



FDCC

DEFENSE LAWYERS. DEFENSE LEADERS.

CELEBRATING OUR 90TH ANNIVERSARY

2026 FDCC WINTER MEETING

Together We Rise from the Valley

FEBRUARY 24-28, 2026

**JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort
Scottsdale, Arizona**



2026 FDCC WINTER MEETING

FEBRUARY 24, 2026 – FEBRUARY 28, 2026

WELCOME BACK TO SCOTTSDALE FOR OUR 90TH ANNIVERSARY!

CONVENTION CHAIRS' WELCOME

Ninety years ago, in 1936, a small group of civil defense lawyers formed a fellowship with one goal: to advance the defense of civil claims through skill, professionalism, and community.

They had no way of knowing what lay ahead. Within a few short years, the world would be at war. Wartime shortages would shape civil litigation, the return of veterans, the emergence of new industries, and the rise of insurance and corporate defense practices. But through it all, the Federation stood firm—growing, evolving, and connecting the best of the defense bar.

Since then, we have witnessed the unimaginable—and endured.

We've lived through World War II, the Cold War, the Vietnam War, and the 9/11 attacks. We've seen the civil rights movement reshape American law, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the internet revolution, and a global pandemic that brought courtrooms to a halt. We've seen lawyers argue in front of blackboards, then on projectors, and now on laptops and AI. We've seen the role of the civil defense lawyer expand beyond the courtroom, into boardrooms,

classrooms, war rooms, and digital platforms.

At each turn, the FDCC has adapted. And more than that, we've led.

Our members have shaped precedent, trained generations, and built a community rooted in trust. We've gathered year after year—across coasts, across eras, across world events—not just to sharpen our craft but to support one another. That is what sets the Federation apart. We don't just practice law. We carry forward a tradition of excellence and fellowship.

Through decades of change, we've never lost sight of who we are.

We're trial lawyers, corporate counsel, insurance professionals, and thought leaders. Friends. We advocate for clients, for fairness, and for each other. We weather storms—not just professionally, but personally—and return stronger. We thrive because we're grounded in something greater than any one case or any one year.

And now, as we enter our 90th year, we gather again.



Let's look back at our past Scottsdale conventions.

In 2007, we were at the Fairmont Princess in Scottsdale, celebrating "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," looking back at who we were and who we were becoming.

In 2012, we were at the Waldorf Astoria Arizona Biltmore in Phoenix, where the theme was "Spring Training! Get Your Game On!" and team building and working on fundamentals were the focus.

In 2020, we were at the JW Marriott Camelback, enjoying the "Wonder of It All," unaware that COVID-19 was about to bring everything to a screeching halt.

And on February 24-28, 2026, we return to Scottsdale at the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort, where we will "Rise from the Valley" and come together to share, fellowship, and welcome friends, old and new, remembering that what sets us apart is us – the members – finding camaraderie, support, and strength together.

The convention property, the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort, offers breathtaking views of the Sonoran Desert, along with four sparkling pools, lazy rivers, and waterslides. Its championship golf courses, designed by Palmer and Faldo, attract enthusiasts worldwide. The award-winning Revive Spa provides desert-inspired treatments in serene surroundings. You will enjoy exceptional dining helmed by "Top Chef" alum Angelo Sosa. Rooms have views of mountain or desert vistas. The expansive property provides walking paths through native landscaping, fire pits for evening gatherings, and proximity to hiking trails. The resort perfectly balances luxury amenities with authentic Arizona desert experiences.

Beyond the resort, Scottsdale blends natural splendor with sophisticated charm. Sun-drenched days reveal stunning desert landscapes and mountain vistas. The vibrant Old Town offers art galleries, boutiques, and weekly ArtWalks. Culinary enthusiasts will delight in award-winning restaurants featuring Southwestern cuisine and farm-to-table innovations. You can explore curated wine shops and indulge in premium tastings. The city's year-round sunshine sets the perfect backdrop for rooftop cocktails and high-end shopping at Scottsdale Fashion Square. Outdoor adventures await, including hiking, horseback riding, and desert tours.

Along with a great city and resort comes excellent programming. Micalann Pepe has put together a spectacular, not-to-be-missed program for us, which showcases you, our members.

We look forward to being with you all.

I would be remiss if I did not thank everyone who made this possible. I want to extend my gratitude to our President and First Lady, Marc and Holly Harwell; my spouse, Ana; our Program Chair and her spouse, Micalann and Brad Pepe; the team at headquarters; Bernie and Martha Heinz; Kimberly Cavender; our hosts; our speakers; and everyone who contributed to the success of this Convention and Program.

For those returning to Scottsdale, remember that we once wore the blue tag, and we want new members to feel as welcome as we did at our first meeting.

See you in Scottsdale.

Frank Ramos
Ana Ramos
Convention Chairs

PROGRAM CHAIRS' WELCOME

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to this year's Winter Meeting at the J.W. Marriott Desert Ridge, and to thank you for joining us for what promises to be an engaging and insightful three days of programming.

We'll begin with a brief welcome and introduction of new members on Wednesday evening - a meaningful way to set the tone for our time together, with connection and community.

On Thursday morning, we are honored to have Craig Thompson, a respected member of our organization and a distinguished leader in the legal profession, serve as our keynote speaker. Craig's insight and perspective will set a powerful foundation for the days ahead.

Our morning programming runs Thursday through Saturday, beginning each day at **8:00 AM** with presentations from our substantive law sections. These sessions will cover a broad range of timely and practical topics, including:

- Effective Relationship Development with Corporate Counsel
- Civility Matters
- Amicus Briefs at the Trial Court Level
- PFAS Forever Chemicals – Forever Litigation
- Litigation Privilege and Post-Litigation Bad Faith Considerations
- The Legal Landscape in Light of Executive Orders from the New Administration
- How the Construction Industry Is Navigating Climate Change – Mitigating Risk of Product Failures
- Psychological Warfare – Positioning Yourself as an “Advocate” for the Plaintiff
- Plaintiff's Life Care Plan: The Money Grab

From **9:00 AM to 12:00 PM** daily, we will shift into our plenary programming, featuring panels on some of the most pressing and dynamic issues facing our profession:

- The New Playbook in Collegiate Sports in the Era of NIL
- Litigation Funding and Mass Torts
- Leveraging Cutting-Edge Trial Technology
- The Modern Judiciary: Perspectives from Arizona Supreme Court Justice King and Justice Cruz



CLOSING SPEAKER: NATALIA COHEN

Throughout the program, we are also proud to present several TED Talk–style presentations by our prestigious litigators as part of our Trial Master's Program. These concise, high-impact sessions will walk us through every phase of trial advocacy—from theme development and jury selection through openings, examinations, and closing arguments—offering insight from some of the best courtroom minds in our field.

Finally, we will close our meeting on a powerful and uplifting note with Natalia Cohen, a renowned ocean rower featured in *Losing Sight of Shore*. Natalia's reflections on gratitude, perseverance, and teamwork will leave us inspired and ready to meet the challenges ahead with renewed purpose.

We echo Frank and Ana's gratitude to everyone whose hard work made this Program possible, including Frank and Ana. In addition to those already mentioned, we want to thank our Program Committee - **Rachel Cooper, Nat Jordan, Chad Hatmaker, Megan Coluccio, Jeff Guillory, and Alonzo Washington** - for helping brainstorm, execute, and wrangle.

Thank you, attendees, for being part of this vibrant community. We look forward to an energizing and thought-provoking program with each of you.

Micalann Pepe
Brad Pepe
Program Chairs

THE PRESIDENT'S AND FIRST LADY'S WELCOME

Holly and I would like to thank Frank Ramos and Micalann Pepe for their work on the 2026 Winter Meeting. Their creativity and organizational skills provide our members with an exceptional opportunity to learn, live well, renew friendships, and make new friends. We look forward to seeing our FDCC family in Scottsdale.

Sincerely, Marc and Holly Harwell





IMPORTANT

PLEASE REVIEW BEFORE THE MEETING

This brochure was created months in advance to give you a preview of the program. While the overall structure will remain the same, please note that times, session locations, and room assignments often change as we get closer to the meeting. Printed copies quickly become outdated and should not be relied upon once you arrive.

For the most accurate and current information, you must use the FDCC Event App. The app is updated in real time and includes all program adjustments, speaker information, and announcements. It is the official guide to the meeting, and the only way to ensure you have the correct schedule throughout the event.

Please do not print or bring this brochure to the meeting, as it will not reflect the latest changes. Instead, download and familiarize yourself with the app in advance.

If you need assistance downloading, setting up, or navigating the FDCC Event App, reach out to the FDCC team- we are here to help make your meeting experience smooth and up to date.

PLEASE REVIEW BEFORE THE MEETING

IMPORTANT





FED•TECH•U

DEFENSE LAWYERS • DEFENSE LEADERS

EVOLVE

FEDTECH U 2026 | FEBRUARY 22-24

Arrive early in Phoenix and take part in FedTech U 2026, a unique add-on program created by the FDCC Evolve Committee. This intensive, small-group event runs February 22–24, 2026, at the offices of Jones, Skelton & Hochuli immediately before the FDCC Winter Meeting in Scottsdale.

FedTech U is designed for members who want to move beyond theory and see, touch, and use the technologies that are shaping today's legal practice. Attendance is capped to keep the program highly interactive, allowing participants to ask questions, test tools, and connect directly with faculty.

Over two full days, you'll participate in hands-on demonstrations, faculty-led workshops, and peer discussions focused on practical applications of technology in litigation and business practice. Planned sessions will explore:

- How user-experience research reveals product strengths and flaws.
- How augmented reality and motion capture are used in testing and case presentation.
- How scientific data—eye tracking, physiological responses, and usability studies—can strengthen or challenge claims.

One of the program highlights will be sessions with Brett Burney, a well-known technology consultant and former ABA Tech Show Chair, who will demonstrate tools and strategies you can apply directly in your practice.

Meals will be provided throughout the event, giving participants structured programming during the day and time to connect and network over breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The combination of skills training, technology immersion, and collegial exchange makes FedTech U an unforgettable experience for those eager to expand their capabilities.

