



2026 Conference Theme: Partnership and Practice-Joint Strategies for Success!

Day One – Monday, June 29,2026	<i>All plenary sessions on the Ballroom level</i>
10:00 AM – 1:00PM	REGISTRATION OPEN
1:00 PM to 1:15 PM	<p><u>Opening Session</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome – Dr. Corey Robicheaux, At-large, 2026 TXLMC • Presentation of Colors – Bexar County Buffalo Soldiers Association • Pledge of Allegiance – Mr. Sasan Sadat-Sharifi, United States Marine Corps Veteran and Vice President of Technology and Process Improvement with Workers Assistance Program Inc., • National Anthem –Timothy Birt- Signature Singing, Voice Lessons of San Antonio, Texas
1:15 PM to 2:15 PM	<p><u>Opening Address:</u> Kicking off a successful 2026 TXLM Conference!</p>
<p><i>Dr. Sharon Denton, Director of Workforce & Org. Development – City of Houston Health Dept.</i></p>	
2:15 PM to 2:45 PM	<p><u>Plenary Session:</u> Houston LERA expands reach to become Texas LERA Announcing Houston LERA’s transition to Texas LERA, and building on the partnership with Texas Labor Management Conference!</p>
<p>Texas LERA</p> <p><i>Emily Smith, LERA National Executive Director, Deidra Norris, Chief of Labor, Employment, and Civil Service – City of Houston & Mickey Brock, Neutral Labor Arbitrator</i></p>	
2:45 PM	BREAK (LIGHT REFRESHMENTS SERVED IN FOYER)
3:00 PM to 4:00 PM	<p><u>Plenary Session:</u> Labor law under the National Labor Relations Act continues to be an important field. It not only governs the right to form, join and assist labor unions and labor-management relations such as collective bargaining, strikes and boycotts but it also provides employees important protections, even in non-union environments.</p>
<p>What’s Hot at the NLRB</p> <p><i>Tim Watson, NLRB</i></p>	
4:00 PM to 4:30 PM	<p><u>Plenary Session:</u> Join the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service for updates & services; see what’s new and what’s changed...</p>
<p>FMCS Is Back in Business</p> <p><i>Beth Schindler, National Representative, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service</i></p>	
4:30 PM	<p><u>Announcements and Adjournments</u> Raffle & door prizes</p>
6:00 PM – 10:00 PM	<p><u>Evening Reception –</u> Join us for a night of networking, fun, and fellowship at CASINO NIGHT. Assorted buffet dinner & drinks included. Located in the Ballroom.</p>
<p>CASINO NIGHT</p>	



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Day Two – Tuesday, June 30, 2026 Schedule of Workshops	Workshop Description
7:30 AM – 8:30 AM BREAKFAST SERVED	Buffet @ Ballroom Foyer <i>Announcements</i>
8:30 AM – 12:30 PM REGISTRATION OPEN	Registration open until Hall of Fame lunch
8:30 AM – 10:00AM	<i>1st Round of Workshops</i> All workshops on Hill Country Level
Arbitration – The Do’s and Don’ts <i>Chris Bourgeacq, Arbitrator ADR Services Mr. Arthur Pearlstein, JD, Arbitrator/Mediator ADR at Work</i>	This session will provide an overview of arbitration, its purpose, and its design of efficiency. The hearing process will be examined from a practical point of view, including tips for organization and presentation, witness preparation, and cost-efficient use of technology. Emphasis will be placed on how to thrive in an arbitration before any organization, panel, or individual. <i>Moderator: Keith Junck</i>
Servant Leadership <i>Dwayne Smetzer, Chief Executive Officer with Workers Assistance Program, Inc.</i>	This workshop introduces the basic core principles of servant leadership and how leading through service can strengthen teams, trust, and workplace culture. Participants will explore key servant leadership behaviors and identify practical ways to apply these concepts in their daily work. The session is interactive, approachable, and designed for leaders at any level. We are all leaders! <i>Moderator: Rick Dielman</i>
The Power of an Apology <i>Michael Wolf, FMCS Federal Mediator/Commissioner (retired). Also previously:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Counsel to NTEU</i> • <i>Texas Mediator Credentialing Assn., Founding Board of Directors Member;</i> • <i>Alamo Federal Executive Board, Shared Neutrals Consortium Founding Chairperson;</i> • <i>Supreme Court of Texas, ADR Advisory Committee Member;</i> • <i>Travis County Dispute Resolution Center, Board of Directors Member; and</i> • <i>State Bar of Texas, ADR Committee Subcommittee Chairperson</i> 	“Why Partners Need to Apologize and How to Do It Right”! Aspiring partners make mistakes. A proper apology can help repair mistakes that threaten to unravel efforts to grow a constructive labor-management alliance. What is an effective apology? How can we make it powerful and effective without harming our own interests? Come participate in this interactive session! <i>Moderator: Judy Cortez</i>



