



## 2024 Northern/ Southern Regional Conference



October 27-29, 2024

*Innovating with Integrity: Addressing Emerging Challenges in Alcohol Regulation*

### PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

**THOMAS R. AKRAS**, Esq. serves as Director of the Legal and Legislative Division for the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Cannabis Commission for the State of Maryland. In this role, he is responsible for reviewing and monitoring legislative bills related to alcohol, tobacco, and cannabis generally, and ATCC duties specifically.

Mr. Akras is also responsible for recommending and developing new ATCC relevant legislation, reviewing and providing interpretive guidance related to existing State laws and regulations, updating existing state regulations as appropriate, and overseeing the administrative hearings process for the agency.

Prior to the ATCC, Mr. Akras served from 2014 to 2021 as Deputy Executive Secretary and General Counsel to the Board of Liquor License Commissioners of Baltimore City. Before transitioning to the alcoholic beverage and tobacco regulatory field, Mr. Akras served as an Assistant State's Attorney and Assistant City Solicitor with the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office and Baltimore City Solicitor's Office.

Mr. Akras holds a Bachelor of Arts in Government and Politics and Juris Doctorate from the University of Maryland. He also holds a Masters in Public Administration from the University of Baltimore. Although originally from New York, he is happy to call Baltimore his home where he lives with his wife, Anne, and their two young children, Carmen and Albert.

**TISHA ALBERT** is the Director of Regulatory for the PA Liquor Control Board. She has oversight and responsibility for the daily operations of the Bureau of Licensing which issues thousands of retail, wholesale and manufacturer licenses as well as permits. In addition, she manages the Bureau of Alcohol Education which is responsible for alcohol trainings and certifications in addition to administering grants. Prior to being named as Director of Regulatory Affairs in 2016, she spent 26 years in the Bureau of Licensing, appointed as the Director in 2011.

**KATHERINE ARTS** serves as Senior Marketing Manager at Provi, where she leads the strategic marketing programming across the company's control states, distributor, retailer, and supplier initiatives. In this role, she drives the implementation of innovative digital marketing tools that foster cross-team collaboration and create meaningful touchpoints for Provi's partners.

Katherine is a service industry veteran with a deep passion for bev-alc. After years of leading beverage-centric campaigns for brands like The Wine Group, Red Bull, TABASCO and Shacksbury Cider, Katherine joined the team at Provi helping to bring better efficiency to all three tiers of the beverage alcohol industry.

Despite being born and raised in South Florida, she prefers snow over sand but genuinely enjoys long walks on the beach. Katherine currently calls Richmond, VT home where you can likely find her mixing cocktails in the kitchen with her partner and dog Toast.



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**SHAUNA BARNES** is the founder of Barnes Beverage Group, a law firm specializing in providing external General Counsel and regulatory counsel to beverage companies. The firm's model is unique, in that it favors a flat fee or subscription model that better aligns clients' incentives and goals with that of their attorneys. Shauna has over a decade of experience counseling alcohol companies, specializing in creative distribution relationship management and risk-based advice in all aspects of the product life cycle.

Shauna leads a team of former in-house attorneys and compliance specialists servicing clients across all alcoholic and non-alcoholic product types, including beer, wine, spirits, and beyond-beer. Their clients include nano, micro, and craft breweries, distillers, wineries and importers, as well as established publicly-traded companies.

Before founding Barnes Beverage Group, Shauna founded the Alcohol & Beverage Practice at Kaleo Legal. Prior to that, she was General Counsel and a trusted member of the leadership team at Dogfish Head for nearly a decade. She found that position during her tenure as an attorney with McDermott Will & Emery focused on alcohol beverage clients and antitrust issues. She is a former Events Chair of the Rose Council of Wake Forest University School of Law and currently serves on the school's Law Board of Visitors. She regularly volunteers her time to the Delaware Brewer's Guild, assisting the members with alcohol-related challenges and legislative efforts.

Shauna earned a Bachelor of Arts from Pennsylvania State University as well as a J.D. from Wake Forest University School of Law. She has been admitted to practice law in North Carolina, Maryland, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Supreme Court.

**ANDY DELONEY** is Senior Vice President and Head of State Public Policy for the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States (DISCUS). Andy has been with DISCUS since June of 2022 and has worked in all three tiers of the three-tier system as well as in a control state regulatory agency.

Prior to joining DISCUS, Andy was Vice President of External Affairs for Johnson Brothers from 2019 to 2022, the nation's fourth largest wine and spirits wholesaler headquartered in St. Paul, Minnesota where he handled legislative, regulatory, and political matters for the company and managed association relationships.