This program is separate from the Winter Meeting and requires independent registration. Space is limited, and participation will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Pricing is still being finalized and will be announced separately. Watch for details and be ready to secure your spot in this exciting pre-meeting program.



HOTEL

Experience a transformative stay at JW Marriott® Phoenix Desert Ridge Resort & Spa, a AAA 4-Diamond gem. Nestled within the serene beauty of Arizona's Sonoran Desert, it offers a wide range of exceptional experiences. It boasts one of Phoenix's premier pickleball facilities, featuring 17 courts, a fully stocked pro shop, and certified instruction. Its spectacular pool area features five pools, a relaxing lazy river, luxurious cabana cottages, and pool suites. Golf aficionados can tee off on two championship courses, accompanied by PGA professional instructors, tournament play, and club fittings.

The negotiated room rate for the FDCC Winter Meeting is \$449 per night, plus a \$25 resort fee. We anticipate that the room block will fill quickly. Our room rate is available until January 26, 2026, or until the room block is fully booked. Check-in is at 4:00 p.m., and check-out is at 11:00 a.m. Valet parking is \$42 per day, and self-parking is \$29 per day. After you register, you will receive a link to reserve a room in our room block.

Please note that you must register for the Winter Meeting before booking a room.

THE RESORT HAS MULTIPLE AMENITIES, INCLUDING...

AQUARIDGE WATERPARK

The water park features a lazy river, signature pools with cabanas, three multi-story water slides, multiple dining options poolside, and Sky Island, an exclusive adult-only pool.

FITNESS CENTER

Enjoy the modern on-property fitness center, featuring inspired wellness classes, state-of-the-art exercise equipment including Peloton bikes and outdoor activities. Open 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, the fitness center is complimentary and available to all hotel guests.

GOLF

Wildfire Golf Club and its two golf courses have been voted "Best Courses You Can Play" by Golfweek Magazine, "America's Top Golf Courses" by Zagat, "World's Best Golf Resorts for Family Trips," and "Best Resort Course in the Southwest" by Travel + Leisure Golf Magazine. Tee off amidst awe-inspiring mountain views at Wildfire Golf Club. Call 1-888-705-7775 for reservations and information.

PICKLEBALL

Featuring 17 lighted courts, the all-new Pickleball Center offers court time and instruction with a certified pickleball instructor.

RESTAURANTS

“Top Chef” Angelo Sosa helms two restaurants.

Tia Carmen. Inspired by his aunt, Chef Sosa crafts a menu of inventive Southwestern flavors that pays homage to local farmers.

Kembara: A reflection of Chef Sosa’s culinary odysseys, featuring travel, cooking, and tasting across Asia with a fresh interpretation of beloved recipes.

REVIVE SPA

The expansive spa complex exudes serenity, from its treatment and relaxation rooms to its palm-lined sanctuary pool, cabanas, sauna, steam rooms, bistro, and salon. Indulge in the floating sound bath in the pool, surrounded by soft candlelight and the soothing sounds of live instruments, including bowls, gongs, flutes, and drums.

GETTING THERE

With nonstop flights from almost every major city, Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX) is 17 miles from the hotel, about a 35-minute taxi or Uber ride.

The Scottsdale and greater Phoenix areas are spread out, so if you plan to explore during the Convention, consider renting a vehicle at the airport, as the hotel does not have car rental facilities.

DRESS CODE AND WEATHER

Scottsdale generally enjoys mild, dry weather in late February, with average temperatures ranging from mid-40s to low 70s Fahrenheit. The chance of rain is relatively low, but occasional light showers can occur. Since many of our afternoon activities are outdoors, please pack appropriate clothing, including layers for cooler mornings and evenings, and a light jacket if you plan to spend time outside.

We recommend business casual attire for the program and business meetings. Most restaurants in the area have a casual dress code, so it’s advisable to keep this in mind when planning your attire.

The opening reception is come-as-you-are. The President’s Celebration (Reception) will be business attire (minus ties for men). Friday’s western-themed event is western attire.

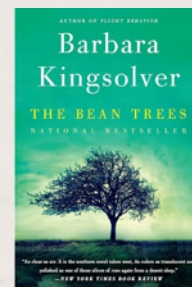
CHARM

The FDCC started selecting gold charms to commemorate its meetings in 1960. Since then, choosing a specially designed charm has become a tradition to mark your time at the meeting. This year, in honor of the FDCC’s 90th Anniversary, First Lady Holly Harwell has commissioned a special charm to commemorate the event! Charms are specially ordered, so be sure to purchase your charm when you register.



BOOK CLUB

An acclaimed bestseller that has come to be regarded as an American classic, *The Bean Trees* is the novel that launched Barbara Kingsolver’s remarkable literary career. Kingsolver has gone on to win the Pulitzer Prize for her novel, *Demon Copperhead*, and is the recipient of the National Book Foundation’s Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters.



The Bean Trees is the charming, engrossing tale of rural Kentucky native Taylor Greer, who only wants to escape her roots and avoid getting pregnant. She succeeds, but along the way, she inherits a three-year-old Native American girl named Turtle. Together, from Oklahoma to Arizona, half-Cherokee Taylor and her charge search for a new life in the West. Hers is a story about love and friendship, abandonment and belonging, and the discovery of surprising resources in seemingly empty places.

FDCC365 APP

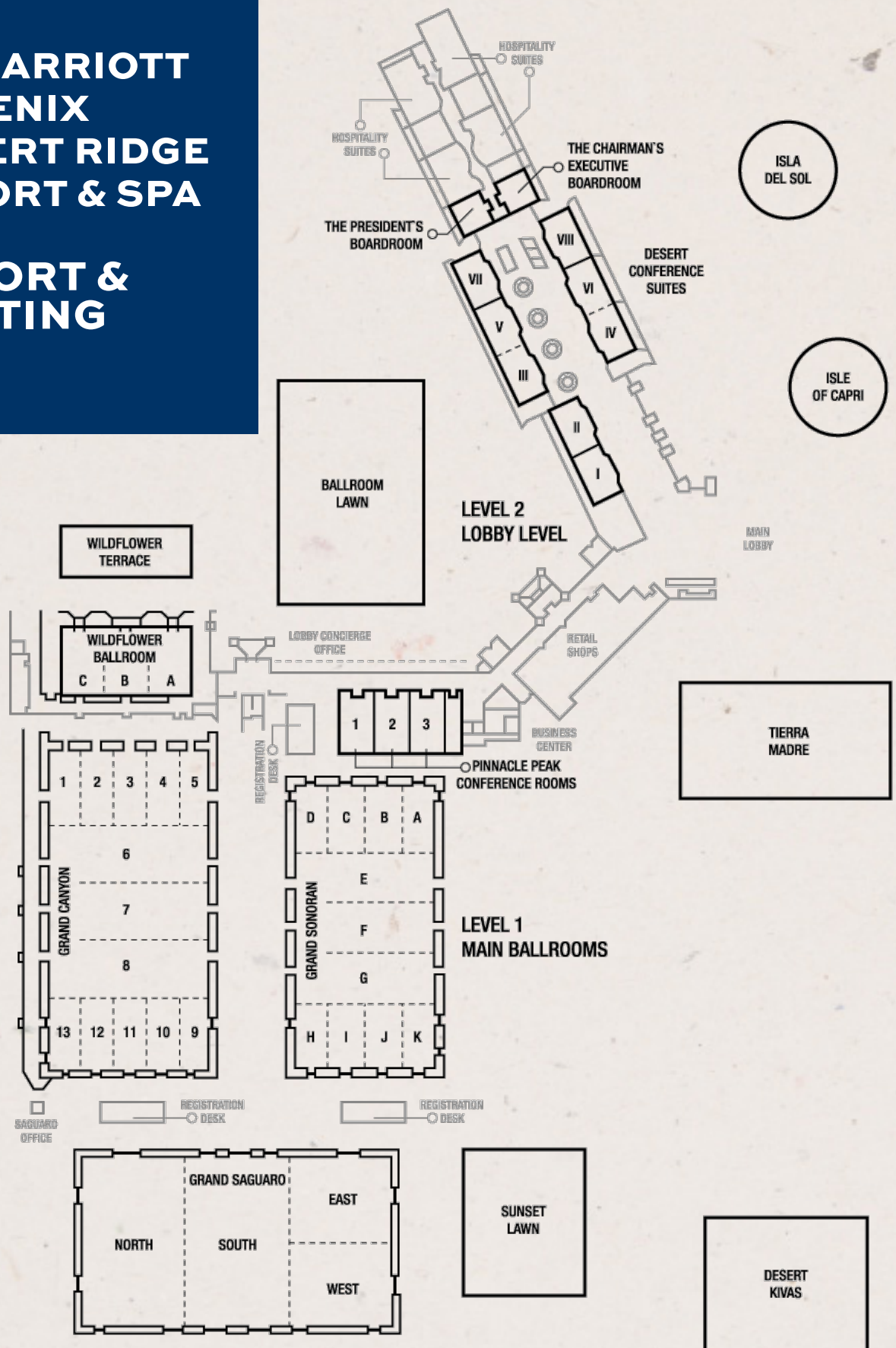
We recommend downloading the FDCC365 App to get updates from FDCC throughout the year, especially before and during meetings

During the meeting, the app will open directly to the meeting schedule, allowing you to track meeting and excursion times and locations, including any last-minute changes. You can also report your CLE through the app.

The app is also fun! It lets you connect with and communicate with members, and share pictures with your FDCC friends, similar to Facebook or Instagram.

JW MARRIOTT PHOENIX DESERT RIDGE RESORT & SPA

RESORT & MEETING MAP



MEETING REGISTRATION

The early bird conference registration rate is \$1,995 for Defense Counsel members and \$850 for guests. This rate is available until January 23, 2026; after this date, it will increase to \$2,145 for Defense Counsel members and \$850 for guests.

The rate for Corporate and Industry members is **FREE** for the first 50 members.

The guest rate is \$850.

The rate for Emeritus Members and their guests is \$850.

We encourage you to register online promptly to secure your preferred afternoon activities. Visit the FDCC website www.thefederation.org for the online link. Alternatively, you can use the downloadable “hard copy” registration form, also available on the FDCC website. Registrations mailed will be processed in the order they are received, and selected activities may not be available. Registrations may also be faxed or scanned and emailed with a credit card payment.

