



February 2, 2022

Session A Speaker Biographies

Linda Edwards, Attorney, Gignilliat, Savitz & Bettis, LLP

Edwards has represented employers in employment matters for more than 30 years. A certified specialist in labor and employment law, she has focused on day-to-day employment matters including wrongful discharge issues, the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act and review of employee handbooks. Her clients include many health care institutions, cities, and counties, as well as private-sector employers.

Edwards has reviewed countless handbooks and employment policies. She has responded to hundreds of discrimination charges on behalf of employers before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission. She has also litigated dozens of cases covering many aspects of employment law in federal and state courts at both the trial and appellate levels, including precedent-setting court decisions involving overtime law. This broad range of experience allows her to assist employers to discover practical solutions to their legal problems.

Jeff Shacker, Field Services Manager, Municipal Association of SC

Shacker joined the Association in 2013 and provides technical and support services to the municipalities of the Appalachian, Catawba, Central Midlands and Upper Savannah Councils of Governments regions. He also is the staff liaison for the Municipal Finance Officers, Clerks and Treasurers Association and the Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Institute. Prior to joining the Association, he served as a Geographic Information Systems analyst and regional planner with the Upper Savannah Council of Governments and as an economic development coordinator, assistant city manager and, most recently, city manager with the City of Newberry. Shacker has a bachelor's degree in geography and a master's degree in public administration from the University of South Carolina.

Steve Pelissier, Executive Director, Appalachian Council of Governments

Pelissier is the executive director of the Appalachian Council of Governments. Before assuming the executive director role in 2006, he served as the agency's planning director. During the past 26 years with the agency, he has worked with numerous communities across the Upstate developing a wide variety of planning initiatives and ordinances. Pelissier routinely provides orientation sessions for local planning commissions. He has a bachelor's degree in economics from Clemson University and a master's degree in urban and regional planning from Virginia Tech.

Chip Bentley, Deputy Director, Appalachian Council of Governments

Bentley is the deputy executive director of the Appalachian Council of Governments. He is responsible oversight of the planning, economic development, and government services departments. He has been with the Appalachian Council of Governments since 1996, serving as planning director from 2006 to 2016 before becoming deputy director. Bentley has worked on a wide range of local and regional issues while assisting communities with strategic planning, land use policy development and infrastructure planning. Bentley earned a Bachelor of Science in political science from Florida



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State University in 1992 and a master's degree in urban and regional planning from Florida State in 1995.

Mayor Frank McClary, Town of Andrews

Mayor Frank McClary, a retired United States Army colonel, is a native of Andrews, South Carolina. McClary officially retired from the Army in August 2015 after 29 years of service. He immediately began his campaign and was elected mayor of Andrews in November 2015.

He is a 1986 graduate of Benedict College, where he earned a bachelor of science in criminal justice and distinguished military honors from the Benedict Army ROTC program. McClary's military education includes the infantry officer's basic and advanced courses, Command and General Staff College, and Army's Senior Service College where he earned a master's degree in strategic studies. He currently serves as a mentor for at-risk kids and serves on Andrews' elementary and high school improvement councils. He is a member of the Columbia Chapter of the 100 Black Men, and he is a proud member Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.