



2025 Access to Justice Summit

Speaker Bios



2025 Keynote

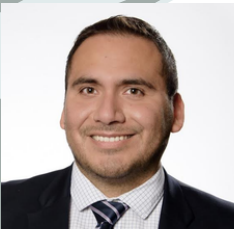


Amy Sorenson, partner at Snell & Wilmer, is a nationally recognized civil litigator with nearly three decades of experience in the federal and state courts of Utah, Nevada, and California. With a collaborative approach and an energizing presence, Amy has led high profile matters ranging from complex business litigation to federal Constitutional and statutory “bet-the-company” challenges and beyond. A trusted advisor to business both in and out of the courtroom, Amy also has led and resolved difficult internal investigations matters. Her industry-specific knowledge includes financial services, higher education, and sports and technology. Amy’s leadership includes acting as Co-Chair of the Financial Services Litigation Practice Group, formerly serving on the firm’s Expanded Executive Committee, and founding the Snell & Wilmer Women’s Initiative, which aims to support the career development of Snell & Wilmer’s women attorneys. For her community, Amy is proud to have served as Co-Chair of the Utah State Bar Access to Justice Commission since 2018 and to have led the most recent Magistrate Judge Merit Selection Panel for the United States District Court for the District of Utah.

Plenary: “Making Justice Accessible”



Judge Richard E. Mrazik was appointed to the Third District Court in April 2018 by Governor Gary R. Herbert. He took the bench in June 2018 and serves Salt Lake, Summit, and Tooele counties. Judge Mrazik received a Bachelor’s Degree in sociology and biology from Bowdoin College in 1999. After serving as an Americorps member at the Fourth Street Clinic in Salt Lake City, Utah, he received his law degree from the S.J. Quinney College of Law at the University of Utah in 2005. Prior to joining the bench, Judge Mrazik was a shareholder in the litigation department of Parsons Behle & Latimer. He served on the board of directors of the Utah Bar Foundation from 2013 to 2019. Judge Mrazik currently chairs the Utah Judicial Council’s Standing Committee on Resources for Self-Represented Parties and serves on the board of directors of the Utah Avalanche Center.



Jonathan Puente, is the inaugural director of the Office of Fairness and Accountability at the AOC which is tasked with identifying and removing racism and bias from the Utah Courts. He received his JD from Loyola University Chicago School of Law and his BA from Brigham Young University. For the last eleven years Jon has been working in diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives from policy development and implementation to strategic planning, to community outreach. His experience is diversified, including serving multiple times as a Diversity Director, chairing strategic planning committees, preparing and presenting workshops, working with organizations on all levels to make sure DEI principles are embedded throughout the organization. During the last five years, his focus has been on diversifying the legal profession, the bench, and increasing access to justice to marginalized communities.



Janine Liebert, serves as the Director of the Self-Help Center of the Utah State Courts. She formerly served as the Director of Public and Legal Education at LA Law Library in Los Angeles, California. Janine holds an undergraduate degree from Amherst College in Massachusetts, a Master of Arts in Liberal Arts degree from St. John’s College in New Mexico and a Master of Library and Information Science degree from UCLA.



Moderator

Maryt Fredrickson serves as the Chief of Staff to the Chief Justice of the Utah Supreme Court. She joined the Utah Judicial Branch in January 2025. She relocated from Wyoming where she worked for the Wyoming Supreme Court and co-chaired Access to Justice 2.0, the action arm of the Wyoming Access to Justice Commission. She also worked for eight years as a staff attorney in Wyoming's district courts, spent a short time as a federal prosecutor, and several years in private practice at Holland & Hart LLP. A few weeks ago, Maryt received the John M. Burman Extraordinary Service Award from the Wyoming State Bar, recognizing her years of service working on access to justice initiatives, writing and speaking about attorney well-being, mentoring law students, and working as a district court commissioner.

Breakout 1: “AI & Tools for Expanding Access to Justice”



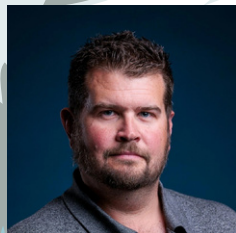
Nick Hafen is the Head of Legal Technology Education and leads the development of the Law School's legal technology curriculum, including LawX and the Legal Technology Initiative. Nick also supports faculty members engaged in tech-related research and serves as faculty advisor for the Law, Innovation, Technology & Entrepreneurship (LITE) student organization. Nick earned a J.D. at Brigham Young University and practiced bankruptcy and corporate law in private practice prior to joining the Law Library. He maintains a practice advising organizations on AI governance and strategy at Clarion AI Partners.



