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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 Master 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.

SANDY ANAOKAR is a Chief Marketing Officer, is responsible for Mahou USA's Marketing strategy – including brand and creative, advertising, media, consumer insights and analytics, innovation and all brand-building efforts for Founders Brewing Company, Avery Brewing Company, and Mahou Imports. Anaokar joined Founders in 2017 as a Brand Manager and was promoted to Vice President of Marketing for Founders in 2019 and Chief Marketing Officer for Mahou USA in 2023. He brings over 15 years of marketing experience to Mahou USA from CPG, financial, auto, and manufacturing industries. Anaokar has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration and Economics from the University of Michigan and earned his MBA in Marketing and General Management from the University of Michigan Stephen M. Ross School of Business.

COURTNEY ARMOUR is the Chief Legal Officer for the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, Inc. (DISCUS) and the Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility (Responsibility.org). In addition to overseeing the legal compliance for the organizations, Courtney also guides legal and regulatory policy issues impacting distillers and develops strategies to mitigate industry risk. Courtney also manages the Code of Responsible Practices for Beverage Alcohol Advertising and Marketing – ensuring proper processing of any complaints with the Code Review Board, guiding any necessary updates to the Code, and providing industry training. Courtney previously practiced antitrust law at Wilson Sonsini in New York and Washington D.C., representing clients in complex litigation and government investigations both domestically and abroad. She also previously served as a judicial extern for the Honorable Dale A. Kimball, U.S. District Court for the District of Utah. Prior to receiving her juris doctor degree from Northwestern University School of Law, she worked for U.S. Senator Robert F. Bennett and served as DISCUS' state government relations manager.

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



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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.

TONY BARNES is Chief Corporate Counsel and Corporate Secretary for Mahou USA, the North American business division of Mahou-San Miguel, a family-owned, multi-national brewer, beverage and hospitality business based in Madrid, Spain and established in 1890. Tony manages the day to day contractual, M&A, regulatory and compliance matters for Mahou USA (consisting of Founders Brewing Company, Avery Brewing and Mahou Imports).

Previously, Tony practiced corporate and M&A law as a partner for Law Weathers PC and Varnum LLP in Grand Rapids and as an associate for Troutman Sanders in Atlanta. Prior to becoming a lawyer, Tony worked briefly as an actor and in the construction industry. He is a graduate of Kenyon College and earned his law degree from Vanderbilt University.

STEVE BASHORE is the Director of Historic Trades and Head Distiller at George Washington's Mount Vernon. In this position he oversees the interpretation, operations and maintenance of Washington's Distillery and Gristmill as well as the Farm and Blacksmith Shop. Steve is a traditional miller and distiller by trade and has been operating, interpreting and repairing historic watermills for 29 years. Since 2007, he has been running George Washington's Distillery producing rye whiskey, bourbon, single malt whisky, rum as well as peach and apple brandy.

DEBBI BEAVERS joined the Kansas ABC in January 2004. In 2010, she was promoted to licensing manager and promoted to operations manager in 2015. She was appointed interim ABC Director in 2016 and was confirmed by the Senate in January 2017. Debbi is the first female director since the inception of ABC in 1949 and serves at the pleasure of the Secretary of Revenue.

Debbi's priorities for the ABC Division are to regulate the industry consistently, provide excellent customer service and increase compliance with liquor laws through education and training. Prior to joining the Kansas ABC, Debbi lived in Missouri and worked in the private sector as a Medicare compliance analyst and also a social services director. Debbi studied at Missouri Western State College and has an associate's degree in travel.

RICHARD M. BLAU is a shareholder with the law firm of Gray Robinson, P.A. He is chairman of the law firm's Alcohol Beverage & Food Law Department, and heads up the firm's *Nationwide Alcohol Industry Team*



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focusing on the rules and regulations that govern the marketing, sale and consumption of distilled spirits, wine, beer, and other licensed beverages.

Richard has been rated “Band 1” for Alcohol Beverage Law by *Chambers USA* since 2007. He also is listed in *Best Lawyers in America*, and is “AV” rated by *Martindale-Hubbell*. A substantial portion of Richard’s professional efforts are focused on trade regulations, litigation and dispute resolution involving the hospitality industry. He has industry-specific experience in the areas of administrative practice and regulatory compliance, advertising and promotional law, importation matters and supplier/distribution relations. An elected member of The American Law Institute, Richard also is a member of The Florida Bar, The New York Bar, The Bar Association of the District of Columbia, the American Bar Association and the Federal Bar Association. Additionally, Mr. Blau served for over eight years as the Chair of the American Bar Association’s *Committee on Beverage Alcohol Practice*.

