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Grant Me This Much: Obtaining Immigration Benefits From The USCIS Regional Service Centers

Speakers: Angelo A. Paparelli, John Abram (USCIS), Jonathan C. Adams, Nancy Alby (USCIS), Jack Chaney, Joe Fierro (USCIS), Adam Green, Brett Gregg (USCIS), Kehrela M. Hodkinson, Ernestine Leslie (USCIS), Edward R. Litwin, Mary L. Mucha, Donald Neufeld (USCIS), Tracy Renaud (USCIS), Merrilee Snell, Wendy Williams (USCIS) and Stephen Zawacki (CIS Ombudsman)

[Seminar Outline](#)

[Speaker bios](#)

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Each call features an hour of analysis, strategy and practice tips by Angelo A. Paparelli, John Abram (USCIS), Jonathan C. Adams, Nancy Alby (USCIS), Jack Chaney, Joe Fierro (USCIS), Adam Green, Brett Gregg (USCIS), Kehrela M. Hodkinson, Ernestine Leslie (USCIS), Edward R. Litwin, Mary L. Mucha, Donald Neufeld (USCIS), Tracy Renaud (USCIS), Merrilee Snell, Wendy Williams (USCIS) and Stephen Zawacki (CIS Ombudsman)

SEMINAR OUTLINE

Note: All Seminars Starting in July will be From 2.00 to 3.30pm ET (11.00am to 12.30pm PT)

Over a year has passed since Congress interred legacy INS and gave birth to USCIS. Enough time has now elapsed to assess this new bureau, evaluate its practices, and get a sense of whether the agency has transcended the pangs of birth.

The consensus among immigration lawyers is decidedly morose. Old-timers bemoan the days when attorney fees were high and denials few. New practitioners wonder if they can survive the rising tide of delays, rejections, higher filing fees and mounting client disappointment.

Well, Immigration Lawyers, stop crying in your latte! Take positive action, sign up for an ILW.COM three-part teleconference that will help you achieve winning ways with the USCIS Service Centers. Hear leading immigration lawyers offer specific and tangible strategies that can inject success into your immigration practice. Jump-start your attitude, sharpen your skills and refine your approach to immigration lawyering. Sign up today!

FIRST Phone Session on May 27:

"Please release me, Let me go..."

(Arrest and Hearing; detention issues, removal grounds, burden, defenses, suppression)

- Do You Know your Service Center? - Mastering Regional Variations in Service-Center Policies and Practices
- Up a Crick with a Paddle: Maneuvering Safely through the Shoals of Cryptic Statutes, Unpublished Regulations, Policy Memos and Informal Agency Letters
- Gross (Error) Me Out - "You Said I Could Work Here, So Why Did You Renege"?
- E-Filing Update: More Digital Forms on the Way - But When Will They Be User-Friendly?
- Premium Processing - How to get the Most out of Concierge Service
- Expedited Adjudication - When You Need It Quick But They Won't Take Your \$1,000
- Sole Jurisdiction/Centralized Filing - What's Left of the Good Old Days?
- Do You Read Me? - Finding the Gold in Service Center Processing Guidelines and USCIS Websites.
- Getting Nourished with Special Ks: Family-Based K-1 and K-3 Nonimmigrant Success Strategies

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[Home Page](#)**SECOND Phone Session on June 24:**

- Getting to Yes: Strategies that Spawn Service-Center Success.
- Dodging the Bullet: Ways to avoid the RFE, the NO, the NOID and the NOIR
- Shake it Like a Polaroid Picture: Creative Uses of Graphic Evidence
- Surf's Up: Web-Trolling for Approval Notices
- What's Your Specialty? - Solutions for Evolving Occupations, Education Mismatches and Workers without Sheepskins
- Keep on Survivin': Strategies to Help Battered Spouses and Children
- Succeeding at Successorship: Service Center Compliance Strategies for Corporate Makeovers
- Oops I'm Late! - Establishing Extraordinary Circumstances and Reasons for Forgiveness

THIRD Phone Session on July 8: 2.00pm to 3.30pm ET (11.00am to 12.30pm PT)

- Readjudications Memo & RFE Memo
- When Merely Good is Not Enough: Proven Ways to Establish Extraordinary, Exceptional, Outstanding, and National-Interest Eligibility
- Portable or Unsupportable? - New Case-Saving Strategies for Mobile Workers (H1B, AOS portability)
- Penny for Your Thoughts: Demonstrating Ability to Pay at All the Right Times
- Take this Job and Love It: Work Permit Options for Dependents: EADs /E & L spousal work permits.
- Big Picture I-140/I-485 Concurrent/Sequential Filings Compared to the Pilot on Concurrent Filing 2d Preference/labor/certification cases.
- I Feel the Earth Move under My Feet: Winning Motions at the RSCs
- Hi Ho, Hi Ho, It's off to the AAO your Competitors Go!
- How can Headquarters Help? - When it's Time to Go up the Chain
- Getting by with a Little Help from Your Friends: Working with the USCIS Ombudsman,
- Getting by with a Little Help from Your Friends: Working with Congressional Liaison and the Media.

[Citations for Session 1](#)[Citations for Session 2](#)[Question 1](#)[Question 2](#)[Question 3](#)**ABOUT THE SPEAKERS**

Angelo A. Paparelli certified as a Specialist in Immigration and Nationality Law by the State Bar of California, has been practising business-sponsored immigration law for over 20 years. He is a nationally recognized speaker, published author and leading expert on cutting-edge business-related immigration issues, including the immigration consequences of mergers, acquisitions, reorganisations and other business changes, consular visa practice, audits of employers' compliance with immigration regulations, and work visas for executives and professionals. From 1991 to 1996, Mr. Paparelli served as co-Chairman of the Immigration and Nationality Law Committee of the American Bar Association's Section on International Law and Practice. He also served from 1988 to 1994 as an elected member of the Board of Governors of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA). He is named in the 1990-2004 editions of Best Lawyers in America under category of Immigration Law. Mr. Paparelli received the President's Award at the June, 2001 AILA Annual Conference for his contributions to the association in liaison with the Immigration and Naturalization Service on the immigration consequences of mergers, acquisitions and other forms of entity restructuring. He is a graduate of the University of Michigan (B.A., 1971) and Wayne State University Law School (J.D., 1976).

John Abram is a Supervisory Center Adjudications Officer, Division II at the California Service Center. Mr. Abram came to the CSC in the Spring of 2003 as a Supervisory Center Adjudications Officer. Prior to joining the CSC, he had an extensive legal career in the Los Angeles area.

Jonathan C. Adams is a Member of Fragomen, Del Rey Bernsen & Loewy. Brooklyn College (B.A., 1992, cum laude); Deans List; Boston College Law School (Visiting Student); Fordham University School of Law (J.D., 1995); Deans Letter of Commendation for statutory research and analysis of history of the death penalty in the U.S. Mr. Adams is admitted to the bars in New Jersey (1995), New York (1996) and the District of Columbia (1998). He joined Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen & Loewy in 1995. He is a member of the American Immigration

Lawyers Association, the American Bar Association, the New York State Bar Association, the New Jersey Bar Association and the District of Columbia Bar Association. In addition to writing articles on business immigration topics, Mr. Adams is a frequent lecturer at immigration conferences for several business and educational organizations including the American Council on International Personnel, LORMAN, Information Technology Association of America and the Canadian Law Institute.

Nancy Alby is an Assistant Center Director, Division XII (Congressional and Customer Relations), California Service Center Ms. Alby began her career with INS at the Nebraska Service Center in 1987. In 1988 she was promoted to Immigration Examiner and transferred to the CSC in 1990. She has served as the CSC Ombudsman, Training Officer, Adjudications Officer, Supervisory Center Adjudications Officer and other collateral duty leadership positions. Ms. Alby was promoted to Assistant Center Director in April 2002.

Jack Chaney is a partner in the law firm of CHANEY & LANE in Irving, Texas, concentrating in business immigration. Mr. Chaney obtained a BBA degree in Accounting, with honors, from Texas Tech University in 1977 and a J.D. from The University of Texas in 1980. His practice focuses on obtaining immigrant and nonimmigrant visas for highly skilled workers from around the world. He has significant experience obtaining visas for "National Interest," "Extraordinary Ability" and "Outstanding Professor/Researcher" aliens. Mr. Chaney advises corporate clients on a wide range of employment based immigration issues including mergers and acquisitions, I-9 compliance, and CIS, DOL and Social Security Administration regulations. Mr. Chaney maintains an extensive database on all areas of business immigration, including DOL labor certification, AC21 portability, the H-1B cap, pending legislation and changes in consulate procedures following 9/11. He represents a number of IT companies, hospitals, health care providers and universities throughout the United States. Mr. Chaney is a frequent speaker on business immigration issues at seminars conducted by law firms with large labor and employment practices. He has over fifteen years of litigation experience and is licensed before all state and federal courts in Texas. He is member of the State Bar of Texas and the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

Adam Green extensive practice and involvement in Immigration Law spans two decades. Some of the highlights of his career include serving as a Foreign Student Advisor at Harvard University, managing a U.S. based immigration law firm in Rome, Italy and heading the immigration law section at a large Boston law firm. He was a former Co-Chair of the American Immigration Lawyers Association Committees for the State Department, United States Information Agency and the committee for foreign students. He also produced two videos on obtaining F visas and maintaining student status (These videos have been purchased by U.S. consulates throughout the world). Adam is listed in the prestigious publication, "Best Lawyers in America." He has an "AV" rating (the highest possible (from Martindale-Hubbell, America's well-known attorney rating service. Additionally, he is a frequent lecturer at universities and for employer groups on obtaining work permits and permanent residence for foreign national employees. He has also been invited to speak at meetings at United State Consuls as well as at national meetings of immigration attorneys.

Joe Fierro is a Supervisory Center Adjudications Officer, Division I at the California Service Center. Mr. Fierro began his career in the Los Angeles District where he was a District Adjudications Officer, he transferred to the CSC where he was promoted to a Supervisory Center Adjudication's Officer several years ago.

Brett Gregg is an Assistant Center Director of the Division II (Nonimmigrants) at the California Service Center Mr. Gregg began his career with INS in 1996 as a District Adjudications Officer in the Los Angeles District. In 2002, Mr. Gregg transferred to the California Service Center where he was promoted to Supervisory Center Adjudications Officer. In April 2003, he was promoted to Assistant Center Director for Division II.

Kehrela M. Hodkinson was admitted to the California State Bar in 1980, after graduating from Loyola Law School in Los Angeles. She established her first law office in Los Angeles, California in 1982, where her practice concentrated on nonimmigrant visas and employment and family-based immigration matters. After moving to San Francisco, California in 1987, she founded a second immigration law firm and continued to provide expertise relating to temporary and permanent visas for business personnel and family-based immigration. She has practised exclusively U.S. immigration and nationality law in London since 1994. Ms. Hodkinson primarily represents IT, financial services, and other corporate and individual clients in processing temporary work permits and immigrant visa petitions, as well as processing family-based immigrant petitions. She is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, the American Bar Association, and American Women Lawyers in

London. Ms. Hodkinson has been a frequent speaker at professional conferences regarding U.S. visa processing in London.

Ernestine Leslie is an Assistant Center Director, Division I (Employment Based Immigrants) at the California Service Center Ms. Leslie began her career with INS 30 years ago. She has worked extensively in Inspections, Training and Exams/Adjudications throughout the Northern and Southern borders for INS. She served as a Supervisory Adjudications Officer in the Seattle District and transferred to the CSC as a supervisor in September 2000. In April 2002 Ms. Leslie was promoted to Assistant Center Director.

