



NCSLA 2020 ANNUAL VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

2020: Regulatory and Industry Innovation through Crisis

June 16-17, 2020

Presenter Biographies

JACOB APPELSMITH of Sacramento is the Director of the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. Jacob graduated from Middlebury College in Vermont in 1985, and from UC Berkeley's Boalt Hall School of Law in 1988. While at Boalt, he worked as a student clerk to Justice Allen Broussard on the California Supreme Court.

Jacob began his career as a lawyer with Pillsbury, Madison & Sutro in San Francisco, where he worked for six years as a commercial litigator. Jacob joined the California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General, in 1994, and in 2008 became a Special Assistant to Attorney General Jerry Brown on matters pertaining to law enforcement and the criminal justice system. He also served as AG Brown's Chief of the California Bureau of Gambling Control.

In January 2011, Jacob joined Governor Brown's administration as a Senior Advisor to the Governor and the Director of the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. In these roles, he served as the Governor's negotiator for tribal-state gaming compacts and tribal land-use matters, advised the Governor on a range of issues from public safety to veteran's affairs, and was responsible for criminal enforcement and regulation of California's 90,000 licensees in the alcohol industry.

Jacob was appointed Chief Campus Counsel for the University of California, Davis, in September 2013. In this role, he was responsible for all aspects of the university's legal affairs, including its \$3.5 billion budget, its 35,000 students, its hospital and health system, and its operations throughout California, the United States, and the world. In June 2017, Jacob returned to Governor Brown's administration as Director of the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control and as an advisor to the administration.

STEVEN BARKER is the Deputy Director and General Counsel of the ABLE Commission, and has served the Commission since 2015. Following two years in private practice, Mr. Barker began his public service career as an Assistant General Counsel for the Oklahoma Tax Commission supervising a team of attorneys focused on the collection of sales, mixed beverage, and withholding taxes. Immediately prior to joining the ABLE Commission, Barker served as an Assistant Attorney General under E. Scott Pruitt providing legal counsel to a variety of state agencies. Steven and his wife Shauna reside in Edmond, Oklahoma with their three children.

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.



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RICHARD M. BLAU is a shareholder with the law firm of GrayRobinson, 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*** 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*.

CARRIE L. BONNINGTON is a Partner with Pillsbury, Winthrop, Shaw, Pittman. Ms. Bonnington is the leader of the firm's Wine, Beer & Spirits law team, co-leader of the firm's Restaurant, Food & Beverage group, the Managing Partner of the firm's Sacramento office, and a member of the firm's Travel, Leisure & Hospitality, Litigation and Government Contracts groups. Ms. Bonnington focuses on alcohol beverage law and regulation. She represents wineries, distilleries, importers, breweries and retailers (such as hotels, restaurants, bars and off-sale retailers) in regulatory practice before state alcoholic beverage control boards, in general civil litigation and in transactional matters. She also regularly advises such clients in connection with state and federal alcohol beverage laws, especially with respect to the advertising, promotion and marketing of alcohol beverages and other trade practice and tied house issues.

Ms. Bonnington has written and lectured in the areas of wine, beer and spirits litigation and regulation. She teaches Wine Law at UC Berkeley and frequently presents at local and national alcohol beverage conferences, seminars and classes. Ms. Bonnington is well-versed in administrative law and procedure, having participated in a number of administrative trials before state agencies, including the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. Ms. Bonnington also has considerable experience with California writ proceedings.



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Ms. Bonnington also advises clients in connection with laws and regulations relating to medicinal and adult recreational use of legal cannabis.

JERRY DINALLO is Vice President of Legal, Regulatory and Trade Affairs at Diageo North America and also has responsibility for Corporate Relations in Canada. Jerry has worked in the beverage alcohol industry for nearly 20 years and has specialized in alcohol trade practices, marketing and sales promotion and technical regulations, manufacturing, distribution, and government relations. Prior to his 15 years of service to Diageo, Jerry was Senior Counsel at Pernod Ricard USA. Throughout his career in the alcohol industry, Jerry has led many regulatory modernization projects, including, most recently, a significant effort to overhaul and streamline many federal regulations, many which have recently advanced to rulemaking. He has served as executive representative to U.S. and Canadian trade organizations and has served as an advisor on high profile strategic projects including e-commerce, shipping, digital marketplace, and litigation/investigations. Jerry holds a BA in Political Science/Economics from Fordham University and a JD from Pace University School of Law. He holds board positions with Spirits Canada and the Katonah Museum of Art. He also serves with the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States on the Executive Committee and as Chairman of the Laws and Regulations Committee.

KIMBERLY FROST, partner at Martin Frost & Hill in Austin, represents wineries, distilleries, breweries, importers, retailers, and those that serve the beverage alcohol industry in Texas and all over the country on federal and state permitting, compliance, labeling, and legislative matters.

JENNA GIGUERE is Deputy Chief of Legal Services for the Rhode Island Department of Business Regulation. She provides a wide range of in-house legal services, including comprehensive internal legal advice, appearing in administrative hearings and court proceedings, and advising on legislative matters. Jenna has experience in a myriad of regulatory law subjects, with current focus areas including Liquor, Board of Accountancy, and Banking. She finds particular satisfaction in identifying opportunities for process improvements, working collaboratively with businesses on complex business licensing and regulatory compliance issues, and mentoring law students through supervising legal internships. She is a proud member of the Leadership Rhode Island (LRI) Class of 2019 and on the Steering Committee of the LRI Women's Network. Jenna serves in various leadership roles including the Rhode Island Bar Association House of Delegates, Chair of the Government Lawyers Committee, and active contributor on the Bar Journal Editorial Board; RI Women's Bar Association Newsletter and Community Outreach Committees; Roger Williams Law Alumni Association Board of Directors; United Way of Rhode Island Young Leaders Circle Executive Committee; and as Chair of the Northern Region and Executive Committee for the National Conference of State Liquor Administrators. Her pro bono legal work has focused on supervising Roger Williams Law students helping incarcerated individuals with civil law issues.

MICHAEL HALFACRE is Executive Director of the Beer Wholesalers Association of New Jersey as well as President of Credit Compliance Corporation, which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Beer Wholesalers Association that assists all New Jersey alcoholic beverage wholesalers in complying with the New Jersey credit regulation with regard to the wholesale distribution of alcohol.



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Mr. Halfacre, having served as Director of the New Jersey Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control, has a deep knowledge and understanding of alcohol beverage laws and regulations. This experience, added to Mr. Halfacre's background in financial, real estate and political matters, enables him to provide valuable counsel to the Association Members.

Mr. Halfacre was appointed as Director of the Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control by Governor Chris Christie. He began his work as Acting Director on February 6, 2012 and, after New Jersey Senate confirmation, was sworn in as Director on March 30, 2012. While at the ABC, Mr. Halfacre oversaw the implementation of New Jersey's Direct-to-Consumer wine shipping statute and the expansion of privileges for wineries, craft breweries and craft distilleries. Mr. Halfacre was also responsible for the planning and roll-out of the ABC's electronic licensing system, the first major overhaul in the ABC's technology in over 20 years.

Prior to leading the ABC, Mr. Halfacre served as mayor of Fair Haven. He took office in the Monmouth County borough in 2007 and won reelection in 2010. As mayor of Fair Haven, he lowered property taxes every year from FY2008 to FY2012, the only municipality in the state to accomplish that feat. He was also a candidate for the United States Congress in 2010.

In addition to his role as mayor, Mr. Halfacre ran his own law practice, where he specialized in transactions, including purchases, sales and refinancing of real estate, small business transactions and transfers of ABC licenses. He also served as a municipal attorney for several area municipalities.

Mr. Halfacre is a member of the New Jersey State Bar Association, the Monmouth Bar Association and is a Trustee of the Monmouth Bar Foundation.

Mr. Halfacre attended law school at the University of Dayton, where he was a member of the Mock Trial Team, and received his undergraduate degree from the Florida State University, where he was Captain of the Men's Varsity Swim Team.

