

**THE EUGENE KUNTZ CONFERENCE ON**  
**NATURAL RESOURCES**  
**LAW AND POLICY**

**9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

**Friday, Nov. 14, 2025**

**Oklahoma City Convention Center**

**Presented by**  
**The University of Oklahoma College of Law and**  
**the Oklahoma Bar Association's Energy and**  
**Natural Resources Law Section.**



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**Richard Books**

**James C.T. Hardwick**

**J. Kevin Hayes**

**Henry Hood**

**Eric King**

**Clark Musser**

**John R. Reeves**

**OKLAHOMA OIL AND GAS  
RECEPTION AND  
EUGENE KUNTZ AWARDS  
PRESENTATION**

**THE EUGENE KUNTZ  
CONFERENCE ON  
NATURAL RESOURCES  
AND LAW POLICY**

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of Professional Landmen**

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**The North American Prospect Expo**

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**Mark McDaniel**

**Jena Williams**

**Jodi Cole Wetzel**

**Michael Reel**

# 2025 Kuntz Conference Schedule

9-9:10 a.m.	Welcome and Moderator Remarks	John Arrowood
9:10-10 a.m.	Annual Case Law Update	Joseph A. Schremmer
10-10:50 a.m.	Upstream Transactions – Legal and Commercial Trends in Oil and Gas A&D	Joseph Adams, Michael Reel, Jordan D. Volino, and Lindsey Jaquillard (moderator)
10:50-11 a.m.	Break (10 minutes)	
11-11:50 a.m.	Oklahoma Carbon Capture and Geologic Sequestration Act: Underground Storage of CO <sub>2</sub>	John R. Reeves
11:50 a.m.-12:10 p.m.	Break (20 minutes)	
	<i>Grab lunch in the lobby and return to your seat for the next session.</i>	
12:10-1 p.m.	Lunch Session: Are You My Appellate Lawyer?	Kate N. Dodoo, Eva Guzman, and Sharon T. Thomas
1-1:10 p.m.	Break (10 minutes)	
1:10-2 p.m.	The Lost Art of Proper Notice	Kate Henderson
2-2:50 p.m.	Is the Upstream MSA Under Attack? Legal Considerations for MSAs in the Energy Sector	Mike Mercer, Ziri Rolston, and Jodi Cole Wetzel
2:50-3 p.m.	Break (10 minutes)	
3-3:50 p.m.	Five Big Questions Facing the Legal Profession	Melissa D. Mortazavi
4 p.m.	Adjourn	

# Speakers

## **JOSEPH ADAMS**

Joseph Adams is managing counsel of Lower 48 Transactions for ConocoPhillips. Adams has been with ConocoPhillips since 2011, working in several business roles before joining the Legal Department in 2016. His current practice focuses on upstream acquisitions, divestitures and other material transactions across the Lower 48. Adams received his bachelor of arts degree from the University of Texas at Austin in 2008 and his Juris Doctorate from the University of Texas School of Law in 2011.

## **MELISSA D. MORTAZAVI**

Melissa D. Mortazavi teaches and writes on the topic of legal ethics, about torts, administrative law, and food law and policy, where she explores the dialogue between legal systems, institutions and identity. Her articles have appeared in the Fordham, Columbia (online), UCLA (online) and Cardozo law reviews, among others. Mortazavi is the former chair of the Association of American Law Schools Section on Professional Responsibility and the incoming chair of the AALS Torts & Compensation Systems Section.

## **KATE N. DODOO**

Kate N. Dodoo is an accomplished appellate, trial and employment lawyer who leads both McAfee & Taft's Appellate Group and the firm's Immigration and Compliance Group. She utilizes her extensive experience to represent clients in state and federal trial and appellate courts, as well as regulatory and administrative agencies, across a wide range of civil litigation matters. She serves as business immigration counsel for major U.S.-based corporations with global operations and foreign-owned companies with business interests in the United States. She also serves as a town attorney and advises Oklahoma municipalities.

Before joining McAfee & Taft in 2021, Dodoo dedicated the first 15 years of her legal career to public service at the federal, state and municipal levels. Her roles included serving as assistant chief counsel in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Office of the Principal Legal Advisor, where she litigated complex immigration cases before the Executive Office of Immigration Review, U.S. Department of Justice and appeals to the Board of Immigration Appeals. Additionally, her tenure as an appellate attorney in the Oklahoma Supreme Court honed her skills in providing procedural and substantive legal advice, drafting precedent-setting decisions and navigating complex civil cases.

