GROOM LAW GROUP

ALUMNI *Network* NEWSLETTER

QUARTERLY UPDATE • Q3 2026

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As summer comes to a close, we are looking forward to a busy and exciting fall at Groom. In the months ahead, our attorneys will come together for our biennial firm retreat, we will reconnect with retired Groom principals at our upcoming Alumni Emeritus Dinner, and we will welcome new faces to the firm, including our incoming first-year associates and several attorneys who have recently joined us.

Before we say goodbye to summer, we are sharing a glimpse of what our attorneys have been up to over the past few months [See page 9-10]. We also marked ERISA's 52nd birthday with a look back at Groom's early days and history alongside the landmark law that has shaped who we are.

We hope you enjoy catching up on the latest from Groom and staying connected with the colleagues and friends who have been part of the firm over the years. We always enjoy hearing from you and hope to see you at a Groom event soon.

Happy fall!

Highlights

Best Lawyers in America and Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch

Thirty-seven Groom attorneys are recognized in the 2027 edition of The Best Lawyers in America® and Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch® in America, an increase from 24 Groom attorneys in 2026. This year's recognitions span five practice areas – Employee Benefits (ERISA) Law, Health Care Law, Litigation – ERISA, Mergers and Acquisitions Law, and Tax Law – reinforcing Groom's national leadership in these highly complex and regulated fields. Read our announcement here.

Caitlin Onomastico Earns Rising Star Honor

Groom senior counsel Caitlin Onomastico was named to Pensions & Investments' 2026 Influential Women in Institutional Investing Rising Stars list, recognizing emerging leaders making an impact across the institutional investment industry.

Save the Date: Groom's 29th Annual Seminar

Mark your calendar for Groom's 29th Annual Seminar, taking place May 13–14, 2027, at the Four Seasons Hotel in Washington, D.C. The complimentary, in-person program will feature workshops, plenary sessions, and roundtable discussions covering the latest developments across the benefits landscape. Additional details will be shared in early 2027. Registration is now open, and we encourage you to save the date and share the event with your network.

From Summer Associates to Associates

Following their time with Groom as 2026 Summer Associates, Kate Killean of George Washington University Law School and Matt Drauschak of Catholic University's Columbus School of Law will return to Groom as first-year associates in Fall 2027. We look forward to welcoming Kate and Matt back to the firm as they begin this next chapter of their careers!

Highlights Cont.

Groom Webinars

This past quarter, Groom hosted several webinars offering timely insights on developments across the benefits landscape, including financial wellness, year-end planning, and the launch of our new Benefits Watch quarterly series.

- ### Supporting Women's Retirement Security

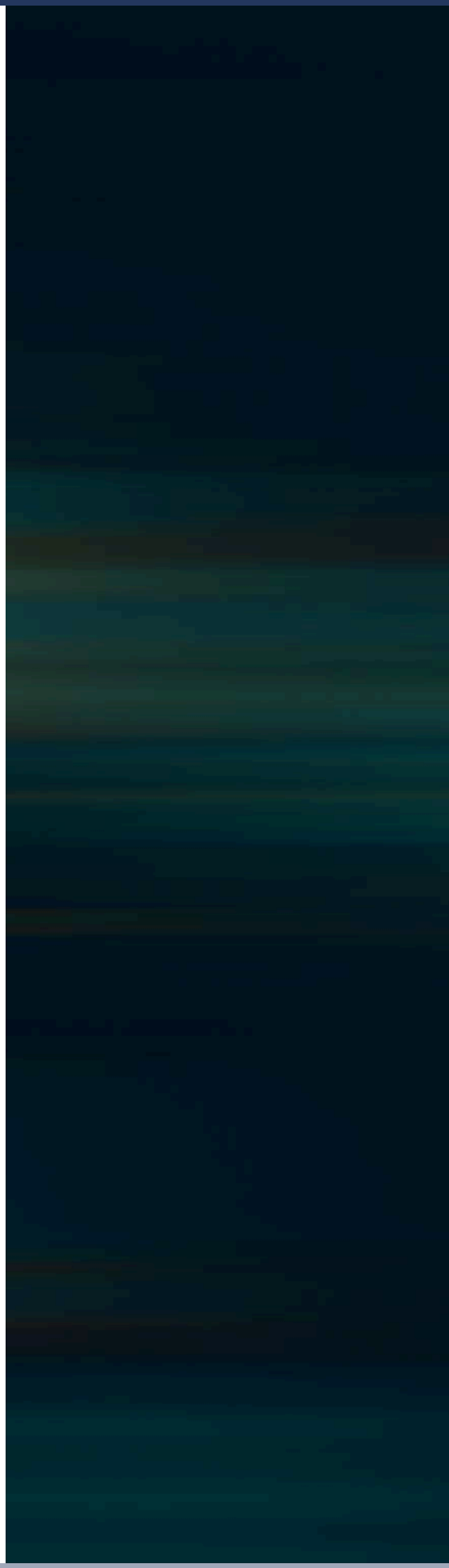
  In recognition of Women's Retirement Security Day on July 14, Groom hosted a special webinar focused on financial wellness and long-term retirement security. The program offered practical guidance on saving, investing, retirement and estate planning, financial protection, and other considerations that can affect women throughout their careers. A recording of the webinar is available upon request. Stay tuned for future webinars from the Women's Committee.