TRAVIS HILL was appointed as Chief Executive Officer of the Virginia ABC Authority by Governor Ralph Northam in January 2018. As CEO, Travis Hill serves as the head of the ABC Authority and works with the appointed five-member Authority Board to set the course and strategic objectives for the Authority. Prior to his appointment as CEO, Hill served as Virginia ABC's Chief Operating Officer after being appointed to that position by Governor McAuliffe in October 2014. During his time as COO, Hill focused on increased revenue, a modernization of business practices and agency infrastructure and enhancing regulatory service provided by the Bureau of Law Enforcement. He also guided the smooth transition of Virginia ABC from an agency to an authority structure. Before arriving at ABC, Hill previously served as Deputy Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, having been appointed by Governor McAuliffe in January 2014 after serving in the same capacity under Governor McDonnell since July 2011. Prior to that, Hill worked eight years as an attorney in the Richmond office of Williams Mullen representing a wide variety of clients before the Virginia General Assembly, the State Corporation Commission and other regulatory bodies, including Virginia ABC. Hill received both his Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctor degrees from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



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ANNA 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 (“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 successfully pursuing divergent career paths. She has served on the executive committee of the National Conference of State Liquor Administrators representing the Western Region states since 2013, and currently holds the position of President.

STEPHEN B. HUMPHRESS began working as an attorney for the Kentucky Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control in 2001 and now has nineteen years’ experience as a state government attorney. Steve served as the ABC’s General Counsel for twelve non-consecutive years and was appointed by both Republican and Democrat Kentucky Governors to that position. Steve is currently employed by the Kentucky Attorney General’s Office. Steve received his law degree from the University of Louisville, School of Law and was employed in private practice until joining the ABC. Steve is admitted to practice in the United States Supreme Court, United States Sixth Circuit; United States District Courts in Kentucky, and the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Steve has sixteen published Federal and state court opinions as counsel of record.

Steve is Kentucky’s leading authority on his state’s complex alcoholic beverage laws. In recent years, Steve was instrumental in proposing and drafting several comprehensive bills with bipartisan support that modernized and drastically improved Kentucky’s alcoholic beverage laws. Steve was the primary author of the comprehensive 2012 Governor’s Task Force Report on Kentucky Alcohol Laws and he has written several published articles and reference materials as well. In 2017, he received the Governor’s first Red Tape Reduction Award for eliminating fifty percent (50%) of the ABC’s outdated and unneeded regulations. Steve is a nationally sought speaker on alcoholic beverage law issues and has been a frequent speaker at National Alcohol Beverage Control Association (NABCA) national legal symposiums; National Conference of State Liquor Association (NCSLA) national and regional conferences; CLE International’s Wine, Beer & Spirits Law annual conferences, PLI’s Alcohol Law programs, and Kentucky Bar Association annual conferences.

JAY LERDAL is the Product Manager of ServSafe Alcohol for the National Restaurant Association. In this role he manages the ServSafe Alcohol Program which trains front of house staff in responsible alcohol service and how to handle difficult situations.

Jay has over 15 years of experience in product management, sales engineering and business development. Prior to joining the National Restaurant Association in 2007, Jay served as a Business Manager for Cargill, Inc. A graduate of Loyola University Chicago with a Master’s in Business Administration, he also holds a Bachelor’s in marketing and finance from the University of Minnesota.



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STEVEN MARKS is a veteran of public service, with 33 years of service to the State of Oregon. Director Marks joined the Oregon Liquor Control Commission in October 2013 and has been working on implementation of recreational marijuana since the passage of Ballot Measure 91 in November 2014. Marks has also led the agency in the largest retail expansion since prohibition, improving customer convenience by increasing the number of retail locations that sell distilled spirits.

