

SPEAKER BIOS – June 2026 Annual Conference

Michael Krasner, MD, FACP, Co-Chief Medical Officer & VP of Education - EmPRO Insurance Company Professor Emeritus of Medicine, University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry

Michael (Mick) Krasner, MD, FACP, is Co-Chief Medical Officer and Vice President of Education at EmPRO Insurance Company and Professor Emeritus of Medicine at the University of Rochester. For more than 25 years, he has taught mindfulness-based programs to patients and health professionals worldwide. He directed the landmark Mindful Communication project (JAMA, 2009), which led to the creation of the internationally recognized Mindful Practice in Medicine programs that he co-directs, including global Centers of Excellence and multi-year facilitator training.

His research has examined the effects of mindfulness on immune function, chronic illness, and caregiver stress. He hosts the podcast Flourishing in Medicine and is Executive Producer of the documentary The Healer's Journey, following five medical students' professional identity formation.

A graduate of UC Berkeley and UC San Diego School of Medicine, he completed Internal Medicine and Pediatrics training at Rochester, where his career has focused on cultivating attention, reflection, and healing relationships to support clinician flourishing and high-quality care.

Sasha Sagalovich, Esq. - Assistant Vice President, Gallagher Bassett

Sasha has worked for 13 years as a litigator representing healthcare institutions and providers in all aspects of medical malpractice litigation, mental hygiene law, as well as in other regulatory matters. She has also counseled healthcare facilities in resolving complex ethical questions. Sasha was a partner in a NY law firm before she transitioned to handling professional liability claims. Since 2020, Sasha has worked as a claims specialist for a professional liability insurance company managing high exposure claims, monitoring trials and negotiating settlements.

Christie Nunn, Esq., - AVP, Claims Counsel of U.S. Healthcare at Somp

Christie began her legal career as an Assistant District Attorney for the Nassau County District Attorney's Office where she worked in the Trial and Special Victims Bureaus. During her five year tenure as an ADA, she secured numerous felony and misdemeanor verdicts. Thereafter, for 15 years Christie worked as a litigator defending healthcare facilities, institutions and providers in high exposure in medical malpractice matters handling cases from inception through trial. Christie worked as a partner in a major medical NY medical malpractice law firm where she also served on the hiring committee COVID-19 Response committee.

Alison O'Dwyer, Esq., - Partner at Fullerton & Beck LLP

A lawyer and former registered nurse, Alison focuses her practice on defending hospitals and healthcare professionals in high-exposure medical malpractice claims. Her experience in the medical field enables her to efficiently analyze medical malpractice claims to determine her litigation strategy. In addition to medical malpractice defense, Alison has represented medical professionals in civil litigation and before the Department of Health in matters concerning medication dependency, professional boundary issues, adverse side effects of medications, suicide risk, and diagnoses and management of behavioral, personality, and mood disorders. Alison's years of experience as a registered nurse in an acute care setting, combined with her experience representing tertiary and/trauma centers provide a unique perspective on risk management, documentation and hospital-based medical malpractice claims.

Lara Vanyo, M.D.-Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine at Weill Cornell Medical College.

Lara Vanyo, M.D received her medical degree from the George Washington University where she was elected into the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society. Dr. Vanyo completed her residency in Emergency Medicine at Mount Sinai. She worked as an Emergency Medicine attending at the Cleveland Clinic and thereafter, she became an Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine at Mount Sinai. While at Mount Sinai, she served as the Emergency Medicine Residency Site Director at Mount Sinai Beth Israel. She was also the Chair of the System Emergency Medicine Faculty Wellness Committee and Corporate Medical Director of Mount Sinai Solutions.

Abdel Disomimba, BSN, MSN, FISQua, CLSSGB, CPHQ, CPPS, Associate Director of Risk Management NYCHHC - Harlem Hospital

Abdel is a seasoned healthcare quality and patient safety professional whose work bridges risk management, patient safety, quality improvement, and organizational development. He brings a systems-minded, human-centered approach to strengthening safety culture, shaped by experience across diverse healthcare environments and grounded in a commitment to practical, compassionate leadership.

His work focuses on how preventable harm events reverberate across teams, leaders, and organizational structures and how integrated OD, QI, and RM strategies can create more resilient, transparent systems. Abdel has led initiatives in incident learning, safety climate assessment, and operational risk mitigation, and is known for translating complex frameworks into clear, actionable practices that resonate with both frontline staff and executives. Grounded, collaborative, and reflective, he continues to explore the hidden burdens carried by safety professionals and the organizational supports needed to sustain those who safeguard patient care.

Alison Thompsen, RN, MSN, CPHRM, Director of Risk Management - NYCHHC - Harlem Hospital

Alison is an experienced healthcare risk management leader with over 15 years of dedicated service in patient safety, policy development, and crisis management. As the Director of Risk Management at New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation, Alison has been instrumental in shaping hospital-wide risk mitigation strategies, fostering safety culture, and mentoring staff to enhance both clinical and operational outcomes. With a background that spans across prestigious organizations such as Montefiore Health System and Mount Sinai Hospital, Alison has consistently collaborated with multidisciplinary teams to drive regulatory compliance, improve patient care quality, and develop effective risk management programs. A Certified Professional Healthcare Risk Manager and Legal Nurse Consultant, Alison is committed to advancing patient safety and quality care through evidence-based solutions, policy development, and crisis management.

Jenelle Arnao, DHS MS CPHRM

Dr. Jenelle Arnao is a certified risk management professional with 20+ years of enterprise risk management experience. She is currently a freelance risk management consultant, nimbly sharing her expertise and experience with healthcare professionals to maintain high-level client servicing. Her passion is to explore the furtherance of risk reduction and patient safety at the community, regional, and national levels. Jenelle earned her Doctorate in Human Services by designing a training program to help leadership identify and mitigate employee burnout. Jenelle is a faculty member of ASHRM, a member of AHRMNY and SHCRM-NJ.

Anne Huben-Kearney, DFASHRM, CPHRM, CPHQ, CPPS

Anne Huben-Kearney, DFASHRM, CPHRM, CPHQ, CPPS, is an independent risk and patient safety consultant after a career in multiple healthcare roles, from staff nurse to nursing administration, quality improvement, risk management and patient safety, as well as medical professional liability insurance, with experience in diverse healthcare settings (multistate healthcare systems to community hospitals, physician office practices, ambulatory care, organ procurement organizations). She was elected to the American Society of Healthcare Risk Management Advisory Board (2020 -2022) and is serving on the 2025-2026 ASHRM Nominating Committee, is the Faculty Lead for the ASHRM Patient Safety Certificate Course, and is co-author of the 3- part AHA/ASHRM White Paper Series on Recognizing and Managing Bias in healthcare. Anne is the current President of the Massachusetts Society of Healthcare Risk Management. Anne has a BSN (magna cum laude) from Misericordia University and an MPA from the University of New Haven, CT.

Peggy Cooke, JD – Founder - Peggy Cooke LLC

Peggy Cooke is a former hospital risk manager, healthcare attorney, and physical therapist turned certified life coach who helps professionals step into a more strategic, influential version of themselves inside complex, high-pressure environments. With experience inside healthcare systems, Peggy understands the realities of risk management, legal practice and organizational complexity—and why so many capable professionals feel overwhelmed, overlooked or stuck in reactive mode. Her work focuses on developing mindset, communication, influence and decision-making skills so individuals move from task-driven contributors to trusted strategic leaders who shape outcomes and experience greater confidence, recognition, and fulfillment in their work. Peggy is the founder of Peggy Cooke, LLC, where she works with healthcare leaders, attorneys, physicians and high-performing professionals on influence, negotiation and strategic communication. She is known for translating behavioral science into practical frameworks that elevate leadership presence, clarity and sustainable impact.

Kiki Orski – Peak Performance Consulting

Kiki Orski MBA, RN is a dynamic Performance Improvement Consultant with over 25 years of experience helping leaders and teams achieve exceptional results by transforming how they work together. Through her company, Peak Performance Consulting, Kiki partners with organizations to elevate collaboration, strengthen workplace relationships, and align people and processes for maximum impact.

Kiki's approach is equal parts strategy and heart coaching leaders to communicate more effectively, build trust across silos, and drive measurable improvements in productivity, engagement, and profitability. Her work ensures that every program and conversation creates real transformation that lasts.

She is also the author of *Smash the Silos: A Surprisingly Easy Way to Enhance Collaboration, Boost Productivity, and Maximize Organizational Results!* Her clients span industries across the United States, including healthcare, human resources, pharmaceuticals, banking, security, and engineering—all united by a commitment to working smarter, together.

Doreen Dufficy, Partner - Barbiero Bisch O'Connor and Commander, LLP

For over 20 years, Doreen Dufficy has defended hospitals, healthcare systems, nursing homes/long-term care facilities, physicians, and other healthcare providers in medical malpractice actions in state and federal courts. She also defends a variety of clients in general negligence, construction, premises liability, and motor vehicle accident matters. Prior to joining BBO&C, Doreen was a Partner at a prominent firm in Manhattan specializing in medical malpractice defense, general negligence defense, and civil rights defense including municipalities. She also handled psychiatric matters related to the Mental Hygiene Law, AOTs, and FHCDA applications. Before that, Doreen was employed as a staff attorney for a large Health Network located in Brooklyn and Queens comprised of three major non-for-profit hospitals, two nursing homes, a prominent physician's group, and various affiliated for-profit and non-for-profit entities. She has experience in medical malpractice, labor and employment, commercial litigation, general liability, risk management, and corporate compliance.

Jennifer W. Yuen, Partner - Lewis Brisbois

Jennifer Yuen is a Partner at Lewis Brisbois. Her practice focuses on New York Labor Law, construction, medical malpractice, healthcare, traumatic brain injury defense, toxic tort, products liability and general liability. She is also the National Co-Chair of the firm's Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Defense Practice and manages a trial and litigation team in Manhattan. She specializes in the defense of matters alleging catastrophic loss and significant liability and damages exposure through all stages of litigation and at trial in all New York State and federal courts. Prior to joining Lewis Brisbois, Jennifer was an attorney at two prominent New York City law firms, where she defended healthcare professionals and product manufacturers in medical malpractice, products liability and general liability litigation. She also served as Law Clerk to an Appellate Term Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, Twelfth Judicial District, First Department.

Carolyn Reinach Wolf, Executive Partner – Abrams Fensterman, LLP

Carolyn Reinach Wolf is an Executive Partner in the law firm of Abrams Fensterman, LLP and Director of the Firm's Mental Health Law practice. She is the only attorney in the country with a family-focused mental healthcare practice. Supported by a team of expert clinicians, she specializes in guiding families through the complex landscape of legal issues that impact loved ones with serious mental illness, overall mental health issues, and/or substance abuse issues. She also represents institutions, such as major hospital systems, community hospitals, and outpatient programs, consulting on matters including capacity, mental hygiene law, end of life decision making, development and ongoing functioning of ethics committees and advance directives. She also represents mental health and healthcare professionals, and higher educational institutions.

Ms. Wolf's expertise encompasses mental hygiene law, including retention and treatment over objection psychiatric cases; mental health warrants; capacity determinations; informed consent and medical treatment cases; confidentiality and release of records matters; interaction with law enforcement in family matters, health care facilities and institutions of higher education; Kendra's Law applications (Assisted Outpatient Treatment Orders); Article 81 and 17-A guardianship proceedings; civil and criminal litigation and negotiation specific to mental health issues; consultation and advice in navigating the mental health and health care systems, and legal interventions in the inpatient and outpatient treatment settings as well as mental health issues in the higher education setting.

Ms. Wolf is a Past President of the National Behavioral Intervention Team Association (NaBITA), a membership association serving more than 1,500 professionals in schools, colleges and workplaces whose role is to support individuals in need of mental health intervention and to minimize the potential for school and workplace violence. She is also a frequently invited speaker and consultant to healthcare and mental health organizations, as well as institutions of higher education. She also provides mental health legal advice to administrators, and professional associations throughout the country regarding mental health law issues and many of the above-mentioned topics. She has been selected to the New York Super Lawyers list since 2013 and the Best Lawyers of America since 2018. Ms. Wolf has also been selected as an honoree of the City and State of New York's 2024 Above & Beyond Women. Most recently, Ms. Wolf was named a 2025 Health Care Hero by Long Island Business News in the Mental Health category.

Elizabeth Eckhardt, LCSW, PhD

Dr. Elizabeth Eckhardt is currently Director of the Nassau County Bar Association's Lawyer Assistance Program. The Lawyer Assistance Program provides confidential services to lawyers, judges, law students and their families struggling with mental health and substance use issues. Dr. Eckhardt also provides outreach and education to the Legal Community on topics such as resiliency, wellness, mindfulness, stress management, suicide prevention, mental health and substance use. In addition, Dr. Eckhardt has a private psychotherapy practice where she has been providing individual, couple and family therapy for more than 25 years.