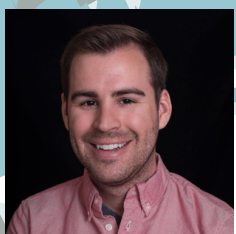
Ransom Wydner is Vice President of Partnerships at SixFifty Technologies, and Co-Chair of the Emerging Leaders Council at Legal Services Corporation. Ransom believes that the law is for everyone, just like public parks and libraries—and that regular people should feel empowered by the law, not intimidated. He advocates for technological and regulatory innovation to expand access to justice. In his free time Ransom loves to sing, talk at length about dioramas, and spend time outdoors with his partner and his dog.



Teisha Bunn is currently a Managing Attorney with Utah Legal Services, supervising the Intake team and working with the Domestic taskforce. During the 8 years she has been with ULS, she has been very involved with efforts to make the preparation of high quality legal documents more efficient, as well as efforts to improve our client's experience and ensure true “Access to Justice” for all we serve.



Ian Christensen has a bachelor's degree in computer networks from Weber State University. He is the Assistant IT Director at the Utah State Bar, and he has been working in legal IT for 12 years. He specializes in making processes better and reverse engineering processes to repurpose them or improve them. He is trained in web design and functions. His hobbies are history, specifically Amusement Park History, riding and designing Roller Coasters. He is writing a history book on the Saltair Beach Resort that he has been researching and writing for 8 years.



Spencer Twede holds a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in information technology management. He has worked over the past decade for Apple and the Canyons School District, and in May 2025 he joined the Utah State Bar as Director of Information Technology. Spencer is a Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM) through PMI and a Certified Education Technology Leader (CETL) through CoSN, in addition to holding multiple Apple technical certifications. He finds motivation in work that serves the public good and is passionate about problem solving and building solutions to complex challenges.



Alexander Chang is a member of Parsons Behle & Latimer's litigation practice team as an associate attorney. His practice focuses on bankruptcy, trusts and estates issues, helping individuals and corporations through commercial and trust litigation. His practice also has an emphasis on navigating complex asset protection trusts and legal issues surrounding the use of generative artificial intelligence. When not practicing law, Alex enjoys gardening with his family and exploring artificial intelligence for various applications.



Moderator

Kimberly Farnsworth is the Training and Special Projects Counsel for the Access to Justice Office. She recently graduated from BYU Law school, where she participated in and served on the Board of LITE (Law, Innovation, Technology & Entrepreneurship). She currently runs the Pro Se Debt Collection Calendar and uses low-code and AI solutions to automate the program for clients and volunteer attorneys. In her free time, she likes to dance, cook, and pick up new hobbies.

Breakout 2: "Exploring New Models for Legal Access"



Devin Shakespear serves as the Victim Services Coordinator for the Kane County Attorney's Office in Southern Utah, a role she has held for over 10 years. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Southern Utah University and has dedicated her career to supporting victims of crime. In 2020, Devin became a Certified Advocate (now Domestic Violence Community Justice Advocate) through Timpanogos Legal Center, which has enabled her to expand the scope of services she offers. Through this certification, she is able to assist victims with legal advice related to protective orders, help draft the orders, and prepare clients for court proceedings. Devin is passionate about empowering victims and ensuring they have the resources and support needed to navigate the justice system.



Cody Egan is the Housing Services Specialist at Ogden-Weber Community Action Partnership, where he developed the Tenant Landlord Mediation Program and the Renter Education program. Cody is passionate about participating in innovative programs, including adopting Utah's first Ready to Rent renter education program and participating in Utah's first cohort for the Housing Stability Legal Advocate (HSLA) program.

Cody teaches Ready to Rent classes at the Utah State Prison, Weber Basin Job Corps, and the Weber County jail, where he helps first-time renters and high-barrier clients build the confidence to be lifelong successful renters. Although initially a high school dropout, Cody eventually attended the University of Utah on a full-tuition scholarship and graduated Cum Laude with a Bachelor's in Economics and a Bachelor's in Health, Society, & Policy. He also attended the University of Southern California on a Dean's Merit Scholarship, where he graduated with his Masters in Planning focusing on Community Development. He recently received the 2024 Utah Housing Coalition's Member of the Year Award for his recent contributions to Utah's housing community. Cody spends his free time camping and paddle boarding with his cat, two dogs, and girlfriend.