- ### Year-End Planning for Plan Sponsors

  In August, Groom hosted "Preparing for Year-End and A Look Ahead for Plan Sponsors", a two-part webinar focused on key considerations for retirement and health plans as open enrollment and year-end approach. Groom attorneys highlighted important "to-do" items for plan sponsors, including year-end amendments, participant notices, reporting requirements, and other areas where organizations may need to plan ahead and allocate resources. Request a recording here.

- ### New Groom Webinar Series – Benefits Watch: A Quarterly Update

  This September, Groom launched "Benefits Watch: A Quarterly Update", a new webinar series designed to provide timely, practical insights on developments shaping the employee benefits landscape. Each 45-minute program will feature Groom attorneys delivering concise updates across retirement, health and welfare, fiduciary, litigation, and policy matters. Request a recording here.



Hispanic Heritage Month Spotlight

Hispanic Heritage Month, observed from September 15 through October 15, recognizes the cultures, histories, and contributions of Hispanic and Latin communities across the country. In recognition of the month, Groom's Xavier Baker shares a personal essay reflecting on his heritage and experiences.



Xavier Baker
Principal

One of my earliest childhood memories is being in my great grandmother's house in Mexico City trying to open a glass bottle of Mexican Coke using the bottle opener that was mounted to the countertop. I'm pretty sure I didn't succeed and my sense of frustration at being denied the sweetness of the drink is why the memory lingers. I also remember the sun streaming down the central stairwell. And the aromas. I even had a stuffed rabbit that I'd kept there that still smelled of her house years later.

My grandmother immigrated to the U.S. to raise her family but did not become a U.S. citizen until shortly after I was born (she became a citizen to get a passport so she could visit infant me in Switzerland). My grandfather, however, was a U.S. citizen and always quick to point it out to others, or so I'm told; I never met him. Growing up, my mother and her 5 brothers lived "on the wrong side of the tracks" in a rural Louisiana town. I later understood this to mean alongside other minorities. My mother never identified as Hispanic or Latina until a classmate sought her out in college and wanted to sit together as the only other Latina in the room.

As a child in Texas, I was peripherally aware of my heritage, but it was seldom front and center. My mother only spoke Spanish when she was irate with my sisters or, rarely, me. And when she did, she taught us some choice words that later stunned my sister Erica's Catholic high school Spanish teacher—and prompted a call home in which my mother claimed to have no idea what those words meant and that she'd learned them from her brothers (lies).

We celebrated Dia de los Muertos, ate albondigas, and tamales. My grandmother taught us how to form the masa, fill it, and wrap it in corn husks. One of my sisters has the whole thing on a VHS tape somewhere.