Mr. Blau has lectured on Twenty First Amendment issues at meetings of the National Conference of State Liquor Administrators (NCSLA), the National Alcohol Beverage Control Association (NABCA) and the National Liquor Law Enforcement Association (NLLEA). From 1998 through 2006, Mr. Blau authored the chapter on “Beverage Alcohol Practice” for the annual volume of the longstanding treatise *Developments in Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice* published by the American Bar Association.

Mr. Blau received his B.A. from Brandeis University and his J.D. from the Georgetown University Law Center, where he served as the Associate Editor for Topics of the *Georgetown Law Journal*. In 2019, Richard was inducted into the NCSLA *Hall of Fame*.

MATTHEW BOTTING was appointed to the position of ABC General Counsel in August, 2008. Mr. Botting has close to 30 years of state government legal experience. He was ABC’s Chief Legal Counsel from 2000-2004 before he left for a short time to work in private practice. Mr. Botting returned to ABC in 2005, where he served as a Staff Counsel III until his appointment to General Counsel. Prior to joining ABC in 2000, Mr. Botting was a Deputy Attorney General with the California Department of Justice. Mr. Botting also represents the California ABC at the National Conference of State Liquor Administrators (“NCSLA”) and served as President of that organization during 2016-17. He obtained his Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Commerce (Economics) degrees from Otago University in New Zealand before relocating to the United States.

CHIEF DEREK BROOKS serves as the Chief of Enforcement at the Alcoholic Beverage and Cannabis Administration (ABCA) for Washington, DC. Chief Brooks has a combined 43 years of military, law enforcement, and regulatory experience. He previously served in management roles for the DC Department of Health, and the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, where he focused on the health and safety of residents and visitors in the nation’s capital. Chief Brooks is a former Certified Fraud Examiner with years of compliance experience, and he holds several degrees to include a Master’s degree from Central Michigan University.

JANELLE CHRISTIAN is the Director of the Office of Industry and State Outreach for the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB). In this role, Janelle focuses on communication and outreach for TTB-regulated industry members. Some of her primary efforts include coordinating TTB participation at industry conferences and events; identifying and conducting training opportunities for industry members to encourage voluntary compliance with TTB laws, regulations, and requirements; and serving as a liaison with industry members and trade associations. Janelle joined TTB in 2011 as a Presidential Management Fellow. Prior to her current position, she served as Industry Outreach Program Manager and as Policy Advisor to Headquarters



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Operations. Janelle received a bachelor's degree in economics from Oregon State University, a master's degree in public administration from Columbia University, and a law degree from the University of Oregon.

EBONY CONNOR is Deputy General Counsel with the Tennessee Alcoholic Beverage Commission. In this role, she works on legal, regulatory, and compliance matters for the Agency. She worked in labor/employment law and healthcare law with various Tennessee state agencies prior to moving into the alcohol industry as a regulator. Ebony is a graduate of Tennessee State University and the University of Tennessee College of Law. All dogs like her, so she is positive and she is a decent person, but cats also instinctively like her, so she could probably be better.

ROD DIAZ has been with the PLCB for 31 years, serving most recently as the agency's chief counsel, from 2016 through 2023, and acting executive director. He was named Executive Director of the PLCB in January 2024.

Since joining the PLCB, Rod has served as assistant counsel, legislative counsel and deputy chief counsel. From 2008 through early 2016, he served as executive deputy chief counsel, directly overseeing all legal functions in the agency.

During his career, Rod has represented the PLCB before numerous tribunals, including Commonwealth Court and the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, in cases involving significant issues like liquid fuels and alcohol sales by supermarkets. He has been instrumental in drafting PLCB regulations and representing the agency before the Independent Regulatory Review Commission. Rod has drafted numerous legislative proposals ultimately enacted into law and has provided testimony in legislative hearings involving the beer distribution system.

Rod served on the faculty of the Pennsylvania Bar Institute, where he taught liquor licensing matters, and he has planned and moderated panels for the National Alcohol Beverage Control Association (NABCA) and the National Conference of State Liquor Administrators (NCSLA). He also serves on the executive board of NCSLA as 3rd vice-president.

A cum laude graduate of the University of Pittsburgh School of Law who received a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science at Yale University, Rod lives in Carlisle with his wife, Sara Meng, Ph.D. and two sons, Christopher and Elijah.

ERLINDA DOHERTY has experienced a 24-year long career in public policy during which time she has worked with various public, private, and nonprofit organizations, including alcohol beverage companies. Over the years, she has advised senior Army leaders on international military relations, lobbied for business consulting and technology firms, and advocated for state legislators in the areas of emerging tech, taxes, and commerce. She is also a notable sommelier, wine/spirits educator, writer, and consultant with a focus on independent, family-owned alcohol beverage brands.

LILY FAN was nominated to lead the New York State Liquor Authority by Governor Kathy Hochul and confirmed by the New York State Senate on June 10, 2023. Ms. Fan, the first Asian American woman appointed as a Commissioner of the SLA, has served with the agency since her original confirmation in June of 2018. She is the first woman to head the agency.



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Ms. Fan, a graduate of Yale College and Yale Law School, was born in Hong Kong and speaks fluent Cantonese. Ms. Fan is a New York City resident who previously served as a member of Community Board 4 in Manhattan in 2015 and served as the Board's Co-Secretary from 2016 to 2017.

Ms. Fan was previously a lawyer at the law firms of Shearman & Sterling LLP and Morrison & Foerster LLP, specializing in white-collar criminal litigation and securities class actions. She also served as Legislative Counsel for the Standing Committee on Social Services in the New York State Senate in 2010. After her law practice, she trained as a family law mediator.

Ms. Fan founded Scandobean Productions, a theatrical and film production company, in 2011. In 2019, Ms. Fan won a Tony Award as co-producer of *Hadestown* for Best New Musical. Her documentary film *Weiner* received the U.S. Documentary Grand Jury Prize at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival. In 2020, another film, *The Fight*, a documentary about the American Civil Liberties Union, won the U.S. Documentary Special Jury Award for Social Impact Filmmaking.

JOE FINELLI has been employed at the SLA for over 25 years coming to the agency in 1999. He received his Peace Officer training at Stratton Air National Guard Base in Scotia, NY. He was an Albany Zone Investigator for many years and went on to become Sr. Investigator in charge of field operations for the Albany zone. Joe then became the Zone Supervising Investigator in 2014 overseeing all aspects of the Albany zone. He took over as Assistant Director of the SLA Enforcement Bureau statewide in 2016 overseeing all zones and went on to become the statewide Director of Enforcement in 2019. He is also a trained General Topics Instructor. Joe Finelli has been appointed to the Deputy Commissioner of Enforcement position as of 2024.

BRIAN FINK, Associate Attorney at Foster Garvey PC, where he provides legal and regulatory services to the food and alcoholic beverage industries. Brian's varied experience includes compliance with FDA, USDA, TTB and FTC laws and regulations; alcoholic-beverage licensing and compliance among all tiers in all 50 states, Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico; acquisitions, leasing, service contracts, distributorships, sponsorships, co-packing and co-manufacturing, and other transactions; and corporate matters, including formation, amendments, mergers and acquisitions, and dissolutions. Brian writes frequently about the laws and policies affecting food and alcoholic beverage companies. He authored "FSMA on the Farm," a comprehensive legal handbook designed to assist agribusinesses in understanding how FDA food-safety rules apply to their operations. His scholarship has appeared in the *Journal of Food Law and Policy* and the *Research Handbook on International Food Law*.

LISA GARDNER currently serves as the Executive Director of the Illinois Liquor Control Commission (ILCC). She joined the ILCC following a 10 year plus legal career as an attorney and brings a wealth of legal expertise and experience to the role. Prior to joining the ILCC team, Lisa was the Managing Attorney of Lakeside Law Group followed by McLeod Law Group. She also is a former Hearing Officer and Administrative Law Judge for the City of Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection where she conducted hearings relating to the regulation of retail liquor in Chicago, as well as other licensed retail establishments. She also previously served as a Supervising Attorney at the University of Illinois Chicago Law School Domestic Violence Clinical Advocacy Program and currently is a Paralegal Studies Adjunct Professor at Generations College.

Director Gardner received her Juris Doctorate from Loyola University Chicago where she focused her legal studies on child and family law as well as trial advocacy, earning certificates in both. She attributes her communication skills to her undergraduate studies at Southern Illinois University – Carbondale, where she received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications with a concentration in Media Marketing.



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LUIS GONZALEZ serves as Republic National Distributing Company's (RNDC) Corporate Vice President and Regulatory Affairs and Commercial Counsel based in Florida. RNDC is a national beverage alcohol distributor with operations in 39 states plus the District of Columbia. Luis has 20 years of experience in the beverage alcohol industry. Before attending law school, Luis was a law enforcement officer in Florida for ten years with five of those years as a special agent and special agent supervisor with the Florida Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco in Key West, Miami, and Orlando.

