

Presidents Message

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WILG is celebrating the holiday season by looking for ways for all of you to come together to collaborate for success in 2018. We are finding better ideas on how to talk about workers' compensation to legislatures and Congress. We are planning amazing conferences and webinars to share ideas to improve outcomes for injured workers around the country. We are keying up our research to be ready to progressively address the issues impacting your clients.

The last WILG conference during 2017 just wrapped up in New York City. The Big Apple was all lit up for Holiday Season and the WILG conference took advantage of all that the city offered. WILG hosted a strong line up speakers ranging from opioid drug policies, a medical take on causation/permanency and disability for our veterans. WILG, with our sponsor Keswani & Son Custom Tailors, hosted a tour of the 9/11 Museum and dinner atop One World Trade Center with all its panoramic views of the city. A big thank you to chair Todd O'Malley, the planning committee, all of our speakers, our generous sponsors and WILG's fabulous staff for making this such a fun event.

This month, your WILG leadership is planning the 2018 Winter and Spring conferences. The Southeast Regional Conference is going back to Atlanta and all its Southern charm February 25-26 th. WILG will be enjoying the wonderful winter playground of Whitefish, Montana for its Northwest Regional Conference March 8-10 th. A week later, WILG will be listening to jazz and eating Creole treats in beautiful New Orleans for our Annual Longshore Conference. Finally, April 17-18 th, WILG will be enjoying the cherry blossoms decorating Washington D.C. & discussing constitutional challenges in workers' compensation. Thank you to all the committee members who are involved in these efforts. Make your plans now to come out for one of these events, and bring a colleague.

December always brings a lot of planning for the next year. WILG is particularly gearing up for the legislative fights all of our members will be facing in 2018. One of our greatest tools in doing this is you! Please fill out this survey to tell us what worker's compensation issues your state is facing:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/18LegStrategy>.

All of this is happening on the heels of the U.S. Department of Labor releasing its workplace fatalities numbers for 2016. There were a total of 5,190 fatal work injuries recorded in the United States in 2016, a 7-percent increase from the 4,836 fatal injuries reported in 2015, the U.S. This is the third consecutive increase in annual workplace fatalities and the first time more than 5,000 fatalities have been recorded since 2008.

Last year, Immediate Past President Mike Gruber reminded all of us of the importance of WILG and its' members accomplish on behalf of injured workers and their families during this time of year. The holidays are a time where all of our clients are impacted particularly harshly by their injuries and limitations. This is particularly true of those families whose loved ones are part of the fatality statistics. Thank you as always for all your hard work.

WILG wishes each of you a magical holiday season filled with cheer. May the next year bring you, your family and clients good health, prosperity and peace.