

# PRESENTERS

## **Juan M. Gaona**

### **STX Director of Business Development, Airrosit Rehab Centers**

Juan Gaona is the Director of Business Development at Airrosti Rehab Centers, where he partners with employers, health plans, and consultants to address one of the largest drivers of healthcare cost: musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions.

With over 15 years of experience in healthcare strategy, operations, and employer engagement, Juan focuses on helping organizations



reduce claims risk, improve workforce performance, and simplify the employee care experience through outcome-driven models. He works closely with HR, Risk, and Benefits leaders across Texas to align clinical care with business objectives – emphasizing early intervention, care coordination, and measurable results. Born and raised in South Texas, Juan is passionate about improving access to effective care and helping individuals resolve pain so they can stay active, productive, and engaged.

## **Lauren Safranek**

### **Vice President, Public Sector Consultant, Lockton**

As a Vice President, Public Sector Consultant, Lauren advises client service teams on the unique challenges faced by municipalities, counties, and other public sector organizations. Her focus is on helping these entities navigate complex financial and political landscapes while striving to deliver exceptional support to their employees. At Lockton, Lauren partners with clients to drive impactful solutions that reflect the distinctive environments in which



they operate. Lauren is responsible for leading strategy and client engagement within the Public Sector Practice. As part of the public sector thought leadership, Lauren stays informed on public sector trends and regulations, represents Lockton's Public Sector Practice in public forums, conferences and client meetings, and contributes to policy development and strategic planning initiatives. Prior to joining Lockton, Lauren dedicated nearly 25 years to the City of Frisco as the Director of Human Resources, rounding out over 30 years of public sector human resources experience. As a seasoned HR leader, Lauren has extensive experience aligning human capital strategy with citywide goals. She has a proven ability to lead full-scope HR operations, partner with executive leadership, and build inclusive, high-performing workplace cultures. Lauren received her BBA in Human Resources | University of North Texas; Denton, Texas. Professional certifications include: SHRM-SCP – Society of HR Management National Public Employers Labor Relations certification 40-hour Mediation certification

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**George Flores**  
**Partner, DigiStream Investigations**

George Flores is the Managing Partner of DigiStream Texas. With over a decade of expertise in workers' compensation and liability insurance defense investigations, he bridges the gap between traditional surveillance and emerging intelligence technology.

Mr. Flores's career is rooted in the field, having started as a Surveillance Investigator in San Diego before rising to Business Development Manager in the Bay Area. This progression from field

capture to strategic intelligence gives him a unique perspective. George is a regular presenter to liability law firms and insurance & workers' comp. organizations, where he shares insights into advanced investigative strategies necessary to mitigate risk and reduce exposure in complex claims for attorneys, examiners, and risk managers. George holds a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice with an emphasis in Crime and Behavior from San Diego State University.



**Melissa Steger**  
**Executive Vice President, WorkCompCollege.com**

Melissa is Executive Vice President of Business Development and a partner at WorkCompCollege.com, where she works to build strong partnerships and create practical education for the workers' compensation and risk management community. With more than 30 years of experience across public, private, and regulatory environments, she brings a real-world, systems-level perspective to leadership, claims, and workforce development. Melissa is a past

National President of the Public Risk Management Association and was named Risk Professional of the Year in 2016. She's a frequent speaker at conferences across the country and is known for making complex topics relatable, engaging, and immediately useful. In addition to her industry leadership, Melissa owns a consulting practice that blends horsemanship principles into leadership and claims education—offering a fresh perspective on trust, communication, and accountability. She also serves on the board of Kids' Chance of Texas and is a passionate advocate for claim professionals and injured workers.

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## **Kristina Peters**

### **AVP, Sr. Consultant, Charlesworth Consulting**

Kristina joined the Charlesworth team in 2024, bringing more than two decades of specialized expertise to the firm. Her professional perspective is uniquely informed by her extensive background in municipal leadership, having previously served as a Director of HR and Risk. This firsthand experience allows her to move beyond theoretical consulting and design insurance programs that address the authentic, day-to-day operational pressures faced by public entities.

Leveraging her deep history within local government, Kristina has a proven track record of implementing integrated risk management and HR programs that strengthen organizational resilience. At Charlesworth, she utilizes this practitioner's insight to build client relationships rooted in a shared understanding of the complex intersection between personnel management and financial liability.



## **Eric C. Botello**

### **Associate Attorney, Pearson Legal P.C.**

Eric Botello obtained his Bachelor's Degree in Political Science with a focus on International Relations from St. Mary's University. After graduating, he attended St. Mary's University School of Law where he had the honor of gaining national recognition with their national trial team. Mr. Botello has been licensed to practice law since 2017 and has extensive experience in civil and criminal litigation.

