

Speaker Biographies

PROFESSOR PATRICK M. CONNORS

BIOGRAPHY

Patrick M. Connors is the Albert and Angela Farone Distinguished Professor in New York Civil Practice at Albany Law School where he has taught New York Practice and Legal Ethics since 2000. Commencing with the January 2013 supplement, Professor Connors became the author for the treatise Siegel, New York Practice. The publication's sixth edition, "David D. Siegel & Patrick M. Connors, New York Practice (6th ed. 2018)," was released in March, 2018. The treatise has been cited in thousands of reported decisions and has been called "The Bible" for litigation in New York State courts.

He received his B.A. degree from Georgetown University and his J.D. degree from St. John's Law School, where he was an editor of the Law Review and research assistant to Professor David D. Siegel. Upon graduation from St. John's in 1988, Professor Connors served as a personal law clerk to Judge Richard D. Simons of the New York Court of Appeals until 1991. From 1991 until May of 2000 he was an associate and then member of the litigation department at Hancock & Estabrook, LLP, in Syracuse, New York.

Professor Connors is also the author of the McKinney's Practice Commentaries for CPLR Article 22, Stay, Motions, Orders and Mandates, Article 23, Subpoenas, Oaths and Affirmations, Article 30, Remedies and Pleading, and Article 31, Disclosure. He also authored the Practice Commentaries for the former New York Rules of Professional Conduct and several articles in the Surrogate's Court Procedure Act. He is currently an author of the New York Practice column and the annual Court of Appeals Roundup on New York Civil Practice, which are published in the New York Law Journal. From 1992 through 2003, he was a Reporter for the Committee on New York Pattern Jury Instructions ("PJI"), the panel of New York State Supreme Court Justices that drafts and oversees the frequent revisions of the standard jury charges in civil cases. His publications have been cited in hundreds of reported cases.

He was a member of the New York State Bar Association's Committee on Professional Ethics from 1996 through 2016. He served on the New York State Attorney Grievance Committee for the Fifth Judicial District from 1997 until 2000. He was the Reporter for the New York State Bar Association's Special Committee on the Code of Judicial Conduct, which published a report recommending substantial amendments to New York's Code of Judicial Conduct. He was also the Reporter for the New York State Bar Association's Task Force on Non-lawyer Ownership of Law Firms. He is a member of the Office of Court Administration's Advisory Committee on Civil Practice and served as a member of the New York State Bar Association's CPLR Committee from 2003 through 2007.

Professor Connors is a frequent lecturer at continuing legal education seminars on recent developments in New York Practice, professional ethics and legal malpractice. He has also served as an expert witness and consultant on issues pertaining to attorney ethics, legal malpractice, and civil procedure.

W. RUSSELL CORKER, ESQ.

Biography

W. Russell Corker's life as a trial lawyer began in 1973 while still a student at Boston University School of Law where, as part of a special trial advocacy program, he was permitted to litigate cases in the District Courts of Boston. During law school, he also interned at the United States Attorney's Office in Boston for two years, where he assisted in and observed many trials. Upon his graduation in 1974, he moved to Long Island and took a position as an Assistant District Attorney in Nassau County. Initially Corker started in traffic court, trying twenty or more cases a day. That experience let him move through the ranks to eventually prosecute major felonies. In 1978, he moved from criminal law to the civil side, taking a position as a trial attorney for a firm that exclusively represented physicians and hospitals in medical malpractice lawsuits. Medical malpractice litigation was still relatively uncommon at that time. Over the next thirty plus years, the area of law known as medical malpractice litigation continued to change along with the American culture. In 1980, Corker's career path changed again when he switched sides and began representing patients in medical malpractice lawsuits. He took a position as the principal trial attorney for a major Long Island plaintiff's firm. From then until now, his practice has been focused primarily on representing patients and their families in medical malpractice lawsuits and severe personal injury cases. During this period, he also began taking classes at night at local universities in the field of medicine and the human body, which he did for the next five years. Corker remained with that firm until 2012, when he opened his own office on Main Street in Huntington Village and a second office on Franklin Avenue in Garden City, to continue representing primarily victims of medical malpractice.

In 1980, Corker also began lecturing to the legal profession, and has continued to do so, on a regular basis. He has taught trial practice, medicine, principles of persuasion, courtroom technology, and a host of other subjects to thousands of lawyers over the succeeding 34 years. He has always been committed to sharing what he has learned with other lawyers in order to benefit their clients and our judicial system. Teaching others has the added advantage of keeping him abreast of current trends and techniques in his field, and he continuously strives to be a better trial attorney. While Corker has received a number of honors during his career — such as Best Lawyers in New York, New York Metro Super Lawyers, the highest rating by Martindale Hubbell, and Ten Leaders in Civil Trial Practice on Long Island — he is most proud of being an active member of the legal community. Corker is honored by being consistently asked to chair and speak at programs to teach practicing lawyers to become better trial attorneys.

