

Montana Arbitrators Association

2020 - 21 Labor & Arbitration Winter Webinar Series

Presenter Bios

JEFFREY W. JACOBS
Attorney/Arbitrator

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Jeff began practicing law in Minnesota in 1980 and became a full-time labor arbitrator in 1995. He was inducted into the National Academy of Arbitrators in 2005. Prior to that he practiced extensively representing union and management clients in both the private and public sectors. Jeff is on the Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Oregon, Montana, U.S. Virgin Islands and Washington state lists of arbitrators and is on two FMCS panels. He is also on numerous permanent panels in the public and private sectors, including USPS/APWU, USPS/NALC, USPS/NPMHU, IRS/NTEU, NMB railroad matters, Endeavor Airlines and CWA, and Compass Air and ALPA. He has numerous published decisions in BNA Arbitration Reporters along with hundreds of cases on public sector lists around the country.

Jeff is a frequent lecturer at arbitration seminars around the country doing both live and webinar presentations for the AAA, Labor Arbitration Institute, Montana Arbitration Association, Iowa PERB, Minnesota Continuing Legal Education, Minnesota BMS and FMCS seminars. He has authored numerous articles in the area of labor arbitration, including an update to two sections of the 6th Edition of Elkouri and Elkouri, *How Arbitration Works*. In addition to his labor arbitration work, Jeff arbitrates and mediates civil and administrative matters in the District Courts and in the Minnesota Workers Compensation system.

DAVID GABA

Attorney/Arbitrator

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David Gaba is a graduate of the University of Nebraska receiving his J.D. from the College of Law in 1984 and his M.B.A. in 1987. Since joining the bar he served as an attorney for the Department of Labor, Chief Administrative Law Judge of the Nebraska Appeal Tribunal, General Counsel for the largest healthcare union in the State of Washington, Assistant Attorney General for the State of Washington, and Director of Labor Relations for Metropolitan King County; he is currently a member of the Washington, Idaho, and Nebraska Bar Associations. Dave has had numerous cases published and cited in the BNA Labor Arbitration Reporter and is the author of *Equitable Defenses Under State Blue-Sky Law*, PIABA B. J., Vol. 16, No. 3 (2009); and, *Disregarding the Manifest Disregard of the Law Standard Under the Federal Arbitration Act*, 17 PIABA B. J. 179 (2010). Dave serves on many permanent panels including those for the states of Washington, Alaska, and Oregon.

When not hearing cases as a labor arbitrator Mr. Gaba limits his practice to securities litigation (mostly suing stockbrokers). Mr. Gaba is currently on the roster of the American Arbitration

Association, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, Washington Public Employment Relations Commission, Oregon Public Employment Relations Board, and FINRA among others.

HOWELL L. LANKFORD

Arbitrator/Mediator

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Howell L. Lankford began working in private practice as a fulltime labor relations arbitrator and mediator in 1984 (after being an Administrative Law Judge for the Oregon Employment Relations Board from 1979 to 1984). He is a past Governor and a past Northwest Regional Chair of the National Academy of Arbitrators, a past Chair of the Oregon State Bar Labor & Employment Law Section; founder and past Editor of the Washington Labor Law Digest; past Editor of the annual University of Oregon PERC Casebooks and of the LERC Monograph series, including Individual Statutory Rights of Represented Employees; and author of the Oregon State Bar Public Sector Labor & Employment Law CLE chapter on enforcing public sector collective bargaining agreements (1990, 1994, 1997, 2002, & 2011). He is on the public panels of the FMCS, AAA and of labor relations agencies in Washington, Oregon, Montana, and Hawaii and is on a variety of limited panels throughout the Northwest, including: State of Alaska & APEA; State of Alaska & ASEA; State of Washington & WFSE; State of Oregon & SEIU (sole classifications arbitrator between those parties); Anchorage School Dist. & Teamsters; Oregon State Hospitals (nurse units) & AFSCME; Oregon Health Science University & AFSCME; Oregon Health Science University & Oregon Nurses Assn.; University of Washington & SEIU; IAM and Boeing; and ATC & The FAA (Prearb Panel). He holds a BA from Reed College, an MA (K.Phil.) from Northwestern University (Evanston, IL), and a JD from the University of Oregon and has taught philosophy (University of Alabama) and labor law and arbitration (University of Oregon LERC and AAA). He presents workshops throughout the year for the AAA, the Oregon LERC, and for any interested organization, on either side of the isle, at no cost other than expenses.

MICHAEL DAHLEM

Attorney at Law

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Michael is an attorney who specializes in school, labor, and employment law, representing school districts and other public employers. Michael received a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Iowa State University in 1975, a master's degree in philosophy from the University of Montana in 1986, and a J.D. and Ph.D. in philosophy from Rutgers University in 1991. Since returning to Montana in 1991, he has been employed as staff director by the Montana Federation of Teachers and staff attorney by the Montana School Boards Association. He also served as chair of the State Bar's Law-Related Education Committee and School Law Section. Michael produces a free monthly e-newsletter entitled Legal Update. Michael currently resides in St. George, Utah.

MATTHEW B. THIEL

Attorney

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Matt Thiel was born and raised in Montana and practices law in Missoula. Matt started his career in the labor arena in 1987 as a field representative with the Montana Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO. He left that position to attend the University of Montana Law School in 1990, where he was Editor-in-Chief of the Montana Law Review, prior to his graduation with Honors in 1993. Matt has

practiced law for the past 26 years in Missoula. A primary focus of his practice is labor law, representing several Montana and Washington based unions. He also practices personal injury law and litigation. He is listed in The Best Lawyers in America in the area of Labor and Employment Law. Matt was elected to the Montana State Bar Board of Trustees in 2008 and served as President of the Montana Bar in 2015-16. Matt serves as an appointed member of the Montana Insurance Guarantee Association, the Montana Facility Finance Association, and the American Bar Association Standing Committee on Membership.

JESSICA BRADLEY

Labor Arbitrator and Trainer

With over 13 years of experience working as a career labor neutral, Ms. Bradley brings a unique and enthusiastic perspective to labor relations. Having worked for both the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and the Washington State Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC), Ms. Bradley has extensive experience in both public and private sector labor relations. She has handled over 900 labor-management cases spanning diverse issues and parties and authored over 100 published decisions, including many complex ULP cases. Ms. Bradley also has experience mediating settlements in a variety of complex grievance and contract mediation cases. Ms. Bradley currently enjoys providing continuing education courses and consulting services for labor relations professionals. Jessica has enjoyed studying and practicing yoga and meditation for 20 years. She is a graduate of the Yoga Loft 200 Hour Teacher Training Program and a certified instructor with the Yoga Alliance.

MICHELE PUIGGARI

Puiggari & Associates Consulting Services

Michele Puiggari is the founder and owner of Puiggari & Associates Consulting Services in Missoula. Ms. Puiggari is an attorney licensed in New Mexico, D.C. and Pennsylvania. After receiving her J.D. degree, she started her own successful employment law practice, where she represented both employees and employers. In addition to litigating employment issues, she provided basic HR legal consulting services, employment training for managers and employees, review and revision of employment policies and procedures, and employment investigation services. Now in Montana, Puiggari & Associates Consulting Services offers HR consulting focusing on employment issues, policy development, employment training, and conflict and grievance resolution. Puiggari & Associates also performs unbiased employment investigations and provides reports. Ms. Puiggari has also been retained to provide expert witness testimony on Human Resources issues.

Ms. Puiggari has worked with large and small businesses and private and public entities.