Mr. Botello is a trial lawyer. Before joining Pearson Legal, he began his career at the Bexar County District Attorney's office. He personally oversaw the prosecution of felony assault offenses, crimes against children, sexual offenses, aggravated robbery, arson, gang violence, and drug trafficking. Throughout his tenure as a prosecutor, he personally brought dozens of trials to verdict. His reputation allowed him to secure countless convictions in the pre-trial stages often near the maximum penalty range.

He spent the next part of his career at a local civil litigation defense firm where his practiced centered on defending insurance carriers in matters regarding catastrophic injury, premises liability, product defects, breach of contract, construction defects, business interruption claims, professional malpractice claims, and employment claims. Now, in his current role with Pearson Legal P.C., he represents Plaintiffs in matters against insurance carriers and builders.

In his spare time, he returned to his alma mater where he revitalized their Undergraduate Pre-Law program which now includes a mock trial program and internship opportunities. He still serves as the main instructor for their national mock trial team. He is also an active member of the American Inns of Court.

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**Jeff McKissack**  
**President, Defense by Design**

Jeff McKissack is a noted speaker on the topics of risk and reputation management, having addressed these topics for some 38 years and to over 400,000 in live audiences, millions more via radio and television. Jeff regularly speaks to a myriad of professional and industry conferences and conventions across the country, offers employee training both in-person and online, and is a contributing writer to several national trade publications.

Jeff is a recognized speaker within the RIMS world and its chapters as well as for the Texas Municipal HR Association and many other state professional associations.



**Ruben Mendez**  
**Damage Prevention Manager, San Antonio Office**  
**Texas 811**

With a career rooted in construction since 2005, Ruben D' Mendez is a seasoned Safety Leader dedicated to fostering a culture of proactive risk management and regulatory compliance. Over the past two decades, Ruben D' Mendez has built extensive expertise across a wide range of construction environments, specializing in the application and enforcement of OSHA and PHMSA regulations. Known for a hands-on approach and a deep understanding of field operations, Ruben D'

Mendez has successfully led safety initiatives for complex projects, driving improvements in incident prevention, workforce training, and regulatory audits. Ruben D' Mendez's leadership philosophy centers on collaboration, continuous improvement, and empowering teams to prioritize safety as a core value on every jobsite.



**Jim Greaves**  
**Vice President Risk Service Manager, HUB International**

Jim Greaves is the Vice President-Risk Service Manager for the Texas Region of HUB's Risk Services Division. Jim has over thirty-seven years of experience as a risk management/risk control consultant. Before joining the team at HUB International, Jim worked with the Baptist Health System as a Safety and Risk Manager, and two national insurance carriers, EBI Companies and Royal Sun Alliance. Jim has provided expert risk management/risk control consultation

to various industries, including manufacturing, construction, health care, hospitality, auto dealerships, transportation, retail operations, oil and gas, and non-profit organizations.

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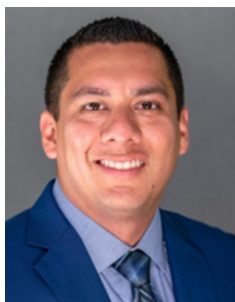
**Fernando Hernandez,  
Risk & Safety Manager, City of Austin**

Fernando Hernandez is a public sector risk and safety leader with over 16 years of experience advancing workplace safety programs and strengthening incident investigation practices across Texas municipalities. As the Risk & Safety Manager for the City of Austin, he leads corporate safety initiatives and oversees a self-funded workers' compensation program that supports one of the largest and most diverse workforces in the state.

Prior to joining the City of Austin, Fernando held risk management roles with the City of McAllen and the City of Irving, where he gained extensive experience in workers' compensation, safety operations, and incident investigation practices.

His approach emphasizes learning from incidents, identifying systemic risks, and implementing practical solutions that reduce repeat injuries. His experience includes developing citywide safety policies, enhancing accident investigation protocols, and integrating data insights to drive proactive safety strategies.

Fernando holds an Associate degree in Business Administration and is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in occupational health and safety at Columbia Southern University. He also holds a Certified Safety and Health Official (CSHO) designation from Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service and serves on the Board of Directors for the Texas Public Risk Management Association (PRIMA), where he chairs the Member Services Committee.



**Jorge Camorlinga,  
Claims Supervisor, United Fire Group Insurance**

Jorge Camorlinga is a Workers' Compensation Claims Supervisor with UFG Insurance, bringing more than a decade of experience in claims management and injury resolution. Since beginning his career in 2015 with Texas Mutual Insurance Company, he has developed expertise managing workers' compensation claims for government entities and self-insured employers. He holds a Bachelor of Business Administration in Business Management from The University of Texas

at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College and earned the Workers' Recovery Professional (WRP) designation through WorkCompCollege.com. In 2026, Jorge was recognized with the Business Insurance Break Out Award, honoring emerging leaders in the risk management and property and casualty insurance industry.