Prior to joining RNDC's legal department, Luis was an Associate and Partner with the international law firm of Holland & Knight. There he specialized in alcohol beverage law and commercial litigation and represented all three industry tiers. He is the author of Holland & Knight's Florida Alcoholic Beverages Trade Practices Guide and has been a speaker on alcohol beverage law at the University of Central Florida, various legal continuing education events, and NABCA, NCSLA, and WSWA industry events.

BEN HALPERT is currently leading Regulated Products and Corporate Compliance at Gopuff, which operates more than 400 locations in 37 states plus the District of Columbia. He has extensive experience counseling clients in all three tiers of the beverage alcohol industry. Prior to Gopuff, Ben worked at Anheuser-Busch, where he led A-B's Ethics & Compliance function. Ben has more than a decade of industry experience, including in the areas of alcohol beverage law, trade practice investigations, franchise, distribution, litigation, responsible delivery, and antitrust. Before A-B, Ben worked in private practice with Dentons, LLP. He holds a law degree from the University of Kansas, and an undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan. Go Blue! In his spare time, Ben loves to cook, travel, and spend time outdoors with his family.

ANNA C. HIRAI is the Assistant Administrator at the Honolulu Liquor Commission. She has been with the Commission since 1997, first as Adjudications Deputy Corporation Counsel, then in various capacities to include Special Assistant to the Administrator, Assistant Administrator, and Acting Administrator. Previously, she was in private practice in Honolulu, Hawaii (corporate, healthcare & real estate) and Little Rock, Arkansas (securities regulation & corporate finance). She has been a member of the Hawaii Bar since 1981 and the Arkansas Bar since 1984.

Anna graduated from Punahou School (1973, "a few years" before Punahou's most famous alumnus); Georgetown University (1977; A.B. American Studies); and Boston College Law School (1981). She is an empty-nester living in Honolulu, with two daughters each pursuing successful career paths in healthcare and medicine. She served on the executive committee of the National Conference of State Liquor Administrators representing the Western Region states from 2013 to 2023, including almost two full terms as President. In 2025, she will come "full circle" by bringing the annual conference back to Hawaii, and looks forward to the NCSLA *ohana* joining the Hawaii liquor commissions in showing support for Maui.

BAHNEH HOBEL, based in Napa is a Partner at Dickenson Peatman & Fogarty and heads the firm's Alcohol Beverage Law & Compliance group. Bahaneh's practice focuses on all aspects of alcohol beverage law and regulation, with a focus on wineries and other alcohol beverage producers and suppliers. Bahaneh has extensive knowledge of the laws related to the sale, distribution and marketing of alcoholic beverages and advises clients on a wide range of topics, including licensing, tied house rules, trade practices (advertising, sponsorships and special events) and celebrity brands. Bahaneh works closely with her clients to help inform and structure their business practices and potential transactions in light of the complex and ever-changing alcohol beverage laws in the U.S. Bahaneh received her J.D. in 2001 from Berkeley Law and served as a law clerk to the Honorable Richard C. Tallman on the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit before commencing her law practice. Bahaneh lives in Sonoma with her husband Cameron (a wine importer) and her



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two children. Bahaneh is also co-owner of Hobel Wines, a small family winery located in the Napa Valley, which recently received 98 points for one of its Cabernet Sauvignons. Hobel has been crafting small production, single vineyard Napa Valley Cabernets since its inaugural vintage in 2009.

LATONYA (Tonya) D. HUCKS-WATKINS is the Senior Legal Counsel for the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority. She has been with VA ABC for almost 8 years. She has a Bachelor's Degree and a Master's Degree in English and Literature from VA Tech. She received her law degree in 2006 from the North Carolina Central University School of Law. She worked in private practice in North Carolina for several years prior to moving back to her home state where she worked as a magistrate in Chesapeake, Virginia and as a prosecutor for the Board of Medicine. Since accepting her position with VA ABC, she has helped to evolve her initial position into a complete in-house office of legal counsel. The Office of Legal Counsel represents the interests of VA ABC and the Bureau of Law Enforcement in connection with initial hearings before ABC Administrative Law Judges, appeals to the VA ABC Board, and the Circuit Court. Additionally, her division provides legal guidance and representation to the various business units within VA ABC. Tonya also serves as the Authority's regulatory coordinator and is heavily involved in drafting and promulgating regulations.

KEN KAST is Product & Regulatory Counsel at DoorDash, focusing his support of the business on all things beverage alcohol regulatory. In conjunction with a team of legal and compliance professionals, Ken provides counsel to the business on all things beverage alcohol delivery, expansion, marketing, advertising, events, licensing and permitting, policies and procedures, training, and more. Prior to joining DoorDash, Ken was Associate General Counsel at Proximo Spirits, the supplier of over 24 different distilled spirit brands, like Jose Cuervo, 1800 Tequila, and Proper No. Twelve.

