

NAALJ 2024 Midyear Webinar

The Art of Judging in NAALJ's 50th Year



May 10, 2024

(Times below are all Eastern Time. Webinar runs from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time, Noon to 3:30 p.m. Central Time, and 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Mountain Time, 10 a.m to 1:30 p.m.)

1 p.m. to 1:05 p.m. (EDT) – NAALJ & NJC Welcome

1. 1:05 p.m. to 2:05 a.m. (EDT) – The Art of Judging

Hon. Nina Ashenafi Richardson, Florida County Court Judge & Hon. Robert S. Cohen, Administrative Law Judge, Florida Division of Administrative Hearings

2. 2:15 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. (EDT) – Language Justice: Effective Ways of Working with Interpreters

Chaumtoli Huq, Associate Professor, CUNY School of Law

3. 3:25 p.m. to 4:25 p.m. (EDT) - Judicial Writing with Clarity and Velocity

Hon. Brian Watkins, Chief Legal Officer, Washington Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals

4:25 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. – Closing

Continuing Legal Education (CLE) Credit Information

Participants are responsible for filing a Certificate of Attendance form provided after the webcast with their states' Continuing Legal Education Commissions, Boards or State Bar where required. While NAALJ's educational programs have been regularly approved by CLE Commissions, Boards or State Bars, participants must follow their states' specific filing rules to have CLE credits considered for approval. **This program has been approved for 3.0 total CLE hours including 1 diversity hour by the Iowa Supreme Court Commission on Continuing Legal Education (activity number 407761)**

Register by clicking this link <https://www.naalj.org/event-5611636>

Session Descriptions and Presenters Biographies

Session 1: The Art of Judging

Socrates identified four qualities of a fine judge: “to hear courteously; to answer wisely; to consider soberly; and to decide impartially.” While no formula or science exists for achieving these ends, this session will review each of these four qualities as they apply to the courtroom, emphasizing the first two. You will discover the art of how judges preside over their courtrooms. Confidence in what judges do in the courtroom often depends less on whether the judge made the “right” decision and more on whether the litigants believe the "process" was fair and impartial. The art and craft of judging lies in this process. This session will present best practice tips and tools for addressing the myriad of issues associated with the increasing number of self-represented litigants, overzealous attorneys and increasing caseloads.



Hon. Nina Ashenafi-Richardson, known fondly as "Judge Nina," was elected in 2008 to serve the 2nd Judicial Circuit. She presides over criminal, civil cases, family and Felony Drug Court. She is also faculty for three judicial colleges – Advanced Judicial College, Florida Judicial College, DUI Adjudication Lab and Conference of County Court Judges. Judge Ashenafi-Richardson is known for her humble spirit, devotion to being a fair and impartial judge, and one who treats those who come before her with dignity and respect. This was recognized by Florida’s highest court when she was presented by the Florida Supreme Court with the Distinguished Judicial Service Award. Judge Ashenafi-Richardson, in the words of one nominator, “not only exemplifies judicial excellence but also personified the ideals that this award seeks to recognize. She has, throughout her career, demonstrated an exceptional commitment to pro bono legal services and the improvement of law and the administration of justice throughout the state.” In 2021, she received the Trial Jurist of the Year from the American Board of Trial Advocates. Judge Ashenafi Richardson serves on several state-wide boards including the Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee (JEAC), which provides written advisory opinions to inquiring judges and judicial candidates regarding the application of the Florida Code of Judicial Conduct. She also served on the Judicial Management Council, an advisory body that assists the Florida Chief Justice and Supreme Court. The Council is charged, among other responsibilities, with identifying and evaluating information that would assist in improving the performance and effectiveness of the judicial branch. She chaired the education and outreach subcommittee responsible for re-drafting the state-wide Florida Communication Plan that was formally adopted by the Florida Supreme Court in January 2016.



Hon. Robert S. Cohen is a native of Orlando, Florida. Bob Cohen graduated from Brandeis University with a B.A. degree in American Studies. He then attended the Florida State University College of Law, from which he graduated and served on the Law Review. After more than 20 years in private practice, concentrating on administrative and civil law. Bob was appointed by the Governor and Cabinet in October 2003, as the Director and Chief Judge of the Division of Administrative Hearings (DOAH). Bob currently serves as a Managing Judge for the Southern District with DOAH. He has served as Chair of the National Conference of the Administrative Law Judiciary, Past President of the National Association of Administrative Law

Judiciary, and Treasurer of the National Association of Workers' Compensation Judiciary. Locally, he has served on the Second Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee, as an alumni member of the William Stafford Inn of Court, as a Past President of the Tallahassee Bar Association, and as a two-time Past President of the Legal Aid Foundation. He has held or holds leadership roles in numerous community and religious organizations. Bob has received many awards and recognitions, including the Florida Bar's Pro Bono Service Award for the Second Judicial Circuit, the Claude Pepper Outstanding Lawyer of the Year Award, the Tallahassee Bar Association's Lifetime Professionalism Award, the Tallahassee Bar Association and Tallahassee Women Lawyers' Champion of Diversity Award, and the Florida Bar Administrative Law Section's S. Curtis Kiser Administrative Lawyer of the Year Award. In 2022, he was inducted into the National Association of Workers' Compensation Judiciary's Hall of Fame and received NAALJ's highest honor, the Victor Roskopf Award.

Session 2: Language Justice: Effective Ways of Working with Interpreters

This session will introduce judges to the concept of language justice—which looks at whether individuals can meaningfully participate in administrative proceedings—and will discuss some best practices in terms of working with interpreters.



Chaumtoli Huq is an Associate Professor of Law at CUNY School of Law. Professor Huq has devoted her entire professional career to public service focusing on issues impacting low-income New Yorkers. Before joining the legal academy, she was in leadership roles at Legal Services of NYC and MFY Legal Services and was appointed General Counsel for Litigation for the New York City Office of the Public Advocate. She also served as Director of the first South Asian Workers' Rights Project at the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, as a Skadden Fellow, and as the first staff attorney to the New York Taxi Workers Alliance, a multi-ethnic, immigrant

and worker-led labor organization. In 2019, Professor Huq was awarded the Access to Justice Leadership Award by the South Asian Bar Association of New York, and in 2020 received the Daynard Public Interest Visiting Fellowship awarded to nationally recognized public interest leaders.

Session 3: Judicial Writing with Clarity and Velocity

Brian Watkins brings enthusiasm and experience to his session, *Judicial Writing with Clarity and Velocity*, which he has taught to judges all over the country. In this abbreviated session from a longer course, participants will learn how to use plain language, frontloading, chain writing, a syllogistic framework, and other tips to make judicial decisions easier to read and easier to write. He also provides participants with tips to improve self-proofreading and editing.



Hon. Brian Watkins is Chief Legal Officer (advisor to the Board) for the Washington State Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals. Since 2008, Brian has served as a trial judge, review judge, mediator, and assistant chief judge. Before coming to the Board, he worked as a senior administrative law judge with the Washington State Office of Administrative Hearings. He graduated from Texas Wesleyan University School of Law (now Texas A&M University School of Law) and the University of Texas at Arlington. Since 2016, Brian has served as administrative law faculty at the National Judicial College. Brian served for many years as a volunteer hearing officer for the Housing Authority of Thurston County, is a former board member of the National Association of Administrative Law Judiciary, served as president of the Washington Administrative Law Judges Association, and co-chaired the Pro Se Committee of the Washington State Access to Justice Board.