Jorge is passionate about delivering fair, timely claim resolutions while helping injured employees navigate the recovery process. His experience working alongside employers, adjusters, and injured workers provides valuable insight into effective claims management and incident response.

Outside of work, Jorge enjoys spending time with his wife and sons, golfing, following baseball, and serving his community through the Rotary Club of Los Fresnos.

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**Jessica Junek**  
**Attorney, Castagna Scott PLLC**

Jessica "Jess" Junek is a zealous advocate for clients involved in litigation. She has proven oral and written advocacy skills in both state and federal courts. She brings enthusiasm to every litigation team through her creative analysis, preparation and grit. Her practice focuses on representing clients in a variety of disputes including personal injury, wrongful death, premises liability, products liability, and construction defect matters.

Outside of the office, Jess enjoys being an active member of her community. She is Adjunct Professor of Trial Advocacy at St. Mary's University School of Law where she teaches and prepares the next generation of lawyers. Through her work as an Adjunct Professor, Jess led the National Trial Team to its first National Championship in over a decade at the 2022 National Trial League Competition.

Jess is also an avid saltwater fly fishing angler. She is often traveling to the lower Florida Keys and the Texas coast in search of redfish, bonefish, tarpon, and the elusive permit. Her fly fishing hobby has rewarded her in so many ways, but most importantly as a way to give back as a casting instructor with a national non-profit, Casting for Recovery, which provides healing retreats for breast cancer survivors and others still in the process of recovery.



**Jorge Zamora**  
**Attorney, Mayer LLP**

Jorge Aaron Zamora was born and raised in El Paso, Texas. After graduating from UTEP in 2014, he attended the University of Houston Law Center and graduated in 2018. Jorge interned with Judge Hoyt and Judge Hittner in the United States Court for the Southern District of Texas during law school. He also interned at the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas. After graduating, Jorge worked at an insurance defense firm for three and a half years

before joining Mayer. In his spare time, he travels with his wife and enjoys exercising.



**Matthew Worthington,**  
**Workers' Compensation Program Director, PAM Health**

Matthew C. Worthington serves as the Workers' Compensation Program Director for PAM Health, overseeing the workers' compensation program across the Austin, Dallas-Fort Worth, and Texarkana markets. He works closely with employers, risk managers, adjusters, nurse case managers, and healthcare providers to improve outcomes for injured workers through effective care coordination and strategic claim management. An experienced speaker, moderator, and educator, Matthew regularly presents on workers' compensation,

healthcare navigation, and return-to-work strategies for industry professionals.

Beyond his professional role, Matthew is committed to community service as a Kids' Chance of Texas Ambassador, a Board Director on The San Marcos Texas Community Foundation, a Board Director for the Sights & Sounds of Christmas Foundation and a member of the CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Stars of Texas Gala Committee. He is passionate about building stronger communities and supporting those facing life's unexpected challenges.

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**Stuart D. Colburn**  
**Shareholder, Downs & Stanford**

Mr. Colburn is a shareholder of Downs & Stanford and opened the Austin, Texas, office. He is board certified in workers' compensation law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization. Stuart is a certified lobbyist, serves as the firm's representative at Division of Workers' Compensation meetings, and attends legislative meetings and hearings. He has extensive experience in all phases of dispute resolution before the Division of Worker's Compensation and in

district court. Stuart passionately strives to remove barriers and increase opportunities to improve the workers' compensation system through advocacy and education, while taking a stand for doing the right thing and opposing those with contrary agendas.



**Larry Bauske**  
**President, The Alcohol and Drug Testing Service**

Established in 1994 as Texas Alcohol and Drug Testing Service, Inc. (TADTS), the company has been a trusted leader in helping organizations create and maintain Drug-Free Workplaces for more than 30 years.

Larry Bauske, President and Owner of Texas Alcohol and Drug Testing Service, Inc., has been a dedicated member of the alcohol and drug testing industry since January 2003. After taking over the family business in 2006, Larry has played a key role in helping independent owner-operators, trucking companies, and numerous Texas state agencies maintain compliance with their substance abuse testing programs.

Under Larry's leadership, TADTS has expanded to operate five offices throughout the state of Texas while also partnering with a nationwide network of approved collection sites. This network ensures that clients receive reliable, professional collection services designed to support employer compliance and workplace safety.

In September 2019, Larry was among the first attendees invited to Des Moines, Iowa, where leaders within the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration drug program management introduced the FMCSA Clearinghouse. Since then, TADTS has continued assisting clients with Clearinghouse queries and compliance management, helping keep the nation's roadways safer for everyone.