76th Annual SAWCA Convention

July 29 - August 2, 2024
Hotel Effie, Sandestin, FL
Welcome To SAWCA’s 76th Annual Convention

On behalf of your SAWCA leadership, welcome to the coastal paradise of Miramar Beach, Florida. We gather at the beautiful Hotel Effie Sandestin for the 76th Annual SAWCA Convention. Nestled along the Emerald Coast, Hotel Effie offers upscale comfort, amenities, and convenient access to local attractions.

We are superbly situated near the resort Village of Baytowne Wharf, where you can enjoy world-class dining, shopping, and vibrant nightlife. Whether exploring the pristine beaches, engaging in water sports, or unwinding at the hotel’s rooftop pool, Sandestin is a treasure trove of Floridian delights. The area’s famous sugar-white sands and emerald-green waters teem with life and activity. That energy offers us the perfect setting to work, grow, and recharge as we come together to advance our industry.

This convention is not just a gathering but a platform for us to engage with foremost experts, share insights, and better understand workers’ compensation systems. Through our collective effort, your unique perspectives, and shared experiences, we can forge an even brighter future where businesses flourish, and the well-being of workers is secured.

We are thrilled to have you join this event, which has the power to create meaningful change in the millions of lives that engage with the workers’ compensation system each year. Your attendance is invaluable, and we are eager to connect with you at the convention.

Paul Tauriello
SAWCA President
Director of the Colorado Division of Workers’ Compensation
SAWCA Leadership Forums

Medical Forum 1:30PM - 3:00PM Juniper 3
The Medical Committee is pleased to present the Medical Leadership Forum. “Improving Outcomes with Patient-Centric Innovation”
Please join us for interactive discussions with two Orthopaedic Surgeons, and representatives from ODG and FIGUR8 to explore the challenges of affording injured workers access to outcome improving innovative musculoskeletal care options. Regulator & Industry participation is encouraged to further the dialogue to better meet the needs of injured workers, expedite access to outcome driven care and decreasing administrative burdens.
Moderator: Ken Eichler, AMA Health Solutions
Presenters:
Raz Winiarsky, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon, Asst. Professor of Orthopedic Surgery
Thomas Branch, MD, Orthopaedic Surgeon. Mechanical Engineer
Matt Byrne, DPT, Exercise Physiologist and Exec Director at Figur8
Pauline Williams, ODG Director & former State
Sponsored By: American Medical Association

Legal Forum 1:30PM - 3:00PM Juniper 5
The Adjudication Committee is pleased to present the Legal Leadership Forum.
Moderator: Robert L. Swisher, Director of Claims-Legal, KEMI
Panelists: Chief Judge Kenneth Switzer (TN); Commissioner James Forrester (MD); Chief ALJ Doug Gott (KY); Judge Sharon Reeves (GA); Judge Jennifer Nicaud (MS); Topics Addressed Include:
• Enforcement of Orders – What Processes Work
• Self-represented Litigants – Successful Approaches
• Young Lawyers – How to train the new generation of legal eagles
• Mandatory v. Voluntary Mediation – Updates on the success of mediation
Sponsored By: Enlyte

“Sandestin Connect”, An Open Wi-Fi Network Is Available in Meeting Space
Tuesday July 30, 2024

Regulators Roundtable  3:15PM - 5:00PM  Juniper 6
Moderators: Tom Glasson (AIG) & Mark Walls (Safety National)

Participating States: Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

Sponsored By: Optum

Tuesday Evening
Dinner on Your Own
Enjoy the wonderful dining options available in the Sandestin area

Wednesday July 31, 2024

Breakfast With Exhibitors  7:30AM - 8:45AM  Juniper Foyer
Sponsored By: TriStar

Exhibits Open  7:30AM - 5:00PM  Juniper Foyer
Registration  8:00AM - 5:00PM  Juniper Foyer
Welcome  8:30AM - 8:45AM  Juniper 6
SAWCA President, Paul Tauriello, Director of the Colorado Division of WC Florida Welcome, Brittany O’Neil, Asst. Director, Florida Division of WC

The 2024 Industry Symposium
Sponsored By: Safety National

2024 General Session 1:  8:45 AM – 9:40 AM  Juniper 6
Carrier / Industry Roundtable:
Moderated by Tom Glasson (AIG)...The first of three roundtable discussions focused on the workers’ compensation industry will address issues specific to the carriers who provide coverage for most of our employers across the nation.

Panelists include:
David Williams, Director-Program Services -Claims, Trean Insurance Group
Thomas Hebson, Vice President of Sales & Marketing, TriStar Insurance Group
Tracy Crawford, General Manager, Alliance Coal, LLC.
Wednesday July 31, 2024

Break With Exhibitors  9:40AM - 10:00AM  Juniper Foyer
Sponsored By: Concentra

2024 General Session 2:  10:00AM – 10:55AM  Juniper 6
Employer Roundtable:
Moderated by Mark Walls (Safety National)
Mark welcomes a distinguished panel of employers as we continue our industry focus sharing issues and concerns specific to employers.
Panelists:
  Lana Martin, General Claims Manager, Dillard's
  Leigh Ellington, Human Resources Manager, Taylor Machine Works
  Natasha Sumter, J.D., Dir. of Claims Compliance & Regulatory Programs, Walmart

Break With Exhibitors  10:55AM – 11:15AM  Juniper Foyer
Sponsored By: Concentra

2024 General Session 3:  11:15AM – 12:15PM  Juniper 6
“Attorney Roundtable – System Challenges”
Moderated By: Robert Rapaport (Virginia WCC)
Panelists:
Hon. Melodie Belcher (GA), Hon. Asha Jefferson (MD), Hon. Kenneth Switzer
Join us for a discussion focused on multiple topics including:
  Variances in Procedures and the Exercise of Discretion / The Bossy Judge
  Timeliness of Decision Making / Time to Resolution / Discovery Woes
  Effect of Our Mobile Society and Remote Working (Medical Panels)

“Networking Lunch”  12:20 PM – 1:30 PM  Juniper 3-5
Sponsored By: Safety National

“Conversations”  Juniper Foyer
The Exhibit and Registration area remains available for meetings with regulators and industry professionals allowing attendees to continue the discussions from earlier today as well as addressing specific questions relative to individual jurisdictions thereby gaining a deeper understanding of the issues impacting workers’ compensation systems across the nation. Whether last minute invitations or scheduled appointments, take time to build lasting professional relationships.
Wednesday July 31, 2024

President’s Reception 7PM - 8:30PM Azalea Foyer & Veranda

SAWCA President, Paul Tauriello, Director of the Colorado Division of WC, invites you to join him at the President’s Reception for an evening of rekindled friendships, great food & beverages, amid the beauty of the Sandestin Resort.

Co-Sponsored By:
AKERA Claims Solutions, Workers’ Compensation Institute, M. Joseph Medical, Ametros, ODG by MCG, WorkCompCollege.com, Meridian Wealth Management, & Healthesystems

Thursday August 1, 2024

Breakfast With Exhibitors 7:30AM - 8:45AM Juniper Foyer
Sponsored By: TriStar

Exhibits Open 7:30AM - 5:00PM Juniper Foyer
Registration 8:00AM - 5:00PM Juniper Foyer
Welcome 8:45AM - 9:00AM Juniper 6

SAWCA President, Paul Tauriello, Director of the Colorado Division of WC

General Session 4: 9:00AM – 10:30AM Juniper 6

SAWCA Presents “Comp Talks 2024” “Emerging Leaders & The Future Of WC”

Moderated By: Jackie Jackson (CO) & Ellen Heiber (Verisk)
Thursday August 1, 2024

Break With Exhibitors           10:30AM – 10:50AM     Juniper Foyer
Sponsored By: Concentra

General Session 5:           10:50AM – 12:15PM       Juniper 6
“How AI Is Impacting Medical Reviews”
Moderator: Ellen Heiber (Verisk)
Presenter: Rob Lewis, SVP of Innovation & Business Development, Verisk
Join us for an overview and discussion of how harnessing AI and ML can effectively automate the administrative process associated with medical records resulting in savings of both time and money.

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“Convention Lunch”     12:20 PM – 1:30 PM       Juniper 3-5
Sponsored By: Prodigy Care Services

The remainder of Wednesday is available for you to meet with regulators and industry professionals...continuing the discussions from the multiple sessions earlier today and gaining a deeper understanding of the various issues impacting workers’ compensation systems across the nation. And be sure to take advantage of the opportunity to visit with our Exhibitors.

SAWCA’s Celebration Dinner
7:00 PM – 11:00 PM

Attendees, guests, and families are invited to SAWCA’s Celebration Dinner. Enjoy great food and live music as we celebrate our 76th Annual Convention.

