

# ANNUAL REPORT

2023



**NATIONAL  
CRIMINAL  
DEFENSE  
COLLEGE**



# MISSION

---

Pursuing justice by delivering the highest standard of trial skills training, through a diverse faculty, to criminal defense attorneys across the United States to ensure that people accused of crimes are represented by client-centered, trial-focused, and zealous counsel.

Pursuing justice by preparing defense counsel to recognize and confront racism and bias in the criminal legal system.

Pursuing justice by inspiring and empowering a diverse community of criminal defense attorneys to transform the criminal legal system to ensure due process of law, effective assistance of counsel, freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures, and equal protection of law for all people.

# VISION

---

We envision a world in which all individuals who come in contact with the legal system are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness, regardless of wealth, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, or status in any marginalized group.



# ABOUT US

---

The National Criminal Defense College (NCDC) was incorporated in 1985 by a dedicated group of committed and talented criminal defense attorneys from all over the United States. Since then, NCDC has empowered over 9,000 defense attorneys with transformative trial-skills training through its comprehensive Trial Practice Institute and shorter weekend programs on specific trial skills topics, all staffed by faculty who are talented and successful courtroom lawyers, trainers and coaches.

We believe that those facing criminal accusations by their governments, the consequences of which are often life-shattering, deserve to be represented by client-centered, trial ready, zealous counsel dedicated to the highest caliber of legal defense.

Today NCDC is the premier and longest-established provider of trial skills training for criminal defense practitioners in the United States.

The functions of the chief executive and operating officers are performed by the Deans of the College. The College is governed by a Board of Regents.



# DEANS' REFLECTION

## Remembering Deryl and Recommitting Ourselves to Her Vision

When we closed out our Deans' Reflection in the 2022 Annual Report, we declared that we remained deeply honored to be the "keepers of the flame" of the National Criminal Defense College, entrusted to carry on the legacy of our inspiring leader, Deryl Dantzler. We further vowed to care for the College in a way that would make her proud. Sadly, just months after our declarations, Deryl was gone. Her passing makes the responsibility of carrying this torch even more profound for us. It has heightened our resolve to do all we can to keep her vision alive and to keep pushing it forward, for our alumni, for our faculty, for our future participants and for the broader defender community and all of those that they serve.

Our first tribute was to rename the Trial Practice Institute in Deryl's honor as the Deryl Dantzler Trial Practice Institute. After all, the work of the College has always been rooted in Deryl's vision, values, and bravery. As we look to the



future, we recognize that there is a need to focus on fundraising and outreach to all members of the broader community and all those interested in the promise of equal justice under the law to ensure that Deryl's vision perpetuates far into the future. Together, we have committed to these our priorities for 2024 and we are so very grateful to everyone who has contributed resources to support Deryl's vision.

### **Bench Dedication in March 2024**

On March 23, 2024, we will pause to remember Deryl in Macon, Georgia at Mercer Law School. We look forward to partnering with Mercer to dedicate a lovely wrought iron bench in Deryl's honor on the lawn of the law school



## DEANS' REFLECTION CONTINUED...

where Deryl served on faculty and where so many of our historic Trial Practice Institute photographs have taken place. We all envision that this will be a place for Mercer Law School students and faculty to sit and remember Deryl and meditate with a beautiful view of the front lawn (and perhaps even to smoke a cigarette out there in Deryl's honor). We will remain at the law school to kick off the NCDC Cross-Examination Workshop the following day. Mercer Law School's Dean, Karen Sneddon, a former colleague of Deryl's, is excited to welcome us back to our old stomping grounds to host this amazing four-day program.

### Hosting the Deryl Dantzler Trial Practice Institute in a New Location

This past year also brought the two-week Deryl Dantzler Trial Practice Institute to a brand-new location, Fairfax, Virginia. Since we have often said that suffering is overrated, we were happy to find that the accommodations at the Fairfax Hilton were very comfortable. The size

of the hotel and its ample conference space ensured that we were able to welcome the largest classes of participants in NCDC's history. It was super convenient for everyone to be lodged at the same place where all the sessions were held, and the hotel is walking distance to numerous shops and restaurants. The Fairfax Hilton is also just ten minutes away from Dulles International Airport which makes travel much more convenient for everyone. (Travel convenience was particularly important this year as participants joined us from as far away as Argentina, Australia, Japan, and The Hague!) During the weekend at the midpoint of the summer sessions, participants were able to choose whether to take day trips to various mid-Atlantic destinations or even to fly home to check in on family members. At the end of the summer, it was clear to us that no matter where the Trial Practice Institute is held, the magic of the College follows wherever we go. We are excited to return to Fairfax for at least the next two summers.



