Overview of the 2020 Conference

*From the Spring Conference Planning Committee*

The Spring Conference Planning Committee is delighted to invite you to the 22nd Annual ABA Section of Dispute Resolution Spring Conference, in New Orleans, Louisiana, April 22–25, 2020! Read more about all the great events.

The Conference will begin on Wednesday with the Symposium on ADR in the Courts, which will explore innovations in court-connected ADR programs, and the opening rounds of the National Finals of the Representation in Mediation Competition. During the Symposium, experts in court-connected ADR will address topics including diversity, access to justice, advocacy in court ADR programs, partnerships between courts and community mediation programs, and ADR data collection and evaluation. The Wednesday sessions will be followed by a reception at the historic [John Minor Wisdom U.S. Court of Appeals Building](http://www.americanbar.org/dispute). The Symposium is open to all Conference registrants and may be of interest to judges, ADR program staff and practitioners, and advocates advising or representing litigants in court ADR programs.

Thursday and Friday will open with inspirational plenary sessions, which will be followed by a treasure-trove of nearly 50 educational sessions exploring fundamental and cutting-edge dispute resolution topics. These programs will help businesses, advocates and dispute resolution practitioners prevent and address conflict through both established and innovative processes, including arbitration, mediation, online dispute resolution (ODR), and neutral analysis. These highly informative programs will inspire and equip attendees to use new tools and techniques in their current work and to explore new areas of practice. Thursday will conclude with a networking reception, and Friday will open with an Innovation Awards Breakfast.

The Conference will conclude on Saturday with the Legal Educators Colloquium, which will explore issues and innovations in teaching dispute resolution in and outside of the law schools. Concurrent sessions will address topics such as integrating dispute system design across the law school curriculum, inspiring sustainable change through mediation education, and enhancing dispute resolution scholarship. Saturday will also include the Legal Educators Colloquium luncheon and presentation of the annual Scholar Award. Colloquium sessions are open to all Conference registrants (there is an extra fee for the luncheon) and may appeal to anyone interested in teaching dispute resolution.

The Conference will offer numerous opportunities for networking. In addition to the Wednesday and Thursday evening receptions, there will be continental breakfasts and committee networking meetings (open to anyone interested in the subject) on Thursday and Friday, and extended networking breaks between many sessions. There will also be free time in the evenings to enjoy the many musical, culinary and cultural opportunities for which New Orleans is famous.

A full Conference registration entitles attendees to enjoy all four days of programming! Registrations for fewer days are also available.
Countless activities in this destination city make the Conference an excellent opportunity for family and friends to accompany you to New Orleans. Top attractions include the National WWII Museum, the French Quarter, steamboat cruises on the Mississippi, the Audubon Nature Institute Museums and food, music, ghost, and swamp tours. Additionally, our Conference overlaps the renowned New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival (April 23 – May 3), where many top artists will perform. So consider coming before or staying after the Conference and being inspired by the many flavors of New Orleans.

We could not be more excited about seeing you at the 22nd Annual Spring Conference, in New Orleans!

The 2020 Spring Conference Planning Committee

Gina Miller, Co-Chair, Standing Conference Committee
Jaya Sharma, Co-Chair, Standing Conference Committee
Alan Wiener, Co-Chair, Standing Conference Committee
Rishi Batra, Spring Conference Program Chair
Liz Carter, Spring Conference Program Chair
Harrie Samaras, 2018-19 Chair, Section of Dispute Resolution (term expired August 2019)
Joan Stearns Johnsen, 2019-20 Chair, Section of Dispute Resolution (term commenced August 2019)