When I was in elementary school, I looked like I could have been in Menudo. But over time I became fairer complected (and given how much time I spend indoors in front of a computer screen, suffice to say my Menudo days are long gone and never coming back). And outside of my family, no one really knew I was Hispanic. This made things easier for me in some ways, and harder in others. I heard things said around or to me that people wouldn't have said if they knew. But I also received scrutiny when joining affinity groups and have been challenged on my identity.

Hispanic is an ethnonym, not a racial category. We don't look a certain way; we can be blonde (see Cameron Diaz or Ana Taylor-Joy), we can be Afro-Latino (see Pedro Martinez or Gina Torres), we can be Asian (see Franklin Chang-Diaz). We could be anyone, anywhere. Even so, it can be hard to be seen or recognized—particularly when you don't speak Spanish very well (thanks, Mom) or at all.

This Hispanic Heritage Month, I invite you to explore the breadth of opportunities, cultures, and achievements of our rich and varied community.

New Faces

Help us welcome our newest Groom attorneys!

We are thrilled to add this group of talented lawyers to our team – each brining unique legal backgrounds, valuable experience, and a shared eagerness to grow at Groom.



Gina Alsdorf recently joined the Firm as Senior Counsel in the Fiduciary Practice Group and is excited to move to a place where enthusiasm for benefits is almost a prerequisite for employment. A career-long ERISA Title I practitioner, she began her career at the EBSA/Department of Labor before moving in-house and then into private practice. She enjoys connecting people and ideas to solve problems and is always available to brainstorm.



Brooke Ingoglia recently joined the firm as an Associate in the Litigation Department. Prior to joining Groom, she was a litigation associate at Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner, where her practice focused on complex commercial and ERISA Litigation. She lives in Chicago with her husband and their three kids, 4 year old Luka and 1 year old twins Rosie and Lucy. Outside of work, Brooke loves reading, traveling, and exploring Chicago.



Greg Matisoff recently joined the Firm as Senior Counsel and is excited to work with the team on executive compensation matters. Prior to joining the Firm, he worked for large law firms including Goodwin Procter LLP and Sidley Austin LLP, where he focused on executive compensation and employee benefits matters in corporate transactions. He spends his time running, cycling, cooking, and with his family (wife and son).

New Faces (continued)

Help us welcome our newest Groom attorneys!

We are thrilled to add this group of talented lawyers to our team – each brining unique legal backgrounds, valuable experience, and a shared eagerness to grow at Groom.



Isa Boyd recently joined Groom as an Associate with the Health group. Prior to joining the firm, she worked as an extern with the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General in the Healthcare Section and as an intern at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. She has a background in Public Health and has always been passionate about healthcare.



Sofia Crutchfield recently joined Groom as an Associate after being a summer associate in 2024 and 2025; she graduated from George Washington University Law School this past May. Prior to law school, she worked as a project manager on tech contracts with the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board.



Miranda Harrigan recently joined Groom as an Associate and will begin her time here working in the Litigation group. Prior to joining the firm, she was a Counterterrorism Analyst with the Department of Homeland Security. During law school, she was a member of the Mock Trial Board and a Notes Editor on the Federal Communications Law Journal.

On the Move

Alumni Comings, Goings, and Announcements

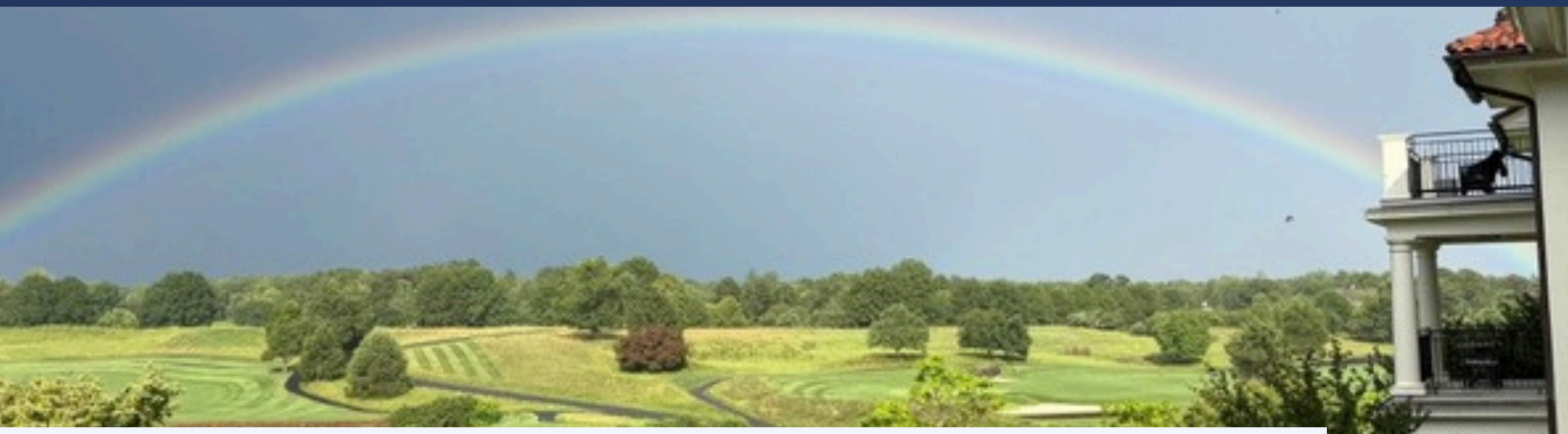
Interested in what your fellow alumni are up to and where they're headed? Find some comings and goings below. If you have an update to share, please send it to us at alumni@groom.com.



Rachel Hancock has been promoted to Assistant Professor at the University of Akron School of Law, where she teaches first-year law students in Lawyering Analysis and Writing.



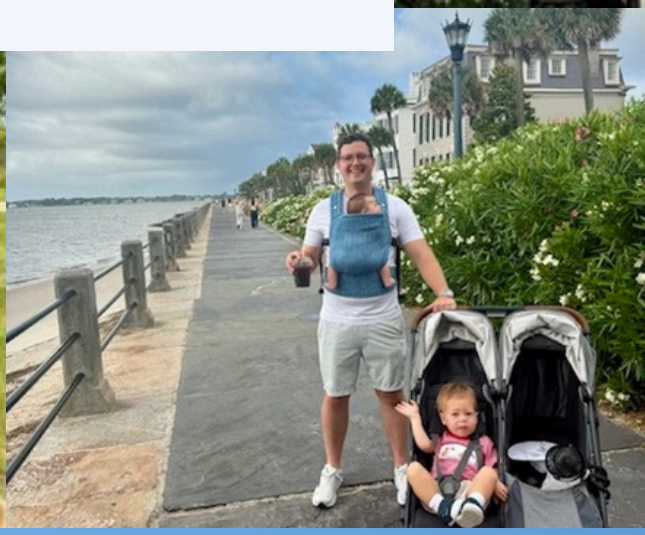
Debbie Harrison has joined HealthSherpa as Vice President of State Government Affairs, where she is part of the company's Government Affairs team.



