



FINDING COMMON GROUND

THE ROLE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF CIVILITY BETWEEN OPPOSING COUNSEL

The American Inns of Court's 2024 National Conversation on Civility

PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND EDUCATIONAL RELEVANCE

Civility is often viewed as something "nice but not necessary" in the practice of law; in fact, many attorneys will argue that it is counter to zealous representation of their clients. Others will see it as something required in order to properly focus on the legal merits of a case.

The vision of the American Inns of Court is a "...legal profession and judiciary dedicated to professionalism, ethics, civility and excellence." A desirable and lofty goal, but how does it translate into practical application? How does one even start with civility in litigation? What does civility look like between strangers versus known adversaries? What are the working cogs of the civility wheel?

The 2024 National Conversation on Civility is an opportunity for attorneys from opposing sides to discuss their personal civility journeys, commonalities and differences, and how they handle the tension between client demands and the building and maintenance of professional relationships and reputations. This conversation presents a practical example, focused through the lens of professional sports. By presenting both plaintiff and defense counsels' perspectives in civil litigation, participants will gain a practical understanding on how civility works and why it can be beneficial for both sides of an issue.

CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

Designed to be eligible for *1 CLE hour of professional conduct/ethics CLE credit* in most jurisdictions.

PRESENTERS

The Hon. Consuelo María Callahan is a United States Circuit Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. She was born and raised in California. In 1972, she graduated from Stanford University with Bachelor of Arts degree, cum laude, in English. She graduated from McGeorge School of Law at the University of the Pacific, with a Juris Doctor in 1975. In 2004, she received a Master of Laws from the University of Virginia School of Law. Judge Callahan began her law career as the Deputy City Attorney for Stockton, California, and then became Deputy District Attorney in San Joaquin County, California. She focused her practice on child abuse and sexual assault cases. In 1986, she became a commissioner of the Stockton Municipal Court. In 1992, she became the first Hispanic woman to be appointed to the San Joaquin County Superior Court. In 1996, Governor Pete Wilson appointed her to serve on the Third District California Court of Appeal in Sacramento. On February 12, 2003, Callahan was nominated by President George W. Bush to serve on the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Her Senate confirmation hearing was on May 7, 2003. On May 22, 2003, she was confirmed by a 99-0 vote. She received her judicial commission on May 28, 2003. On July 14, 2014, Judge Callahan was presented the Ninth Circuit Professionalism Award from the American Inns of Court; she currently serves on the American Inns of Court Board of Trustees.



Matthew P. Crouch, Esq. is an attorney for the federal government with a long background in service to both the public and the legal profession. He was born in the Philippines to American educators and lived there until age six, when his family returned to the U.S. He has lived in the Midwest, the West, South and now in San Francisco. Attending St. Thomas University School of Law in Miami, Florida, he graduated early while at the same time serving as an Articles Editor for the law review, being President of the Mock Trial Board and on the Moot Court team. Matthew also has an LL.M. in Taxation from the University of Denver. He is licensed to practice law in Texas and Colorado, as well as numerous federal courts, the U.S. Supreme Court, and as a solicitor in England and Wales. Matthew is the co-author of *Middle Ground: A Discussion on Civility Between Opposing Counsel* (Stetson Business Law Review 2024). Additionally, he authored *In the Aftermath: Responsibilities and Professionalism in the Wake of Disaster*, winning the Warren E. Burger Prize from the American Inns of Court in 2013 and later published by the South Carolina Law Review. Furthermore, he has authored an extensive list of published articles in the legal arena and has presented and written materials for numerous CLEs. Matt was named the Denver Bar Association's Young Lawyer of the Year in 2007 and has been privileged to have been a member of the American Inns of Court while in law school and throughout his career.

Niral R. Gandhi, Esq. is a Founder, Shareholder, and Attorney at Estes & Gandhi, P.C. He has been practicing property tax law since 2008 representing commercial property owners on all aspects of property tax, including valuation disputes, pre-acquisition analyses, exemption and abatements, property tax lending, delinquent tax, and other areas related to property tax. Niral is a 2005 graduate of Baylor University where he obtained a Bachelor of Business Administrative, summa cum laude, in Economics with a concentration in Accounting and Finance. He obtained his J.D., with honors, from the University of Texas School of Law in 2008 where he was the President and Co-Founder of the South Asian Law Student Association UT Chapter, Chief Articles Editor for the Texas Intellectual Property Law Journal, and a Student Associate for LexisNexis. Niral is currently a member of the Institute for Professionals in Taxation. In 2013, he achieved the designation of Certified Member of the Institute (CMI), considered to be the highest professional designation for property tax consultants. Niral is also a member of the North Texas Chapter of the Texas Association of Assessing Officers, a lifetime member of Texas Exes, and a member of the Garland Chamber of Commerce Legislative Affairs Committee. He is also admitted to practice in any Texas court and before the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas.