



FDCC

DEFENSE LAWYERS. DEFENSE LEADERS.



2027 FDCC WINTER MEETING

LIVIN' LA VIDA IN MIAMI

FEBRUARY 28 - MARCH 3, 2027

LIFE LAW FRIENDSHIP



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LIVIN' LA VIDA IN MIAMI

WHERE LIFE, LAW, AND FRIENDSHIP MEET

BY VALERIE KELLNER & LEE KELLNER – CONVENTION CHAIRS



Valerie Kellner

Set against the iconic backdrop of the legendary Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami Beach, the FDCC invites you to immerse yourself in Livin' La Vida in Miami—Where Life, Law, and Friendship Meet, where cutting-edge legal issues meet the energy and rhythm of Miami from February 28, 2027 to March 3, 2027.

A city defined by its year-round sunshine and vibrant fusion of cultures, Miami Beach is the perfect setting for our Winter Meeting, which blends outstanding programming with unforgettable curated excursions.

THE ICONIC FONTAINEBLEAU HOTEL

Situated along the oceanfront in the heart of Miami Beach, the Fontainebleau offers a distinguished setting that combines architectural elegance with contemporary luxury. From the moment you step through its doors, the Fontainebleau wraps you in a sense of glamour that is quintessentially Miami



Fontainebleau Hotel - Miami

Beach. Since its debut in 1954, this iconic hotel has remained a hallmark of Miami Beach. Designed by architect Morris Lapidus, whose sweeping curves and dramatic spaces became the visual hallmark of mid-century Miami Beach, the hotel stands today as both a historic landmark and a world-class contemporary

resort. It immediately became a magnet for celebrities of the day including the Rat Pack and served as the unforgettable backdrop for the James Bond film “Goldfinger.” Most recently, the hotel earned a prestigious place on *Travel + Leisure’s* World’s Best Awards in 2025.

You will enjoy direct access to a pristine private stretch of Miami Beach, where white sand meets the turquoise Atlantic. The hotel has multiple expansive oceanfront pools, private cabanas, and sun terraces. Spacious, modern guestrooms and suites offer sweeping views of either the Atlantic Ocean or the glittering Miami skyline, along with every modern comfort and the Fontainebleau’s signature elegance.

The Fontainebleau is also home to an outstanding collection of restaurants, including Michelin-rated Hakkasan, impeccable Italian cuisine at Mirabella, and Prime 54, a premier steakhouse. When the schedule calls for relaxation, the Lapis Spa offers a full menu of restorative treatments, and a state-of-the-art fitness center ensures every need is met with the seamless hospitality for which the Fontainebleau is legendary.

EXPLORE MIAMI: CURATED EXCURSIONS FOR EVERY PASSION

We have curated a selection of afternoon excursions designed to showcase the city’s history, art, distinctive character, and scenic beauty. Afternoons are yours to explore what Miami has to offer—because *Livin’ La Vida* in Miami means savoring every moment. Whether you are a first-time visitor or a seasoned traveler, we have something for everyone.

ART, ARCHITECTURE & FOOD

No visit to Miami is complete without understanding the architectural legacy that defines it. Guided Art Deco walking tours wind through South Beach’s iconic pastel skyline, where the preserved architecture of the 1920s and 1930s tells the story of a neighborhood that defined American glamour. The Vizcaya Museum and Gardens offers a different perspective entirely: a European-inspired estate set against lush tropical landscapes overlooking Biscayne Bay, blending Old World elegance with South Florida’s natural beauty. In the Wynwood Arts District, the Wynwood Mural Gardens present an open-air gallery of large-scale murals and street art from internationally recognized artists, transforming an entire neighborhood into a canvas of bold creativity.