## DEANS' REFLECTION CONTINUED...

### The 2023 Short Programs

In addition to our flagship program, the Deryl Dantzler Trial Practice Institute, NCDC also held two short programs. In January 2023, we held the NCDC Cross-Examination Workshop at the Dupont Circle Royal Sonesta in Washington, DC. Brian Voelcker made his debut as a Resident Arts Faculty Member to provide performance, breath, and voice feedback to participants. (Brian joined us in Fairfax for the Deryl Dantzler Trial Practice Institute as well.) Brian's contribution to the program was a game changer. We are seeking funding to support and enlarge the involvement of arts faculty in as many of our programs as possible. At the conclusion of the workshop, in observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday, a group of faculty members and participants traveled together in a big yellow school bus to take in the experience at the National Museum for African American History and Culture.

In March 2023, the College traveled to Denver, Colorado to hold its third Forensic Cross-Examination Workshop

in partnership with our friends from the Innocence Project in New York. This partnership is aimed at better equipping defenders to challenge junk science and take on testifying forensic experts when they appear in court. The program was a great success. We challenged participants to conduct mock forensic cross-examinations of toolmark expert witnesses and supported them with tons of practical information, expert lectures, and demonstrations. We reinforced that the foundation for forensic cross-examination remains rooted in the cross-examination techniques that have been taught at the Trial Practice Institute for the past three decades and more. The participants left all fired up to challenge junk science at every turn.

### Farewell to Tommy Futch

Professional actors playing the roles of witnesses remains a foundational element of NCDC programs. This past year, in addition to losing Deryl, the College also mourned the loss of Tommy Futch of Laughing Matters an awesome improvisational talent who managed the talented troupe of actors who supported TPI and NCDC short program for



## DEANS' REFLECTION CONTINUED...

decades. Many a participant groaned audibly when Tommy would come into a small group to play a witness during their turn at the podium. Truly if you could cross Tommy, you could cross anybody. We will miss Tommy and we all owe him a debt of gratitude for preparing us to take on some of the most difficult challenges in our work.

### Welcoming 12 New Faculty Members

In 2023, we were excited to welcome 12 new talented faculty members to our rolls: Brook Antonio, Michelle Betancourt, Carmen Brooks, Michael Carter, Kaushiki Chowdhury, Jawara Griffin, Joshua Jones, Christian Lassiter, Desiree Lassiter, Kara Rolf, and Casey Secor. (Their photos appear later in this annual report.) We look forward to getting to know these twelve exceptional defenders better as we teach together in the coming year. And we look forward to all that they will bring to the College.

### Gratitude to our Faculty

In everything that we do, we remain grateful to the many talented NCDC faculty members who show up year after year to teach for the College, to

Inshare their expertise and to provide each participant with the feedback and encouragement that they need to be the very best versions of themselves. The faculty continues to amaze us each year as they bring wisdom from the frontlines of courtrooms across the country to selflessly share techniques and encouragement with participants eager to grow and learn. We are nothing without our amazing faculty.

As we step into 2024, Deryl remains close to our hearts. We will continue to explore opportunities to share the magic of NCDC with the broader criminal defense community to help more defenders be their best and most effective selves for people accused of criminal offenses in courtrooms everywhere. Only then can the words inscribed over the doors of the highest court in our land - Equal Justice Under Law - even come close to being a reality for those who faces the power and might of their government as defendants in a criminal prosecution.