Once registered, you will receive a link to help you reserve a room in our discounted room block. Rooms are limited, and the block will fill up quickly, so please make your room reservations promptly. You cannot book a room until you have completed your convention registration.

CANCELLATION POLICY

For cancellations received before January 19, 2026, a full refund, less the credit card processing fee, will be issued.

For cancellations received after January 19, 2026, but before February 9, 2026, a refund of registration fees will be processed, minus the credit card processing fee and \$250.

For cancellations received after February 9, 2026, a refund of registration fees will be processed, minus the credit card processing fee and \$500.

ON-SITE CHECK-IN AND REGISTRATION

The FDCC Registration and Hospitality Desk will be open for registration and information outside the main meeting rooms during the following hours:

Tuesday, February 24 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, February 25: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Thursday, February 26: 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Friday, February 27: 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

NAME BADGES REQUIRED

Your FDCC name badge is your “ticket” for entry and is required for all FDCC events, both on-site and off-site.

The name badges are color-coded as follows:

White FDCC members and family

Blue FDCC members – first-time attendees and family

Green FDCC members – second-time attendees and family

Yellow Non-FDCC members, guests, and family

Orange Guests under 21 years

FDCC ALCOHOL POLICY

The FDCC’s policy states that alcohol should be served at FDCC functions only to attendees 21 years of age or older. FDCC members and/or guests who bring individuals under 21 to the Convention will be expected to cooperate in enforcing this policy and ensuring that such underage individuals understand it.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

The FDCC is happy to accommodate any of its members or guests who require assistance. If you need any accommodation, including ADA access, special meals, or other assistance, please notify the FDCC staff in advance of the meeting, and we will do everything possible to accommodate you.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

Although the Convention team plans every aspect of the meeting well in advance, some things are beyond our control. Therefore, the FDCC reserves the right to change the schedule, location, topics, speakers, and/or activities.



EXCURSIONS

We have planned a variety of fun and exciting afternoon activities. Please enjoy this opportunity to enjoy Scottsdale's charm and natural beauty.

Except where noted, all prices are per person, and at least one FDCC host will accompany the group participating in the activity.

Group sizes are limited, so we recommend booking early. If your preferred activity is booked, you can apply to be a stand-by. In this case, please meet at the scheduled time and location for the activity, and we will accommodate you if a space becomes available.

Cancellations or changes can only be made in accordance with the FDCC policy. Refunds for excursions can only be made if the vendor refunds the FDCC. Any refunds for excursions are issued after the meeting concludes.

AFTERNOONS ON YOUR OWN

Each day will be filled with education, excursions, evening events, and fellowship. If you choose to spend an afternoon on your own or with family and friends, the following are five alternatives to consider.



MUSEUMS IN OLD TOWN

Spend an afternoon surrounded by art, history, and culture in Scottsdale's walkable Old Town. This area offers a collection of museums that can easily fill your afternoon. Begin at the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, where rotating exhibits showcase modern art and design. From there, stroll to the Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West, celebrating the art, culture, and history of the American West. Nearby, the Scottsdale Civic Center features public art installations and relaxing green spaces, making it a perfect spot for a short outdoor break. Together, these stops create a well-rounded cultural afternoon just a short ride from the resort.



HIKING AND BIKING IN THE PRESERVE

For those who want to stretch their legs and enjoy the desert, Scottsdale offers some of the best trails in the Southwest. The McDowell Sonoran Preserve has loops for every level, from easy family walks to more challenging climbs. The Gateway Loop offers sweeping desert views and is a local favorite, while the Bajada Nature Trail is a flat, accessible path ideal for a short stroll. More adventurous visitors can head to Tom's Thumb Trailhead for striking rock formations and panoramic overlooks. Whether you walk, hike, or bike, these trails immerse you in the natural beauty of the Sonoran Desert.

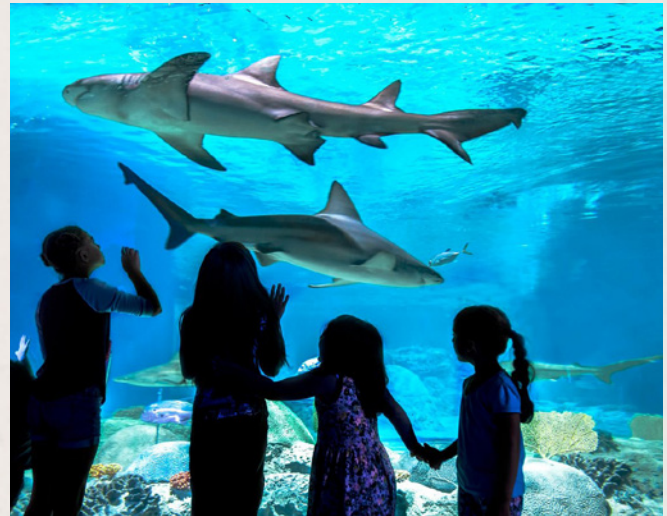
ADVENTURE & GAMES AT TALKING STICK

If you prefer a lively afternoon of activities all in one place, head to the Talking Stick Entertainment District. Start with a round of swings at Topgolf Scottsdale, where the bays are perfect for groups and friendly competition. Just down the way, you'll find Octane Raceway, offering indoor kart racing for thrill-seekers. For even more variety, Mavrix combines bowling, laser tag, and arcade games under one roof. Everything is close together, making it easy to spend a whole afternoon rotating between exciting attractions without ever leaving the district.

SHOPPING & DINING AT THE WATERFRONT

Enjoy an afternoon of style, flavors, and relaxation in Scottsdale's premier shopping and dining corridor. Begin at Scottsdale Fashion Square, the city's luxury mall with high-end boutiques and familiar favorites. Just steps away, the Scottsdale Waterfront adds charm with its canal-side paths and public art. Between browsing, stop for lunch

or a small plate at acclaimed restaurants such as Francine for French Mediterranean, or Toca Madera for modern Mexican. If you want to extend your outing, nearby Nobu Scottsdale offers a polished spot for drinks or light bites. This area blends shopping, art, and fine dining into one polished afternoon.



FAMILY FUN AT ARIZONA BOARDWALK

Families with children can enjoy a cluster of attractions designed to spark imagination and wonder, all in one location. At Butterfly Wonderland, step into a tropical rainforest filled with thousands of butterflies. Next door, the OdySea Aquarium offers exhibits featuring marine life and interactive experiences, including touch pools and unique theater shows. For something playful, visit the Museum of Illusions, filled with interactive displays perfect for photos, or explore the dinosaur exhibits at Pangaea: Land of the Dinosaurs. With plenty of dining and snack spots on the same plaza, the Arizona Boardwalk makes it easy for families to enjoy a memorable afternoon without having to move between venues.

FOUNDATION FUNDRAISER

The FDCC Foundation, which supports our groundbreaking CLE and other notable programs, will announce its fundraising initiatives in the Friday 5s for the Winter Meeting. The Foundation Board is grateful for the support of our FDCC Members and looks forward to everyone's participation in its fundraising goal at the upcoming Winter Meeting.



WEEK AT A GLANCE

ADMINISTRATIVE

PROGRAM

ACTIVITIES

SOCIAL

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Registration
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Officers Meeting
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Executive Committee Meeting
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Admissions Committee Meeting
4:00 PM - 5:30 PM	Projects and Objectives
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM	State Representative Meeting

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Registration
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Finance and Budget Meeting
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Diversity Committee Meeting
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Membership Development Committee Meeting
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Membership Recruitment Committee Meeting
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	FDCC Foundation Meeting
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Board of Directors Meeting
3:15 PM - 3:45 PM	New Member and Past President Reception (Invitation Only)
3:45 PM - 4:30 PM	New Member Orientation (Invitation Only)
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Conference Kickoff, Meeting, Greeting, and Welcoming New Members
6:15 PM - 10:00 PM	Past Presidents' Dinner (Invitation Only)
7:30 PM - 10:00 PM	Dine Around

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26

7:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Breakfast
7:30 AM - 8:30 AM	Sisters' Breakfast (Presidential Suite - Invitation Only)
8:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Registration

WEEK AT A GLANCE

ADMINISTRATIVE

PROGRAM

ACTIVITIES

SOCIAL

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26

8:00 AM - 8:50 AM

Substantive Section Programming

- Effective Relationship Development with Corporate Counsel
- Dual Dueling Defenses: Who's to Blame When Building Products Fail?
- Is the Litigation Privilege Headed Over a Cliff?

9:00 AM - 10:40 AM

Plenary Session

- Welcome Remarks
- Keynote Speaker Craig Thompson: Elevate Together: The Power of Effective Leadership in Changing Times
- Trial Master's Ted Talks: Voir Dire & Jury Selection, Openings, Cross Examination of Lay Witnesses

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Sister Spouse Breakfast (Presidential Suite, Invitation Only)

10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Spouse Hospitality (Presidential Suite)

10:40 AM - 10:50 AM

Break

10:50 AM - 12:00 PM

Plenary Session

- Trial Master's Ted Talks: Cross Examination of Experts and Directed Verdicts
- Justice for Sale? Third-Party Funding and the Economics of Mass Litigation

1:30 PM - 4:30 PM

JS Held Tour (Free)

1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Cosmic Shooting

1:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Jeep Tours

1:25 PM - 5:30 PM

Food Tour

1:20 PM - 5:15 PM

Spirits Tour

1:00 PM - 5:30 PM

Cooking Class

5:30 PM - 6:30 PM

Corporate Counsel Reception - Presidential Suite

7:00 PM - 10:00 PM

President's Celebration - Musical Instrument Museum

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27

7:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Breakfast

7:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Registration

8:00 AM - 8:50 AM

Substantive Section Programming

- Amicus Briefs at the Trial and Appellate Levels
- PFAS Forever Chemicals – Forever Litigation
- Psychological Warfare – Positioning Yourself as an “Advocate” for the Plaintiff

8:50 AM - 9:00 AM

Break

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Plenary Session

- The Modern Judiciary: Perspectives from Arizona Supreme Court Justice King and Justice Cruz
- Trial Master's Ted Talks: Direct Examinations and Closings