Prior to joining the Oregon Liquor Control Commission as Executive Director, he served as a policy advisor in the Office of the Senate President, a Senior Policy Advisor to the Governor, and as Chief of Staff to the Governor during his service to the state. From 2004 to 2010 Marks was president of his own public policy and public affairs consulting business, *The Marks Network*. In 2013, he returned to state government service as a policy advisor within the Chief Operations Officer's Office, Oregon Department of Administrative Services.

Marks earned his undergraduate degree and Master's Degree in Public Policy, Planning and Management from the University of Oregon.

JO MOAK is Senior Vice President and General Counsel for Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America (WSWA). She manages internal corporate legal matters, advises on legal and regulatory issues facing wholesalers at both the state and federal levels, is the point person for special projects, and manages the WSWA Educational Foundation.

Prior to joining WSWA, Jo was an associate with Hogan Lovells LLC and Darby & Darby P.C., where she had experience litigating various intellectual property disputes in federal court, including cases regarding trademark, patent, and copyright infringement; unfair competition; and defamation. Additionally, she had experience in various transactional matters, including drafting and negotiating contracts for the commercialization of intellectual property and technology. She also counseled clients on brand protection and clearance issues. Prior to her law career, Jo worked abroad in Europe and Asia.

Jo received her law degree in from the Washington College of Law at American University in Washington, D.C. and her undergraduate degree in English from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia. She lives in Northern Virginia with her husband, three children, and Golden Retriever.

CAROLINE O'CONNELL is Senior Counsel in Husch Blackwell, LLP's Alcohol & Beverage Practice. Caroline represents alcoholic beverage industry members in all tiers with respect to licensing, trade practice, franchise law and regulatory compliance matters before state and federal agencies. In addition, Caroline's background as a corporate transactional lawyer helps industry clients effectively navigate complex transactional matters.

THOMAS PHILPOT serves as the Chief of Staff of the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation. Appointed in January 2019, Thomas leads the Department's regulatory policy initiatives and the administration of agency operations with a total operating budget of nearly \$160 million and more than 1,600 team members serving in 20 field locations statewide. The Department licenses and regulates more than 1.4 million businesses and professionals across more than 30 fields of industry.



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As Chief of Staff, Thomas oversees the Department's central organizational units that comprise the core support infrastructure for the agency's statutory programs, including administration, financial management, legislative affairs, communications, information technology, service operations, and emergency management. Thomas routinely represents the Department in matters under consideration by the Executive Office of the Governor, the Florida Legislature, and other state agency partners.

Previously, Thomas served as the Department's Acting Deputy Secretary for Business Regulation (September 2018 – January 2019), Director of the Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco (January 2015 – January 2019), and Deputy Director of the Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco (July 2014 – January 2015). Thomas also represents the State of Florida as the First Vice President on the Executive Committee of the National Conference of State Liquor Administrators. In this capacity, Thomas collaborates with other state regulatory officials across the eleven member states within the southern region on current issues relating to state regulation of alcoholic beverages.

Thomas is a member of The Florida Bar. Prior to joining the Division, he represented clients in private practice across a broad portfolio of governmental and regulatory legal matters. Before practicing law, Thomas served as an on-the-record spokesperson and media liaison for Governor Jeb Bush and Governor Charlie Crist in Florida. He also served in fellowships with the Governor's Office of Policy and Budget and the Economic Affairs Committee of the Florida House of Representatives.

Thomas earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Florida and a Juris Doctor degree from the Florida State University College of Law, where he served as President of the Moot Court Team.

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, 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 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 four years ago.



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CHRISTOPHER THIEMANN is the Distilled Spirits Program Manager in the Regulations and Rulings Division of the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB). Chris 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. Chris has recently been leading TTB's initiative to modernize its regulations related to labeling and advertising of alcohol beverages. Chris has a Bachelor of Arts from Columbia University and J.D. and M.B.A. degrees from The Ohio State University.

BART WATSON is chief economist at the Brewers Association. Prior to his position with the BA, he was a lecturer at the University of California, Berkeley, and a visiting assistant professor at the University of Iowa. His academic research focused primarily on the political and economic effects of increasing market consolidation in distribution channels. He holds a B.A. from Stanford University and a Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley.