

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY
2026

"YOU BE THE JUDGE" PROBATE AND GUARDIANSHIP SEMINAR

MIAMI DADE BAR PROBATE GUARDIANSHIP COMMITTEE
YOUNG LAWYERS SECTION
DADE LEGAL AID - PUT SOMETHING BACK



On January 21, 2026, Dade Legal Aid presented the **"You Be the Judge for Newbies & Pros" Probate & Guardianship Seminar** in conjunction with the MDB Probate and Guardianship Committee. Under the leadership of Dale Noll, Esq., Chair of the Committee and Partner at Akerman LLP, we brought this dynamic continuing legal education program designed to equip both new and seasoned practitioners with practical tools for navigating probate and guardianship issues. Offering 4.0 CLE including 1.0 Professionalism, the seminar emphasized real-world problem solving, ethical decision-making, and hands-on learning through case-based discussions.



The program's purpose was to strengthen probate and guardianship practice by engaging attorneys in practical decision-making on issues such as elder exploitation, fiduciary duties, blended family disputes, and the rights of alleged incapacitated persons. By placing participants in the role of the judge, the seminar bridged doctrine and practice while reinforcing Dade Legal Aid's commitment to ethical advocacy and access to justice.

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FEATURED SPEAKERS

DALE NOLL, ESQ. - AKERMAN LLP

Dale Noll, Esq., is a Partner at Akerman LLP, where he represents trustees, beneficiaries, and fiduciaries in complex probate, trust, and guardianship matters. He is an active member of the Florida Bar's Real Property, Probate, and Trust Law Sections and is Chair of the Dade County Bar Association's Probate and Guardianship Committee. Mr. Noll, whose support and assistance was instrumental for seminar, opened the seminar with welcoming and opening remarks,



WENDY L. ROBBINS, ESQ. - DADE LEGAL AID

Wendy Robbins, Esq., is the Managing Attorney of the Guardianship Division at Dade Legal Aid, overseeing a wide range of guardianship, probate, family law, and appellate matters. She supervises multiple attorneys and projects, including youth-focused guardianship initiatives. A certified NITA instructor, she has provided training at the local, state, and national levels and is the recipient of the Robert L. Shevin Public Service Award (2016). Ms. Robbins presented *Guardianship: Successes and Challenges*.

GUTMAN SKRANDE, ESQ. - DUANE MORRIS LLP

Gutman Skrande, Esq., is a Partner at Duane Morris LLP, whose practice focuses on probate, trust, and guardianship administration and litigation, representing fiduciaries, beneficiaries, and institutions in complex and emotionally sensitive matters throughout South Florida. He presented *Timing of Reasonable Funding of Sub-Trusts Post-Death*.



LOTOYA K. BROWN, ESQ.- PUT SOMETHING BACK PROJECT

Lotoya K. Brown, Esq., is the Civil Pro Bono Project Coordinator for the Put Something Back Project, where she assists clients with consumer, collection, housing, probate, and guardianship matters. A former Interim Deputy City Attorney for Sunny Isles Beach and past president of the Gwen S. Cherry Black Women Lawyers Association, Ms. Brown presented *How to Accept and Represent a Pro Bono Case*.

LISA D. LANDY, ESQ. - LANDY RODRIGUEZ, LLP

Lisa Landy, Esq., is a Founding Partner at Landy Rodriguez, LLP with more than eighteen years of experience in probate, litigation, and fiduciary matters. Her practice includes advising fiduciaries, administering estates and trusts, resolving disputes, and managing high-stakes family and business transactions. She presented *Pretermitted Share Claims on Homestead Property*.



MONIQUE D. HAYES, ESQ. - DGIM LAW, PLLC

Monique Hayes, Esq., is an experienced attorney whose practice includes bankruptcy, fraud litigation, asset sales, and complex transactional matters. She is a best-selling author and frequently contributes to legal publications and speaking programs. A member of the ABA Business Law Section Council and adjunct professor at the University of Miami School of Law, Ms. Hayes presented *Modern Family Feud (Blended Family Contest)*.

MATTHEW P. MOSCHELL, ESQ. - KELLEY KRONENBERG

Matt Moschell, Esq., an attorney at Kelley Kronenberg, focuses his practice on estate planning, probate litigation, and guardianship matters. He previously worked as a Junior Partner at a multi-state insurance defense firm and as an Associate Attorney at a large civil litigation firm, concentrating on first and third-party civil litigation. He presented *Party's Right to Jury Trials in Probate Matters*.