10:30 AM - 10:40 AM

Break

10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Book Club (Presidential Suite)

WEEK AT A GLANCE

ADMINISTRATIVE

PROGRAM

ACTIVITIES

SOCIAL

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27

10:40 AM - 12:00 PM

Plenary Session

- Leveraging Cutting-Edge Trial Technology

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

Professional Women's Forum & Diversity Committee Luncheon

1:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Exponent Tour (Free)

1:25 PM - 5:30 PM

Food Tour

1:30 PM - 5:30 PM

Cooking Class

1:05 PM - 4:15 PM

Pedal Bar Crawl

12:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Horseback Trail Riding

12:30 PM - 4:30 PM

Cattle Drive

12:45 PM - 4:30 PM

Hike and E-Bike Tour

7:00 PM - 11:00 PM

FDCC Sonoran Desert Saloon on the Ballroom Lawn

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28

7:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Breakfast

7:50 AM - 8:45 AM

Substantive Section Programming

- Substantive Section Programming
- Socrates Defends the "Professional Parables"
- From Crackdowns to Cutbacks: Navigating the New Rules under the New Administration (Trump 2.0) in the Employment, Civil Rights, Cyber Risk, and Privacy Enforcement Arena
- Plaintiff's Life Care Plan: The Money Grab
- Engage and Excel - A Guide to Maximizing Your FDCC Journey

8:50 AM - 9:50 AM

Business Meeting

9:50 AM - 10:00 AM

Break

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Plenary Session

- Forks Up, Wallets Open. The New Playbook in Collegiate Sports in the Era of NIL.
- Closing Keynote Speaker Natalia Cohen

1:20 PM - 3:45 PM

Sea Trek Diving Tour

1:20 PM - 5:15 PM

Wine Tour

1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Pool Party and Cornhole Tournament

1:30 PM - 5:30 PM

Scottsdale Gun Club

1:30 PM - END

Golf Tournament

1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Pickleball Tournament

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Dine Around

9:00 PM - 12:00 AM

Last Call- Cocktails in the Presidential Suite

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

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9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	FDCC Foundation Meeting
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Board of Directors Meeting
3:15 PM - 3:45 PM	New Member and First Time Attendee and Past President Welcome (Invitation Only)
3:45 PM - 4:30 PM	New Member and First Time Attendee Orientation and Reception (Invitation Only)

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM Conference Kickoff, Meeting, Greeting, and Welcoming New Members

Welcome Address by Tim Eigo, Communications Chief for the State Bar of Arizona and Senior Editor of Arizona Attorney Magazine.

Our Winter Meeting begins with a welcome address, meeting our new members, followed by a warm and relaxed gathering on the Sunset Lawn. Set against sweeping views of the surrounding desert landscape and distant mountain ranges, this open-air reception offers the perfect backdrop for reconnecting with colleagues and friends. As flights arrive throughout the day, members can ease into the week with signature cocktails, fine wines, and hors d'oeuvres.

This first evening is designed for fellowship and camaraderie. Whether catching up with old friends or meeting new faces, the reception marks the start of meaningful conversations and connections that will continue throughout the meeting. Dress is casual—"come as you are"—so members can step straight from travel into a welcoming environment that sets the tone for the days ahead. Following the reception, guests may join one of the optional dine-around groups or enjoy dinner on their own.

6:15 PM - 10:00 PM Past Presidents' Dinner (Invitation Only)

7:30 PM - 10:00 PM Dine Around





THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26

7:00 AM – 9:00 AM	Breakfast
7:30 AM – 8:30 AM	Sisters' Breakfast (Presidential Suite – Invitation Only)
7:00 AM – 4:00 PM	Registration
8:00 AM – 8:50 AM	Substantive Section Programming

Effective Relationship Development with Corporate Counsel

Law Practice Management, Corporate Counsel

Panelists

Kendra Akin Jones – US Steel
 Jamie Jones – Friday Eldredge & Clark, LLP
 Alison Christian – Meritage Homes
 Connie Morley – Shelter Insurance

This legal panel brings together seasoned in-house counsel and experienced outside counsel to explore best practices for communicating effectively with corporate clients. The discussion will delve into strategies for aligning legal advice with business objectives, managing expectations, and fostering collaborative relationships. Panelists will share insights on tailoring communication styles to different stakeholders, handling sensitive or complex legal issues with clarity, and building trust through transparency and responsiveness. Attendees will gain practical tools to enhance the impact and value of their legal counsel within corporate environments.

Dual Dueling Defenses: Who's to Blame When Building Products Fail?

Construction, Product Liability

Panelists

Shelly Masters – Cokinos Young
 Jared Liro – Wicker Smith
 Elizabeth Fitzpatrick – Island Companies
 John Sinnott – Irwin Fritchie Urquhart Moore & Daniels

When construction meets catastrophe, who takes the fall—the product, the contractor, or the planet? This dynamic panel unpacks the growing wave of hybrid construction/product defect litigation triggered by extreme weather events, unpredictable failures, and the increasing strain on building materials and methods.

With climate patterns shifting and temperatures shattering records, products once deemed reliable are now cracking, warping, or outright failing. Contractors face mounting liability for means, methods, and materials they didn't manufacture, while manufacturers push back, citing misuse, misapplication, or acts of God.

Join seasoned trial lawyers, in-house counsel, insurance professionals, and forensic experts as they explore:

- How weather-driven failures are reframing product liability and construction defect claims;

- Strategies for defending or shifting blame in “it’s not us—it’s you” litigation;
- Contractual and insurance tools that can mitigate exposure; and
- What to watch for in building product performance, design specifications, and installation practices.

Whether you’re defending a builder, suing a supplier, or managing risk from the inside, this session delivers real-world insight on navigating the legal and operational minefield of modern construction failures.

Is the Litigation Privilege Headed Over a Cliff?

Insurance Coverage, Extra-Contractual Liability, Trial Tactics

Panelists

Patti Harmeling – Shelter Insurance
 Michele Wojcik – McAngus Goudelock & Courie
 Michael Handler – Fosberg & Umlauf
 Alicyn Freeman – Broening Oberg Woods & Wilson

This panel will examine whether the litigation privilege continues to protect insurers from bad-faith claims arising from their conduct during coverage litigation. Defense counsel will gain insights into key exceptions courts are recognizing and the emergence of vexatious litigation claims as a new threat to traditional privilege defenses.

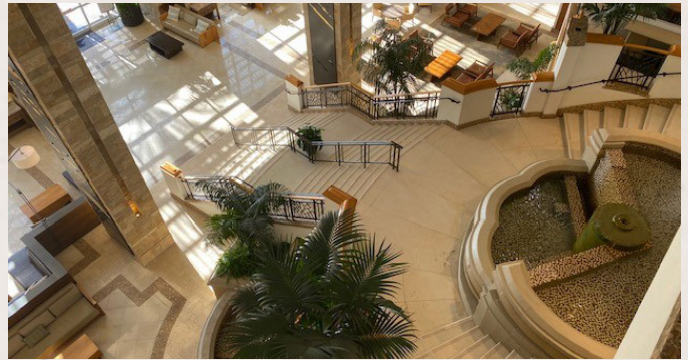
9:00 AM – 10:40 AM Plenary Session

Welcome Remarks

Keynote Speaker Craig Thompson:
Elevate Together: The Power of Effective Leadership in Changing Times

Trial Master’s Ted Talks:

- Voir Dire/Jury Selection:
 L. Johnson Sarber III – Carr Allison
- Openings: Jay Davis – Clement Rivers, LLP
- Cross Examination of Lay Witnesses:
 Kile T. Turner – Norman Wood Kendrick & Turner



9:30 AM- 10:30AM

Sister Spouse Breakfast
 (Presidential Suite- Invitation Only)

10:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Spouse Hospitality
 (Presidential Suite)

10:40 AM – 10:50 AM Break

10:50 AM – 12:00 PM Plenary Session

Trial Master’s Ted Talks:

- Cross Examination of Expert Witnesses:
 Christopher Page – Young Moore and Henderson, P.A.
- Directed Verdict: Mary Robberson –
 Robberson Schroedter LLP

Justice for Sale? Third-Party Funding and the Economics of Mass Litigation

Panelists

Mohamed Bakry – Marshall Dennehey
 Imoh Akpan – Goldberg Segalla
 Ricardo Woods – Burr Forman, LLP
 Andre Webb – Kennedys

This panel presentation will explore the growing role of third-party litigation funding in mass tort litigation and the potential consequences for all parties involved. As outside capital increasingly fuels plaintiff-side cases, this trend has the potential to reshape the litigation landscape—impacting case volume, prolonging litigation, and influencing settlement strategies. The panel will examine the legal and ethical implications of these arrangements, including concerns around control, confidentiality, and disclosure. Attendees will gain insight into how litigation funding may shift dynamics between plaintiffs, defendants, and the court, and how defense counsel can strategically respond to this evolving challenge.

THURSDAY EXCURSIONS, ACTIVITIES & EVENING EVENTS

1:00 PM - 4:30 PM J.S. Held's User Research LabTour

Step inside J.S. Held's cutting-edge User Research Lab (URL) and see how science, technology, and strategy intersect. This exclusive tour gives you a behind-the-scenes look at how products are tested, analyzed, and refined for both performance and legal defensibility. You'll watch live demonstrations of motion capture and augmented reality tools, see how product claims are stress-tested, and learn how user experience (UX) research can reveal design flaws before they become costly disputes. The facility includes six advanced lab suites equipped with physiological recording tools—measuring responses such as eye tracking, electrodermal activity, and muscle movement—alongside an ample motion-capture space for real-world testing. Experts will walk you through how these methods shape product development and strengthen legal cases.

Join us for an interactive afternoon of innovation, technology, and insight that shows how data-driven research is transforming industries. Snacks and beverages will be served.