*-Karen and Tasha*

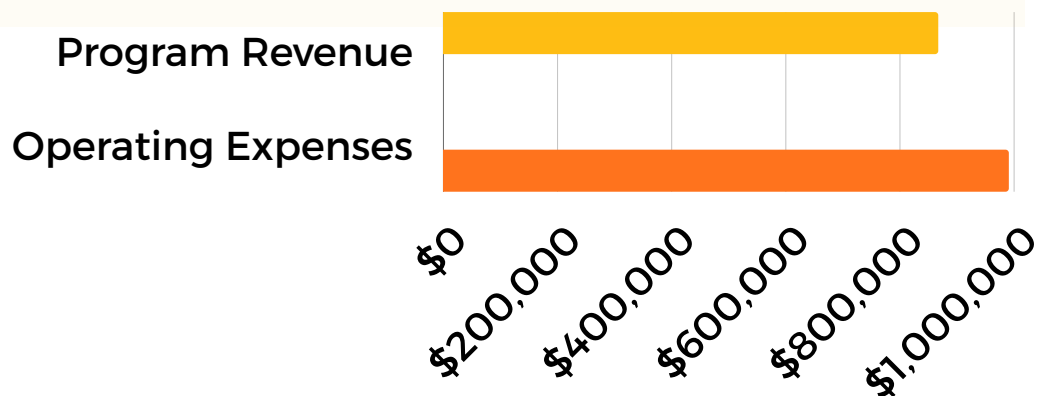


# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

2023 was an exciting and challenging year for us in many ways. As the country came out of the pandemic, so too did the court system. Many of us suddenly found ourselves with very busy trial schedules and many public defender offices found themselves with less than robust training budgets as they had gotten used to sending their attorneys to far less expensive online training programs. We made the bold decision to run more programs in 2023 and to move the Deryl Dantzler Trial Practice institute to the Hilton Fairfax in Virginia. While these decisions were the right ones for many reasons, they had a negative impact on our bottom line. Although we had hoped to end the year with a surplus, we were unable to do so. Our participants' busy trial schedules and their offices' reduced training budgets resulted in lower than anticipated enrollment for our short programs (the in person NCDC Cross-Examination Workshop and the Forensic Cross-Examination Workshop), leaving

us with a deficit at the end of year. Our decision to host these short programs in hotel event spaces was also a decision that added cost in unexpected ways. Finally, there were many expenses involved in hosting TPI in Fairfax that we were unable to accurately anticipate. These lessons learned have led us to make significant changes in our financial planning for 2024. We have implemented tighter controls over the budget with monthly monitoring. We are seeking out law school space for our short programs (not hotel space) and we feel certain that we fully understand how to anticipate expenses at TPI. Finally, most courthouses have been able to manage their COVID caseload backlog and we expect an increase in enrollment at all of our short programs. In fact, enrollment for the 2024 NCDC Cross Examination Workshop has yielded higher than expected enrollment. We are optimistic that we will finish 2024 with a surplus.

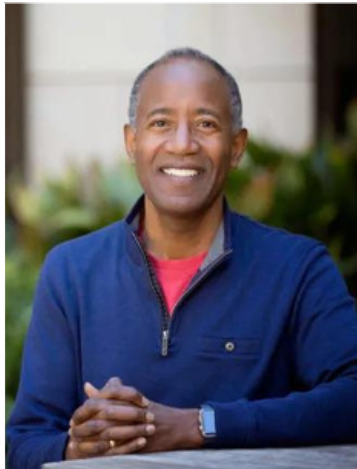
## 2022/2023 Revenue and Expenses





# BOARD OF REGENTS

---



**Ron Tyler,**  
**Chair**  
Stanford, CA



**Cathy Bennett,**  
**Vice-Chair**  
Anchorage, AK



**Paul Rudof,**  
**Secretary**  
Northampton, MA



**Tara Allen**  
Bristol, RI



**Melody Brannon**  
Topkea, KS



**Byron Conway**  
Macon, GA



**Shawna Geiger**  
Denver, CO



# BOARD OF REGENTS CONTINUED

---



**Shaffy Moeel**  
Oakland, CA



**Martín Sabelli**  
San Francisco, CA



**Juval Scott**  
Roanoke, VA



**Callie Steele**  
Los Angeles, CA



**Ryan Swingle**  
Athens, GA



**Deja Vishny**  
Milwaukee, WI



# FACULTY

It would not be possible for the College to continue to fulfill our mission after so many years without our gifted and dedicated faculty. We extend gratitude to all of you for your time and efforts in this last year as we continue to grow to expand our influence in the criminal defense field.

The largest number of participants in NCDC's history convened at the Fairfax Hilton seeking transformation - 126 in the June Session and 128 in the July Session. Participants came to us from 41 states, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Argentina, Australia, Canada, The Netherlands, United States Pacific Forces (Japan), and Uruguay. None of this would have been possible without the 64 amazing NCDC Faculty Members who generously donated their time and wisdom to teach.

It is a joy and a privilege to announce that we have invited the following 12 talented defenders to become NCDC Faculty in 2024:



**Brook Antonio**  
Waxhaw, NC



**Michelle Betancourt**  
La Mesa, CA



**Carmen Brooks**  
Atlanta, GA



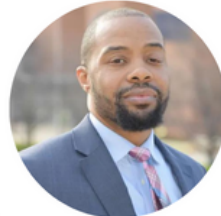
**Michael Carter**  
Southfield, MI



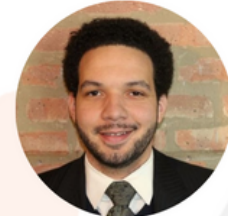
**Kaushiki Chowdhury**  
Tulsa, OK



**Devin Franklin**  
Mableton, GA



**Jawara Griffin**  
Las Vegas, NV



**Joshua Jones**  
Chicago, IL



**Christian Lassiter**  
Baltimore, MD



**Desiree Lassiter**  
Baltimore, MD



**Kara Rolf**  
Milwaukee, WI



**Casey Secor**  
Lexington, SC

# PROGRAMS



THE DERYL DANTZLER  
TRIAL PRACTICE INSTITUTE

## DERYL DANTZLER TRIAL PRACTICE INSTITUTE

The newly renamed Deryl Dantzler Trial Practice Institute is the original, transformative, two-week trial skills program designed exclusively for criminal defense practitioners. In place for over 35 years, NCDC is proud to call over nine thousand criminal defense attorneys its alumni.



## SHORT PROGRAMS

IN PERSON & ONLINE CROSS WORKSHOPS

For decades, NCDC has presented weekend workshops that teach NCDC's trial-tested cross-examination techniques.