DoorDash is a technology company that empowers local economies and connects people with the best in their communities, currently operating in 27 countries across the globe. As far as beverage alcohol in the United States, this means facilitating the third party delivery of the product in 27 states, as well as Washington, D.C.

ERIN KELLEHER, a partner with Hinman & Carmichael LLP in San Francisco, began her tenure with the firm in 2014. She is a seasoned corporate lawyer with a specialty in advising buyers and sellers on transactions involving alcohol beverage and cannabis licensees. Erin works extensively with her client's outside counsel, providing regulatory advice to inform business practices, relationships and potential transactions. Additionally, Erin has extensive knowledge of the laws related to the sale, distribution and marketing of alcoholic beverages, the federal and state tied-house laws, and deep expertise with regulatory qualification requirements applicable to investors in alcohol beverage licensees. Erin has leveraged her transactional and licensing experience for the cannabis industry, providing investors and operators with practical structuring advice and risk analysis in a rapidly changing regulatory environment. Erin has participated as a guest lecturer at Sonoma State University on wine regulatory topics and is an active member of numerous trade associations. She provides pro bono legal services to the industry, representing Stern Grove and the Zinfandel Advocates and Producers, among others.

Erin was previously an associate in the corporate group of Latham & Watkins LLP and Morrison & Foerster LLP. She is licensed to practice in California and New York and is a graduate of Northwestern University School of law.

WENDY KNIGHT is the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Liquor and Lottery that regulates and oversees three business enterprises within Vermont state government: the Division of Liquor Control, the Vermont Lottery, and the new Sports Wagering Enterprise Fund launched in January 2024.



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A former craft beer store owner, Knight has significant international experience in the hospitality and food and beverage sectors, working with distilled spirits companies, wineries, cider makers, brewers, restaurants, and lodging properties. She was a consultant for On the Fly, a collective of experts providing technical assistance to Vermont's hospitality businesses negatively impacted by COVID-19. A former journalist, Wendy has written 100+ articles for the *New York Times* and four non-fiction books and has appeared on *CNN*, *ABC News*, and *NPR*.

As Vermont's Tourism and Marketing Commissioner from 2017 to 2019, Wendy created a first-in-nation economic development tourism initiative and was part of the senior leadership team at the Agency of Commerce and Community Development. Knight was a founding member and Vice Chair of the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC), created by Governor Scott in 2017 to strengthen Vermont's outdoor recreation economy. She is currently a Commissioner with the Vermont Commission on Women, Vice Chair of the Vermont Outdoor Business Alliance, and Vice Chair Northern Region of the National Conference of State Liquor Administrators.

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

ALEX KORAL is based in Boulder, Colorado, Alex Korral is Regulatory General Counsel for Sovos ShipCompliant, where he serves as lead legal researcher for beverage alcohol regulation and has become a leading expert in DtC shipping laws and interstate distribution of alcohol. He has spoken on the topic at many industry events including DISCUS Annual Conference, Craft Brewers Conference, DTC Wine Symposium, ACSA Convention as well as meetings for the National Council of State Liquor Administrators and the National Liquor Law Enforcement Association. Alex has been in the beverage alcohol arena since 2015, after receiving his J.D. from the University of Colorado Law School.

JEREMY KRUEDINIER began his tenure at WSDI in 2015 and was named Executive Director in 2021. He was previously appointed General Counsel in 2019. Jeremy is a licensed attorney and registered lobbyist that advocates for the regulatory and legislative interests of WSDI members in front the Illinois Liquor Control Commission, the Illinois General Assembly, and various units of local government. He came to WSDI after working as a government relations consultant, serving clients from highly regulated industries. Jeremy, a graduate of the University of Illinois College of Law, previously served in a variety of positions in state government. Jeremy is admitted to practice law in the State of Illinois, the United States District Court - Northern District of Illinois, the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, and the Supreme Court of the United States. He is an active member of the Chicago Bar Association, previously serving as the Chair of the Trade and Professional Associations Committee. He also serves as the Chair for the Advisory Council of the Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of America, where he sits on the Legal Strategy Task Force, the E-Commerce Council, the Government Affairs Council, and the Public Relations and Responsibility Council.

Additionally, he is active in the community, having served in various leadership positions at the Alzheimer's Association of Illinois and Equality Illinois. Jeremy got his undergraduate degree from the University of Illinois where he was a member of the Track and Field team and is now active in the Varsity "I" Association. Jeremy lives in Oak Park, Illinois with his wife and children.