PRICE: FREE



1:00 PM - 5:00 PM Cosmic Shooting at Scottsdale Gun Club

Step into an out-of-this-world adventure at Scottsdale Gun Club, home to the only Cosmic Shooting experience in the country. Imagine cosmic bowling—but with firearms. Under blacklights, the range transforms into a glowing space station, with neon targets, illuminated lanes, and even firearms that light up in the dark. Participants

will enjoy the thrill of shooting in a one-of-a-kind atmosphere that blends fun, competition, and high-energy entertainment. Certified range officers guide the experience, making it safe, exciting, and accessible for shooters of all skill levels. This event offers something you can't find anywhere else in the nation, right in the heart of Scottsdale—an unforgettable highlight for those looking to try something bold and new.

PRICE: \$270



1:30 PM - 4:30 PM Jeep Tour

Take a private Jeep adventure through the rugged Sonoran Desert. Your guide navigates trails while sharing stories about native wildlife, plants, and history. Stops provide photo opportunities and breathtaking views. The tour may include bumpy terrain, so participants should be ready for an active ride. This excursion combines outdoor exploration with education in a safe, guided format.

PRICE: \$245

1:25 PM - 5:30 PM Old Town Scottsdale Food Tour

Take a guided walking tour of Old Town Scottsdale's vibrant food scene. The tour introduces you to diverse flavors at several locally owned restaurants while enjoying a walking history tour. Space is limited, and tours involve walking between locations, so comfortable shoes are recommended.

PRICE: \$162



1:20 PM - 5:15 PM Spirits of Scottsdale Tour

Discover the lively side of Old Town Scottsdale with a private group tour designed for spirit enthusiasts. You'll sip bourbon flights at a locally owned honky-tonk, enjoy handcrafted martinis at a landmark saloon, and sample four upscale tequilas guided by an agave ambassador. Along the way, guests may choose a premium vodka or gin flight—or a signature craft cocktail—at one stop, and visit a historic building where Southwest-inspired creations shine. Each spirit flight or cocktail is paired with a delicious appetizer to elevate the experience.

PRICE: \$160

1:30 PM - 5:30 PM Southwest Flavors: A Hands-On Culinary Journey

Spend an unforgettable afternoon learning to prepare a menu inspired by the bold flavors of the Southwest. Guided by expert chefs, you'll discover the secrets behind regional favorites, from smoky salsas and fresh guacamole to chile-infused entrees bursting with spice. Alongside your hands-on cooking experience, enjoy stories of the desert's culinary heritage and tips on blending flavors unique to the region. After class, relax and savor your creations with friends, paired with a refreshing margarita or local craft beer. It's a delicious way to connect, learn, and taste the true spirit of the Southwest.

PRICE: \$170

5:30 PM – 6:30 PM In-House Counsel and Corporate Members Reception

Gather for an exclusive evening reception in the Presidential Suite designed for in-house counsel and corporate members. This event offers a relaxed setting to connect with colleagues, share insights, and strengthen professional relationships. Guests will mingle over cocktails and light fare while enjoying the suite's inviting atmosphere and views. The reception provides a unique opportunity for meaningful conversation and networking in a comfortable, intimate space. More than just a reception, it's a chance to exchange perspectives, deepen connections, and enjoy a warm evening of camaraderie within the FDCC community.



7:00 PM – 10:00 PM President's Celebration at the Musical Instrument Museum

Join us for a memorable evening at the world-renowned Musical Instrument Museum, where music, culture, and connection come together in one extraordinary setting. Guests will enjoy cocktails and dinner surrounded by the museum's stunning exhibits, featuring instruments and traditions from across the globe. Live musical performances will bring the evening to life, creating a vibrant atmosphere. This special evening promises an opportunity to explore one of Scottsdale's most unique venues in the company of colleagues and friends. Buses will provide round-trip transportation between the hotel and the museum for all attendees. Business attire is appropriate, but ties are not required.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27

7:00 AM – 9:00 AM Breakfast

7:00 AM – 4:00 PM Registration

8:00 AM – 8:50 AM Substantive Section Programming

Amicus Briefs at the Trial and Appellate Levels

Appellate, Trial Tactics

Panelists

Angela Flowers – Kubicki Draper

Lawrence Ebner – Capital Appellate Advocacy PLLC

Matthew Friedlander – Webb Daniel Friedlander LLP

The panel will focus on new developments and strategic aspects involved in filing amicus briefs. The discussion will address recent trends affecting the filing of amicus briefs at the trial and appellate levels.

PFAS Forever Chemicals – Forever Litigation

Civil Rights and Public Entity Liability, Toxic Tort & Environmental Law

Panelists

Joe Hargraves – The Cook Group

John Peiserich – JS Held

Andrew Rutens – Galloway Wettermark Rutens LLP

Kim Jackson – Bovis, Kyle, Burch & Medlin, LLP

As PFAS/PFOA litigation evolves and impacts industries, governments, utilities, and communities nationwide, defense lawyers should be aware of key issues. Attend for an overview of the science behind these chemicals, the spectrum of claims and defendants, and strategic approaches for addressing liability, treatment challenges, and environmental justice concerns in this high-stakes legal landscape.



Psychological Warfare – Positioning Yourself as an “Advocate” for the Plaintiff

Transportation

Moderator

Melanie Cheairs – Mayer LLP

Panelists

Max Brusky – Transdev N.A.

Jennifer Mauer Lee – Fee, Smith & Sharp

Carolyn Ramos – YLAW Attorneys

The adversarial nature of every litigated case is a given. No file rises from a claim to a litigated claim without acknowledgment of the fact that sides are opposed to each other. However, on certain occasions, finding common ground on the journey is an opportunity to close early or at least limit the issues. Join us in a discussion of a potentially seriously contentious case and explore the options to successfully appeal to plaintiff counsel’s business sense and common sense in navigating to the ever-vanishing “amicable solution.”

8:50 AM – 9:00 AM Break

9:00 AM – 10 30 AM Plenary Session

The Modern Judiciary: Perspectives from Arizona Supreme Court Justice King and Justice Cruz

Moderator

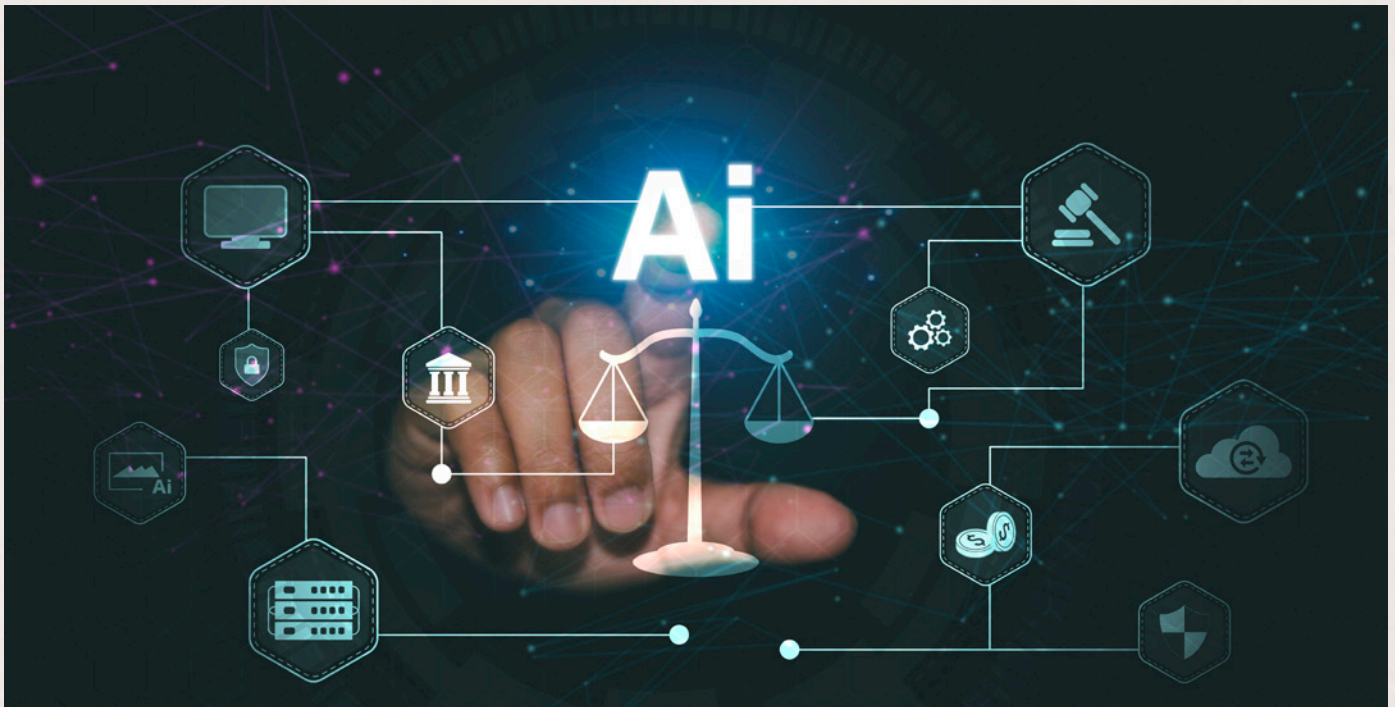
Alison R. Christian – Meritage Homes

Panelists

Justice Kathryn Hackett King – Arizona Supreme Court

Justice Maria Elena Cruz – Arizona Supreme Court

Join us for this moderated fireside chat with Arizona Supreme Court Justice Kathryn Hackett King and Justice Maria Elena Cruz, as they discuss their journeys to the Arizona Supreme Court and the practical, legal, and ethical challenges of modern and rapidly changing litigation.