Edward R. Litwin is a nationally recognized immigration law expert and is certified by the California State Bar Board of Legal Specialization as a Specialist in Immigration and Nationality Law. He concentrates in the area of labor certifications and business visas, in addition to providing other immigration services. He is a graduate of Hastings College of Law and has been in practice since 1975. His past and present professional affiliations, activities, and accomplishments include: published articles in the Immigration Journal, Personnel News, and Immigration Law & Procedure; speaker at advanced immigration seminars throughout the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico under the auspices of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, Practising Law Institute, California State Bar, and various other bar associations; Adjunct Professor, teaching immigration and Nationality Law at the University of San Francisco Law School and the McGeorge School of Law; Member: American Immigration Lawyers Association and elected member of its Board of Governors, and San Francisco Bar Association, Christian Legal Society, Federal Bar Association, and American Bar Association. He is included in the Best Lawyers in America (Seventh Edition), An International Who's Who of Corporate Immigration Lawyers, Who's Who in American Law (Ninth Edition), Who's Who in Executives and Professionals (1999-2000 edition), and National Registry of Who's Who (life member), Strathmore's Who's Who (life member).

Mary L. Mucha is the Directing Attorney of the Los Angeles County Bar Association Immigration Legal Assistance Project. She is a graduate of UCLA and the University of Washington School of Law. Ms. Mucha sits on the executive committee of the Los Angeles County Bar Association Immigration Section and is a member of the Southern California American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA). She has been invited to speak at numerous conferences and seminars on family immigration law, political asylum, and HIV/immigration issues. She has also authored several articles for AILA publications and for other bar associations.

Donald Neufeld is Director of the California Service Center. Mr. Neufeld began his career with INS in 1983 in the Los Angeles District. He has held the following positions; Immigration Examiner, Supervisory Adjudications Officer and Deputy Assistant Director for Adjudications all in the Los Angeles District. In addition, he held the position of Deputy Director in the Miami District and the Director of Production Management with INS HQ. Mr. Neufeld became the Director at the CSC in June 2002.

Tracy Renaud serves as USCIS' Director of Immigration Services Modernization, the program charged with fundamentally transforming and improving the way that Immigration Services conducts business. Services Modernization includes several key projects including: the implementation of our 10-year business and strategic information technology (IT) plans and the projects associated with those plans; the IT Services Blanket Purchase Agreement; IT Portfolio Management; E-gov customer service initiatives; and special reengineering projects as assigned. Prior to her current position, Ms. Renaud led one of Services Modernization's cornerstone projects-the establishment and direction of USCIS' E-Filing Program. Under the leadership of Ms. Renaud, USCIS will soon offer E-Filing as an option for applications making up more than 50% of USCIS' annual volume of receipts. Ms. Renaud began her career with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in 1982 in a clerical position at the Vermont Service Center and rose to the position of Supervisory Immigration Examiner/Supervisory Center Adjudications Office. In 1999, she joined INS/USCIS Headquarters and has served in a variety of positions including Deputy Director of the Production Management Division.

Merrilee Snell recently moved her law practice to Long Beach, California. Along with her business immigration practice, she has extensive background in representing victims of domestic violence. She lectures on VAWA and HIV waivers for Los Angeles County Bar and the American Immigration Lawyers Association. She is a former chair of the Immigration Section of the Los Angeles County Bar and currently serves as an officer of the Long Beach Women Lawyers. Attended California State University in San Francisco, Law Degree from Western State University in 1982 and was admitted to the bar the same year.

Wendy Williams is a Supervisory Center Adjudications Officer, Division I at the California Service Center. Ms. Williams has worked at the CSC with the Program Analyst, Training Division as a Training Officer and most recently she was promoted to Supervisory Center Adjudications Officer.

Stephen Zawacki serves as the Operations Director for the Department of Homeland Security's Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman. He is an attorney with over a decade of private practice experience in the immigration field, as well as having over twenty years' experience in program and systems management.

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