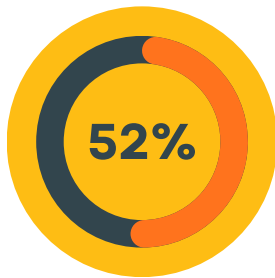


# 2023

## Graduates: 253

**Deryl Dantzler Scholarships:**  
**\$46,689**

**ACTL Scholarships:**  
**\$35,000**



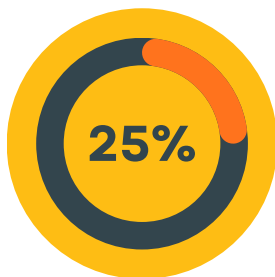
**WOMEN**



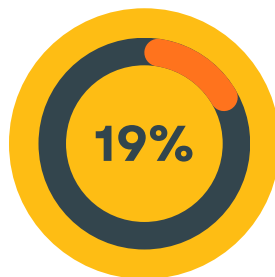
**LAWYERS OF COLOR**



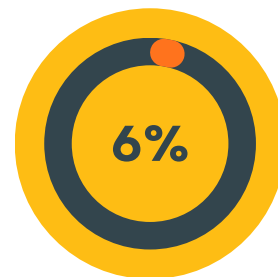
**PUBLIC DEFENDERS**



**FEDERAL DEFENDERS**



**PRIVATE DEFENDERS**



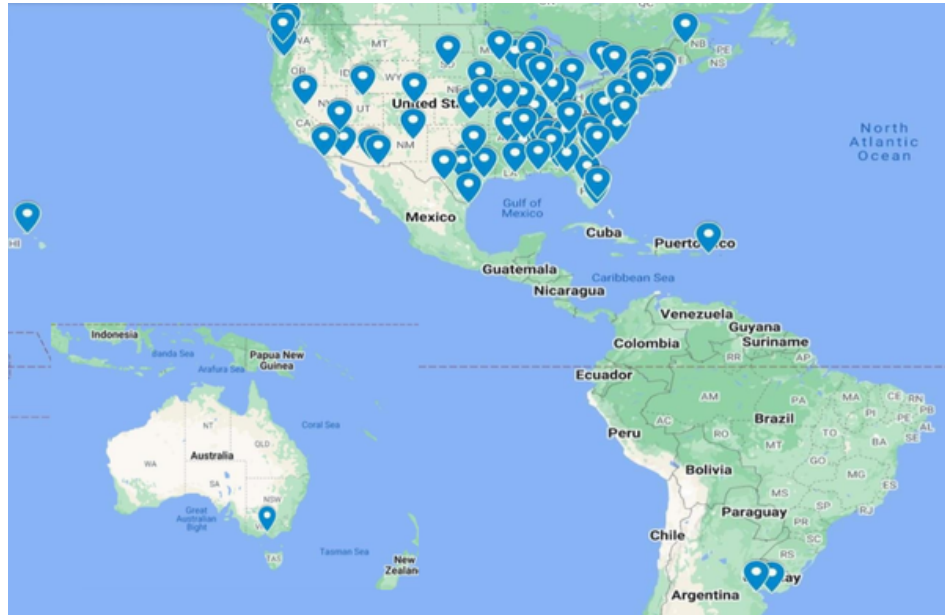
**MILITARY DEFENDERS**



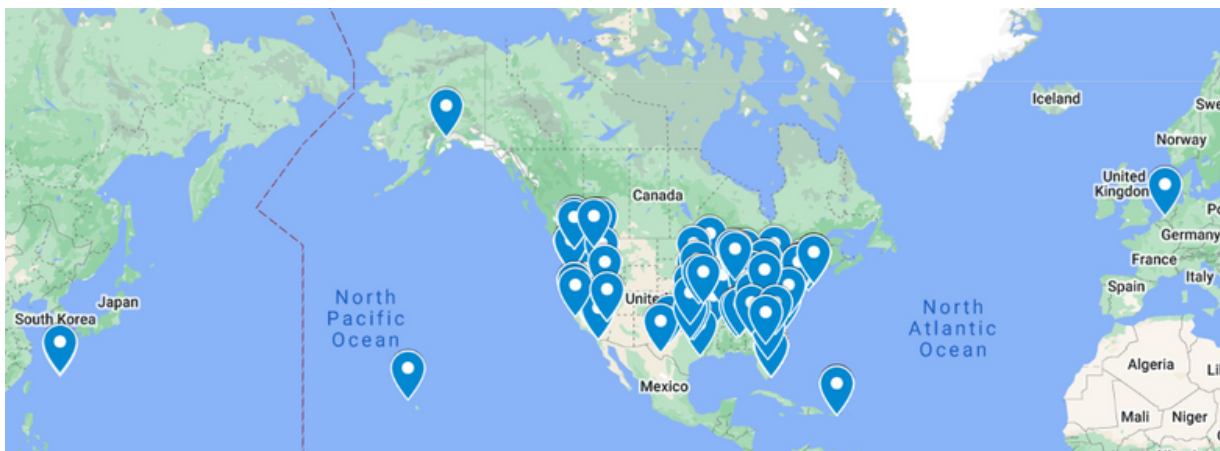
# Participants came from all over the world...

---

## June Session



## July Session





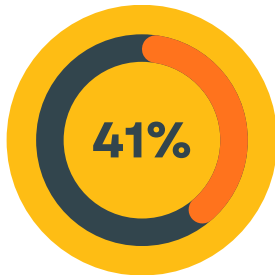


# 2023

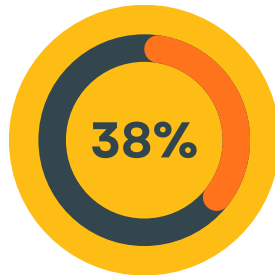


# NCDC CROSS-EXAMINATION WORKSHOP

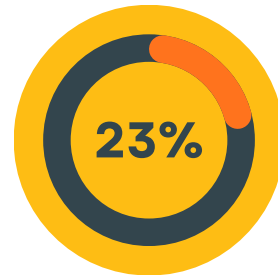
## WASHINGTON, DC



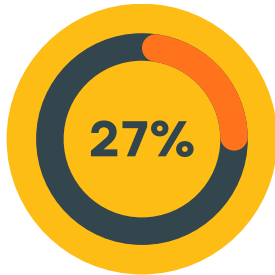
**WOMEN**



**LAWYERS OF COLOR**



**PUBLIC DEFENDERS**



**FEDERAL DEFENDERS**



**PRIVATE DEFENDERS**



**MILITARY DEFENDERS**

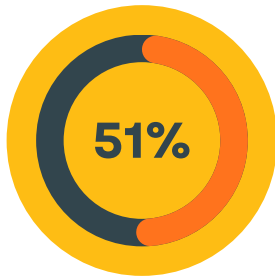
“ This workshop was TERRIFIC! I left feeling empowered and inspired, like I did when I left NCDC. More than that I left, with actual skills that I practiced during the sessions and with tips and rubrics which I’m already applying to my cases. ”