STEPHEN LARSON was appointed to a fourth term as the Administrator of the Iowa Alcoholic Beverages Division by Governor Kim Reynolds. He was previously appointed by two former Iowa governors and was overwhelmingly confirmed in all prior confirmations. This bipartisan confidence in Mr. Larson is a testament to



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his exemplary work in establishing the Alcohol and Tax Operations Division as a successful state executive branch agency.

During his fourteen-year tenure, Mr. Larson modernize the Division in its dual role as both a governing authority of the alcoholic beverages marketplace and creating a more efficient and effective wholesale distribution of alcoholic spirits throughout Iowa. as a business.

Upon his appointment in 2010, Mr. Larson first set of priorities, was to re-establish a regulatory compliance program, with the insertion of an educational component. Today there are six business units' comprising the Alcohol and Tobacco.

During this time, the bureau has been recognized with various awards issued by state and national organizations for innovation and strategic leadership. Mr. Larson been instrumental in reviewing and refreshing Iowa's alcohol laws to ensure that they meet the needs of the modern marketplace while protecting public health, safety, and welfare.

On the business side of the agency operations, which is the sole wholesaler of alcoholic spirits many improvements have occurred. Most notably, on April 15, 2019, the Ruan Transport Corporation assumed responsibility for the distribution of spirits on behalf of the Division as part of a public-private partnership. He served as a past member of the National Alcohol Beverage Control Association executive board of directors, and served as past Chairman of the board from 2015-2016.

Mr. Larson's public service career began in 1984, as an unclaimed property auditor. During his public service career, he has received various awards, served on state boards, and state and local national associations. Mr. Larson graduated with honors from William Penn University in Oskaloosa, Iowa with a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration. Resides in Polk City, Iowa with his wife Jane, has two sons and is a proud grandparent of two granddaughters. Hobbies and what bring joy outside of work is golf, traveling and spending time with family and friends.

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 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.

MARGIE A.S. LEHRMAN enjoys the association world, as demonstrated by her service to multiple national organizations. Currently, she serves as the CEO to the American Craft Spirits Association (ACSA), a trade group with over 700 members. With a rise in spirits production by small businesses throughout the U.S., ACSA



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was formed in 2013 as the only national trade group representing the interests of independent, craft spirits producers, with manufacturers operating in all 50 states. Margie also continues to serve as an advisor to Lehrman Beverage Law, where she formerly practiced in the area of alcohol beverage licensing matters within the Washington, DC Metropolitan area. Formerly, Ms. Lehrman worked for 15 plus years for the American Association for Justice (AAJ), formerly the Association of Trial Lawyers of America and the Foreign Policy Association. She leads with over 25 years of association management experience. Ms. Lehrman holds a J.D. from California Western School of Law and a bachelor's degree in International Service and Politics from Marymount College. She lives in Vienna, Virginia and enjoys boating on the Chesapeake, gardening, cycling, yoga, traveling, and cooking.

MARBET LEWIS is a first generation Cuban-American and native Floridian working with various global leaders in the alcohol industry. She focuses her practice on the federal, state and local laws governing the alcohol industry and the production, importation, and sale of alcohol beverage products. She also represents clients in all aspects of federal, state and local alcohol and business licensing, alcohol industry transactions, marketing practices and other business regulatory matters. Marbet represents foreign and domestic manufacturers, large box chain retailers, convenience stores, private equity funds, entertainment venues, sports venues, restaurants, night clubs, liquor stores, hotels and other hospitality venues.

Marbet is also an active leader in addressing and tackling barriers for women in law and the alcohol industry. She is an active member of the Cuban American Bar Association and of *Women of the Vine & Spirits*, an organization dedicated to the empowerment of women in the alcohol industry. Marbet is also an avid writer and lecturer, and has been featured in various news, trade and legal publications for her thought provoking industry insight.

MAGGIE LU is VP & Associate General Counsel, at Diageo North America, a leader in beverage alcohol with a collection of brands across spirits and beer – including Johnnie Walker, Smirnoff, Captain Morgan, Don Julio, Casamigos, Tanqueray and Guinness – and enjoyed in more than 180 countries. Maggie leads the Legal Regulatory Department at Diageo North America, and advises, counsels and partners with the business on various marketing, innovation, commercial and corporate relations strategies and matters. She previously held a variety of roles at Diageo, including as Director & Senior Counsel, Marketing, Digital and IP, in North America, and as Acting Regional Counsel for Northern Europe, France and Middle East/North Africa and IP Europe. Prior to her career at Diageo, she worked at law firms in New York City and clerked for the District Court, Eastern District of Pennsylvania. Maggie is passionate about mentoring and creating an inclusive environment where individuals of different backgrounds, race, gender, beliefs and personalities can thrive.