Active in a number of professional organizations, Dodoo is currently serving a three-year term as governor on the Oklahoma Bar Association's Board of Governors in addition to serving as a trustee on the association's Bench and Bar Committee, governor liaison to the OBA Law School Committee, and a member of OBA Diversity Committee. She is also a Fellow of the Oklahoma Bar Foundation and a member of the Oklahoma County Bar Association, Cherokee Nation Bar Association, State Bar of Texas, Texas Bar College, American Bar Association, National Bar Association, and American Immigration Lawyers Association.

Dodoo has remained a committed community volunteer while maintaining an active professional and family life. Over the years, she has devoted her time to enhancing education opportunities for at-risk and special needs youth through the Oklahoma Children's Court Improvement Program, coaching the Frederick Douglass Moot Court teams at the Oklahoma City University School of Law, mentoring law students participating in the Oklahoma Supreme Court's internship programs, and serving on the boards of the Law and Public Safety Career Academy of Douglass High School, the Young Women's Christian Association and Youth Opportunity Task Force. Her community engagement earned her a nomination for the YWCA's Social Justice Activator Award and recognition as an "Oklahoma Shero" in 2017 by the State of Oklahoma.

# Speakers

## **EVA GUZMAN**

A partner at Wright, Close & Barger in Houston, Eva Guzman focuses her practice on appellate work in state and federal courts. A former Texas Supreme Court Justice, she began her legal career practicing in Houston for 10 years before Gov. George W. Bush appointed her to the District Court bench in Harris County in 1999. In 2001, Gov. Rick Perry appointed her to the Texas 14th Court of Appeals. In 2009, after an appointment to the Supreme Court of Texas, she became the first Latina to serve on Texas's highest civil court and the first to win statewide office in Texas.

Over the course of her judicial career, Justice Guzman ruled on thousands of civil and criminal appeals and authored more than 900 opinions. She has also served as an adjunct professor, teaching trial advocacy, at the University of Houston Law Center.

For many years, she has been a speaker and presenter at state and national legal conferences and symposia. An elected member of the prestigious American Law Institute, she has collaborated with other legal professionals on various studies and projects and authored articles for a number of national and state legal publications.

## **KATE HENDERSON**

Kate Henderson started her career in the oil and gas industry in 2011 when she joined Bearcat Land. Working her way up in Bearcat, she has unique, first-hand experience in many facets of land management, including title, leasing, acquisitions, divestitures, due diligence and, for the past 12 years, extensive regulatory matters, including compliance, offering OCC expert testimony, and litigation.

Henderson is also experienced in Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Indian Affairs leasing and compliance, including Communitization Agreements for single and multi-section drilling units. Her knowledge of the emerging carbon market as a part of the team that had the first carbon credits issued through the American Carbon Registry via plugging orphan oil and gas wells makes her a subject matter expert.

Henderson is also a member of American Association of Professional Landmen, Oklahoma City Association of Professional Landmen and Tulsa Association of Petroleum Landmen. When not at work, she enjoys spending time with her husband and 11-year-old daughter Parker, and also serves on the board of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society after Parker's own battle with B-cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia upon being diagnosed at the age of 8.

## **LINDSEY JAQUILLARD**

Lindsey Jaquillard is a corporate partner in the Houston office of Kirkland & Ellis LLP. Her practice focuses on mergers, acquisitions, divestitures and joint venture formation involving energy assets and companies across the energy value chain, with an emphasis on domestic energy transactions in the upstream and midstream sectors.

Jaquillard's transactional experience includes advising clients in connection with the purchase and sale of a broad range of energy assets, complex joint development projects, farmout and participation agreements, oil and gas financing transactions, transportation and gathering agreements, natural gas processing agreements, and other commercial transactions.

# Speakers

## **MIKE MERCER**

Mike Mercer began his career working for a specialist oil and gas consultancy in Surrey, UK, then launched a career in the insurance industry in London in 2006. He worked with programs reflecting onshore and offshore energy industry risk; domestic and international exposures; both property and casualty insurance placements; and international manuscript coverage forms.

Mercer obtained direct exposure to oil super majors, oil service companies, NOCs, independent operators and contractors, and power and utility companies, along with all manner of intermediaries. His clients were based in the United States, Korea, India, Canada, New Zealand, Qatar and Bahrain. In 2009, Mercer took a client-facing retail role in Houston in which he continued to develop relationships with U.S.-based upstream and midstream clients. In 2011, he joined the Energy Team at Lockton as an account executive.

Mercer focuses on business development in addition to the servicing and marketing of energy business into the London and U.S. insurance markets. He earned a master's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Bristol.

