

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS

Appellate Advocacy Program

December 4, 2025

Portland, Oregon

Panelist Bios

HONORABLE M. MARGARET McKEOWN, Senior Circuit Judge, was appointed to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in 1998. She graduated from Georgetown University Law Center and holds an honorary doctorate from Georgetown University. Before her appointment, Judge McKeown was the first female partner at Perkins Coie in Seattle and was co-founder of the firm's Washington, D.C. office. Judge McKeown served as a White House Fellow, where she worked as a Special Assistant to the Secretary of Interior and Special Assistant at the White House. She was also a Japan Society Fellow.

Judge McKeown chairs the Ninth Circuit Workplace Environment Committee and is a member of the National Workplace Conduct Working Group and the Judicial Conference United States Committee on Judicial Conduct and Disability. She also chairs the Ninth Circuit Pacific Islands Committee. She served as president of the Federal Judges Association, chair of the Judicial Conference United States Codes of Conduct Committee (ethics), and chair of the ABA Commission on the 19th Amendment. She serves on the boards of the World Justice Project, the ABA Rule of Law Initiative (Vice Chair and former Chair), and the Teton Science Schools, and is on the Council of the American Law Institute and the Judicial Advisory Board of the American Society of International Law.

Judge McKeown is an adjunct professor at Georgetown University Law Center and Instituto de Empresa (IE) in Madrid and is Jurist-in-Residence at the University of San Diego School of Law. She has lectured throughout the world on international law, human rights, intellectual property, litigation, ethics, judicial administration, and constitutional law, and for more than 25 years has participated in numerous rule of law initiatives with judges and lawyers.

Judge McKeown is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. She received the American Inns of Court Lewis F. Powell, Jr. Ethics and Professionalism Award, the ABA Margaret Brent Women Lawyers of Achievement Award, the ABA John Marshall Award, the Georgetown University John Carrol Award, the Federal Bar Association Community Service Award, the Lawyers Club Icon Award, the California Bar Warren Christopher Award for International Law, the William H. Webster Profiles in Leadership Award, and the Girl Scouts Cool Woman Award, among others. Judge McKeown is the author of *Citizen Justice: The Environmental Legacy of William O. Douglas—Public Advocate and Conservation Champion* (2022).

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HONORABLE DANIELLE J. FORREST, Circuit Judge, has served as a judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit since 2019. Her chambers is in Portland, Oregon. Before joining the federal bench, Judge Forrest was a state trial judge in Oregon and served as the Chief Civil Judge and the Presiding Judge.

Judge Forrest graduated summa cum laude from the University of Idaho College of Law. She served as law clerk for Judge Paul J. Kelly, Jr. of the Tenth Circuit, Judge Michael W. Mosman of the U.S. District Court in Oregon, and Judge Diarmuid F. O'Scannlain of the Ninth Circuit. Judge Forrest practiced commercial litigation in Portland, and she has taught advanced civil procedure and litigation skills as an adjunct professor at Lewis & Clark Law School.

HONORABLE JENNIFER SUNG, Circuit Judge, was appointed to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in 2021 by President Joe Biden. Previously, she sat on the Oregon Employment Relations Board (2017-2021). Judge Sung had a civil litigation practice in Portland at McKanna Bishop Joffe LLP, and in San Francisco, at Altshuler Berzon LLP. She also completed a Skadden Fellowship at the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law, and served as a clerk for the Honorable Betty Binns Fletcher of the Ninth Circuit. Judge Sung received her B.A. from Oberlin College and her J.D. from Yale Law School.

ATHUL K. ACHARYA is the Executive Director of Public Accountability, a nonprofit civil-rights law firm focused on reforming qualified immunity and related doctrines. He regularly litigates issues related to freedom of speech, excessive force, prisoners' rights, and the doctrines governing the federal courts. Before entering private practice, he served as a law clerk to the Honorable Milan D. Smith, Jr., on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and the Honorable Michael H. Simon on the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon. Mr. Acharya earned a JD magna cum laude from Duke University School of Law.

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STEPHEN LIACOURAS is the Chief Circuit Mediator for the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, leading a team of seven mediators who handle appellate cases across the Circuit. He was appointed Chief Mediator in 2018 after 17 years as a circuit mediator.

Before joining the Mediation Office in 2001, Stephen practiced civil litigation in San Francisco, worked as a supervising staff attorney for the Ninth Circuit, and served as in-house counsel at a technology company in Austin. He has taught negotiation at UC Hastings College of the Law (now UC Law San Francisco) and is a panel mediator for the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California.

Stephen earned his J.D. from Yale Law School, clerked for Chief Judge Dolores Sloviter on the Third Circuit, and holds a B.A. in History with highest distinction from UC Berkeley.

SUSAN GELMIS is the Chief Deputy Clerk for Operations at the Ninth Circuit. She has been with the court for 37 years, starting as a Motions Attorney in 1989. In 1992, she became the Supervising Attorney for the newly established Pro Se Unit, which she helped to define and create. In 1993, she worked with the Court and the federal bar to create the Circuit's Pro Bono Program, which she directed for 22 years. She assumed the additional role of Supervising Attorney of the Motions Unit in 2000. 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 December 2015, Susan moved to the Clerk's Office to assume her current position as Chief Deputy Clerk, where she oversees all docketing and filing and calendaring systems and procedures, 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.

PAUL KELLER is a longtime staff attorney with the Ninth Circuit, and has assisted Judge S.R. Thomas in coordinating the en banc process for over twenty years. Between 1989 and 1990, he served as a law clerk to former Ninth Circuit Judge Alfred T. Goodwin. He taught courses in legal writing, moot court, and

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appellate advocacy at University of California College of the Law, San Francisco (formerly UC Hastings) from 1999 to 2014.