Music By: “Latitude”
Tom & Michelle Becker

Azalea Ballroom & Foyer
Sponsored By: Verisk
Friday August 2, 2024

“Farewell Grits Breakfast   7:30AM - 9:00AM   Juniper 6
Sponsored By: Sedgwick

Registration 8:00AM   Juniper Foyer
Exhibits Open 7:30AM   Juniper Foyer
Conference Announcements 8:50AM - 9:00AM   Juniper 6

2024 General Session 6:  9:00AM - 10:00AM   Juniper 6
“Federal & State Legislative Trends”

Tim Tucker, Washington Affairs Executive, External and Government Affairs, NCCI
Join us for our annual update on newly enacted and potential federal and state legislative changes including judicial decisions that impact our workers’ comp systems. Tim shares a high-level overview of the recent Supreme Court “Chevron” ruling, the CMS/MSA April Guidelines, and more.

2024 General Session 7: 10:00AM - 11:00AM   Juniper 6
“Leadership Transitions In State WC Commissions”

Bob Wilson welcomes a distinguished panel of newly appointed regulatory experts for a lively discussion on transitions in leadership...along with a host of additional issues and topics that make Bob go “Hmmm”.

Jurisdictional leaders joining Bob include Brittany O’Neil, Florida; Troy Haley, Tennessee; Maureen Quinn, Maryland; and Scott Wilhoit, Kentucky

Closing Announcements
SAWCA President, Paul Tauriello,
Director, Colorado Division of WC

SAWCA adjourns & reconvenes Nov.18, 2024 for the 2024 ACC Omni Resort / Amelia Island, FL
SAWCA is pleased to recognize our industry partners for their support and participation.

If Your Company Is Interested In Joining These Industry Leaders In Their Support of SAWCA? Contact Gary Davis: gary.davis@sawca.org
August each year
Workers’ Comp Regulators from throughout the nation come together to discuss challenges, concerns and issues facing jurisdictions in their oversight of an ever-changing workers’ compensation industry. Problems facing one jurisdiction may have already been addressed by another. Developing issues in one state may be an omen for future developments in another and legislative / constitutional issues know no boundaries.

The National Regulators Roundtable© is a forum where regulators share lessons learned and seek timely answers to their most pressing issues. Topics Routinely Included Are:

♦ Constitutional Challenges & Presumptions
♦ Emerging Trends / Artificial Intelligence
♦ Self-Insurance, Bankruptcies, & Defaults
♦ Federal Intrusion
♦ Managing the Legislative Environment
♦ Top Ten Medical Issues
♦ Advancing Technology & System Overhauls
♦ Increasing Economic Pressures

This Session is open to all WCI Convention Attendees.
Each year the Southern Association of Workers’ Compensation Administrators and The Self-Insurance Guaranty Funds of America present the National Workers’ Compensation Regulators College. ..a world-class opportunity for both the newly appointed and the experienced regulator. The curriculum for the National Regulators College © is a program designed by veteran state regulators and renowned industry experts who lead the topic driven, discussion-oriented sessions.

Tuition is $375 for the 2-day / 12 hour college and includes:

♦ Open Only To Regulators & State Officials
♦ All Course Material & Handouts
♦ Breakfast & Lunch Both Days With Am/PM Breaks
♦ Contact List of Faculty & Students
♦ Complimentary WCI Convention Registration

Join us and take full advantage of the expertise & knowledge of world-class speakers & their willingness to share; enjoy the beautiful surroundings of the World Center Marriott; and use the College to build life-long professional relationships.

The Best Regulatory Educational Opportunity In The Nation
Visit: www.sawca.org / gary.davis@sawca.org
SAWCA moves from the Atlantic to the Gulf Coast ...but keeps the sun and sand of Florida beaches revisiting the “Grand Lady” of the Gulf Coast...The Don CeSar July 14-18, 2025. SAWCA invites you to join the “decision makers” from 21 jurisdictions and industry experts from across the nation for 4 days of Keynote Speakers, Leadership Forums, General Sessions and Special Events. Add an Industry Exhibit Hall and numerous opportunities specifically designed to foster substantive discussions and you have a conference that is a “must attend” event. Join Us...St. Pete Beach, FL.. July 2025!

November 10-14, 2025 marks the dates for the SAWCA ACC amidst the incredible beauty of Colorado Springs, Colorado. Make plans now to join us at The Broadmoor...a world famous hotel nestled at the foot of Cheyenne Mountain. The ACC provides attendees a full educational program with the intimacy of a small group setting allowing for greater access and professional growth. Plus...It is The Broadmoor. Find a way to join us November 2025.

It Will Be A Conference To Remember!