



AMERICAN
IMMIGRATION
LAWYERS
ASSOCIATION

2025 AILA Annual Conference

Innovation Stage

All sessions will be held in the Aurora Exhibit Hall, Level 2
Times listed are Mountain Time and are subject to change without notice

Thursday, June 19, 2025

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

Managing Risk, Maximizing Success: Insights for Immigration Law Firms

Industry professionals Gayle Wissinger and Liz Grice will discuss firm and risk management best practices for immigration law firms, including a review of typical and not-so-typical claims that proactive risk management practices would have mitigated or eliminated altogether.

Gayle Wissinger, Grand Rapids, MI
Liz Grice, Grand Rapids, MI

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Do it Right: J-1 Visa Compliance and Eligibility Guide for Immigration Attorneys

The J-1 Visa category, although gaining popularity with immigration attorneys and corporate global mobility, remains a specialized practice field with eligibility and compliance criteria different from those in employment-based immigration. A successful management of the J-1 process relies as much on the federal regulation (22 CFR §62) as on the Department of State written and oral guidance, shared industry experience, and best compliance practices. This session will address recent J-1 program regulatory developments, consular trends, and management and oversight practices, helping attorneys avoid common pitfalls and maximize ROIs when managing J-1 visa programs for their clients.

- Eligibility and workplace application of J-1 categories that support high skill talent mobility
- The most common sponsor and host compliance issues

- DOS compliance activity uptick examples
- Management reviews vs. compliance audits
- Attorney-sponsor relations: making J-1 process efficient and effective

Gennady Babankov (DL), Business Development Manager, American Immigration Council, Washington, D.C.
Scott F. Cooper, Troy, WI

4:30 pm – 5:30 pm

Advocacy in Action: Getting Involved with AILA

In the face of harmful immigration policies and ongoing threats to due process, AILA members can take action through congressional engagement and join a united message to protect fairness and accountability in the immigration system. This session will highlight how members can use AILA's Advocacy Center and year-round opportunities to build an immigration system that supports families, fuels economic growth, and operates efficiently, fairly, and with accountability.

- Learn how to use AILA's Take Action Center to engage with Congress
- Understand how to plan and participate in in-district congressional meetings
- Get an overview of AILA's political engagement strategy through SCOPE
- See how AILA's tools and resources support effective chapter engagement
- Walk away confident and ready to make your voice heard

Gregory Chen (DL), AILA Senior Director of Government Relations, Washington, D.C.
Paul Rampersaud, AILA Grassroots Advocacy Associate, Washington, D.C.

Friday, June 20

9:30am – 10:30 am

Financial Wellness and Coaching with Capital Good Fund

Navigating the U.S. financial system can be overwhelming for immigrants, yet establishing credit, opening bank accounts, and building financial stability are crucial steps toward long-term success. In this session, learn how coaching programs empower immigrant families through personalized guidance on credit building, budgeting, and financial planning—leading to stronger financial health and reduced reliance on predatory services. Join us to explore how financial coaching can complement your legal services, providing holistic support for your clients' journeys and have a direct impact on your firm's bottom line.

Lawrence Aldrick, Providence, RI

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

Law Students and New Members: Am I Nuts for Getting into This Field?

Join us for a discussion on the various career paths within immigration law

from experts in the field. We'll also discuss tips, tricks and techniques for making the most out of your law student experience.

*Robert Oliver Branch, AILA Board of Governors, Toronto, ON
Melissa Belle Drennan, New York, NY
Reginald A. Pacis, Detroit, MI*

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm **Paralegals Panel: Strategies for Staying Ahead of the Details**
Paralegals, please join us for a session specifically tailored to your needs. Panelists will discuss:

- Case management and project management software
- Calendars, alarms, and work blocks
- Checklists, spreadsheets, and templates
- Case reviews and documentation of case history
- Active communication with client and attorney

*Flavia Santos Lloyd (DL), Newport Beach, CA
Cheri Harjo-Dobbs, Paralegal, Elizabeth, CO
Jessica Ramos, Paralegal, McKinney, TX*

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm **Understanding the Military Assistance Program: How to Get Involved**
AILA's one and only pro bono program has been serving military immigration members and their families since 2007. Military Committee member and Military Fellow, Joanna Kloet, will discuss more about the program, what to expect, some common things you may need to know to handle military cases, and how to get involved.

Joanna C. Kloet, Grand Rapids, MI

2:30 pm – 3:30 pm **AILALink and Fastcase Demo**
Come see how AILALink, our subscription immigration law library, and Fastcase, the comprehensive case law research system included in your AILA member benefits, can assist you in your practice. AILA staff will demonstrate both of these convenient online legal research tools.

Sarah Loor, AILA Online Legal Publishing Manager, Washington, D.C.

Saturday, June 21

8:00 am – 9:00 am **Ira Kurzban Meet-and-Greet and Bookplate**
Meet immigration legend Ira Kurzban and receive a signed bookplate to add to your copy of Kurzban's Immigration Law Sourcebook.

Ira J. Kurzban, AILA Past President/AILA Author, Kurzban's Immigration Law Sourcebook, 19th Ed., Coral Gables, FL

9:30 am – 10:30 am

Asylum Q and A With AILA Author Dree Collopy

Get your asylum questions answered by the author of AILA's Asylum Primer and provide feedback and input for the next edition.

Dree K. Collopy, AILA Author, AILA's Asylum Primer: A Practical Guide to U.S. Asylum Law and Procedure, 9th ed., Law Journal Editorial Board, Washington, D.C.