



*11th Annual*

# New Laws FORUM

**December 4, 2024**  
Doubletree Hilton | Lisle, Illinois  
8:30 am – 4:30 pm



## Our Speakers



### **Jeffrey Risch**

*Partner, Amundsen Davis, LLC*

Jeff serves as the Chair of Amundsen Davis' expansive management-side Labor & Employment Practice Group headquartered in Chicago, Illinois. Jeff represents employers in jurisdictions and before administrative tribunals throughout the United States. Jeff provides employment and traditional labor law counsel to several trade associations, including the Illinois Chamber of Commerce. Jeff has also contributed to cutting edge stories produced by several recognized media outlets such as NPR, Fox News Chicago, CNNMoney.com, the Daily Herald, and the Chicago Tribune. He also helped write and edit THE leading resource manual on labor and employment law for Illinois employers published by the Illinois Chamber of Commerce. Jeff is regularly recognized by his peers as a leading lawyer in the field of Labor & Employment Law on a local, regional, and national basis.



### **Kassandra Silva**

*Senior Policy Advisor, Michael Best Strategies LLC*

Kassandra assists the team with strategic communications and provides support on government relations and legislative matters. Prior to joining Michael Best Strategies, Kassandra served as a Legislative Liaison for the Illinois Department of Human Services where she represented the agency in the state legislative process. Earlier, Kassandra worked as a Program Specialist for the Illinois House of Representatives Office of the Speaker where she created and managed outreach plans for legislators by drafting statements and press releases on issue positions, bills, and current affairs.



## **Mary Felder**

### ***Vice President of Human Resources, Midwest Refrigerated Services***

Mary initially joined Midwest Refrigerated Services as the Director of HR in December 2020. Her promotion to VP of Human Resources reflects her strong leadership and strategic acumen. Before MRS, Mary served as Director of HR for Tribus Services, managing HR for 26 sites across the U.S. and Canada, and as Corporate Director of HR at Meridian Industries, where she oversaw multiple manufacturing sites and secured substantial cost savings by optimizing temporary staffing contracts.

Mary holds a BBA in Industrial Relations and a Master's in HR from DeVry University and has taught as an adjunct instructor at Concordia University. Beyond her career, Mary enjoys travel, music concerts, and genealogy. She and her husband, Dave, have two children and are devoted grandparents. Known for her collaborative, communicative leadership style, Mary aligns her work with MRS's core values, emphasizing integrity and hands-on teamwork.



## **Melissa Pilch**

### ***Director of Human Resources, LaSalle County***

Melissa has served as the Director of Human Resources for LaSalle County since 2016. In her current role, she is committed to supporting the mission of the LaSalle County Government, its employees, and the public by providing strategic leadership in the development, implementation, and administration of sound policies and programs. In doing so, her team delivers a level of customer service that encompasses equitable treatment of all individuals, respecting the dignity of others, acting with integrity and honesty, complying with state and federal laws, and maintaining a level of confidentiality with regard to all matters shared in

trust. Prior to LaSalle County, Melissa held HR positions within both the public and private sectors. She holds a BS from Eastern Illinois University and SHRM-CP credentials provided by the Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM) and PHR credentials provided by HR Certification Institute (HRCI).



## **Ashley Trost**

### ***Director of People and Culture, Gallagher Asphalt Corporation***

Ashley serves as the Director of People and Culture for Gallagher Asphalt Corporation, a paving general contractor and manufacturer in the Chicagoland area. In her current role, she functions as a Human Resources Department of One, facilitates the organization's leadership training and development, and oversees the company's Marketing and Communications department. She has a passion for fostering a culture of Values-Based Leadership and helping leaders facilitate

effective communication that drives strategic alignment. She spent the first decade of her career in the medical field before transitioning to the construction industry in 2022. She holds a BS from Bradley University, a MS from Western Governors University, and SHRM-CP credentials provided by the Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM). Outside of work, she loves working out, getting creative in the kitchen, and visiting new cities. She strives to live every day with purpose, intent, and gratitude, and to help others do the very same.