ALVA MATHER is the Global Co-Head of the Firm's Regulatory Practice Group and heads the Alcohol Regulatory & Distribution Practice. As a nationally recognized go-to lawyer for alcohol beverage regulatory, commercial and M&A matters, clients say that Alva "comes to the situation with clear leadership and strong knowledge of the food and beverage industry." She combines her extensive knowledge of the commercial and legal landscape as well as deep understanding of the beverage industry to help clients mitigate risk, respond to challenges, and capture and pursue new business opportunities.

Representing over 30% of the largest alcohol companies in the world, Alva's clients include brewers, distillers, wineries, importers and retailers. She also represents clients in the growing cannabis space and has in-depth knowledge of the evolving legal and regulatory issues facing this industry. Alva's work spans high-stakes audits, investigations, arbitration and litigation, as well as other areas affecting alcohol beverage and cannabis companies such as intellectual property, trade and tax. Her practice is on the forefront of emerging trends in the alcohol industry, including alcohol delivery services, new beverage collaborations and e-commerce.



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As companies look to break into or expand their footprint in the alcohol industry, they turn to Alva for her extensive experience advising clients in major M&A transactions. Non-traditional beverage companies, large alcohol producers and private equity clients confidently rely on her to guide them through the ever-changing regulatory landscape of alcohol production, distribution and delivery, both through contemplated transactions and on an ongoing basis.

Alva often writes about and speaks on trends and regulatory matters affecting the alcohol and cannabis space. She is a co-editor of McDermott's *Alcohol Law Advisor* blog and a frequent speaker at alcohol beverage industry conferences.

JACQUELINE 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.

CLAIRE MITCHELL a partner with Stoel Rives based in Seattle and co-leads the firm's Alcohol Beverage regulatory practice. She was also recently appointed to the Board of Directors of the Washington Wine Industry Foundation. Claire counsels on state and federal liquor licensing strategies, tied house compliance, trade practice regulation, promotional advertising and sponsorship assessments, and contract negotiation. Her clients include grocers, restaurants, hotel operators, e-commerce retailers, entertainment venues, alcohol brand owners, and beer, wine, and spirits producers.

EMILY PENCE, after almost a decade in private practice, focusing on Intellectual Property at law firms, Emily went in-house with then client Molson Coors Beverage Company where she served as in-house counsel, before ultimately formally leaving the practice of law to be Chief People Officer at Best Day Brewing Inc. which is a pure play non-alcoholic beer company that convinced her to also oversee regulatory and compliance issues.

TYLER RUDD is the Central States Counsel for Wine Institute, covering state legislatures and alcoholic beverage regulating agencies for Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Iowa, Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico, and Utah. He began with Wine Institute in June 2016. Prior to joining Wine Institute, Tyler was a Texas contract lobbyist for various clients including Wine Institute, Tesla Motors, Texas Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, Railway Supply Institute, West Texas Gas company, and several others.

Tyler graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in 1991 with a degree in English and a minor in Philosophy. After graduating, he worked in the Texas State Capitol for the then Secretary of State, Antonio Garza, who eventually became Ambassador to Mexico under President George W. Bush. Tyler also worked



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for State Rep. Bill Seibert in the Texas House. In 2000, he graduated from the University of Texas School of Law and began a career in lobbying. In 2003, Tyler received a scholarship to attain his Masters in Law in International Finance at the University College London, where he graduated with an L.L.M. in 2004.

After graduating in 2004, Tyler spent five years in Houston and then London, England, practicing law for firms including Berwin Leighton Paisner (now Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner) and Paul Hastings. Tyler's specialty was asset and project finance, particularly in the countries of England, Croatia, and Bosnia. In 2009, Tyler returned to Austin to restart his contract lobbying career, leading to joining Wine Institute in-house seven years ago.

NICHOLE SCHUSTACK* focuses her practice on alcohol trade practice, regulatory, commercial agreements and distribution matters. She represents companies in the alcohol beverage industry, including brewers, distillers and wineries and has in-depth knowledge of the legal, regulatory and distribution issues facing the industry.

Prior to joining the Firm, Nichole acted as in-house counsel for eight years at one of the largest craft brewers in the world where she counseled on regulatory, distribution matters and represented the company in drafting complex commercial agreements. Since joining McDermott, she uses this experience to provide clients with business-minded and practical legal advice.

**Not admitted to practice in the District of Columbia; admitted only in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Supervised by principals of the Firm who are members of the District of Columbia Bar.*

JAMES (Jim) SKLODA is Assistant General Counsel for Casey's General Stores, Inc., (Casey's) where he leads the Licensing team in addition to handling Real Estate and M & A matters. Prior to joining Casey's he was in house counsel with Sheetz. Jim received his J.D. from the State University of New York at Buffalo Law School in 2002.

