

Chris Leifeld

Chris Leifeld is director of the Compliance, Records and Training (CRT) unit within the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry's (DLI's) Workers' Compensation Division.

Leifeld has served as the director since March 2018. Prior to that, he served as DLI's deputy commissioner, overseeing the Workers' Compensation Division, beginning in January 2015. He joined DLI in 2011 and has served previously as the director of the division's Vocational Rehabilitation unit and Alternative Dispute Resolution unit.

Leifeld lives with his two children in St Paul, Minnesota. He is a graduate of the University of St. Thomas (bachelor's degree) and the University of Minnesota (master's degree in education).

- Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry: www.dli.mn.gov



Russell Gelfman

Russell Gelfman, M.D., M.S., has been treating individuals with temporary and permanent work disabilities for more than 26 years. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine. He is currently the medical director of Work Rehabilitation at Mayo Clinic. Clinical interests include the diagnosis and treatment of work-related injuries and the outpatient rehabilitation of neurological and musculoskeletal disorders.

Gelfman received his bachelor of science degree in bioengineering at the University of California, San Diego, attended the University of California College of Medicine at Irvine and completed his training at Mayo Clinic with an internship in internal medicine followed by his PM&R residency, graduating in 1993. Following his residency and practicing for a year in Pennsylvania, he became medical director of Occupational Health Services at Divine Savior Healthcare in Portage, Wisconsin. In Portage, he provided care for injured employees from many companies, including Canadian Pacific Railway, Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics, Penda Corporation, Cardinal Glass Industries, Rayovac and Brakebush Brothers. He returned to Mayo Clinic in 2003 and completed a master's degree in clinical and translational science. His research interests include upper extremity neuromusculoskeletal disorders and other conditions that impact one's ability to work.

Gelfman has given multiple lectures about various aspects of work disability and caring for injured workers. His current practice includes educating medical residents about various aspects of work rehabilitation. He is a co-investigator on a National Institutes of Health grant to study the ability of dynamic ultrasound to predict



Speakers

treatment outcomes in carpal tunnel syndrome and he has been an author of multiple peer-reviewed publications and a book chapter. He has been an external reviewer for two chapters in Occupational Medicine Guidelines: Evaluation and Management of Common Health Problems and Functional Recovery in Workers, Third Edition, by the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

- Mayo Clinic: www.mayoclinic.com

Jessica Cicero

Jessica Cicero, PA-C, is a physician assistant (PA) at Twin Cities Orthopedics in Eagan, Minnesota. She has been working alongside Dr. Jonathan Cooper, a sports medicine surgeon, since 2013. Together, they help patients of all different activity levels return to their desired activities. Her favorite aspect of her career is educating patients and motivating them to take a more active role in their personal health, fitness or recovery.

She was graduated from Minnesota State University, Mankato, with a degree in biochemistry in 2010 and then began her PA studies at Rush University in Chicago. While in Chicago, Cicero had the privilege to learn from nationally renowned orthopedic providers. She earned her master's degree in 2013 and felt her calling was to return home to Minnesota.

- Twin Cities Orthopedics: www.tcomn.com



Thomas Kieselbach

Thomas Kieselbach, attorney at Cousineau, Waldhauser and Kieselbach, P.A., has been practicing in the area of workers' compensation law for more than 35 years. He is a well-known litigator representing employers, self-insureds and insurance companies. Kieselbach is a problem solver, known for his attention to detail, comprehensive preparation and results.

He was a longstanding adjunct professor of law who has significantly contributed to the legal profession. Many of his students are now litigators in firms across the state. In 2007, he was selected as a charter member of the College of Workers' Compensation Lawyers and is now serving a three-year term on its National Board of Governors. Kieselbach is also Minnesota's representative for the National Workers' Compensation Defense Network and Larson's National Workers' Compensation Advisory Board. His peers have voted to list him in Best Lawyers in America, Super Lawyers and "Top 40 Workers' Compensation Attorneys."

Kieselbach loves the game of golf, which has been a passion since childhood. He is fortunate to work at a great firm with fantastic people.

- Cousineau, Waldhauser and Kieselbach, P.A.: www.cwk-law.com



Speakers

Kathryn R. Berger

Kathryn R. Berger, J.D., has been an attorney in the Department of Labor and Industry's Office of General Counsel since about 1990. She primarily works on workers' compensation legislation, rules and compliance. She worked as a registered nurse before becoming an attorney.

- Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry: www.dli.mn.gov



Michael Hill

Michael Hill, M.S., has worked at the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry since 2008, as a rehabilitation policy specialist engaged in rehabilitation and insurer training, compliance and advising on workers' compensation rules. Prior to coming to the department, Hill worked as a qualified rehabilitation consultant, vocational expert, medical case manager and director of rehabilitation. He has co-contributed as an author to several Elsevier nursing textbooks.

When not working, Hill is involved in organizations dedicated to helping children at little or no cost with orthopedic surgery, cleft lip/palate repair, speech and language services, cancer treatment and education through high school scholarships.

- Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry: www.dli.mn.gov



John Wedl

John Wedl is the president and founder of Minneapolis-based WEDL Placement Services Inc. He has been involved in the job placement and staffing industries for more than 25 years. He began WEDL Placement in 2003, had several senior management positions at internet recruiting company Techies.com in the late '90s, and was recruiting accounting and administrative talent for Robert Half International for five years prior to that.

Wedl has been on the board of the Minnesota Association of Rehabilitation Providers for more than 10 years and served as president in 2013. He has served on the board of directors for Our Lady of Grace School and served as the president of the Men's Club for two years. Wedl is a proud graduate of St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota, and enjoys spending his spare time volunteering with area job-transition groups and with his family. He and his wife Megan are raising their three children in the southwest suburbs of the Twin Cities.

- WEDL Placement Services: www.wedlplacement.com



Speakers

David Kempston

David Kempston, attorney at Mottaz and Sisk Injury Law, grew up on the West Coast, but moved to Minnesota to attend law school more than 30 years ago. After being graduated from the University of Minnesota law school in 1992 (magna cum laude and Order of the Coif), he has spent his entire career as a litigator – primarily handling workers’ compensation claims. During that interval, he has tried more than 400 workers’ compensation cases. He has also appeared at oral argument in front of various appellate courts, including the Minnesota Supreme Court, about 30 times.

Kempston has been voted a Super Lawyer every year since 2000. He was named the 2017 Lawyer of the Year by the Anoka County Bar Association. He frequently lectures on the Minnesota workers’ compensation statute and is a co-contributing author to a chapter in the Minnesota Worker’s Compensation Deskbook (chapter 7). He has written two books, published through Amazon, *That’s Why They Call it Practicing Law* (2017) and *Lessons Learned on the Run* (2020). In 2020, Kempston was inducted as a fellow in The College of Workers’ Compensation Lawyers, a national entity established to honor those attorneys who have distinguished themselves in the practice of workers’ compensation.



When not lawyering, he likes to read, walk, and run – and to spend time with his four kids and four grandkids.

- Mottaz and Sisk Injury Law: www.mottazsiskinjurylaw.com