From 2011 to 2019, Andy was Chairman of the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC), the nation's largest spirits wholesale control state. He was appointed to the MLCC and designated Chairman by Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder in June of 2011 and re-appointed by Gov. Snyder in 2015. While he was Chairman of the MLCC, he also served on the Board of Directors for the National Alcohol Beverage Control Association (NABCA). He was elected by his fellow directors on the Board to serve as Chairman of the Board for 2017-2018.

Prior to his time at the MLCC, Andy was Vice President of Public Affairs for the Michigan Restaurant Association – now the Michigan Restaurant and Lodging Association – from 2003 to 2011 where he first cut his teeth in beverage alcohol advocacy. He had his first lobbying position with the Michigan



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chapter of the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) as its Assistant State Director from 1997 to 2003.

Like many in lobbying, he did his time in the government sector prior to going to the private sector, serving on staff in the Michigan House of Representatives from 1993 – while he was still in college – to 1997.

Andy earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Albion College in Albion, Michigan in 1995. There, he met his wife, Tammy. Together, they've raised two girls, Audrey, 22, and Abby, 18.

Andy resides in White Lake, Michigan.

**MATTHEW HAWES** has worked exclusively in the legal cannabis industry for nearly 25 years. Starting in 2000, operating a small patient collective in California's medical cannabis program, Matt continued his career to include operating businesses in nearly all facets of the cannabis supply chain. Additionally, he has done extensive policy advocacy and consultancy, including as a subject matter expert contributor in developing Washington State's I-502 adult use regulations in 2013. Today, Matt operates Novel Beverage Co., a dispensary channel THC infused beverage manufacturer and brand owner in Maine and Massachusetts; he is a partner at Brothers Cannabis, a small, regional chain of adult use dispensaries in Maine; and is a founding director at the Maine Cannabis Industry Association.

**TRAVIS HILL** a leader in Hunton Andrews Kurth's Global Economic Development, Commerce and Government Relations practice, Travis applies skills acquired during his years of senior leadership in the public and private sector to support clients with multifaceted legal and non-legal needs. Clients who find their business interests at the intersection of law and policy benefit from his distinct experiences across a range of industries as a lawyer, executive, and regulator.

Travis's practice includes both legal and non-legal services with an emphasis on administrative law, alcohol and other regulated products and services, as well as economic development, capital deployment, and legislative and regulatory matters. For nearly a decade, Travis served as the head of the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority (Virginia ABC), Virginia's state-operated spirits retailer and alcohol regulatory body, developing extensive experience and providing leadership and legal insight at both executive and organizational levels. His experience transforming large organizations while meeting customer demands and legal mandates enables him to advise companies who face external pressures on many fronts.

In his former role, Travis led a three-year transformation resulting in the creation of Virginia's independent ABC Authority and facilitated efforts to provide regulatory guidance to stakeholders. He reformed the Commonwealth's alcohol licensing structure, with an emphasis on maintaining a fair and predictable marketplace that adapts to new approaches to business. While CEO Travis served on the NCSLA Executive Committee as well as an ex-officio board member on the Virginia Higher Education Substance Use Advisory Committee and the Virginia Spirits Board.



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Prior to his time at ABC, Travis served as Deputy Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry. Travis was the primary point of contact on management, legal, and regulatory issues coming before the secretariat and led efforts across local, state, and federal agencies to implement policy and business strategies. He helped conceptualize and implement the first agriculture and forestry-specific state economic development program in Virginia.

Travis began his career at an AmLaw 200 firm with an emphasis on legislative and regulatory efforts before the Virginia General Assembly, executive agencies, and regulatory boards. He handled matters involving water quality, financial, insurance, utility, and energy regulation.

Travis received both his Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctor degrees from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**MARTHA JENKINS** has served as the General Counsel of the District of Columbia Alcoholic Beverage and Cannabis Administration for 15+ years. Prior to her employment at ABCA, Ms. Jenkins worked as a telecommunications attorney for Sprint Long Distance and SCC Communications, and had a brief stint in private practice. A native of Kansas, Ms. Jenkins enjoys cheering on her Jayhawks in all college sports!

**WENDY KNIGHT** is the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Liquor and Lottery, an 80-employee department that regulates and oversees three business enterprises within Vermont state government that generate \$150M in revenue. She is also a member of Vermont Governor Phil Scott's Executive Cabinet.