Trial Master's Ted Talks:

- Direct Examination of Witnesses:
William Toles – Munsch Hardt
- Closing Arguments:
Melanie Cheairs – Mayer, LLP

10:30 AM – 10:40 AM Break

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM Book Club

10:40 AM – 12:00 PM Plenary Session

Leveraging Cutting-Edge Trial Technology

Moderator

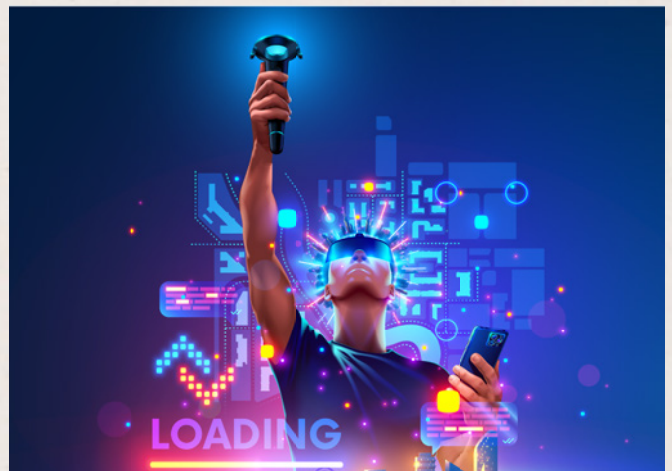
Robert L. Christie – Baker Sterchi Cowden & Rice LLC

Technology Partners

- JS Held
- Exponent
- iDiscovery Solutions
- SEA
- ProFile Discovery
- American Jury Centers
- Relevant Data Technologies
- ESi

Bob Christie will moderate this powerhouse compilation of trial technology providers who will deliver real-time demonstrations of cutting-edge advancements in trial technology, including in the areas of:

- Motion Capture
- Virtual reality
- Data layering and xIoT
- Camera technology and 3d model overlaying
- Effective use of demonstratives
- Live/interactive jury surveys
- AI video for courtroom advocacy
- Testing hypothesis in the “Digital Sandbox”



FRIDAY EXCURSIONS, ACTIVITIES & EVENING EVENTS



12:00 PM – 1:30 PM Professional Women's Forum and Diversity Luncheon

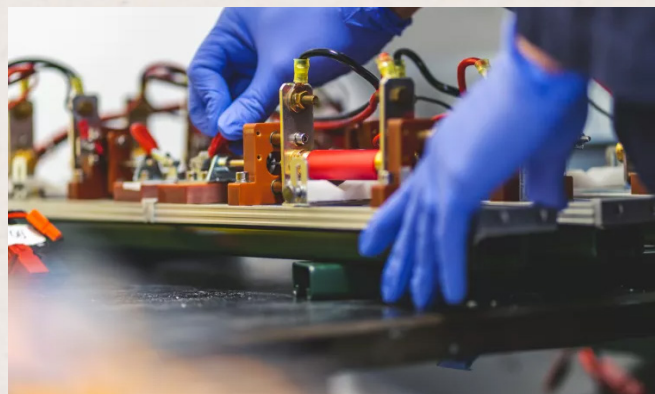
The Professional Women's Forum and the Diversity Committee invite you to a lunch seminar with Barbara M. Barrett, former U.S. Secretary of the Air Force, U.S. Ambassador to Finland, and experienced business leader. Barbara will address the real impact of sponsorship and mentorship on career growth and leadership development. She will examine how intentional sponsorship opens doors, how effective mentorship builds confidence, and how both strengthen inclusive workplaces. Drawing on her service in government, diplomacy, and corporate leadership, Barbara will offer practical guidance on building relationships that create opportunities, elevate others, and advance your own path. Attendees will leave with strategies to apply directly in their careers, whether leading teams, supporting peers, or preparing the next generation of leaders. This interactive program combines Barbara's unique perspective with actionable lessons, making it a valuable session for professionals at every stage. Join us for a candid and engaging conversation over lunch with one of today's most respected voices in leadership.

PRICE: \$50

1:30 PM - 4:30 PM Exponent Test & Engineering Center Tour

Explore Exponent's 147-acre Phoenix Test & Engineering Center. Tour the two-mile test track, see crash recreations, and learn how engineers analyze automated and electric vehicle technologies. Inside, explore a 20,000-square-foot test facility with flexible labs, custom equipment, and advanced data capture. You'll see how experts evaluate industrial equipment, vehicles, electronics, consumer products, and more. This unique experience blends technology, engineering, and safety research in a hands-on learning environment. Snacks and beverages will be provided.

PRICE: FREE



1:25 PM - 5:30 PM Old Town Scottsdale Food Tour

Discover Scottsdale's Old Town and its thriving food scene on a guided walking tour. The tour introduces you to diverse flavors at several locally owned restaurants while enjoying a walking history tour of one of Scottsdale's most vibrant districts. Space is limited, and tours involve walking between locations, so comfortable shoes are recommended.

PRICE: \$162

1:30 PM - 5:30 PM An Afternoon in Paris: French Cooking Experience

Transport yourself to Paris with a culinary class celebrating timeless French flavors. Led by talented chefs, you'll roll up your sleeves to create a menu

featuring French classics—from delicate hors d'oeuvres to rich sauces and elegant entrees. Along the way, learn techniques that have shaped French cuisine for centuries. The hands-on session concludes with a leisurely tasting of your dishes. Between the flavors, laughter, and camaraderie, you'll feel as though you've stepped into a Parisian bistro for the afternoon. Bon appétit!

PRICE: \$170

1:05 PM - 4:15 PM Pedal Bar Crawl

Climb aboard a party bike for a two-hour crawl through Old Town Scottsdale. A certified party captain guides your group to three partner bars with exclusive drink specials. Adult beverages are allowed on the bike, adding to the festive atmosphere. The experience includes pedaling, partying, and lots of attention from onlookers. Must be 21+ to participate.

PRICE: \$100



12:30 PM - 4:30 PM Ride the Desert Trails

Saddle up for a scenic horseback ride through the wild beauty of Arizona. The trail winds through the Sonoran Desert, with sweeping views, desert plants, and the chance to cross the Verde River on horseback. Our experienced staff makes it easy and fun for riders of all levels, so no prior experience is needed. Whether you're out with colleagues, friends, or family, this is the perfect way to slow down, take in the landscape, and keep your eyes open for wildlife along the way. A relaxed, memorable adventure you'll be talking about long after the ride.

PRICE: TBD

12:30 PM - 4:30 PM Drive the Herd!

Step into cowboy boots for an authentic Arizona adventure! At The Stables at Fort McDowell Adventures, you'll join wranglers and fellow riders to help move cattle across the range. No experience? No problem—our guides will show you the ropes and keep it safe and fun. Feel the thrill of teamwork as you guide the herd, laugh with your cowhands, and get a taste of real ranch life. It's not about speed or roping, just enjoying the ride and sharing in the spirit of the Old West. Grab the reins—those cows aren't going to move themselves!

PRICE: TBD

12:45 PM - 4:30 PM Hike & E-Bike Tour

Ride world-class bike paths, tour Paradise Valley, and hike Camelback Mountain's Cholla Trail in one combined excursion. Guests receive a tutorial before riding e-bikes through scenic areas with views of mountains and water. The hike is short and manageable—15–20 minutes up and back—making it an easy way to experience Camelback without overexertion. Perfect for those wanting a taste of the Arizona desert landscape with a balance of cycling and hiking.

PRICE: \$180

7:00 PM - 11:00 PM FDCC Sonoran Desert Saloon on the Ballroom Lawn

Enter a world where the Old West comes alive. At the FDCC Sonoran Desert Saloon, guests are dropped into a frontier town of outlaws, gamblers, and show people. Characters roam the crowd, recreating the grit and charm of a bygone desert saloon. Specialty cocktails flow as music notes give way to raucous tunes, and every corner holds a surprise—whether a hand of cards, a roving entertainer, or a chance encounter straight out of the Wild West. This isn't just a party; it's an immersive escape into a desert saloon where you write your own western story.

The evening's attire is Western Glam. Women are encouraged to dress up their jeans with stylish tops, cowboy boots, and fun Western accessories—hats, fringe, turquoise, or statement belts. Men may pair jeans with jackets or shirts and add cowboy hats, bolo ties, or other Western accents for flair. The look is polished yet playful, blending comfort with a touch of showmanship.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28

7:00 AM – 9:00 AM Breakfast

7:50 AM – 8:40 AM Substantive Section Programming

Socrates Defends the “Professional Parables”

Ethics Credit

Moderator/Socrates

Richard K. Traub – Retired

Panelists

Attie Carville – Laborde Siegel LLC

Edward J. “Ned” Currie, Jr. – Retired

H. Mills Gallivan – Gallivan, White & Boyd P.A.

Sean C. Griffin – Longman & Van Grack, LLC

In 399 BC, Socrates was charged with impiety and corrupting youth. At his trial, he famously said, “An unexamined life is not worth living.” Join Editors Mills Gallivan and Ned Currie for an in-depth Socratic examination of their new book, “Professional Parables: Lessons in Civility”.

This is not your typical ethics hour; participants will be asked to engage in critical thinking, self-reflection, and Socratic dialogue about the current civility crisis. The program will feature a deep dive into a few of the great parables from the book, the state of civility in the profession, human nature, and the importance of doing the right thing. This stunning compilation of stories written by leading lawyers and judges will inspire you to greatness as a lawyer and to become an even better person.

A jury of 501 members found Socrates guilty by a vote of 280 to 221 and condemned him to death. This is your opportunity to engage in dialogue with several FDCC parable authors and examine your own experiences. Just like Socrates’ jury, you can vote on the success of this fundraising project by buying multiple copies of the book for your friends, family, and firm. All profits from book sales will benefit the FDCC Foundation Barb Currie Diversity Scholarship Fund and the National Foundation for Judicial Excellence.

From Crackdowns to Cutbacks: Navigating the New Rules under the New Administration (Trump 2.0) in the Employment, Civil Rights, Cyber Risk, and Privacy Enforcement Arena

Employment, Civil Rights, Cyber Security, and Data Privacy

Moderator

Helen Holden – Spencer Fane LLP

Panelists

Eric Kinder – Spilman Thomas & Battle, PLLC

Megan Coluccio – Baker Sterchi Cowden & Rice LLC

Stephen Embry – EmbryLaw LLC

Bring your burning questions, hypotheticals, and compliance horror stories for an outstanding panel of employment, civil rights, and data privacy experts, who will cover the following topics:

- EEOC, OSHA, and other agencies—what’s hot, what’s not, and what’s just plain confusing?
- The NLRB’s latest—are you keeping up?
- ICE enforcement under the new administration—crackdown or cooldown?
- Why disparate impact claims are out, and intentional discrimination is in.
- The shrinking scope of Section 1983 litigation—what’s left of civil rights protections?
- What’s changing in federal cybersecurity disclosure requirements—less red tape or more confusion?
- How are federal agencies policing (or not) cybersecurity and data privacy compliance?
- Is federal privacy enforcement taking a back seat, or changing lanes?
- State AGs and private lawsuits: “If the Feds won’t, who will?”