Vizcaya Museum and Gardens



Pérez Art Museum Miami





Little Havana

For art enthusiasts, the Pérez Art Museum Miami houses world-class modern and contemporary collections in a striking waterfront building designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architects. For those drawn to immersive experiences, Superblue offers large-scale, interactive art installations that blur the line between observer and participant. Right across the street, The Rubell Museum, one of the largest privately owned contemporary art collections in North America, features works by emerging and established artists, including Keith Haring and Jeff Koons, in a converted warehouse setting.

For foodies, step into the heart of Miami's Cuban heritage on the Little Havana food and walking tour. This cultural journey highlights the colorful streets, live music, hand-rolled cigars, and authentic Cuban cuisine that preserve the heritage of Miami's vibrant community. We also have hands-on cooking classes where the city's vibrant cultural influences come alive through the guidance of talented local chefs.

ADVENTURE & THE OUTDOORS

For those seeking adventure, guided ATV and e-bike tours offer a dynamic way to explore the scenic surroundings of Miami Beach or you can also enjoy elegant sailing excursions on the waters surrounding Miami, providing a unique perspective of the city's iconic skyline and coastal beauty. You can also tee off at our golf tournament.

For a more casual outing, just steps from the Fontainebleau, you can take a stroll on the Ocean Drive boardwalk, which offers breathtaking views of





Miami Beach. After soaking in the views, spend your afternoon unwinding at the beach or pool, the perfect opportunity to relax and recharge.

EVENING EVENTS

Sunday night will start with our Welcome Reception for our new members outdoors, which will be held on the Fontainebleau Rooftop, with the Miami skyline as a breathtaking backdrop. On Monday, we will host an elegant President's Reception at the Pérez Art

Museum Miami on the spectacular open-air terrace with views of Biscayne Bay in downtown Miami. This hallmark event honors FDCC tradition with warmth and celebration. Tuesday evening features curated dine-arounds at some of Miami's finest and most celebrated restaurants—an opportunity to explore the city's extraordinary culinary scene in the best possible company. Wednesday night, our final night, will be our Beach Night. A casual, relaxed gathering where we will enjoy the beautiful ocean air and spend time with friends before returning to our busy lives.

True to FDCC tradition, the Winter Meeting is about more than a destination, it is about relationships. These experiences strengthen the bonds that set our Federation apart and remind us why the FDCC remains a professional home for so many.

I would be remiss if I did not thank everyone who made this possible. I want to extend my gratitude to our President Jennifer Johnsen and First Gentleman Gary Johnsen; our Program Chair and her spouse, Jody Briandi and Sal Ortolano; and the team at headquarters, Martha and Bernie Heinze and Kimberly Cavender.

We look forward to gathering with you in Miami Beach—to learn, to connect, and to continue *Living La Vida* where life, law, and friendship meet.

[Valerie Kellner](#) is an FDCC Defense Counsel Member, a Senior Director on the Board and Convention Co-Chair of the 2027 Winter Meeting.



LIVIN' LA VIDA LEGAL IN ACTION

BY JODY BRIANDI & SAL ORTOLANO



Jody Briandi

Livin' La Vida Legal in Action is our guide to the modern attorney's "crazy life"—from the streets of South Beach to downtown boardrooms and the glare of televised trials. This year's program follows the full life cycle of contemporary disputes: how they begin, how they spin out of control, and

how great advocates bring them to conclusion. You'll move through crime, high profile trials, insurance coverage, catastrophe, AI, mass torts, discrimination, data breaches, and the future of law practice, with a constant focus on tools you can use the moment you return to your office.



The History of Crime in Miami with Dr. Paul George

We open by welcoming our past presidents and new members, followed by Miami historian Dr. Paul George and The History of Crime in Miami, a fast paced tour of how the city's evolution from vice haven to global financial hub has shaped its culture and legal system.

Insurance, Courts, and the New Litigation Landscape

Our section programming begins with insurance coverage taking center stage in a two day section program, Forecast: Clear Skies, Cloudy Claims—A Modern Insurance Coverage Boot Camp, following a claim from inception through coverage determination—notice, investigation, reservations



Clear skies...Cloudy Claims: Insurance Coverage Boot Camp

of rights, and cooperation—then pivoting to “when the claims handling is the catastrophe,” unpacking the missteps that fuel bad faith, extra contractual exposure, and nuclear verdicts.



