

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

From October 19 to October 21, 2016, we held the first National Institute for Trial Advocacy (NITA) immigration pilot program at a firm in Washington, D.C., overlooking the White House. Little did we know that the election results would soon thrust a vastly increasing number of immigrants into removal proceedings in immigration court and that immigrant defenders would need trial skills more than ever before. Since the first NITA immigration pilot program, we have planned and presented trial skills programs across the country both in-person and virtually.

For over 50 years, NITA's learning-by-doing methodology has helped lawyers at all skill levels achieve their best in trials in their relevant areas of practice. NITA achieves these teaching goals by training seasoned litigators to become unparalleled instructors. We have taught alongside many of NITA's incredible instructors to train immigration court practitioners on trial skills that are common in state and Article III federal courts, but rarely used in immigration court. We are grateful to NITA for training us and for its continued commitment to the immigration public interest and public programs.

We want to extend special thanks to several NITA instructors from whom we have both learned immeasurable lessons on how to best teach trial skills with humor, humility, and love. These NITA super stars include: Shani Adess, John Baker, Mark Caldwell, Mike Dale, Mary DeFusco, Veronica Finkelstein, Christina M. Habas, Nancy Hathaway, Amy Hoffman, Adrienne Johnson, Hon. Eric Johnson, Hon. Jeanne Jourdan, Suzanne Katchmar, Neil D. Kodsi, Stephanie Ledesma, Amy Maldonado, Bob McGahey, Qusair Mohamedbhai, LeTiffany Obozele, Olu Orange, Jaclyn Pampel, Reza Rezvani, Allison Rocker, Adam Shlahet, Nick Sitterly, Henry Su, Tom Swett, Gene Tanaka, Whitney Untiedt, Courtney Witten, Hon. Michael Washington, and Jason Young.

Another unique aspect of the immigration court trial skills trainings we provide is to include retired immigration judges among the faculty. Participants in these trainings find the unique perspective from the other side of the bench to be invaluable. We are very fortunate that many of these same retired immigration judges read this book and provided their insights to the authors. Retired immigration judges, Hon. Jeffrey Chase, Hon. Jennie Giambastiani, Hon. Carol King, Hon. Eliza Klein, and Hon. Denise Slavin, each read and commented on several chapters. We would like to give special thanks to Hon. Dana Leigh Marks, who read every chapter and provided unique insights from her 35 years on the bench.

In addition to the retired immigration judges, Professor Veronica Finkelstein (Wilmington University School of Law) and Professor Tanika Vigil (Immigration Law and Policy Clinic at Denver University's Sturm College of Law and University of Denver's Department of Political Science) reviewed several chapters and provided invaluable feedback. We would also like to thank our colleague Rebecca Scholtz who co-authored practice advisories that were foundational for our work on this book.

We also wish to thank the National Immigration Project for understanding the incredible need for hands-on trial skills trainings and for prioritizing the offering of these trainings. As a member-based organization, the National Immigration Project is deeply committed to training and mentoring the immigration advocacy community. The National Immigration Project understands the value of and need for high quality litigation, and that litigation begins case by case, trial by trial, in immigration court.

Finally, we want to thank the hundreds of immigrant defenders whom we have taught over the years. You give us hope that a more just future lies ahead.