CAREN LESSER, ESQ. - GUARDIANSHIP PROGRAM OF DADE COUNTY

Caren Lesser Esq., Director of Legal Services, for the Guardianship Program of Dade County, provides legal support for approximately 1,200 wards annually and is a Florida Supreme Court Certified Family Mediator and recipient of multiple public service awards. Ms. Lesser is a member of the Florida Bar Elder Law, Real Property & Trust Law Section, the Florida Guardianship Association, and the Miami-Dade Bar Probate & Guardianship Committee. She presented *Elder Exploitation*.

PATRICIA D. BLANCO, ESQ. & LAUREN M. BRACERAS, ESQ. - WICKER SMITH

Patricia D. Blanco, Esq., is a Partner in Wicker Smith's Miami office, handling estates, trusts, guardianship administration, and estate litigation, with extensive experience in contested fiduciary matters. She presented *AIP's Right to Counsel and the Requirements/Guidelines Under the Holmes and Campbell Cases*, alongside co-presenter Lauren Bracerias, Esq., an Associate whose practice focuses on estates, trusts, and probate matters and who brings experience from judicial clerkships and youth clinics.



In addition to its educational mission, the “You Be the Judge for Newbies & Pros” Probate & Guardianship Seminar honored leaders whose careers reflect exceptional service, professionalism, and dedication to protecting vulnerable individuals and families in probate and guardianship proceedings.

2026 PUT SOMETHING BACK PRO BONO AWARDS



Edward I. Golden, Esq., has practiced law since 1977, dedicating his career to probate, guardianship, and trust litigation and administration. As Chairman of the Internal Procedures Committee, he has worked closely with Miami-Dade County Probate Judges and local practitioners to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of probate court operations, and he has also chaired the Dade County Probate & Guardianship Committee. Through Put Something Back, **Mr. Golden has dedicated more than 200 hours of pro bono service.**



Johnny A. Gaspard, Esq., maintains a diverse practice focusing on criminal law, foreclosure defense, bankruptcy, entertainment law, and general civil litigation, while also advising small businesses on corporate structuring, contract drafting, and intellectual property protection. **Mr. Gaspard has devoted more than 100 hours through Put Something Back** to assisting low-income clients facing probate and guardianship challenges.



Joselito Burgos, Esq., is dedicated to guiding families through the often sensitive and overwhelming areas of probate, estate, trust, and guardianship law. His experience includes estate planning, guardianship, probate, and trust administration, and **he regularly volunteers through Put Something Back to provide vital assistance** to low-income individuals navigating complex guardianship proceedings.



Joy B. Spill, Esq., is a solo practitioner whose work focuses on commercial real estate, estate planning, and the preparation of wills, trusts, durable powers of attorney, and other advance directives. She also assists clients with the administration of probate estates. **She has handled more than 60 cases through Put Something Back**, offering meaningful support to children and families in probate and guardianship matters.

Together, these honorees exemplify the mission of the Put Something Back Project by going above and beyond to ensure that vulnerable individuals and families receive high-quality legal representation and compassionate advocacy.



HONOREES

THANK YOU FOR MAKING “YOU BE THE JUDGE” A SUCCESS

Dade Legal Aid's Put Something Back Project extends its sincere thanks to everyone who joined us for the “You Be the Judge for Newbies & Pros” Probate & Guardianship Seminar on January 21, 2026.

We are grateful to the attorneys, judges, and practitioners whose participation, thoughtful questions, and engagement made this program a meaningful and successful day of learning.



THANK YOU TO OUR SPEAKERS

We extend special appreciation to our distinguished speakers for sharing their time, expertise, and practical insight. Through their presentations, each speaker helped bring complex probate and guardianship issues to life for both new and experienced practitioners.

Your dedication to mentorship, professionalism, and public service reflects the very best of our legal community.



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS & HOST

This program would not have been possible without the generous support of our sponsors and host:

- Miami- Dade Bar
- Miami-Dade Bar Young Lawyers Section
- Gwen S. Cherry Black Women Lawyers Association
- Virgil Hawkins Florida Chapter, National Bar Association
- Haitian Lawyers Association Foundation
- **Host Firm: Akerman LLP**



Your continued partnership strengthens our ability to provide high-quality legal education and expand access to justice for low-income individuals and families.

PROGRAM RECORDING AVAILABLE



For those who were unable to attend or wish to revisit the program, we are pleased to share that the seminar was recorded and will be made available for continued learning and reference. Contact psb@dadelegalaid.org.

WITH GRATITUDE

On behalf of Dade Legal Aid and the Put Something Back Project, thank you for being part of this program and for your continued commitment to service, professionalism, and our community.

