

## CENTER FOR CHILD COUNSELING 1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL

### Family Law Mental Health Summit



**The Honorable Ronald Alvarez** is a retired Circuit Civil Judge, a Florida Supreme Court Certified Circuit Civil Mediator, Private Judge, and Qualified Arbitrator. He has been happily married to the extraordinary Elaine Webb-Alvarez for the past 45 years; He has two sons, Mark and Chad. Ronald Alvarez enjoys staying in shape, cooking, reading, and spending time with his family. Judge Alvarez was born and raised in Gary, Indiana, where he attended the University of Indiana for his undergraduate career, as well as for law school. A respected trial lawyer for 21 years, Ronald Alvarez was appointed by former Florida Governor, Lawton Chiles, to the Circuit Court bench on April 2, 1993. During his time as a judge, Ronald Alvarez served on a variety of Circuit Court Benches that included juvenile, family, and civil court cases until 2014. Ronald Alvarez has an unparalleled perspective on all types of civil disputes. While serving as a judge, Ronald Alvarez garnered the reputation for being extremely equitable which earned him the respect by all lawyers who appeared before him.

**Abigail Beebe, Esquire\*** is principal owner of The Law Office of Abigail Beebe, P.A., a West Palm Beach-based marital and family law firm and is the current chair of the Family Law Section of the Florid Bar. Beebe has been practicing law for nearly a decade, starting her career with the Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County, Inc. and later moving to a South Florida-based law firm where she focused on a wide range of complex marital and family law issues. Beebe opened her own practice, The Law Office of Abigail Beebe, P.A., in July 2014. She is well known and respected throughout the South Florida legal community for her thorough and specialized approach, dedication and overall professionalism. Beebe is also an active participant and influencer in the ongoing debate and legal battle over alimony reform, chairing legislation for The Florida Bar Family Law Section, lobbying and assisting in the drafting of documentation on the subject.



**Joe Considine, Esquire** has practiced law in South Florida since 1983. His practice is limited to family law and addiction related law including the Marchman Act. Joe has handled over 1500 litigation cases in his career, appearing in courts throughout Florida. Joe works extensively with families whose loved ones have substance abuse and mental health problems as an attorney. He lectures throughout Florida on family law matters including the Marchman Act and other substance abuse related issues. Joe grew up and lives in West Palm Beach, has three adult children and loves mountain biking.



**Laura Davis Smith, Esquire\*** is a Partner of Davis Smith and Jean, LLC, is a member of the Georgia, Massachusetts and Florida Bars. An experienced attorney and active member of the Florida Bar's Family Law Section, Ms. Smith has received several awards for her special service to the Section, and is regarded highly by her peers and judges in the Family Law arena. She is presently Chair of the Publications Committee of the Family Law Section, and a member of its Legislation Committee and has served as Past-Chair of the Family Law Section of the Florida Bar.

**Magistrate Diane Kirigin\*** is a General Magistrate in the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit, in and for Palm Beach County, Florida, where she previously served for several years as the Chief General Magistrate. She currently serves at the North County Judicial Complex in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida presiding primarily over post-judgment Family Division cases. She also handles Baker Act (mental health), Marchman Act (substance abuse) proceedings, as well as guardianship enforcement matters. General Magistrate Kirigin has a B.A. in History from Florida Atlantic University; and a J.D. from Nova Southeastern University. General Magistrate Kirigin has been board certified in Marital and Family Law since June, 1995. General Magistrate Kirigin is a very active member of The Florida Bar, Family Law Section and is a past Chair of the Section's *Ad Hoc* Adoption Committee where she co-authored the Putative Father Registry; has been a member of The Florida Bar, Marital and Family Law Certification Committee {which is responsible for reviewing and testing all initial applicants seeking the designation of Board Certification in that practice area; and also for reviewing all recertification applications} since from 2002 - 2008, serving as Vice Chair from 2003 – 2006, as Chair in 2007; was Chair of The Florida Bar, Family Law Section from 2010 – 2011; is a member of the Executive Committee of The Florida Bar, Family Law Section in her capacity as Trustee. She served as Chair of the Section's Legislation Committee back-to-back during bar cycles 2005-2006 and 2006-2007. In 2008 the National Association of Social Workers, Palm Beach Unit honored General Magistrate Kirigin as "Public Citizen of the Year" for her work with those individuals involved in the court system through Marchman Act and Mental Health Court; in 2007 General Magistrate Kirigin was honored by the Florida Chapter of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers with its Gavin Letts Award as "Jurist of the Year"; and is the 2006 recipient of the South Palm Beach County Bar Association "Lifetime Achievement Award." General Magistrate Kirigin delivered marital and family law legislative updates at the 2007, 2008 and 2010 Florida Circuit Judges Conference. She has lectured extensively throughout the State on behalf of The Florida Bar, Family Law Section, various other local Bar Associations and in-house at the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit on marital and family, guardianship and mental health law.