ROBERT B. GIBSON, ESQ.

Biography

Robert B. Gibson is a partner at HPM&B and manages its White Plains, New York office. Rob's practice focuses on the representation of major teaching hospitals and individual physicians in high exposure medical malpractice actions. He is a trial lawyer with 20 years of experience representing clients in all phases of litigation, from inception through trial, and has successfully defended many clients through verdict. Rob has been repeatedly selected for inclusion in New York Super Lawyers® and has earned Martindale-Hubbell's highest rating, AV Preeminent®.

Rob lectures nationwide on medical malpractice litigation and trial tactics. In 2015, Rob was a featured speaker at the DRI Medical Liability and Health Care Law Annual Conference in San Francisco. He is also regularly invited to speak at Grand Rounds at hospitals throughout the New York area.

Rob writes frequently on medical malpractice topics, with his publications being featured in *The New York Law Journal* and the *New York State Bar Association Journal*. His articles have also appeared in nationally distributed publications from the Defense Research Institute and the Physician Insurers Association of America.

Rob is a member of the Firm's Executive Committee. After graduating from Pace University, he received his Juris Doctor degree from New York Law School. Rob is a member of the New York State, Bronx and Westchester County Bar Associations.

J.K. HAGE, III, ESQ.

Biography

J.K. Hage III is the owner and managing attorney at Hage & Hage LLC, an 87+ year old law and consulting firm that advises public and private utility, energy, communications, business and technology (including research and technology transfer) clients, and others, both for-profit and non-profit, in the areas of business organizations, governance, new ventures, strategic planning, capital formation, sustainability, mergers, acquisitions, negotiation of transactions, succession and estate planning.

J.K. Hage III has represented public and private utilities for 40 years, with extensive federal and state utility experience in electricity, gas, water, microwave, telecommunications, Cable TV, fiberoptics, wind, solar, broadband, geothermal, hydro-electric generation, landfill electricity generation, sustainable infrastructure, energy-efficient construction, emerging technologies and federal, state and local regulation.

J.K. Hage III is of counsel to Lukas, La Furia, Gutierrez and Sachs, a Washington, D.C. public utility, communications law and engineering firm. Mr. Hage has initiated numerous business ventures including Independent Wireless One Corporation (aka U.S. UNWIRED), a national Sprint PCS affiliate and was the organizer and the first Executive Director of the Griffiss Institute, a market driven national collaboration of industry, the academy and government dedicated to applied research, training, and services in information security.

J.K. Hage III serves as a director of the national Economic Crime and Cybersecurity Institute of Utica College, the Albany Law School Board of Trustees (Co-Chair of Finance Committee), the Albany Law School Center for Innovation, and, formerly, the Glimmerglass Opera Board of Trustees (Chair of Finance Committee). Mr. Hage is a member of the City of Utica Master Plan Steering Committee, the Cornell University R2G Committee, the Multi-Cultural Committee of the Hamilton College Alumni Counsel and a former member of Oneida County, EDGE Board of Directors.

J.K. Hage III is an entrepreneurial activist investor in public and private ventures and has extensive personal experience on public, private, for-profit and non-profit boards and management teams. Mr. Hage is a frequent lecturer in the areas of business organizations, governance, mergers, acquisitions, information security, succession and estate planning, telecommunications regulation, sustainable design, construction and green initiatives.

J.K. Hage III is a member of the American Bar Association, New York State Bar Association and the Oneida and Herkimer County Bar Associations. He was appointed to the New York State Commission of Corrections by Governor Hugh L. Carey in 1982. Mr. Hage is a member of the New York State Bar Association Committee on Public Utility Law and the New York State Bar Association Committee on Trusts and Estates. He is a Vice President of

the Oneida County Bar Association and is a Delegate to the New York State Bar Association House of Delegates.

J.K. Hage III is a life-long resident of the Mohawk Valley and is a small business owner in downtown Utica. Mr. Hage transformed and developed the former Homestead Savings Bank building at 283 Genesee Street into the first and only LEED Gold Certified “green” office building in the City of Utica.

J.K. Hage III, a 1978 graduate of Albany Law School, attended Hamilton College and Oxford University, England. Mr. Hage studied for a Ph.D. in languages at New York University and the University of Madrid. He also lived and studied as an exchange student in Peru and in Mexico. He is the recipient of numerous academic honors and was engaged as an instructor at Albany Law School while still a student himself. In addition, Mr. Hage was the first oralist on the National Moot Court Trial competition team at Albany Law School. Mr. Hage has won numerous public speaking awards.

JOHN L.A. LYDDANE, ESQ.