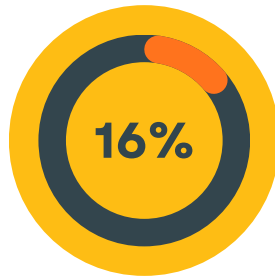


# NCDC & THE INNOCENCE PROJECT FORENSIC CROSS-EXAMINATION WORKSHOP

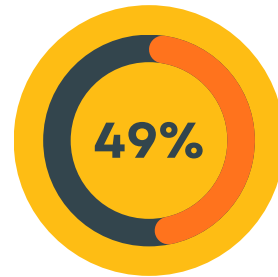
## DENVER, CO



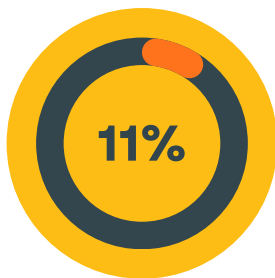
**WOMEN**



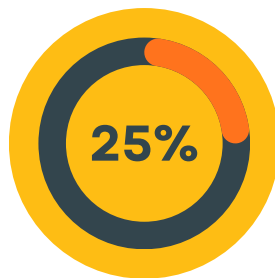
**LAWYERS  
OF COLOR**



**PUBLIC  
DEFENDERS**



**FEDERAL  
DEFENDERS**



**PRIVATE  
DEFENDERS**



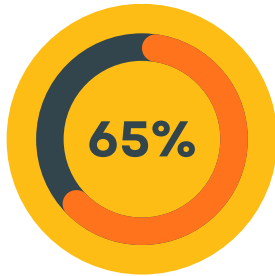
**MILITARY  
DEFENDERS**

“ I am completely blown away at the quality of the faculty. Not just in terms of acumen and credentials, but also as humans. It's always inspiring to meet people that you hope to emulate as professionals and people. ”

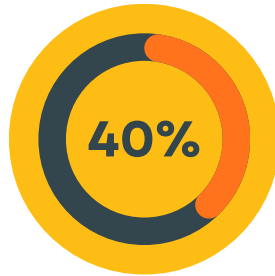


# NCDC ONLINE CROSS-EXAMINATION WORKSHOP

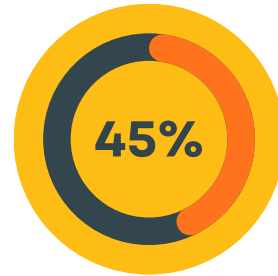
---



**WOMEN**



**LAWYERS  
OF COLOR**



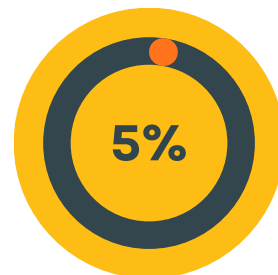
**PUBLIC  
DEFENDERS**



**FEDERAL  
DEFENDERS**



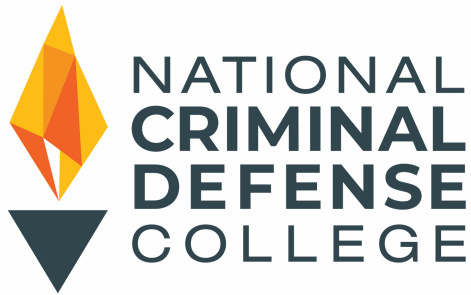
**PRIVATE  
DEFENDERS**



**MILITARY  
DEFENDERS**

“ I really appreciated all the lectures and the variety of instructors that all offered great expertise. ”





# LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024...



**MARCH 24-27**

NCDC Cross-Examination Workshop  
Macon, GA



**JUNE 16- 29**

Deryl Dantzler Trial  
Practice Institute  
Fairfax, VA



**JULY 14-27**

Deryl Dantzler Trial  
Practice Institute  
Fairfax, VA



**OCTOBER 10-13**

Forensic Cross-Examination Workshop  
Miami, FL