Knight is the Vice Chair Northern Region of the National Conference of State Liquor Administrators and Vice Chair of the Vermont Outdoor Business Alliance. She is a former tourism and marketing commissioner, craft beer store owner, marketing consultant in the hospitality and food + beverage sectors, and journalist, who has written 100+ articles for the New York Times and four non-fiction books.

She is a graduate of Cornell University who resides in a small agricultural community in Vermont on the shores of Lake Champlain.

**ERNEST LEGIER, JR.** is an experienced attorney and executive with 30 years of experience leading projects and organizations. He is currently serving as Commissioner of Louisiana Alcohol and Tobacco Control. An honorably discharged veteran of the Louisiana National Guard, he earned a B.A. in Political Science from the University of New Orleans (1992), a J.D. from Loyola University New Orleans (1995), and an MBA from the University of New Orleans in 2020. In addition to his work as a regulator, he is a recognized leader in alternative dispute resolution, executive management, federal funding application, grants management and compliance, construction management and asset management. He has more than 20 years of experience practicing law, working to improve organizational performance, managing complex projects and operations, and developing and managing client relationships. Mr. Legier has served as Executive Director of the Orleans Parish Hospital Service



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District "A" where he recruited and hired all staff, developed a physical headquarters, instituted all required policies and procedures, represented the board in all financial matters including the HUD application process, supervised all contracted professional services and oversaw the construction of a \$100,000,000.00 hospital project. He has worked as Vice President of Business Development for the American Arbitration Association where he was responsible for business development efforts in 6 states. He also served as Deputy Director of the Road Home Program which was the historic program designed to aid homeowners following Hurricanes Rita and Katrina. Mr. Legier is active in his community and serves on the board for several organizations.

**TED MAHONEY** has served as Chief of Investigations and Enforcement with the Massachusetts Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission since 2001. In 2004 he was named the National Liquor Law Enforcement Association (NLLEA) Agent of the Year for his leadership in ensuring effective liquor law enforcement in Massachusetts and in 2008 the Massachusetts ABCC was recognized as the NLLEA Agency of the Year for its innovative enforcement programs. Chief Mahony served as President of the NLLEA in 2008-2009 and again in 2012-2013.

**ANDREA MARQUIS** is a seasoned sales and marketing executive with over 20 years of experience in the beverage industry. As the Vice President of Sales & Marketing at Martignetti Companies, she has a proven track record of driving strategic growth and brand development through effective team leadership. Previously, Andrea served in various leadership roles within the organization where she specialized in market expansion and customer engagement throughout New England. In addition to her work at Martignetti, she is actively involved in industry leadership, serving on the Broker Advisory Boards for both NABCA and WSWA. She was also recently recognized by the New Hampshire Lodging and Restaurant Association as their 2023 Allied Partner of the Year.

**MICHAEL MARTINEZ** is senior counsel to the Hospitality, Alcohol and Leisure Industries Group. Since joining the firm Mr. Martinez has provided legal services to all tiers of the alcohol beverage industry, including retailers, suppliers and wholesalers. More broadly, in the course of representing clients before the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) and other state and federal agencies, he has handled licensing matters, the defense of administrative complaints, rule challenge hearings, Petitions for Declaratory Statements, Circuit Court appeals and compliance consulting.

Prior to joining the firm in 2015 Mr. Martinez worked in Florida state government for fifteen years at the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation. While at DBPR, he handled a wide range of administrative matters, worked closely with legislative committee staff on drafting legislation, constituent issues and interim projects. Mr. Martinez also drafted administrative rules, chaired rule hearings, worked on legislative implementation, testified at rule challenge hearings at the Division of Administrative Hearings and defended rule challenges on behalf of the State. Throughout his tenure at DBPR, he routinely engaged with the Governor's Office regarding litigation and policy matters.

**JO MOAK** works as SVP, General Counsel at Winebow, a leading national importer and distributor of fine wine and spirits. Jo oversees all legal and regulatory matters at Winebow, including business





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agreements, state and federal compliance, and corporate concerns. Previously, she was EVP & General Counsel for Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America, where she advised on legal and regulatory issues facing wholesalers, managed the WSWA Educational Foundation, and led the development of SipSource.

Jo started her legal career as an associate with Hogan Lovells LLC (Washington, D.C.) and Darby & Darby P.C. (New York), where she worked on intellectual property litigation and commercial agreements. Jo lives in Northern Virginia with her healthy, runner husband and her Golden Retriever. Floating about in her orbit are her three kids. She welcomes any advice on becoming an empty nester.

