



TMCA

21ST ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

October 25, 2025
8:30 AM to 5:00 PM

The University of Texas at Austin
Joe C. Thompson Conference Center
2405 Robert Dedman Drive, Austin, Texas 78712

We Are Back in Austin!!! (Both LIVE and Via Zoom!*)

As promised, our Symposium is hybrid once again! And, notably, the TMCA Board voted unanimously to extend the same registration fee for this hybrid Symposium as charged last year for Zoom only. To start off a day packed with skills-based sessions is the energetic Alan Bush to help keep us "in line," ethically, followed by the ever-popular duo, Justice Debra Lehrmann and Hon. John Coselli, with the latest from the SCOT along with a live Q&A. You won't want to miss our featured speaker, Rebekah Ratliff, a former commercial claims professional turned mediator. Her pre-lunch session, *Middleman Mindset and the Psychology of Negotiating*, will compel us to be evermore "mindful" during the negotiation process. After lunch, Rebekah will be back with *Ethical Optics: Exploring the Mediator's Role*, which promises to be both interactive and experiential. Renowned for her high-energy and engaging facilitation style, Kendria Taylor will then illuminate for us *The Reflective Mediator* and Mark Nair, seasoned innovator and AI expert, will round off the day with the latest on *How AI Is Transforming Mediation*. Hope to see you in Austin!

6.5 hours CLE, incl. 3 hours ethics
CLE Course No. 174283426

**Though we would love to connect with you in person, for those who would prefer to watch our Symposium online, we will simulcast all sessions via Zoom and record the Zoom version for later viewing by paid registrants.*

Receive a **10% discount** on your application/renewal fee when you apply for or renew your TMCA Credential by 12/31/25!

8:00 AM – 8:30 AM	NETWORKING BREAKFAST
8:30 AM – 8:45 AM	WELCOMING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION John P. Palmer
8:45 AM – 9:45 AM	THE ETHICAL "FINE LINE" IN MEDIATION (1 hour; 1 ethics) Alan Bush Negotiations can involve pressure, particularly when attorneys may not be carefully measuring their words. How far is too far to go to get that "sweet deal"? Ethically, that is. As mediators, we'll get a feel for how to better actively listen to the parties and attorneys who want to walk right up to the ethical line.
9:45 AM – 10:45 AM	LATEST FROM "THE SUPREMES" (1 hour; .25 ethics) Justice Debra H. Lehrmann and Hon. John Coselli Learn about the latest Texas cases affecting your mediation practice from Texas Supreme Court Justice Debra Lehrmann and her devoted sidekick, Judge John Coselli. This session will include a Q&A segment.
10:45 AM – 11:00 AM	BREAK
11:00 AM – 12:15 PM	MIDDLEMAN MINDSET AND THE PSYCHOLOGY OF NEGOTIATING (1.25 hours; .5 ethics) Rebekah Ratliff Join us for a walk inside the mind of a former commercial claims professional turned mediator and arbitrator. As mediators, we can employ psychology and psychodrama in reality-testing to help guide parties through negotiations to settlement. Gain insight on how to influence strategies at the negotiation table to empower different viewpoints and values that may more readily lead to resolution.
12:15 PM – 1:15 PM	LUNCH (provided)
1:15 PM – 1:30 PM	PRESENTATION OF TMCA'S OUTSTANDING CREDENTIALLED MEDIATOR AWARD AND JAMES GIBSON SCHOLARSHIP
1:30 PM – 2:45 PM	ETHICAL OPTICS: EXPLORING THE MEDIATOR'S ROLE (1.25 hours; .5 ethics) Rebekah Ratliff The art of negotiating is a process of strategically managed and conveyed information and two-way concessions, guided by the mediator—all while respecting the canons of self-determination, impartiality, and confidentiality. This interactive, experiential learning session will help mediators navigate the road to settlement while staying in their lane. Along the way, we will explore ethical questions frequently pondered, though seldom answered.
2:45 PM – 3:00 PM	BREAK
3:00 PM – 4:00 PM	THE REFLECTIVE MEDIATOR: PROMOTING PARTNERSHIP AND OWNERSHIP IN THE MEDIATION PROCESS (1 hour; .25 ethics) Kendria Taylor Reflection is a powerful tool in mediation. It helps participants pause, reduce impulsive reactions, and engage in solution-focused thinking. By shedding light on perspectives, reflection fosters self-awareness. Through a social-emotional learning lens, you will learn to be reflective in the moment using four distinct question types. You'll also learn how to deliver thoughtful, reflective feedback during separate meetings and apply the SARA model (Shock, Anger, Resistance, Acceptance) to support individuals through the emotional journey of mediation with greater patience and empathy.
4:00 PM – 5:00 PM	HOW AI IS TRANSFORMING MEDIATION (1 hour; .5 ethics) Mark Nair Artificial intelligence is rapidly reshaping our world and the field of mediation is no exception. In this presentation, you will learn how AI can enhance a mediator's preparation, communication, and even the creation of the MSA. Gain insights into ethical challenges as well as practical steps to integrate AI into mediation responsibly and effectively, all the while understanding how AI cannot replace human empathy, judgment, and emotional intelligence.
5:00 PM	ADJOURN