Understanding Appellate Decision Dynamics

Courts and judges are the next stop. In Behind the Appellate Bench: Understanding Appellate Decision Dynamics, our panel will pull back the curtain on factors that influence appellate outcomes, from legal reasoning and judicial philosophy to panel dynamics and procedural strategy.



Tort Reform on the Move: Transportation & Premises Claims

Change across the Southeast drives Tort Reform on the Move: Transportation and Premises Claims in Florida, Georgia, and Beyond, which distills new statutes, shifting comparative fault regimes, evidence and

damages reforms, and venue tactics affecting trucking, auto, and premises exposures, and shows how to adjust evaluation, negotiation, and trial strategies.



Judge Michael Hanzman on the Surfside Condo Collapse & Mass Tort Dockets

The plenary program opens with *Why Business and Commercial Courts Matter: Lessons from Judge Michael Hanzman Following Surfside and Beyond*, which uses the Surfside condominium collapse to show how specialized courts manage mass tort dockets, balance competing interests, and deliver results under intense public scrutiny, offering a playbook for complex, multi party disputes in any industry.



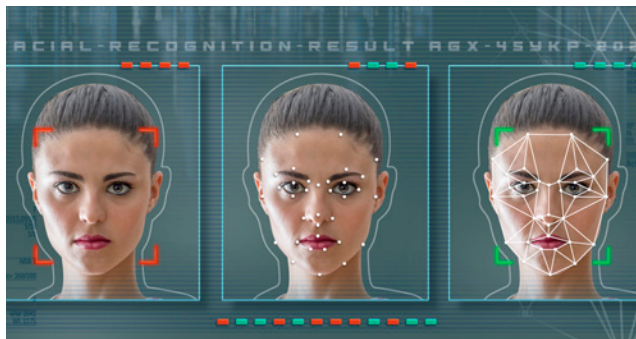
The Future of Learning the Law in the AI Era

Modern discovery and AI are impossible to ignore. *Discovery Remix: Dancing Off the Beaten Path* challenges boilerplate practice and shows how to craft creative, proportional, strategic discovery in an era of exploding data, social media, and AI generated content. *The Future of Learning Law in the AI Era* tackles the hard questions head on—whether we will still have the same jobs, whether we will still need as many lawyers, and how to train new attorneys when generative AI can draft a brief in minutes—by exploring competence standards, emerging ethics rules, and practical training strategies that integrate AI without surrendering judgment or professionalism.



Trials in the Spotlight: Murdaugh, Depp, and the Modern Jury—Go Behind the Scenes of Two of the Most Watched Trials in Recent History

Trial Masters: Tale of Two Trials is the centerpiece of our program, featuring defense attorney Camille Vasquez and prosecutor Creighton Waters. With Mr. Waters, we dissect the Murdaugh murder trial, focusing on narrative choices, cross examination in a media circus, and building a record for inevitable appeals. We then turn to the Johnny Depp defamation trial with Ms. Vasquez, examining how social media saturated jurors, live streamed testimony, and global commentary rewrote the playbook for reputation litigation. We close *Trial Masters* with *Murder, Defamation, and the Modern Jury Trial*, where our panel of FDCC trial lawyers will have a candid discussion with Mr. Waters and Ms. Vasquez, distilling practical guidance on voir dire, juror psychology, and trying a case under intense scrutiny and in the media spotlight.



Technology, Catastrophe, and Global Risk

Technology and science driven disputes get equal billing. *Seeing Isn't Always Believing: How Deepfakes, Altered Video, and AI Are Reshaping Litigation* shows how manipulated audio and video are eroding assumptions about “what the jury can see for itself,” and outlines tools and strategies for authentication, discovery into source files and metadata, and educating judges and jurors about engineered perception.