Casey's is owner and operator of over 2600 convenience stores in 17 states across the Midwest, and is the fourth largest holder of liquor licenses in the U.S.

CLARK SMITH is a partner at Vela Wood, a Texas TABC attorney, and head of the firm's Alcohol Policy & Regulation practice. Clark is a Texas Bar Foundation Fellow, an honor granted to 1/3 of 1% of Texas attorneys. In November 2023, Governor Greg Abbott appointed Clark to serve on the Texas Lottery Commission. He has a B.A. and J.D. from the University of Texas.

REBECCA (Becky) SMITH is the Director of Licensing and Regulation for the Liquor and Cannabis Board (LCB). She has served as the division director since 2015. Becky joined the LCB in April 2013 as the Marijuana Licensing and Regulations Manager. As the agency lead for Social Equity in cannabis program, she continues to provide agency leadership for cannabis-related projects. Becky is a current regional vice-president of National Conference of State Liquor Administrators (NCSLA).

She has experience leading change and implementing new initiatives. Her career has been spent working with communities and partners at the local, state, and federal level. Becky received the 2017 Governor's award for Leadership in Management for her work to increase cross-agency teamwork, building consensus and involving her staff in decision-making to build their skills and competencies.



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Becky is experienced in creating consistency for staff, licensees, and applicants, leading significant reform efforts, and organizational change management. She leads her team to focus on safe communities and customer service, using data-driven decision making; strategic planning; and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion principals to make meaningful process improvements.

MARC SORINI currently serves as General Counsel for the Brewers Association, the national trade association for America's small, independent brewers. Prior to joining the Brewers Association, Marc spent twenty-five years in private practice, twenty as a partner in the Washington, DC office of McDermott Will & Emery, where he led the firm's alcohol beverage group. He is a beer lover and homebrewer who has served as a counsel for alcohol beverage suppliers for more than two decades. Marc holds a Juris Doctor degree from Georgetown University Law Center and is a frequent writer and speaker on alcohol beverage law and policy.

CHRISTOPHER THIEMANN is the Distilled Spirits Program Manager in the Regulations and Rulings Division of the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB). Christopher has been with TTB since 2008, when he joined as a Presidential Management Fellow, and he also spent time in the Office of Global Health Affairs in the Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Services. Christopher led TTB's decade-long initiative to modernize its regulations related to labeling and advertising of alcohol beverages and has been actively involved in the transition of CBMA Imports responsibilities from CBP to TTB. A native New Yorker, Christopher has a Bachelor of Arts from Columbia University and J.D. and M.B.A. degrees from The Ohio State University.

BILL TOMASZEWSKI has been the General Counsel for Wine.com, Inc. since 2004. His main focus is working with state agencies on alcohol regulatory matters. Prior to his employment with Wine.com he served for 20 years with the Jersey City Police Department in various roles. He is a graduate of Rutgers-Newark School of Law. Bill is board president for Planet Bee Foundation an environmental education nonprofit educating youth nationwide.

MARYBETH WILLIAMS is President of Williams Compliance and Consulting Group, PLLC, based outside of Richmond, VA, which provides compliance services and legal consulting to the alcohol beverage industry. She works with producers and importers, with a focus on the day to day compliance issues and trade practice parameters within which industry members must function. Ms. Williams graduated from the University of Denver College of Law in 1996. She served as a felony prosecutor in CO for 6 years and as a civil litigator for 2 years before returning to her home state of Virginia, where she worked as a regulatory attorney with the Virginia State Corporation Commission before starting Williams Compliance in 2008. She is honored to have been named the 2012 Virginia Wineries Association Wine Person of the Year, the 2021 Virginia Wineries Association David L King Advocacy Award, and have been named as a member of the Class of 2024 Virginia Law Fellows.

Sergeant **RISA WILLIAMS** has been with the Arizona Department of Liquor for twelve years, she has been a police officer for sixteen years. During her time with the Arizona Department of Liquor, she has filled many different roles, including being a field investigator in the Tucson office and Phoenix offices. She had been a CUB(Covert Underage Buyer) coordinator, a trade practice detective working with wholesalers and suppliers, trained many local governing bodies, and worked with many community coalitions. Sergeant Williams is a subject matter expert on Trade Practice Matters. Sergeant Williams currently supervises special agents in the Trace Practice squad which focuses on preventing DTC violations. She holds a Bachelor's from Northern Arizona University and a Masters from Grand Canyon University.