Summer at Groom





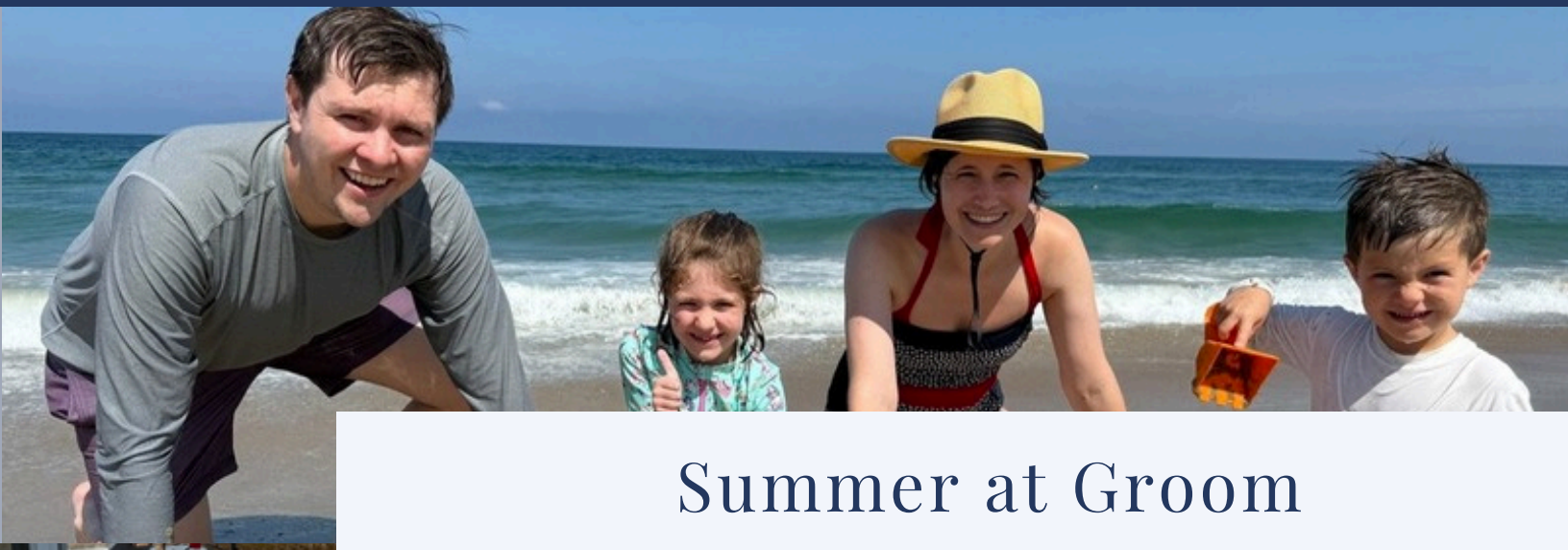




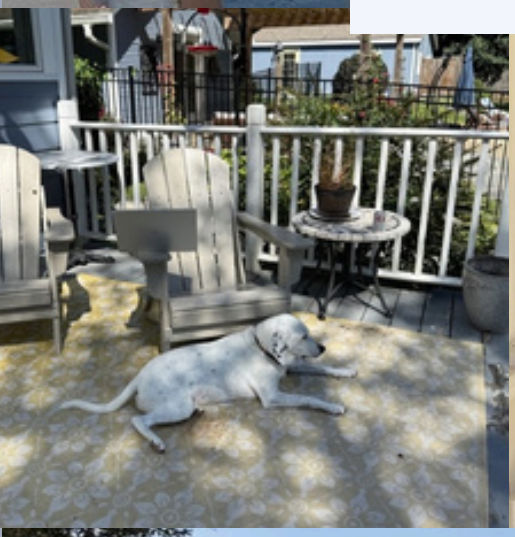






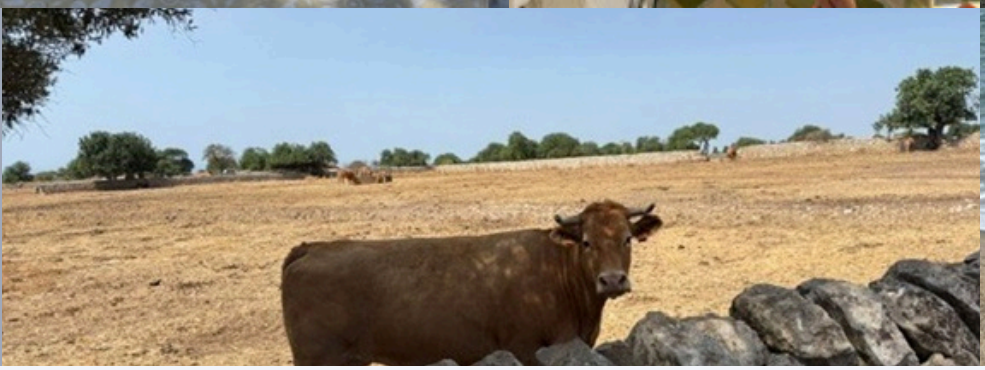


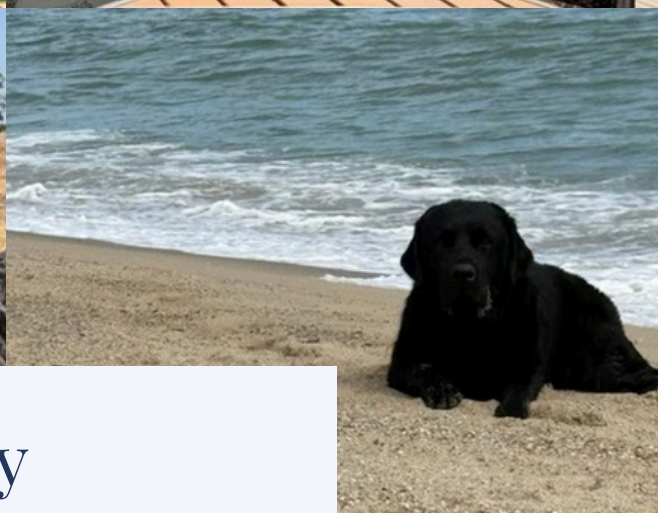
Summer at Groom











52nd ERISA Birthday







Resources

Access Past Webinars

As part of our alumni network, you have access to our vast library of webinars. We recently hosted programs covering end-of-year retirement policy, guidance on diverse asset manager selection, new mental health parity updates, and more.

To access our webinar library, please contact marketing@groom.com.

Jobs Corner

Are you looking to fill a position within your team or company? Contact us with any job opportunities at alumni@groom.com, and we will look within our sizable network to help match candidates.

Alumni Spotlight

Want to be featured in the next issue of our Quarterly Alumni Newsletter? We've rolled out an Alumni Spotlight to highlight professional and personal updates and current goings-on of our alums.

If you are interested, you may fill out this interest form or reach out to alumni@groom.com and we will contact you.

Pro Bono Opportunities

Below are ongoing Groom pro bono opportunities we would like to extend to our alumni. More information on these organizations can be found on the following page.

- DC Legal Aid, contact Ross McSweeney for more information.
- Legal Counsel for the Elderly and the Legal Counsel for the Elderly Young Lawyers coalition, contact Randy Bunnell for more information.
- AsylumWorks, contact Arsalan Malik for more information.

Keep an eye out for a future, Groom-sponsored, one-day community pro bono clinic. For general pro bono questions or information, please contact Ed Meehan.

Pro Bono Opportunities