Plaintiff's Life Care Plans – How to Evaluate, Counter, and, If Necessary, Destroy Them

Premises Liability, Healthcare

Moderator

Valerie Kellner, Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker LLP

Panelists

Heath Vickers – Carr Allison

William Toles – Munsch Hardt

Jud Woody - InQuis

In many personal injury claims and cases, ranging from soft tissue injuries to orthopedic injuries to catastrophic and permanently debilitating injuries, the plaintiff will present lifetime medical care plans, along with expert witness testimony to establish the admissibility and efficacy of these “life care plans.” For the defense, questions arise not only about the admissibility of these plans and expert testimony at trial as evidentiary matters, but also about their efficacy and even applicability to the damages claims related to these injuries. Additionally, there are tactical and strategic questions for the defense – when to retain a defense expert and what the expert should do, including whether to present the expert’s testimony as part of its case-in-chief.

Engage and Excel - A Guide to Maximizing Your FDCC Journey

Law Practice Management, Corporate Counsel

Moderator

Nicolas Haigler – Robinson Gray

Panelists

Aaron Gentry – Adaptive Health

April Berman – Asurion

Beverly S. Gates – Monogram Foods

Jeffery Guillory – First Acceptance Insurance Company

This dynamic panel brings together in-house and defense counsel members to share how to make the most of membership in the FDCC. From personal enrichment to professional advancement, hear strategies for building lasting relationships, raising one’s professional profile, and turning active engagement into meaningful returns. Topics covered will include how the FDCC can make your job easier, how to explain the benefits of membership to your internal stakeholders, and practical ideas for aligning FDCC involvement with individual and professional goals.

8:50 AM – 9:50 AM Business Meeting

9:50 AM – 10:00 AM Break

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM Plenary Session

Forks Up, Wallets Open. The New Playbook in Collegiate Sports in the Era of NIL.

Moderator

Chad Hatmaker – Woolf, McClane, Bright, Allen & Carpenter, PLLC

Panelists

Karl Dorrell – Former Head Football Coach, Colorado Buffaloes and UCLA Bruins

Todd Roberts - Ropers Majeski

Bradford Box - Rainey Kizer

Aaron Hernandez - Assistant Dean, Executive Director of Allan Bud Selig Sports Law and Business Program, Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law

This panel will discuss the history of amateur athletics, the impact of anti-trust litigation against the NCAA, the evolution of the current Name, Image & Likeness (NIL) policy, the House settlement, and the future of collegiate athletics.

Closing Keynote Speaker: Natalia Cohen

Natalia Cohen is an international keynote speaker, transformational travel advocate, and double world record holder.

She knows first-hand what it takes to chart a course and execute a plan in a high-performing team, as she is best known for being part of the first all-female team to row unsupported across the Pacific Ocean. This was a journey of just under 9,000 miles from San Francisco, USA, to Cairns, Australia, in a 29-foot ocean rowing boat.

The expedition was not only a challenge of extreme conditions and perseverance but also a journey within to understand the strength of the human spirit better, the importance of being aligned as a team as well as with your values, developing mental resilience and an adventure mindset, using the power of diversity within a team, and choosing to enjoy the journey.

She may have crossed her literal Pacific, but everyone has their own Pacific to cross.



SATURDAY EXCURSIONS, ACTIVITIES & EVENING EVENTS

1:30 PM

Golf at Wildfire Golf Club

Play a round at the Arnold Palmer Signature course at Wildfire Golf Club. This shotgun event offers a premium golfing experience in the heart of Scottsdale. Rental clubs are available for an additional fee and can be arranged in advance. Players should expect standard course policies on attire and pace of play. Groups enjoy a memorable outing with scenic views and a world-class golf experience.

PRICE: \$335

1:20 PM - 3:45 PM

SeaTrek Underwater Adventure

Experience the thrill of walking beneath the waves without leaving Arizona. This exclusive SeaTREK adventure at OdySea Aquarium lets you don a state-of-the-art dive helmet and descend into a massive, crystal-clear tank teeming with marine life. No swimming skills are required—you'll walk along the aquarium floor at a depth of eight feet, surrounded by graceful stingrays, colorful tropical fish, and other dazzling sea creatures. Certified guides ensure safety while you enjoy a close-up, 360-degree view of the underwater world. The entire experience lasts about 45 minutes and accommodates up to

8 participants, making it perfect for a small-group adventure. Stay to enjoy the aquarium.

PRICE: \$225

1:20 PM - 5:15 PM

Wine Tour

Join a private Wine Walkabout tour through three tasting rooms in Old Town Scottsdale. Learn from sommeliers and wine experts, sample Arizona wines, and take part in sensory activities such as blind tastings and "Le Nez du Vin." Tours include wine, small bites, and guided presentations. Groups of eight or more can book this 2.5-hour experience. Space is limited, and participants must be 21+.

PRICE: \$160

1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Poolside Escape

Spend a laid-back afternoon at the resort pool with friends, soaking up the Arizona sunshine. Lounge by the water, enjoy refreshing dips, and sip tropical cocktails crafted just for poolside relaxation. Between conversations and laughter, try your hand at a friendly game of cornhole. It's the perfect blend of leisure, camaraderie, and fun in a beautiful desert setting.

PRICE: FREE (DRINKS ON YOUR OWN)

1:30 PM - 5:30 PM Gun Club Experience

Split into two groups for this three-hour event at a Scottsdale gun club. One group uses a virtual range with video-game-style training scenarios, while the other uses the live-fire range. Groups then switch. The experience includes instructors, targets, firearm rentals, and ammunition. Full-auto rentals are available. Eye and ear protection are provided. Safety protocols apply, and group size determines final pricing.

PRICE: \$232



1:30 PM - 3:30 PM Pickleball Tournament

Join us for a lively pickleball tournament held at the J.W. Marriott Resort's new 17 court pickleball facility. Structured brackets ensure players of all skill levels—from beginners to seasoned competitors—enjoy steady play with rotating partners to keep matches fresh and social. All equipment is provided, though players may bring their own paddles. Comfortable sneakers, water, and energy are recommended. Expect fast rallies, friendly rivalries, and a setting designed for both competition and camaraderie.

PRICE: TBD



Last Night Out!

We'll close our Scottsdale meeting with a memorable dine-around offering members a mix of flavors and experiences. At the JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort, you can select from chef's table experiences at three of the property's signature restaurants: Tía Carmen, with its bold, modern Southwestern cuisine; Kembara, showcasing vibrant Asian street-food flavors; and Meritage: An Urban Tavern, known for its American classics with a fresh, contemporary twist. Each venue will offer a unique chef-driven menu, designed to create a one-of-a-kind evening.

For those who want to venture off-property, additional dine-around options will be available. These may include exclusive chef's tables at renowned Scottsdale restaurants, a fine-dining experience paired with a helicopter ride for a dramatic twist, or a speakeasy-style evening featuring inventive cocktails and a hidden-door atmosphere. Whatever option you choose, you'll enjoy a night of great food, fellowship, and fun.

After dinner, please return to the resort for Last Call - a farewell gathering in the Presidential Suite. It will be a fun evening with friends and colleagues, complete with wines, spirits, and cocktails—including many of our members' favorites. This relaxed setting offers the perfect chance to unwind, laugh, and share one last toast before the week concludes.

Our Last Night Out is the perfect way to celebrate great meals, warm friendships, and lasting memories.



FOOD AND DRINK

While it is impossible to create a comprehensive list of all the fantastic restaurants in the Scottsdale area, here are a few options worth trying. Many of these restaurants are helmed by award-winning chefs, and, not surprisingly, they are often booked well in advance. Therefore, plan and make a reservation.

UNDER 5 MILES FROM DESERT RIDGE RESORT

Barrio Queen (1 Mile)

Barrio Queen offers award-winning, authentic Mexican fine-dining from scratch, a world-class tequileria, and legendary cocktails. The restaurant honors Day of the Dead traditions with festive decor.

Ocean Prime (1 Mile)

Ocean Prime curates seafood and steak dishes with precision and skill. The restaurant serves expertly prepared fish, sushi, and dry-aged steaks in a modern space.

5 - 10 MILES FROM DESERT RIDGE RESORT

Buck & Rider (9 miles)

A modern steak and seafood spot with a robust cocktail program and shareable plates. Its warm, contemporary atmosphere and focus on high-quality ingredients make it a favorite for group dine-arounds or a night out with colleagues.

Course (10 Miles)

Discover exquisite flavors and exceptional service at Course, where culinary artistry meets warm hospitality. Fine Dining Made Approachable.



Dominick's Steakhouse (6 Miles)

Dominick's Steakhouse offers expertly prepared steaks and fresh seafood, prepared with time-tested methods. It is known for world-class steaks featuring USDA Prime, Domestic, and Japanese Wagyu, craveable appetizers, and side dishes.

Eddie V's (7 Miles)

Eddie V's serves seafood and steak dishes using classic methods, accompanied by live jazz. The restaurant operates in a space inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's design.

Evo (6 Miles)

EVO is an Italian-inspired restaurant and bar serving handmade pasta, pizza, entrées, and more in an upscale yet relaxing environment.

Hush Public House (7 Miles)

Discover Chef Dom's modern take on comfort food at Hush Public House, offering an upscale yet inviting dining experience in North Scottsdale.

Mastro's Steakhouse (7 Miles)

Mastro's Steakhouse North Scottsdale offers live music, premium cuts of meat, and seafood in a sophisticated environment. An upscale dress code is enforced.



Sol (6 Miles)

Oak-grilled Coastal Mexican cuisine, paired with over 100 types of tequila and mezcals, served in a modern Mexican setting.

Talavera (10 Miles)

Talavera serves Spanish steakhouse fare, featuring prime cuts and hearty paella. The restaurant offers Mediterranean-inspired dishes in a luxurious space.

