

PRESENTERS' BIOS

The Art of Appellate Advocacy: A View from the Ninth Circuit Bench

The Hon. Carlos T. Bea:

Judge Bea is a Senior Judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, and a graduate of Stanford University and Stanford Law School. He was born in Spain and immigrated to the United States from Cuba, becoming a naturalized citizen in 1959. After 31 years in private practice, Judge Bea was appointed to the Superior Court of California in San Francisco, where he served until his appointment to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in 2003. He assumed senior status in 2019 but continues to actively participate in court calendars and other activities.

The Hon. Morgan B. Christen:

Judge Christen has been an active Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit since 2012, with chambers in Anchorage. After graduating from the University of Washington and Golden Gate University School of Law, she served for one year as a law clerk to Alaska Superior Court Judge Brian Shortell, and then practiced law in Anchorage for 15 years before being appointed to the Alaska Superior Court in 2002, serving as presiding Judge on that Court from 2005-2009. She was then appointed to the Alaska Supreme Court, where she served until her appointment to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in January, 2012.

The Hon. Mark J. Bennett:

Judge Bennett was appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in 2018, with chambers in Honolulu. After graduating from Union College and Cornell University Law School, he served for one year as a law clerk to Judge Samuel P. King of the United States District Court for the District of Hawaii. Judge Bennett then served as an Assistant United States Attorney for 9 years, first in Washington DC and then in Hawaii, before entering private practice in 1990. During his time in private practice, he also served as an Adjunct Professor of Law at the University of Hawaii Richardson School of Law, a Special Prosecuting Attorney and Special Deputy Corporation Counsel for the City and County of Honolulu, and as Special Deputy Attorney General for the State of Hawaii. He took a break from his private practice and other roles to serve as the State Attorney General of Hawaii from 2003-2010, returning to private practice and his other roles until his appointment to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in 2018.

Maggie Lambrose:

Maggie Lambrose is an Assistant Federal Public Defender in Las Vegas and frequently practices in the Ninth Circuit. Before joining the Federal Defender's Office, Ms. Lambrose ran her own law firm, focusing on complex civil litigation. She began her career at a large Las Vegas firm, specializing in white-collar criminal defense and 1983 civil rights litigation. Ms. Lambrose is a past president of the Nevada Chapter of the Federal Bar Association and is currently a member of the State Bar of Nevada Board of Governors.

Susan Gelmis:

Susan is the Chief Deputy Clerk for Operations at the Ninth Circuit. She has been with the court for 35 years, previously serving as supervisor of the Motions and Pro Se Units in the Staff Attorneys' Office and as founder of the Circuit's Pro Bono Program, which she directed for 22 years. Susan has served on numerous Circuit wide committees and task forces relating to prisoner and pro se litigation, and as liaison to the pro se law clerks in the district courts, organizing and speaking at Circuit wide and national conferences. In 2015, Susan moved to the Clerk's Office to assume her current position, where she oversees all docketing and filing, records and calendaring systems and procedures, supports the Circuit Advisory Rules Committee and the Appellate Lawyer Representatives, and organizes and speaks at CLE programs around the Circuit. Susan is a 1987 graduate of NYU Law School and originally a native of New York.