Below are ongoing Groom pro bono opportunities we would like to extend to our alumni. Please get in touch with us if you are interested in getting involved with any of these organizations.

Legal Aid DC

Legal Aid, DC's oldest and largest civil legal services organization, upholds its mission of making justice real in individual and systemic ways. Groom's continued partnership with Legal Aid has led to successful outcomes for pro bono clients (read one such story here) and to the firm being awarded their Making Justice Real Pro Bono Award in 2019.

If you are interested in Legal Aid DC pro bono opportunities, click here to contact Ross McSweeney (rmcsweeney@groom.com).

Legal Counsel for the Elderly

Legal Counsel for the Elderly (and their newly formed Young Lawyers Coalition) champions the dignity and rights of DC elders by providing free legal and social work services to those in need.

If you are interested in pro bono opportunities with Legal Counsel for the Elderly, click here to contact Randy Bunnell (rbunnell@groom.com).

AsylumWorks

AsylumWorks empowers asylum seekers and other forced migrants to rebuild their lives safely and with dignity through employment, social services, and community.

If you are interested in AsylumWorks pro bono opportunities, click here to contact Arsalan Malik (amalik@groom.com).

Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center

The APALRC advances the civil and legal rights of Asian Americans by focusing on providing linguistically accessible and culturally appropriate legal services to low-income Asian immigrants in the Metro-DC area

See You There?

Upcoming Industry Conferences

Groom will be joining the below, upcoming industry conferences. Let us know if we will see you there!

