

# The Art of Mitigation: Crafting Persuasive Narratives

Dallas, TX: January 29-30, 2026: 13.75 CLE, including 1.00 Ethics

## Course Director

Harmony Schuerman – Fort Worth, TX  
Nicole VanToorn – Fort Worth, TX  
Rick Wardroup – Taos, NM

## Agenda

### Thursday, January 29, 2026

- 8:30 am *Opening Remarks*  
8:45 am Building the Team - Guidelines, Expectations and Responsibilities (*Ethics*) ~ **Gary Smart**  
9:45 am What Constitutes Mitigation ~ **Susan Garvey**  
11:00 am The Case for Mitigation in Non-Capital Murder Cases ~ **Stacie Lieberman**  
12:15 pm *Lunch Presentation*: Open Source Information, Records by the Numbers ~ **Jesse Caloway**  
1:15 pm The Importance of Writing and Sharing Reports ~ **TBD**  
2:00 pm Getting in the Door & Building Rapport - Relationships with Collateral Witnesses ~ **Randi Chavez**  
3:15 pm Sourcing Social History ~ **Amy Williams**  
4:00 pm Help Us Help You - Working with Experts in Mental Health ~ **Jeanine Galusha, PhD**  
4:45 pm *Adjourn*

### Friday, January 30, 2026

- 8:30 am *Opening Remarks*  
8:45 am Mitigation Collaboration with Fact Investigation ~ **Rob Cowie**  
9:45 am Developing a Thorough and Fluid Theory of Mitigation ~ **Lisa Greenberg**  
11:00 am Being Sensitive to Evidence of Mental Illness and Intellectual Disability ~ **Alexandria Anderson**  
12:00 pm *Lunch Presentation*: Selecting Experts & Obtaining Funding ~ **Mitch Nolte**  
1:00 pm Brainstorming ~ **Harmony Schuerman, Nicole VanToorn, & Rick Wardroup**  
2:45 pm Presenting the Mitigation Argument to a Jury ~ **Tyrone Moncriffe**  
3:45 pm *Adjourn*

## Travel Stipends

TCDLA will reimburse for travel expenses (flight, Ubers, rental car & fuel, or mileage at the standard mileage-rate) **up to \$250**. Anything beyond that is the registrant's obligation. Registrant should make their own travel arrangements; **reimbursement forms will be provided at the on-site registration.**

TCDLA will cover the hotel costs of Wednesday, January 28, 2026 (check in) to Friday, January 30, 2026 (check out). **Attendees are responsible for calling the hotel making a room reservation in our block and guaranteeing the room.** TCDLA will move the room to the direct bill upon attendees' arrivals.

## Registration | Materials

| Registration             |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>\$40</b> (for all classes, meals, and materials)<br><a href="#">*General Enrollment Information</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Defense Lawyer</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Judge</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Student</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Mitigation Specialist</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Paralegal</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Investigator</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Legal Assistant</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Social Worker</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Other</li></ul> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Add on Vegetarian Meal Option* - \$5<br>*No accommodations will be made after the cut-off date.  |

Unable to pay tuition? E-mail [mschank@tcdla.com](mailto:mschank@tcdla.com) to request tuition assistance.

## Register - Payment Must Accompany Registration

Online [www.tcdla.com](http://www.tcdla.com)

Phone 512.478.2514

Fax 512.469.0512

Email [register@tcdla.com](mailto:register@tcdla.com)

Mail 6808 Hill Meadow Dr | Austin, TX 78736

## Meeting | Lodging Location

The meeting will be held at the Aloft Dallas Downtown, located at 1033 Young Street, Dallas, TX 75202. The TCDLA room rate is \$149 for a single/double room. Call (214) 761-0000 and **refer to "TCDLA" to receive the group rate. The group rate is available until January 14, 2026, or until the room block is full, whichever occurs first.**

**[WWW.TCDLA.COM](http://WWW.TCDLA.COM)**

*This course is funded by a grant from the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals*

## Contact Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Bar Number \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## Join TCDLA #tcdlastrong #onevoice

- ☐ New Member or Second-Year Member \$100  
Endorser Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Renew Membership \$180  
☐ Affiliate Membership \$80  
☐ Public Defender \$60  
☐ prefer not to participate in auto renewal

For your convenience, TCDLA uses AUTO RENEWAL for all membership dues, using your checking account or credit card. You will be automatically enrolled in the auto renewal program so you do not have to do anything while continuing to enjoy membership benefits every year! You can always opt out of auto-renewal anytime by simply emailing [mduarte@tcdla.com](mailto:mduarte@tcdla.com) or by checking the opt-out option above.

## Payment ☐ Check ☐ Credit Card

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_

## General Information

(Please read before registering) you may not register for this program if you are a full-time law enforcement officer, prosecutor, or currently acting as a prosecutor or special prosecutor in a capital case (unfortunately, no exceptions).

Registration Fees: Pre-registration fees for CDLP events total \$40. Of that amount, \$20 is collected as tuition for attending a grant-funded training event. Onsite registration fees total \$80, of that amount \$20 is collected as tuition for attending a grant-funded training event. It is used to supplement grant funds and is limited in use by grant restrictions. The remaining is an overhead fee that TCDLA has voluntarily chosen to bridge the gap between what state grant funding can provide and increasing costs. Because TCDLA cannot sustain its present operations solely with grant funds and the nominal fees it assesses for tuition, meals, and/or travel stipends. The additional voluntary fee, which is deposited as private funds, will be used for expenses that exceed what is allowed under state grant guidelines for participant food and lodging costs as well as staff salaries and benefits. Thank you. CANCELLATION POLICY: To receive a refund-less 10% processing fee-cancellations must be received in writing 14 days prior to the seminar (email [kpreston@tcdla.com](mailto:kpreston@tcdla.com)). Registrants who paid tuition and are not entitled to a refund will receive the course materials. Tuition waiver recipients must attend the program to receive materials. Tax Notice: \$36 of your annual dues (\$19 if a student member) is for a one-year subscription to the VOICE for the Defense. Dues to TCDLA are not deductible as a charitable contribution but may be deducted as an ordinary business expense. Media Consent: I hereby grant permission to the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association (TCDLA) to use photographs and/or video of me taken at this event in publications, news releases, online, and in other communications related to the mission of TCDLA.