

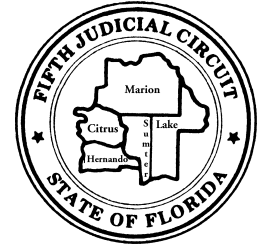


STATE OF FLORIDA

FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

CITRUS, HERNANDO, LAKE, MARION, AND SUMTER COUNTIES



Daniel B. Merritt, Jr.
Chief Judge

Jeffery K. Fuller
Trial Court Administrator

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

April 16, 2026

Rhaiza Robles
Public Information Officer
Office: (352) 253-1605
robles@circuit5.org
WWW.CIRCUIT5.ORG

2026
Professionalism Conference

Judges and attorneys from across Central Florida gathered in Ocala on Friday, April 10, 2026, for the 2026 Professionalism Conference. This year’s program centered on the theme “*Managing Stress While Maintaining Professionalism*” offering attendees an opportunity to be encouraged, equipped, and inspired in their work.

The conference featured a distinguished lineup of speakers who addressed the importance of cultivating a professional life grounded in joy, health, high performance, and integrity. Justice Meredith L. Sasso of the Florida Supreme Court opened the event with remarks on the essential role professionalism plays in the judiciary and legal community.

Judge Alicia Latimore of the Ninth Judicial Circuit followed with her presentation, “*Law, Stress, and Resilience: Balancing Well-Being and Professionalism*” highlighting strategies for sustaining resilience in demanding legal environments.

Former professional basketball player and motivational speaker Patric Young shared his powerful personal story in “*Sit to Rise: Turning Your Darkest Pain into Your Biggest Victory*” reflecting on the life-altering accident that reshaped his perspective and purpose.

Health experts Dr. Edward Santoian and Richelle Reilly of AdventHealth discussed the significant impact of nutrition on overall well-being in their session, “*How Diet Can Impact Your Overall Health.*”

The conference concluded with Professor Lawrence Krieger and Rev. Theresa Krieger, who presented “*Creating a Professional Life Grounded in Joy, Health, and High Performance*” offering practical guidance for fostering fulfillment and balance in the legal profession.

Fifth Circuit Professionalism Award

Rob Davis, General Counsel for the Marion County Clerk and Comptroller, was honored as the recipient of the 2026 Fifth Circuit Professionalism Award. The award was presented by The Honorable Ann Melinda Craggs in recognition of Davis’s exemplary professionalism and his consistent dedication to serving the community. The Fifth Judicial Circuit extends its appreciation to Mr. Davis for the integrity and commitment he brings to his work each day.

The next Professionalism Conference is scheduled for 2028.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Citrus County Courthouse
110 N. Apopka Avenue
Inverness, FL 34450
(352) 341-6700
(352) 341-7008 FAX | <input type="checkbox"/> Hernando County Courthouse
20 N. Main Street
Brooksville, FL 34601
(352) 754-4402
(352) 754-4235 FAX | <input type="checkbox"/> Lake County Courthouse
P.O. 7800/550 W. Main Street
Tavares, FL 32778
(352) 253-1604
(352) 253-1630 FAX | <input type="checkbox"/> Marion County Judicial Center
110 N.W. First Avenue
Ocala, FL 34475
(352) 401-6701
(352) 401-7883 FAX | <input type="checkbox"/> Sumter County Courthouse
215 E. McCollum Avenue
Bushnell, FL 33513
(352) 569-6950
(352) 569-6985 FAX |
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