- **AARP 2026 Retirement Policy Conference**

  October 5, 2026 | Washington, D.C.

  Groom's **Arsalan Malik** will speak at AARP's 2026 Retirement Policy Conference on investor protection and fiduciary duty in an evolving AI landscape.

- **ABA Virtual 2026 Fall Tax Meeting**

  October 5–9, 2026 | Virtual

  Groom's **Rose Zaklad**, **Elizabeth Dold**, **Will Fischer**, and **Amber Rivers** will participate in sessions at the ABA Virtual 2026 Fall Tax Meeting, covering covering key retirement and health and welfare developments.

- **ABA TIPS National Insurance Symposium**

  October 15–17, 2026 | Hilton Head Island, SC

  Katie Bjornstad Amin and **Kelly Geloneck** will participate in the ABA TIPS National Insurance Symposium on Thursday, October 15, in Hilton Head Island, SC. Kelly will moderate and Katie will serve as a panelist for "Trump Accounts: From Legislation to Agency Guidance—A Practical Update."

- **72nd Annual Employee Benefits Conference**

  October 25–28, 2026 | New Orleans, LA

  David Levine will speak at the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans' 72nd Annual Employee Benefits Conference in New Orleans, LA. David will participate in the session "Using Artificial Intelligence to Manage Health Plan Operations."

- **CCA Annual Meeting 2026**

  October 25–28, 2026 | Scottsdale, AZ

  Groom's **Rose Zaklad**, **Brigen Winters**, and **Joshua Shapiro** will participate in sessions at the CCA Annual Meeting 2026 in Scottsdale, AZ. Their sessions will cover plan terminations, retirement plan design and modeling, and the healthcare policy outlook.



See You There?

- **ABA Health and Welfare Benefit Plans National Institute 2026**

  October 26-27, 2026 | Washington, D.C.

  Groom's **Mark Nielsen**, **Will Fischer**, and **Katie Amin** will speak at the ABA Health and Welfare Benefit Plans National Institute, covering health and welfare plan litigation, plan assets, and related fiduciary considerations.

- **In-House Benefits Counsel Network National Forum**

  October 27, 2026 | Washington, D.C.

  Groom's **Amber Rivers** will speak at the In-House Benefits Counsel Network National Forum on emerging PBM reforms and contracting practices affecting employer-sponsored health plans.

- **SWBA 37th Annual Benefits Compliance Conference**

  October 29–30, 2026 | Dallas, TX

  Groom's **Brigen Winters** and **Christine Keller** will speak at the SWBA 37th Annual Benefits Compliance Conference, discussing the post-election legislative and regulatory outlook for benefits plan sponsors.

- **Employee Owned 2026**

  November 1–4, 2026 | Las Vegas, NV

  Andrew Salek-Raham will speak at The ESOP Association's Employee Owned 2026 conference in Las Vegas, NV. Andrew will participate in the session "ESOP Case Law Update – 2026," examining significant ESOP court decisions and regulatory developments from the past year.

- **2026 PLANADVISER 360 Conference**

  November 8–11, 2026 | Orlando, FL

  Andrew Salek-Raham and **George Sepsakos** will be participating in breakout sessions at the 2026 PLANADVISER 360 Conference on Tuesday, November 10, in Orlando, FL.

- **NAIC Fall National Meeting**

  November 14–17, 2026 | Dallas, TX

  Groom's **Michelle Koltov** and **Lisa Campbell** will attend the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) Fall National Meeting in Dallas, TX.



A Gift From Groom

Have you received your free stadium bag?

Scan the QR code, **email** us at alumni@groom.com, or **click here** to provide us with your mailing address. We will take care of the rest.