**Renée E. Layman, MS, LMHC** is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor with over twenty years of experience in mental health, sixteen specific to children's mental health. Over the past twelve years, she has gained significant experience in the areas of program development, leadership, and nonprofit management. In her various roles, Renée has been a passionate advocate for child and family health, bringing high quality services for some of the most pressing issues facing at-risk children and families in Palm Beach County. In addition to her experience in the nonprofit sector, Renée has successfully worked with children and families in private practice, specializing in childhood trauma, loss, and developmental difficulties utilizing Play and Equine Assisted Therapies. She has training in Filial Therapy, EMDR, Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Child-Parent Psychotherapy, and is an accredited provider of the Triple P Parenting Program.



**Peggy Rowe-Linn, Esquire\*** was raised in West Palm Beach, Florida. She attended local schools and received her J.D. from Nova Southeastern University in 1984. She is a thoughtful, compassionate attorney who specializes in family matters and divorce law. She is Board Certified by The Florida Bar as a specialist in Marital and Family Law. Board certification requires high standards, continuing legal education and professionalism in the practice of law. The words Board Certified, Specialist,

Expert and the letters B.C.S. for Board Certified Specialist mean that a Florida lawyer has special knowledge, skills and proficiency in a specific field of law.

**Eddie Stephens, Esquire\*** is an equity partner in Ward Damon, PL, where he leads the family law department and manages community relations for the firm. Eddie is a Board Certified Family Law Attorney who specializes in high-conflict matrimonial law. In addition to practicing family law, Eddie is an author, lecturer, and community leader who supports a number of local civic and charitable organizations including Center for Child Counseling, Leadership Palm Beach County, Boy Scouts of America, Delta Sigma Pi, Big Dog Ranch Rescue and Peggy Adams Animal Rescue League. His hobbies include cooking, yoga, camping and spending time with his family. Eddie is happily married to Jacquie and has two children, Christopher and Matthew, and they all call Palm Beach, Florida home.





**Jacquie Stephens, E-RYT 200** is an experienced yoga teacher who took her training here in Palm Beach County and has been teaching for just under a decade. Jacquie is the program coordinator for the School of Hatha Yoga at Simply Yoga. This is a 200 hour training and is Yoga Alliance affiliated. Jacquie is the proud mother of an extraordinary daughter, step mother of two boys, five canine children and a variety of other living creatures.

**Ralph “R.T.” White, Esquire\*** received his Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Florida Atlantic University in 1995 and Juris Doctorate in 2003 from Barry University, College of Law. He was admitted to the Florida Bar in 2003. Mr. White is a member of: Palm Beach County Bar Association and The Florida Bar. As a member of the Family Law Section of The Florida Bar, Mr. White was part of numerous committees. Mr. White is Board Certified in Marital and Family Law and is a Fellow of the AAML. Mr. White frequently lectures at continuing legal education seminars and is past-chair of The Florida Bar Grievance Committee (15G).