## **MICHAEL REEL**

Michael Reel joined Mach Natural Resources in July 2017 and currently serves as general counsel and secretary. Prior to joining the company, he served as senior counsel for Accelerate Resources.

Reel previously served as internal counsel for White Star Petroleum, LLC, American Energy Partners, LP, and Chesapeake Energy Corp.

He earned a bachelor of science degree in political science from Oklahoma State University in 2008 and his Juris Doctorate from Oklahoma City University School of Law in 2011.

## **JOHN R. REEVES**

John R. Reeves earned his bachelor of business administration degree with special distinction in 1971 from the University of Oklahoma, master of business administration degree from Florida State University and Juris Doctorate with highest honors in 1974.

He was admitted to practice law in Oklahoma in August 1974 and worked as an attorney for Crowe & Dunlevy from 1974 to April 1982. In 1982, he helped form the law firm of Mock, Schwabe, Waldo, Elder, Reeves & Bryant PLLC, and he practiced law with that firm until 2013. Reeves then became a partner in the law firm Conner & Winters, LLP. In 2022, he joined the national law firm of Fox Rothschild LLP.

Since 1976, Reeves' practice has focused primarily on oil and gas matters, with a special emphasis on oil and gas matters before the Oklahoma Corporation Commission and matters dealing with joint operating agreements.

He is a member of the American Bar Association, the Oklahoma Bar Association and the Oklahoma County Bar Association and a member and past president of the Mineral Lawyers Society of Oklahoma City and of the Oklahoma City Real Property Lawyers Association. He has authored or co-authored various publications dealing with joint operating agreements and issues related to conservation matters before the Oklahoma Corporation Commission.

# Speakers

## **ZIRI ROLSTON**

Ziri Rolston joined Lockton Cos. in June 2011 when he entered Lockton University, a one-year Account Manager/Executive program in Kansas City. While in the program, he went through extensive insurance coverage training and serviced a book of middle market accounts. Upon his return to Lockton Houston in July 2012, he began his insurance career in the Energy Group.

Rolston focuses on the energy sector of the business, specializing in upstream (onshore/ offshore), midstream and oilfield services operators. His responsibilities include working with major insurance carriers as well as marketing, placing and servicing energy accounts.

After graduating from St. Edward's University with a bachelor of arts degree in business administration, Rolston spent a year working for a drilling equipment exporter in Houston.

## **JOSEPH A. SCHREMMER**

Joseph A. Schremmer is a professor of law at the University of Oklahoma College of Law and director of the Oil, Gas, Natural Resources, and Energy Center. He teaches courses in oil and gas, energy and natural resources law, as well as first-year property and contracts.

He is the sole revision and update author of *Kuntz on Oil and Gas Law*, a co-author of *Oil and Gas Law: Cases and Materials* (11th ed. Foundation Press) and has published extensively in law journals on topics including correlative rights, waste, pore space, subsurface trespass and split estates.

Before joining OU Law, Schremmer was the Judge Leon Karelitz Oil and Gas Law Professor at the University of New Mexico School of Law. Before that, he practiced law in Wichita, Kansas, for six years, handling a wide variety of matters involving oil and gas production.

## **SHARON T. THOMAS**

Sharon T. Thomas began practicing law in 1981 at Watson & McKenzie in Oklahoma City as an attorney and shareholder. After 11 years there, she spent over 24 years as a partner at Hall Estill in Oklahoma City before joining The Rudnicki Firm upon its inception in 2017 as appellate counsel.

Thomas has focused her career on appellate practice, oil and gas, and energy law. She has served as counsel of record on over 50 published decisions from the 10th Circuit and Oklahoma appellate courts. She has been recognized by Best Lawyers® in commercial litigation, energy law, and oil and gas law, including "Lawyer of the Year" in 2022 for Energy Law in Oklahoma City. She is also a Martindale-Hubbell AV Preeminent Attorney and has been named to the Super Lawyers list for Appellate Law in Oklahoma.

In 2024, Thomas was presented with the University of Oklahoma College of Law's Eugene Kuntz Award as an outstanding individual in the field of oil, gas and natural energy law.

# Speakers

## **JORDAN D. VOLINO**

Currently, Jordan D. Volino practices at Mahaffey & Gore, P.C., serving numerous clients in the energy space in all areas, but specifically he provides guidance on transactional matters and negotiation on acquisitions and divestitures, contract drafting, due diligence, corporate governance and compliance, and litigation.

Volino previously served as the general counsel for 89 Energy and Land Run Minerals, a private equity-backed oil and gas company and mineral investment group based out of Oklahoma City, prior to its successful full asset divestiture in 2025. This position handled all legal, litigation, transactional, or corporate matters for 89 Energy and Land Run, or its affiliate companies.