**JACQUELINE PARADEE METTE** Esquire is the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commissioner for the State of Delaware. She was nominated by Governor John Carney in June 2021 and confirmed by the Delaware State Senate later that month. She began as Commissioner on September 1, 2021. As the sole Commissioner for the State of Delaware, Mette is responsible for the oversight and implementation of the state's Liquor Control Act and sets the strategic goals for the Office.

Previously, Commissioner Mette was Deputy Legal Counsel to the Governor, and prior to that she served the administration as the Chief Policy Advisor in the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families. Commissioner Mette has also served as counsel to the state's House of Representatives Democratic Caucus and was a professor of law at Widener University School of Law.

Mette received her undergraduate degree from Vassar College and her Juris Doctor from Villanova University School of Law. She is happily married to her husband, Luke, of 30+ years, and they live in Lewes, Delaware. They travel frequently to New York City to spend time with their adult sons and new daughter-in-law.

**HARLAN POWELL**, managing partner of Powell Junia P.C. in Chicago, has practiced exclusively in the alcohol beverage and hospitality industries for over 25 years. He appears regularly before state and local liquor control commissions, appellate bodies, and other administrative agencies on licensing and compliance issues.

Harlan provides trade practice counsel, regulatory counsel, and specialized transactional services to suppliers and retailers. He is also an experienced litigator, having represented hundreds of industry members in administrative law actions, appeals, franchise litigation, and other business disputes.

Harlan is a frequent public speaker on beverage alcohol matters and his Illinois Alcohol Regulation Overview has been published by Thomson Reuters and is available on Westlaw.

**ANGUS RITTENBURG** is an engineer who is focused on cannabis infusion technologies and manufacturing advancements. As CEO of Warehouse Beverage Co, Angus oversees all aspects of sales, marketing, production, quality control and regulatory compliance, while also designing and building machinery in-house to streamline productivity. Prior to entering the cannabis sector, Angus was a Battery Design Engineer at Tesla, where he worked on the design and manufacturing of the



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Model 3 battery module. He enjoys applying what he learned from creating products in the highly regulated automotive space to the rapidly evolving cannabis space.

**SARAH ROSS** has served as Associate Legal Counsel for the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority since 2020. Prior to joining ABC, she served as a child welfare advocate and prosecutor in Pennsylvania. Sarah received her undergraduate degree in Political Science and her law degree from Widener University. She lives in Richmond, Virginia, and enjoys cheering on her children, who are avid swimmers and runners.

**JACKIE SUMMER** is a James Beard Finalist, seasoned public speaker, and serial entrepreneur. Summers is the founder of JackFromBrooklyn Inc. and the creator of the award-winning Sorel Liqueur.

Jackie has written for everyone from the James Beard Foundation to Plate, Wine Enthusiast, VinePair, Epicurious, Delish, and Edible Brooklyn.

**DAVID WOJNAR** serves as Senior Vice President of Industry Affairs and Social Responsibility at Provi, bringing over two decades of experience in public policy and industry leadership. Prior to joining Provi, Wojnar was the SVP and Head of State Public Policy at the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States (DISCUS), where he played a key role in advancing significant legislative changes, including the passage of laws allowing Sunday alcohol sales in Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island, Virginia, and West Virginia. He also led efforts to defend against tax increases and eliminate outdated blue laws, while building strong relationships with control state officials as DISCUS's point person for the National Alcoholic Beverage Control Association (NABCA).

At Provi, Wojnar leads initiatives focused on industry affairs and control state programs, collaborating with national associations to drive industry growth through innovative digital solutions. His deep experience in public policy and industry advocacy has positioned him as a key figure in shaping the future of the beverage alcohol sector.

Born and raised in Massachusetts, Wojnar is currently serving his eighth term on the Acushnet (MA) Board of Selectmen. Outside of his professional life, he has a passion for sports, having hosted his own sports radio call-in show and called play-by-play for local high school basketball during his college years. He currently resides in Massachusetts with his wife, Melissa, and their two children, Jacob and Nathan.

**ALYSSA WOLFE** is an Assistant Attorney General and serves as Counsel to the Director at the New Jersey Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control (NJABC). In that capacity, she provides legal and policy advice to the Director and to the Division on issues affecting all three tiers of the alcoholic beverage industry. Prior to being appointed Counsel in August 2018, she served as a Deputy Attorney General at the NJABC since January 2013. This followed a twenty-year legal career as an environmental attorney at the New Jersey Attorney General's Office, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and in private practice. Alyssa received her J.D. from the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University and her B.A. in Political Science from Rutgers College.