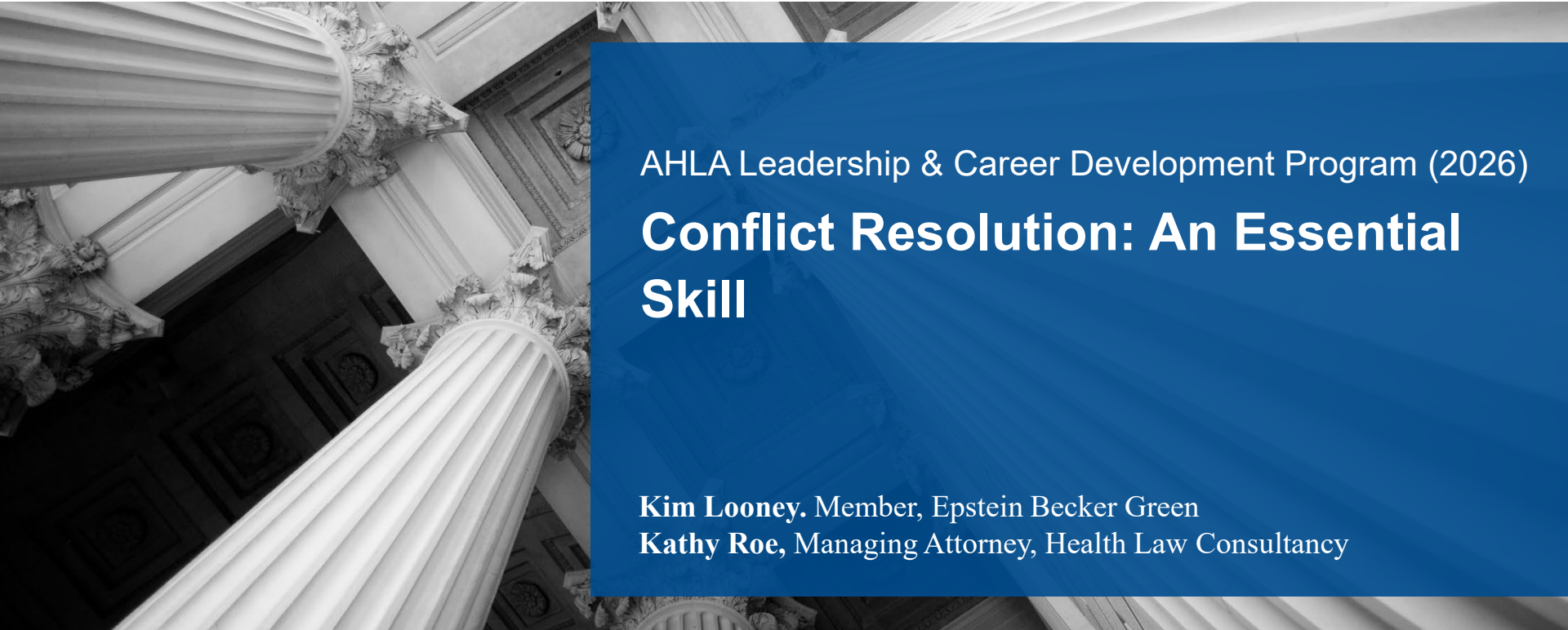




AHLA Leadership & Career Development Program (2026)

Conflict Resolution: An Essential Skill

Kim Looney. Member, Epstein Becker Green

Kathy Roe, Managing Attorney, Health Law Consultancy



“The more we run from conflict, the more it masters us;
the more we try to avoid it, the more it controls us;
the less we fear conflict, the less it confuses us.”

David Augsburger

Professor Emeritus of Pastoral Care and Counseling, Fuller Seminary

What is conflict





Conflict as Bad



Conflict as Good

Working Definition of *Conflict*



Real or perceived incompatibility between two or more interdependent parties' wants, needs, beliefs, values, obligations, or actions, resulting in tension, disagreement, or opposition

How to respond to conflict





Unhealthy Response



Healthy Response

Working Concept of *Conflict Resolution*



Process of:

1. Identifying incompatibility
2. Understanding each party's perceptions, interests, and goals
3. Finding compatible ground
4. Identifying potential solution(s)
5. Negotiating workable outcome

Hypotheticals



Corporate Legal Department Hiring



Legal department interviews 3 finalists for open mid-level lawyer position

- GC favors A who works as counsel for health care regulatory agency but has no law firm or in-house experience
- Deputy GC favors C referred by company's Senior VP
- Staff lawyers favor B who has 5 years combined law firm and in-house experience and worked for health care consulting firm for 2 years pre-law school

How does the legal department decide among the 3 finalists?

GC alone made last lawyer hire—lawyer left after 8 months for another job

Association Conference Planning



Association's planning committee receives speaking proposals for conference

- Committee chair favors opening session proposal from leading health law partner
- Committee members favor opening session proposal from rising health law associate paired with tech company health lawyer
- Committee majority selects leading health law partner's proposal
- Two weeks before conference, leading health law partner tells committee chair she can no longer present because of client conflict

How does planning committee fill opening session speaker slot?

One committee member (unbeknownst to and before planning committee decides) tells rising health law associate her proposal is selected

Attorney Advising on Transaction Structure



In-house health lawyer for thriving oncology practice contacts health law partner on structuring joint venture between practice and private equity firm

- In-house health lawyer describes structure that practice's lead oncologist has been discussing with private equity firm
- Health law partner raises fraud and abuse compliance concerns with structure and proposes alternative
- In-house health lawyer invites health law partner to present alternative structure to practice leadership
- During presentation, practice's lead oncologist pushes back and insists on finding path to effect original structure

How does in-house health lawyer navigate increasing friction in lead oncologist's and health law partner's exchange about joint venture structure?

In-house health lawyer formerly associate of health law partner



“The more we run from conflict, the more it masters us;
the more we try to avoid it, the more it controls us;
the less we fear conflict, the less it confuses us.”

David Augsburger

Professor Emeritus of Pastoral Care and Counseling, Fuller Seminary

Questions/Discussion

Kim Looney
Member
Epstein Becker Green

klooney@egblaw.com

1222 Demonbreun St.
Suite 1400
Nashville, TN 37203

(P) 615.565.6258

Kathy Roe
Managing Attorney
Health Law Consultancy

kroe@hlconsultancy.com

62 W. Huron St.
Suite 2A
Chicago, IL 60654

(P) 312.332.7711



Educating and Connecting the Health Law Community

americanhealthlaw.org



© 2026 is published by the American Health Law Association. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form except by prior written permission from the publisher. Printed in the United States of America.

Any views or advice offered in this publication are those of its authors and should not be construed as the position of the American Health Law Association.

“This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is provided with the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering legal or other professional services. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought” —from a declaration of the American Bar Association.