Biography

John L.A. Lyddane is the Group Head of the Medical Malpractice Defense Group at Dorf & Nelson. Mr. Lyddane has been a medical malpractice and personal injury defense attorney for over forty years and has tried close to 300 cases to dismissal or verdict. In addition, he has briefed and argued cases in the appellate courts including the New York Court of Appeals. He has been involved in every aspect of teaching of litigation and trial skills in university, bar association, Continuing Legal Education, and risk management programs, including six separate four-hour programs on ethics for the litigator. He is a frequent contributor to the legal literature on practical trial skills and the defense of medical malpractice cases, and has co-authored a regular column in the New York Law Journal on Medical Malpractice Defense for many years.

Mr. Lyddane lives with his family in Greenwich, Connecticut, where he has served his community as President of the Belle Haven Landowners' Association, Commodore of the Belle Haven Club, Commissioner of the Belle Haven Tax District, District Leader of District 2 of the Greenwich Republican Town Committee, Sunday school teacher and soccer coach.

Prior to joining the firm, Mr. Lyddane was a Senior Partner at Martin Clearwater & Bell LLP. Earlier in his career, Mr. Lyddane served as Deputy Attorney General for the State of New York.

Mr. Lyddane received a AB in History from the University of Rochester.

He received a Juris Doctor from Syracuse University College of Law. In 1972, Mr. Lyddane was admitted to practice in all courts of New York State. In addition, Mr. Lyddane is also to admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court; the United States Second Circuit Court of Appeals; the United States Southern, Eastern and Northern District Courts of New York.

ALICIA OUELLETTE, ESQ.

Biography

Alicia Ouellette is the 18th President and Dean of Albany Law School. As Dean, she led the law school in the development, adoption, and implementation of a new strategic plan, led and consummated an institutional affiliation with the University at Albany, and has introduced to the Law School innovative educational programs.

Prior to her appointment as Dean, she served as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Intellectual Life and a Professor of Law. Her research focuses on health law, disability rights, family law, children's rights, and human reproduction. Her book, *Bioethics and Disability: Toward a Disability Conscious Bioethics*, was published in 2011 by Cambridge University Press. She has authored numerous articles published in academic journals such as the *American Journal of Law and Medicine*, the *Hastings Center Report*, the *American Journal of Bioethics*, the *Hastings Law Journal*, the *Indiana Law Journal* and *Oregon Law Review*.

Before joining the law faculty, Dean Ouellette served as an Assistant Solicitor General in the New York State-Attorney General's office. As ASG, Prof. Ouellette briefed and argued more than 100 appeals on issues ranging from termination of treatment for the terminally ill to the responsibility of gun manufacturers for injuries caused by handguns. Before that, Dean Ouellette worked in private practice and served as a confidential law clerk to Judge Howard A. Levine on the New York State Court of Appeals. She has continued her advocacy work in select cases and was lead counsel on the law professors' brief submitted in support of same-sex couples who sought the right to marry in New York State.

A.B., Hamilton College

J.D., Albany Law School

Editor-in-Chief, Albany Law Review

ALFRED P. VIGORITO, ESQ.

Biography

Alfred P. Vigorito is the firm's senior trial partner, bringing 35 years of litigation experience to the courthouse on behalf of his clients. Recently, elected to the prestigious Litigation Counsel of America, Mr. Vigorito has tried over 100 cases to verdict in New York State Supreme Court and Federal Court for the Southern District. The majority of those verdicts were taken in Bronx and Kings County, notoriously dangerous venues, where his clients received verdicts in their favor countless times.

Never one to shy away from the difficult case or represent a recalcitrant client, Mr. Vigorito, a native New Yorker, brings a skill set that combines his street sense with an intimate knowledge of the facts and medicine to each case. While respected for his trial skills, Al takes pride in dealing fairly with his adversaries, resolving cases early when warranted so as reducing litigation costs for his clients. Mr. Vigorito will oftentimes gain discontinuance of initial claims by candidly discussing the case after thorough investigation of the facts and medicine.

Mr. Vigorito has been selected by his peers to SuperLawyers since 2010 and has received an AV rating from Martindale-Hubbell, their highest rank for ethics and ability. Al frequently lectures on medical negligence and trial practice, and regularly conducts Grand Rounds orientations at area hospitals as part of their continuing medical education programs.

Mr. Vigorito, a graduate of Brooklyn Technical High School, St. John's University and Pace University School of Law began his legal career in the Bronx County District Attorney's Office under the Hon. Mario Merola. He served as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Southern District under the Hon. Rudolph Giuliani, prosecuting high profile public corruption cases. In 1988, Al joined Bower & Gardner, the largest firm defending medical negligence cases in N.Y. and quickly rose to Partner. He continues to represent the healthcare profession and all professional insurance programs.