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<p>10:30 AM to 12:00 PM</p>	<p>1st Round of Workshops All workshops on Hill Country Level</p>
<p>Artificial Intelligence</p> <p><i>Sasan Sadat-Sharifi, Vice President of Technology and Process Improvement with Workers Assistance Program, Inc.</i></p>	<p>Thanks to AI, the sky is now the limit for improving the technology of your organization. But few IT teams are taking advantage of these powerful, low-cost AI tools. Are we putting up with old technology barriers that have already been broken? Learn how to partner with your IT team to drive successful technology upgrade.</p> <p><i>Moderator: Rick Dielman</i></p>
<p>The Mediation Advantage: 12 Practical Payoffs for Labor–Management Grievances</p> <p><i>Stephanie Haynes and Myla Hite, Transformation WRX™</i></p>	<p>Grievances don’t have to be a slow march to arbitration. In this fast-paced, practical session, experienced mediators will lead labor and management advocates through exploring a dozen concrete reasons to take a grievance to mediation—and how doing so can protect relationships, reduce cost, and produce outcomes both sides can live with. Grounded in field-tested grievance-mediation principles, we’ll look at how mediation creates space for an exchange of information and perspectives, ensures people feel heard, and keeps the process moving toward resolution—often by surfacing the “real” workplace issues beneath the stated dispute. This presentation emphasizes how grievance mediation can resolve disputes through productive collaboration by emphasizing communication, problem-solving, and shared solutions. Participants will walk away with a clear, advocate-friendly rationale for mediation, including how a neutral can reality-test positions, help parties spot logic gaps (including their own), support graceful off-ramps, maintain procedural fairness, and encourage problem-focused (not person-focused) solutions—while preserving flexibility and confidentiality</p> <p><i>Moderator: Chris Blanton</i></p>
<p>Partnership and Practice: Healthier Leadership and Workplace Wellness</p> <p><i>Martha Rice, Owner/Founder of Complete ‘N Him and Professional Certified Life and Mental Health Coach</i></p>	<p>In a time marked by burnout, disconnection, and workplace stress, this session explores partnership-driven strategies that strengthen leadership, workplace wellness, and organizational culture. Attendees will gain practical tools to unite people, purpose, and performance while building healthier, more resilient, and people-centered workplaces where both employees and organizations can thrive.</p> <p><i>Moderator: Assigned Virginia Perez</i></p>



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HALL OF FAME LUNCHEON

2026

Day Two – Tuesday, June 30, 2026

12:15pm to 2:00pm

PRESENTED BY HALL OF FAME COMMITTEE

12:15pm	Lunch
12:30pm	Hall of Fame Committee Welcome
12:40pm	Keynote Speaker, Mr. Michael Wolf <i>“From Adversaries to Allies: Growing Durable Labor-Management Alliances for Better Outcomes in Texas”</i>
1:15pm	Inductee Introductions and Awards by Hall of Fame Committee
2:00 pm	Closing, Raffle/Door prizes, Announcements

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2026 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Ms. Jalisa Sims, Management Representative

Mr. Jim Pearson, Labor Representative

Mr. Walter Darr, Neutral Representative

Additional details coming soon



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2:30 PM – 4:00 PM	3rd Round of Workshops <i>All workshops are on the Hill Country Level</i>
<p>Apprenticeship Readiness Program/Multi-Craft Core Curriculum: Houston Gulf Coast Building and Construction Trades Council</p> <p><i>Paul Puente and Dale Sanford, Houston Gulf Coast Building Construction Trades Council</i></p>	<p>Discover how pre-employment apprenticeship programs (the other four-year degree) are creating stronger talent pipelines through practical education, workforce readiness, and employer partnerships that deliver results.</p> <p><i>Moderator: Dalila Delgado</i></p>
<p>AI at the Table: Power, People, and The New Negotiation Playbook</p> <p><i>Myla Hite and Stephanie Haynes, Transformation WRX™</i></p>	<p>This fast-paced, interactive session provides an overview exploring how artificial intelligence is reshaping the balance of power in unionized workplaces and transforming collective bargaining in real time. Beginning with the growing controversy surrounding AI— from job security and surveillance concerns to questions of data control and fairness— this session introduces a practical roadmap for labor and management to collaborate on responsible AI implementation. Participants will gain insight into emerging best practices for contract language addressing AI, discover how lead negotiators are leveraging AI tools to strengthen strategy and outcomes, and learn critical cautions around bias, confidentiality, and overreliance on technology. Ideal for union leaders, management representatives, HR professionals, and negotiators, this session equips attendees with actionable strategies to navigate—and lead—in the evolving AI-driven negotiation landscape.</p> <p><i>Moderator: Larry Chamberlain</i></p>
<p>Partnership & Practice in U.S. Workplace Laws</p> <p><i>Tim Watson, NLRB Ft Worth Region 16 Director and Tonya Lennox, EEOC Outreach & Education Coordinator</i></p>	<p>A candid session discussing labor and equal opportunity laws in the workplace.</p> <p><i>Moderator: Deidra Norris</i></p>
<p>4:00pm Adjournment</p>	<p>(LIGHT REFRESHMENTS SERVED IN FOYER)</p>
<p>***Free evening to explore San Antonio! ***</p>	



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Day 3: Wednesday, July 1, 2026		<i>All plenary sessions on the Ballroom Level</i>
7:30 AM – 8:30 AM	BREAKFAST SERVED	Buffet @ Ballroom Foyer
8:30 AM to 9:45 AM	<p>Partnership and Practice-Joint Strategies for Success!</p> <p>TXLMC presents: Dr. Corey Robicheaux, Vice President-ILA local 1351, Chris Blanton, Office Manager AFSCME 1624, Keith Junck, Labor Relations Specialist, and John Cornelius, Vice President at Centerpoint Energy</p> <p>Texas LERA presents: <i>Deidra Norris, Chief of Labor, Employment, and Civil Service – City of Houston & Mickey Brock, Neutral Labor Arbitrator</i></p> <p>Neutral Perspective- <i>Beth Schindler, FMCS</i></p>	<p>A panel discussion of Texas Labor Management Conference and Texas Labor and Employment Relations Association board members along with their counterparts. This session will be interactive and engage the audience. As the conference comes to a close, the goal is to leave with a takeaway that you can implement within your own organization back home!</p> <p><i>Moderator: Walter Darr, U.S. Department of Labor, Member TXLMC & TX LERA</i></p>
9:45 AM		BREAK
10:00 AM to 11:00 AM	<p>Closing Keynote Address</p> <p><i>Rudy D. Garza, President and CEO of City Public Service (CPS) Energy, San Antonio, Texas</i></p>	<p>Join us for an engaging, candid conversation with Rudy D. Garza about leadership, partnership, community impact, and the future of public power in Texas. Bring your questions—this plenary is designed to be interactive, practical, and shaped by the room!</p> <p><i>Moderator: Dr. Corey Robicheaux</i></p>
11:00 AM		<p>Closing Remarks- TXLMC Board</p> <p>**Raffle, Door Prize, & 50/50 Drawings***</p>
11:30 AM		Conference Ends
11:45 AM	<p>Board Meeting</p> <p>Official 2026 Conference Closure Meeting and preliminary preparations for next conference. Mandatory for TXLMC & LERA board members, and any attendees interested in joining board!</p> <p>Location: Guadalupe Room</p>	