

## 2024 Legal Update – Speaker Bios

### Faith Alejandro

Shareholder, Sands Anderson

Faith represents companies, nonprofits, and local governments in a broad spectrum of management, operation, and planning issues. Throughout her complete legal support, she offers quick and efficient responses to daily HR management issues and diligently dives deep into regulations and case law. When matters escalate to litigation, Faith regularly defends employers in federal and state court and in administrative hearings and investigations before federal and state agencies such as the EEOC and the Virginia Office of Civil Rights.

As a collaborative partner, Faith pays close attention to your organization's unique legal needs and goals to help you build a healthy, safe workplace in line with your mission. In every step, her goal is to craft preventative strategies, including effective workplace trainings, and strong defenses that help you and your organization succeed.

Faith's practice benefits from her prior work in the field of mediation and dispute resolution services, as well as her leadership of Sands Anderson's Diversity & Inclusion Committee. She is a passionate and frequent speaker on DEI for both clients and referrals, and her community service reflects this commitment to inclusion and equity as she serves on the board of the YWCA and volunteers with her church. Faith joined Sands Anderson in 2011 after graduating from UVA and the University of Richmond, and was elevated to become the Firm's first Asian-American shareholder in 2020. She was recognized by Best Lawyers in America for her work in employment law in 2024, was selected for the Virginia Lawyer's Weekly 2022 Class of Influential Women in the Law, their 2017 Class of Up and Coming Lawyers, and has been recognized by both Virginia Business Magazine and Super Lawyer for her work since 2016.

### Lindsay Bunting Eubanks

Associate, Sands Anderson

Lindsay joined Sands Anderson in 2019, supporting their Litigation Group. Throughout her career and education, Lindsay has made service to others a priority. Lindsay has experience counseling employers on a variety of issues, including the Fair Labor Standards Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Virginia Human Rights Act, the Virginia Wage Payment Act, and other relevant labor and employment laws. She has drafted employment and separation agreements, employee handbooks, and other employment related policies and procedures. She has defended employers in front of courts in the Eastern and Western District of Virginia and in state courts across the Commonwealth. And she has experience handling and responding to complaints before the EEOC, the Virginia Office of Civil Rights, and the U.S. Office of Civil Rights. In addition, Lindsay has supported Sands Anderson's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts as an active member of the Sands Anderson DEI Committee, which Faith Alejandro chairs.

In addition to deep client support, Lindsay has experience in local government leadership, is an active participant in her local church congregation, involved in board service with a Richmond-area non-profit, and is a ballet enthusiast/student.

### **Shaun Bennett**

#### **Associate, Littler**

Shaun M. Bennett focuses his practice on labor and employment law matters. He has litigated cases throughout federal and state courts in Virginia. He has experience in the courts as well as representing employers in proceedings before government agencies such as the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Shaun has represented clients to defend against lawsuits brought as single-plaintiff actions, collective actions, and class actions.

In addition to his litigation experience, he has represented and advised clients in the drafting of and revision of employment policies and employee handbooks covering the full scope of labor and employment law, and has represented clients across a broad array of industries.

### **Thomas Lucas**

#### **Senior Counsel, Littler**

Thomas M. Lucas represents clients in the full scope of labor and employment law. He has extensive experience in traditional labor law and employment discrimination litigation, frequently representing employers in matters arising under the National Labor Relations Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, and Family and Medical Leave Act.

A former trial attorney and deputy to the assistant general counsel at the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), Tom is an experienced litigator, and frequently represents clients before the National Labor Relations Board, Equal Opportunity Commission, and the Department of Labor, including OSHA and OFCCP.

In addition to his litigation practice, Tom counsels employers in a range of employment law issues, from drafting employee handbooks, policies and noncompete agreements to training management in traditional labor matters. Throughout his career, he has advised a wide range of corporate clients, including those in the manufacturing, government contracting, retail/service, maritime, ship repair and healthcare industries.

### **Karen Michael**

#### **President, KarenMichael, PLC**

Karen Michael is the President of Richmond-Virginia based KarenMichael, PLC, a work law & HR consulting firm founded in 2008. The firm represents organizations of all sizes, State Agencies, Municipalities, Non-Profits, and Universities. The firm specializes in: Leadership, Management and Employee training, Title IX and Workplace Investigations, Human Resources Consulting, Employment Law Advice.

Karen is a sought after speaker, delivering training and keynote addresses to organizations throughout the country, including the public and private sector, non-profits, associations and large international corporations.

Karen also conducts objective and thorough workplace investigations into allegations of harassment, discrimination, workplace bullying and other forms of misconduct, including complex allegations.

Karen is a former human resources executive and employment attorney with over 29 years of experience in providing advice and training with clients.

#### **Leah Stiegler**

#### **Principal, Woods Rogers Vandeventer Black**

Leah strategically advises employers on compliance with employment laws and defends actions before agencies including the EEOC, DOL, and NLRB. Leah has substantial federal trial experience, conducts workplace and board training sessions, and guides managers through workplace investigations.

Leah has traveled the Mid-Atlantic region speaking about diversity and implicit bias. She has presented to many audiences, including front-line employees, upper management, and Human Resources Professionals. During her sessions, Leah encourages the audience to consider the impact of their workplace conduct, engender civility, and work together to prevent harassment and discrimination.

Leah's workplace training sessions cover topics such as workplace violence, FMLA/ADA and all employee medical leave or workers' compensation concerns, FLSA/wage and hour obligations, documentation and discipline, performance reviews/PIPs, Form I-9 best practices, and addressing employee conduct on social media. In every case, Leah works with her clients to create a custom training program that will address their unique workforce situations.

In addition to public speaking, Leah works extensively with employers to develop employment contracts, workplace policies, and employee handbooks that suit specific company-specific needs.

Leah maintains a niche focus on higher education. She provides day-to-day compliance advice to public and private institutions on employment and student-related matters. Leah advises many civic and community clients including the Roanoke City Police Department's Threat Assessment Task Force on employer obligations in the face of workplace safety and security concerns. Leah also provides extensive counsel to non-profit organizations nationwide and takes on civil rights trials for prisoners in federal court.

**Emily Kendall Chowhan**

Associate, Woods Rogers Vandeenter Black

Emily Kendall Chowhan is an Associate attorney in the firm's **Labor & Employment, Litigation & Dispute Resolution, and Higher Education** practice groups. She practices out of the firm's Richmond office.

Emily's practice includes advising employers on compliance with state and federal employment law, representing employers before agencies, and developing customized employment contracts, workplace policies, and employee handbooks.

Emily is a valued member of the firm's higher education practice. She has experience in litigation involving higher educational institutions, advising on higher education compliance measures, and guiding institutions through agency investigations. She partners with other members of the team to represent clients in court and in federal and state administrative proceedings.

Prior to law school, Emily earned an M.A. in Strategic Communications from Liberty University. Before becoming an attorney, she used her education in organizational communication and communication theory in the commercial insurance sales industry. She is experienced in public speaking and managing client relationships. Emily earned her J.D. from Washington & Lee University School of Law.