Toro Latin Grill (6 Miles)

Toro Latin Grill serves pan-Latin cuisine, featuring ceviche, sushi, and grilled meats prepared with precise techniques. The restaurant frames its menu with views of TPC Scottsdale's iconic 16th hole.

10 - 15 MILES FROM DESERT RIDGE RESORT

Arboleda (13 Miles)

Arboleda serves Mediterranean-inspired dishes crafted with fresh ingredients and wood-fired techniques. The restaurant offers a relaxed atmosphere that prioritizes quality and flavor.

Catch Scottsdale (15 miles)

A vibrant, stylish restaurant at Scottsdale Fashion Square featuring seafood, sushi, and steak in a lively setting. Known for its bold flavors, dramatic presentations, and celebrity-favorite vibe, it brings big-city energy to the desert.

Fat Ox (13 Miles)

Fat Ox serves Italian steakhouse fare, including house-made pasta and grilled meats. The restaurant provides a modern dining experience that stresses precise preparation.

Roka Akor (15 miles)

Roka Akor grills Japanese cuisine on a robatayaki setup, selecting high-quality seafood and meats. The restaurant presents its fare in a sleek, stylish environment.



Volanti (11 miles)

Overlooking the runway at Scottsdale Airport, Volanti pairs modern dining with the thrill of watching private jets come and go. With its sleek design and creative menu, it's a perfect spot for aviation enthusiasts or those seeking a dining experience with a unique twist.

15+ MILES FROM DESERT RIDGE AND OLD TOWN

Cafe Monarch (19 Miles - Old Town)

Cafe Monarch crafts a multi-course tasting menu that highlights seasonal ingredients. The restaurant creates an intimate dining experience with attentive service.

Chula Seafood (18 Miles)

Chula Seafood serves coastal dishes by sourcing fresh seafood and preparing creative plates. The restaurant serves authentic fare that emphasizes quality and freshness.

Citizen Public House (19 miles - Old Town)

Citizen Public House serves comfort food with a modern twist, pairing each dish with carefully crafted cocktails. The restaurant creates a gastropub atmosphere that seamlessly bridges casual and refined dining.



Different Point of View (16 miles)

Perched atop North Mountain, this Four-Diamond restaurant offers sweeping valley views and elevated cuisine. The floor-to-ceiling windows and patio seating make it one of the most breathtaking dining experiences in Arizona.

FnB Restaurant (19 Miles)

FnB Restaurant sources local ingredients and crafts a seasonal menu with focused techniques. The restaurant delivers an intimate dining experience that celebrates regional flavors.

Francine (17 Miles)

Francine cooks French-Mediterranean dishes using proven techniques and fresh seafood. The restaurant offers a dining experience that stresses precise execution.

Marcellino (18 miles)

Marcellino crafts Italian cuisine using handmade pasta and traditional recipes, delivering a refined experience that honors culinary tradition.

Nobu (18 Miles)

Nobu prepares Japanese-Peruvian fusion cuisine using signature methods and fresh ingredients. The restaurant offers innovative dishes, including black cod miso, in a refined space.

Sizzle Korean Barbeque (19 Miles)

Sizzle Korean Barbeque grills premium meats at the table and serves classic Korean sides. The restaurant creates an interactive dining experience that emphasizes communal cooking, allowing guests to participate in preparing their meals.

The Ends (19 Miles)

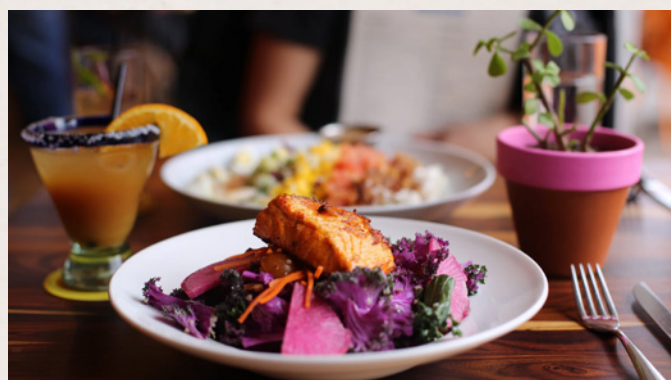
The Ends crafts inventive small plates using seasonal ingredients and bold flavors, delivering a cozy experience that emphasizes creative presentation.

The Mission (18 Miles)

The Mission creates Latin-inspired dishes using handmade tortillas and bold techniques. The restaurant delivers inventive plates in a modern dining space.

Toca Madera (18 Miles)

Toca Madera fires up the grill to prepare Mexican grill dishes with precision and flair. The restaurant offers upscale fare in a contemporary dining space.



Virtu (19 Miles)

Virtu crafts Mediterranean-inspired dishes using house-made pasta and fresh seafood. The restaurant offers creative cocktails in an intimate dining space.

ATTRACTIONS

In addition to the afternoon tours and events, you are welcome to explore the city and enjoy its attractions, which are listed below.



UNDER 5 MILES FROM DESERT RIDGE RESORT

Desert Ridge Marketplace (.5 Miles)

Desert Ridge Marketplace features a mix of retail shops and casual dining options in an open-air center, energizing shoppers with a lively blend of entertainment.

Musical Instrument Museum (2 Miles)

The site of our President's Celebration, the Musical Instrument Museum collects instruments from around the globe and presents interactive exhibits that celebrate musical diversity, immersing visitors in a rich tapestry of sound and cultural expression.



5 - 10 MILES FROM DESERT RIDGE RESORT

Kierland Commons (7 Miles)

Kierland Commons offers a blend of local shops and national brands in a vibrant outdoor space. It serves guests in a relaxed, inviting environment.

McDowell Sonoran Preserve (8 Miles)

The McDowell Sonoran Preserve spans vast desert terrain and offers diverse hiking and wildlife viewing opportunities. It challenges outdoor enthusiasts with its dynamic natural environment.



10 - 20 MILES FROM DESERT RIDGE RESORT

Butterfly Wonderland (13 Miles)

Butterfly Wonderland features thousands of free-flying butterflies in a tropical conservatory, engaging families with interactive exhibits that spark wonder.

The Frank Lloyd Wright Museum (12 Miles)

The Frank Lloyd Wright Museum honors the legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright through curated exhibits that examine his design philosophy and architectural influence, immersing visitors in a journey through innovative structures and his artistic vision.

OdySea Aquarium (12 Miles)

OdySea Aquarium presents marine life through immersive exhibits and interactive touch pools, captivating guests with a state-of-the-art aquatic adventure.

Old Town Scottsdale (19 Miles)

Old Town Scottsdale preserves historic streets and hosts art galleries, shops, and restaurants with character. It anchors a cultural scene that celebrates its rich heritage.



Scottsdale Arts District (18 Miles)

Scottsdale Arts District clusters galleries, studios, and creative spaces that spotlight local talent. It immerses visitors in a vibrant cultural scene that celebrates artistic expression.

Scottsdale Fashion Square (18 Miles)

Scottsdale Fashion Square curates luxury shopping and dining experiences, featuring a diverse range of retailers. It draws guests into a modern center that celebrates upscale living.

Scottsdale Historical Museum (18 Miles)

The Scottsdale Historical Museum collects artifacts that trace the city's evolution from a farming community to an urban oasis, and its engaging exhibits preserve local heritage.

Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art (19 Miles)

The Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art showcases modern art, design, and architecture through thought-provoking exhibitions. It attracts guests to a space that champions innovative creativity.

Scottsdale Stadium (19 Miles)

Scottsdale Stadium hosts spring training games and sports events that energize fans and families, delivering a vibrant, competitive atmosphere that unites sports enthusiasts.

Scottsdale Wine Trail (19 Miles)

The Scottsdale Wine Trail curates visits to local wineries and tasting rooms that celebrate Arizona's rich wine culture, inviting enthusiasts on a guided journey that delights the palate.



Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West (19 Miles)

Western Spirit curates exhibits that document the art, history, and culture of the American West, immersing visitors in frontier life through powerful storytelling and authentic artifacts.

20+ MILES FROM DESERT RIDGE RESORT

Arizona Capitol Museum (23 Miles)

The Arizona Capitol Museum preserves state history through engaging exhibits and authentic artifacts, inviting visitors to explore Arizona's political heritage with clarity and purpose.

Desert Botanical Garden (23 Miles)

The Desert Botanical Garden cultivates a vast collection of desert flora in themed garden settings, showcasing the resilient beauty of arid landscapes through immersive exhibits.

Heard Museum (20 Miles)

The Heard Museum displays Native American art and cultural artifacts with authenticity and respect. It celebrates indigenous heritage through vivid exhibits and compelling storytelling.

Phoenix Art Museum – (20 Miles)

The Phoenix Art Museum showcases a diverse range of art collections that span classic to contemporary styles. It captivates visitors with myriad displays and dynamic exhibitions.

Phoenix Zoo (25 miles)

The Phoenix Zoo houses a diverse array of animal species and offers interactive exhibits for all ages. It provides a dynamic wildlife experience that educates and entertains visitors.

HIKING TRAILS

CAMELBACK MOUNTAIN (16 MILES)

Camelback Mountain challenges hikers with steep trails that reward them with panoramic city views, inspiring outdoor enthusiasts with its rugged beauty and iconic presence.



MCDOWELL MOUNTAIN REGIONAL PARK (26 MILES)

McDowell Mountain Regional Park in Fountain Hills, AZ, offers over 50 miles of multi-use trails for hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding, ranging in length and difficulty, with options for both easy and strenuous hikes.



MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE (10 MILES)

The McDowell Sonoran Preserve in Scottsdale, Arizona, offers a vast network of non-motorized, multi-use trails (hike, bike, and horse) spanning over 30,500 acres of preserved desert habitat, with 11 trailheads and more than 230 miles of trails.



PINNACLE PEAK PARK (10 MILES)

Pinnacle Peak, situated near Scottsdale, Arizona, features a 4.1-mile out-and-back hiking trail that traverses the Sonoran Desert, renowned for its moderate difficulty and stunning vistas, with an elevation gain of approximately 1,020 feet.





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Jacob J. Liro

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McMurtry

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Alonzo Washington

Jimmy B. Wilkins

Jennifer L.
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