Emmie Gardner, Chief Executive Officer of Holy Cross Ministries, is a passionate, mission-driven leader with a 30-plus year history working in healthcare in a variety of clinical and administrative roles including mental health, cancer care, and senior services. She is a licensed clinical social worker, earning her MSW from the University of Utah. She also holds graduate certifications in Mediation and Conflict Resolution and Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND). She is passionate about the intersectionality of culture and disabilities and has taken on a USU faculty position in Utah Regional LEND program through USU. Emmie is skilled in non-profit organizations serving on several local not-for-profit organization boards, enjoys advocacy and public speaking, and promotes staff development and team building.



Moderator

Hayley Cousin is the Executive Director of Community Justice Advocates of Utah. Hayley has a passion for ensuring all Utahns can understand and access the civil legal system in a meaningful way. Her work in access to justice began at Timpanogos Legal Center, where she helped to design and then ran the Certified Advocate Partners Program, the first Utah Regulatory Sandbox program to use nonlawyers to provide free legal services to Utahns. After three years of evaluating and improving the service model, she founded Community Justice Advocates of Utah to provide a central agency to oversee and support nonlawyers who are providing low complexity, high impact legal services to Utahns, with the goals of lowering barriers to entry to legal services provision, increasing support for nonlawyer providers and their agencies, and evaluating and improving programs and service models. Hayley graduated with honors from the BYU Law School, and is a member of the Utah State Bar.

Breakout 3: “Expanding Access to Justice in Rural Communities”



Judge Samuel P. Chiara was appointed to the Eighth District Court by Governor Gary Herbert in August 2013. He serves in Daggett, Duchesne, and Uintah counties. Judge Chiara received a Bachelor of Science degree in accounting from the Marriott School of Management at Brigham Young University. He graduated magna cum laude receiving a juris doctorate degree from J. Reuben Clark Law School, BYU, in 1997. Prior to his appointment, Judge Chiara practiced at a firm in Price, Utah. He practiced first with Keith Chiara and later as a partner in Chiara & Torgerson. His practice included criminal defense, domestic, probate, contract, property, parental defense, and personal injury law. Judge Chiara also served as defense counsel for the Carbon County Drug Court. Judge Chiara was awarded the Utah State Bar Litigation Section Judicial Excellence Award in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2020. He served on the Board of District Court Judges from 2017-2020 and currently serves on the Judicial Council on the Policy and Planning Committee.



Abram Sherrod was born in Pocatello, ID and was raised by his mother and grandmother. They provided him with a strong foundation and a love for learning. Abram was among the first in his family to attend college on his mothers side. He was introduced to higher education at a young age because his uncle was in the process of finishing his Doctorate in Political Science at Idaho State University. Abram would follow in his path and received a bachelors in Political Science and Sociology. He would continue with his education pursuing a Master’s degree in Public Administration with an emphasis in state, local, and nonprofit institutions. Abram’s first passion has been working with youth in a number of different capacities. He got his start working at a community pool, but has since worked with youth in a school and community program environments. He has since pivoted towards working with adult populations. His current role has brought him to the Utah Courts as the Public Outreach Coordinator. Abram is dedicated to creating safe environments for all residents regardless of their background.



Susan Griffith is the Executive Director of Timpanogos Legal Center. She has over 30 years of experience in working with family law and domestic violence issues. Susan has served as Managing Attorney of the Provo Office of Utah Legal Services and an Assistant Attorney General in Child Protection. Susan has been part-time faculty at Brigham Young University’s Law School since 1995. She teaches clinical courses in Family Law, Domestic Violence Intervention, Child Advocacy as well as externship classes and skills-based courses. Susan was a founding member of Timpanogos Legal Center and loves the challenge of finding ways to help more people and involve more attorneys in pro bono work.



Moderator

Megan Connelly was named the Utah State Bar’s Access to Justice Director in December 2023. She brings over a decade of experience in social impact work to the position. Megan held previous roles in legal services, higher education, nonprofits, and philanthropy with a focus on issues of equitable community and economic development. She is a graduate of the University of Notre Dame and SUNY Buffalo Law School.