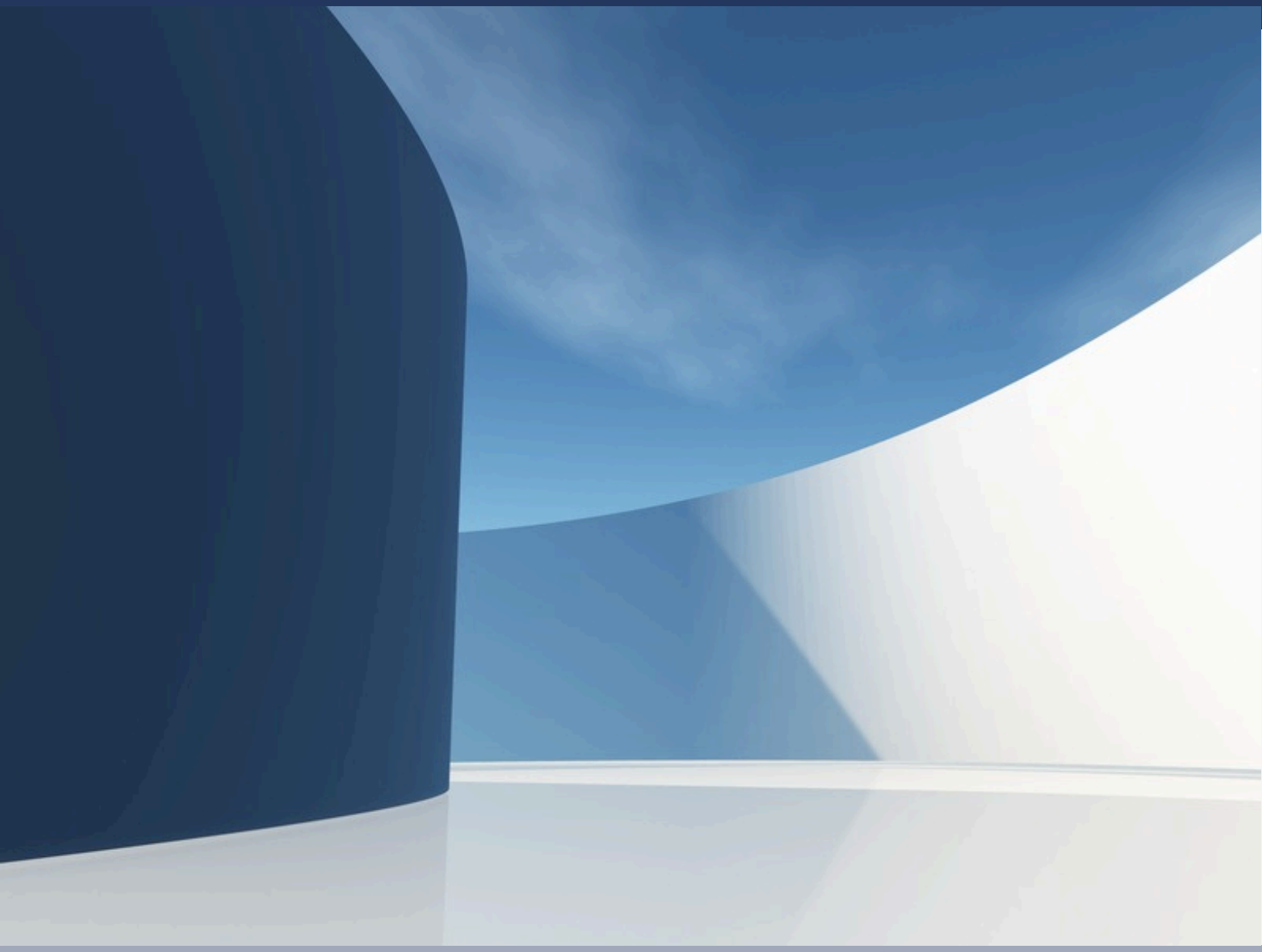


SCAN ME

Join Us On LinkedIn!

Join our LinkedIn Group, Groom Alumni Network, for regular updates, offerings, and to stay in touch with your fellow alums. **Scan** the QR Code to the right or **search Groom Alumni Network on LinkedIn** to join.

SCAN ME



Do you have any career or life updates you'd like to share with us? Do you have an item you'd like us to include in the next Alumni Newsletter? Want to find more ways to stay involved? Email us at alumni@groom.com.

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