Regulations & Litigation in Products & Medical Devices

In *International Crossroads: The Intersection of Regulatory and Litigation in the Products and Medical Device Space*, faculty trace how global regulators, scientific findings, and coordinated plaintiffs' efforts converge in cross border litigation, and how regulatory actions can either inoculate companies or serve as roadmaps for plaintiffs.



Defending Talc Claims

The Power and Punishment of Powder: Defending Talc Claims in U.S. Courts and When the Structure Fails: Legal, Engineering, and Risk Lessons from Catastrophic Construction Losses provide deep dives into toxic tort and construction failure risks, from Daubert battles and jury psychology to allocation among design and construction professionals and insurance and reinsurance consequences.



Discrimination v. Everyday Conflict: Responding & Reducing Risk

Governance and workplace risk round out our program. Is that REALLY Discrimination? Recognizing, Responding, and Reducing Risk uses realistic hypotheticals to separate genuine discrimination from everyday conflict and to show how investigations, documentation, and communication can reduce liability while preserving culture.



Case Study: Data Breach at a Law Firm

On the plenary stage, *Case Study: Data Breach at a Law Firm* walks you through a simulated breach from first alert and internal scramble to client notification, regulatory response, insurer coordination, and post incident remediation decisions that can determine a firm's future.

Signature Conversation: Fireside Chat with Jeb Bush

We close with a Keynote Fireside Chat with Jeb Bush, offering an insider's view of leadership, crisis management, and policy reform from the former



Governor of Florida. Drawing on experience with hurricanes, large scale emergencies, and landmark reforms, Governor Bush will discuss lessons learned from spearheading bold education reforms, including navigating political resistance, tracking the results of reforms, and building durable coalitions for change. He will also share candid insights on decision making under pressure, leading through controversy, and managing crises in the public arena—offering practical takeaways for lawyers and business leaders who must guide institutions through periods of intense scrutiny and rapid change.

We look forward to seeing you in Miami, and *Livin' La Vida Legal in Action* together for three unforgettable days of learning, laughter, and law.

[Jody Briandi](#) is an FDCC Defense Counsel Member and a Director on the Board. She is also Program Co-Chair with Sal Ortolano of the 2027 Winter Meeting.

MEETING AGENDA

2027 WINTER MEETING

MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA

Join us

FEBRUAR 28 · MARCH 3, 2027



SATURDAY FEBRUARY 27

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Officer's Meeting

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Executive Committee Meeting

2:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Registration

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Admissions Committee Meeting

3:30 PM - 5:00 PM

Projects and Objectives Meeting

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

State Representatives Meeting



SUNDAY FEBRUARY 28

7:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Registration

7:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Buffet Committee Breakfast

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

FDCC Board of Directors Meeting

3:15 PM - 3:45 PM

New Member & Past President
Reception (Invitation Only)

3:45 PM - 4:30 PM

New Member Orientation
(Invitation Only)

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Opening General Session

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Welcome Reception



MONDAY MARCH 1

7:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Registration

7:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Breakfast

8:00 AM - 8:50 AM

Substantive Section Programming

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Plenary Session

10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Spouse Hospitality

1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Afternoon Excursions

6:30 PM - 10:00 PM

Presidential Reception



TUESDAY MARCH 2

7:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Registration

7:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Breakfast

8:00 AM - 8:50 AM

Substantive Section Programming

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Plenary Session

10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Book Club

1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Afternoon Excursions

1:00 PM - 5:30 PM

Golf Tournament

7:00 PM - 11:00 PM

Dine Around



WEDNESDAY MARCH 3

7:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Registration

7:00 AM - 9:00 AM

Breakfast

7:50 AM - 8:45 AM

Substantive Section Programming

9:00 AM - 9:50 AM

FDCC Business Meeting

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Plenary Session

1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Afternoon Excursions

7:00 PM - 10:00 PM

Beach Night on the Lawn