Volino frequently lectures on various energy, property and land topics, and is a published scholar on oil and gas legal matters in multiple states. In addition, he is an author for the Oklahoma state forms manual covering oil, gas and real estate forms. He serves as a board member for the Oklahoma City Association of Professional Landmen, a board member for the Legal Committee for the Petroleum Alliance and is a member of the Mineral Lawyer's Society.

In 2023, Hart Energy and *Oil and Gas Investor Magazine* deemed Volino a member of "Who's Who in A&D and Capital Formation" in the oil and gas industry. Volino is licensed to practice law in the state of Oklahoma.

## **JODI COLE WETZEL**

Jodi Cole Wetzel is a shareholder at McAfee & Taft, practicing in its Oklahoma City office. She is a solutions-oriented attorney with 17 years' experience and a multi-jurisdictional practice representing clients in the energy sector.

Wetzel's extensive representative experience includes advising clients on drafting and negotiating operational contracts used in the oil and gas industry, including master service agreements and risk management programs, farm-out agreements, midstream contracts, and surface/land-related contracts. Her experience in contract drafting and negotiation makes her uniquely situated to address, resolve and pursue legal remedies, if necessary, when disputes arise. Her litigation experience includes representing clients in hundreds of lawsuits to resolutions.

Wetzel regularly conducts training programs for clients related to risk allocation plans, proper payment procedures under the Oklahoma Production Revenue Standards Act and related Oklahoma law, and best practices related to health, safety and environmental compliance. She also serves as an adjunct professor at the Oklahoma City University College of Law.

Wetzel has been recognized for her expertise in Oklahoma Super Lawyers, Best Lawyers in America (commercial litigation; energy law; oil and gas law) and Benchmark Litigation "40 & Under Hot List").

# *2025 Eugene Kuntz Award Winner*

## **PAUL D. TRIMBLE**

Paul D. Trimble is the managing member of Trimble Law Group PLLC, where he represents clients ranging from mineral owners to large independent oil and gas companies in both transactional and litigation matters. Over the course of his career, he has also served as managing attorney at Chesapeake Energy Corporation and as a longtime partner at Crowe Dunlevy.

Colleagues describe Trimble as a lawyer whose experience and consistent approach distinguish him. “Paul’s breadth of experience – from big law and corporate counsel to teaching and mediation – gives him unique insight,” said Gary Thompson, attorney at Trimble Law Group PLLC. “He represents clients effectively without unnecessary conflict.”

“Paul combines vast knowledge of the law with a remarkable ability to explain it clearly,” said Henry Hood of Henry J. Hood, PLLC. “He has long set the standard for professionalism in our field.”

An OU graduate, Trimble earned a bachelor of business administration degree and a Juris Doctor. For more than two decades, he has taught oil and gas law as an adjunct professor at OU and other institutions and is a frequent lecturer at professional conferences and seminars.

“Paul was an outstanding young lawyer with a deep knowledge of oil and gas law and an unmatched work ethic. He has remained humble and deserving of this recognition,” said John Griffin, director at Crowe Dunlevy.

**EUGENE KUNTZ AWARD  
FOR LEADERSHIP IN  
NATURAL RESOURCES  
LAW AND POLICY**

*Award  
Recipients*

**1993**

*William G. Paul*

**1995**

*Tom J. McDaniel*

**1996**

*R. Clark Musser*

**1998**

*R. G. "Jack" Horner*

**1999**

*The Honorable  
Joseph Morris*

**2000**

*Philip D. Hart*

**2001**

*Barth P. Walker*

**2002**

*Charles E. Daniel*

**2003**

*James George*

**2004**

*James C.T. Hardwick*

**2005**

*Duke R. Ligon*

**2006**

*H. B. "Hank" Watson*

**2007**

*Mark D. Christiansen*

**2008**

*Henry J. Hood*

**2009**

*The Honorable  
Marian P. Opala*

**2010**

*Terence Daintith*

**2011**

*Lyndon C. Taylor*

**2012**

*David L. Boren*

**2013**

*Mart Tisdal*

**2014**

*Michael L. Decker*

**2015**

*Owen Anderson*

**2016**

*J. Larry Nichols*

**2017**

*Gregory Mahaffey*

**2018**

*Richard Books  
Richard Grimes*

**2019**

*John Moricoli*

**2021**

*John R. Reeves*

**2022**

*Kevin Hayes*

**2023**

*Eric King*

**2024**

*Sharon T. Thomas*

**2025**

*Paul D. Trimble*



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