The American College of Employee Benefits Counsel

THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS COUNSEL AND THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA, COLUMBUS SCHOOL OF LAW

are pleased to announce that

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW WINS THE EIGHTH ANNUAL ELLEN A. (NELL) HENNESSY EMPLOYEE BENEFITS MOOT COURT COMPETITION

Named in memory of Nell Hennessy—a fearless advocate for the rights of employee benefit plan participants and retirees—this unique competition promotes and recognizes the finest oral and written advocacy on critical issues in employee benefits appellate litigation.

The ACEBC® and The Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law, were proud to sponsor and host the eighth annual Ellen A. (Nell) Hennessy Moot Court, held on Friday and Saturday, March 7-8, 2026. Sixteen Teams from the following law schools competed:

- Baylor University School of Law
- Drexel University, Thomas R. Kline School of Law
- The George Washington University Law School
- Penn State Dickinson Law
- William & Mary Law School
- Villanova Charles Widger School of Law
- UNLV William S. Boyd School of Law
- Lewis and Clark School of Law
- University of Virginia School of Law
- The Catholic University of America, Colombus School of Law

The teams argued before experienced ERISA practitioners. The final round was judged by: the Honorable John Rogers, U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit; The Honorable Tana Lin, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington; and the Honorable Phyllis C. Borzi, former Assistant Secretary of the Employee Benefits Security Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor (and longtime friend and colleague of Nell Hennessy).

Teams addressed current topics in employee benefits law through briefs and multiple rounds of oral argument.

After several hard-fought rounds, teams from Baylor University and the George Washington University met in the finals. After nearly an hour of argument and intensive questioning by the panel, the Baylor team of Keegan Coon and Cagan Baldree won the Best Team Award by a nose over the George Washington team of Carolyn Jones and Christina Hitchcock.

Albert Anaim from Catholic University won Preliminary Best Oralist.

The third-place teams included Dylan Kochran and Trey Rodgers from William & Mary and Brianna Cooper and Kelly Gurcsik from Villanova.

The George Washington team of Carolyn Jones and Christina Hitchcock won the Best Brief award, and the Catholic University team of Ileana Elder, Bradley Krause, and Trenton Shook won the Best Brief Runner-Up.

The winners receive cash awards. The ACEBC® is also paying for the winning team to attend ACEBC®'s annual dinner, being held this year in Charleston, South Carolina.

This year's sponsors included: LexisNexis; DLA Piper; Keller Rohrback; Palmeri & Eisenberg; Catherine A. Boozman and Howard Shapiro; and Boutwell Fay LLP.

ACEBC® Fellows Jonathan Rose, a partner at DLA Piper, and Erin Riley, a partner at Keller Rohrback, co-chaired this year's competition.