2025 TMCA SYMPOSIUM SPEAKERS

ALAN BUSH

Alan mediates for a living, though speaks and writes for fun. He doesn't do boring. All the boring details about Alan are on his website at bush-mediation.com. No need to waste time with them here. He is a proud first-generation Fightin' Texas Aggie, with the second gen in College Station now. Alan has been married to his gorgeous wife, Melanie, for over 20 years. She's the sitting Montgomery County Treasurer, and his experience as her campaign manager has taught lessons about the jury pool.



HON. JOHN COSELLI

John has been a State District Judge for over 20 years. He served as the presiding Judge of the 125th Civil District Court of the State of Texas for 10 years, and continues to serve as an assigned State District Court Judge. Prior to taking the Bench, he was in private practice with the law firm of Carl, Lee, & Coselli from 1977 until appointed to the Court by the Governor in 1999. John now also mediates and arbitrates.



JUSTICE DEBRA H. LEHRMANN

Debra H. Lehrmann is the Senior Justice on the Supreme Court of Texas and the Court's longest-serving woman Justice in Texas history. She was a trial judge in Tarrant County for 23 years prior to her appellate service and has been an active leader in the legal community on a state and national level throughout her career, including serving as chair of the ABA Family Law Section, inaugural chair of the SBOT Child Protection Law Section, chair of the Texas Chapter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts, chair of the Lloyd Lochridge Inn of Court, a commissioner on the ULC, and a member of the ALI. A strong advocate of mediation for many years, she served on the Advisory Board of and as a mediator for Tarrant County Dispute Resolution Services.



MARK NAIR

Mark is a seasoned innovator with over 25 years of experience in digital content, innovation, and distribution. He is a member of the National Academy of Inventors, is a National Science Foundation I-Corps mentor, and holds an extensive patent portfolio. A tech entrepreneur and educator, Mark has co-founded Musicgram, Inc., Oasis Microgrids, and Redigi, Inc., and leads creative and tech ventures including Bicycle Guy Studios and Giant Atom. He's built technology for companies such as Apple, Nokia, and Walmart and has taught college level economics and app development. Mark has both his undergraduate and graduate degrees from Texas A&M. A frequent speaker on innovation, he lives in Texas with his family and speaks German, Mandarin, and English.



REBEKAH RATLIFF

Rebekah is a mediator and arbitrator with JAMS. She is a credentialed former commercial insurance claims professional with more than 25 years of experience negotiating and settling complex casualty claims for global carriers. Rebekah is a highly sought-after presenter and lecturer in the insurance and legal industries, commanding audiences from all over the world. She serves on the ABA's Dispute Resolution Section Council and she is the 1st Vice Chair of the NBA's ADR Section, as well as an adjunct professor at Howard University School of Law, teaching ADR curriculum that she created. She is a recipient of various prestigious awards including a Global Women of Excellence U.S. Congressional Honor (2024) and is based in Atlanta.



KENDRIA TAYLOR

Kendria is a TMCA Credentialed Mediator with a focus on workplace mediation and is the President and Principal Consultant for TG8 Solutions Insight. She is a dynamic Learning and Development professional with over 20 years of experience. Renowned for her high-energy and engaging facilitation style, she delivers experiential training sessions that are both impactful and memorable. Her "out-of-the-box" methods keep participants excited and engaged. Past leadership roles include Senior Consultant, Director, Vice President, and Interim CEO. Her expertise in operations and organizational development drove measurable success in every role. A practicing mediator since 2003, Kendria Bachelor's degree and basic mediation training, workplace and family mediation trainings are from the University of North Texas. She also holds a Master's degree from Amberton University.



**Promoting
Quality Mediation
Throughout Texas**

SYMPOSIUM FEES:

Register NOW at www.TXMCA.org*

EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT BY 10/3/25

\$100 (current Credential holders [CH])

\$125 (non-Credential holders [NCH])

AFTER 10/3/25

\$125 (CH) \$150 (NCH)

*Please register by Friday, October 17th.