



Declaration of Candidacy

Candidates for election as Second Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, or Director Elected Nationally must complete this form and submit it to the Chief Executive Officer at the principal headquarters of DRI by 5:00 PM (CDT) on July 1st of the year in which the election is held.

National Director Requirements - Directors Elected Nationally or by Region must be Individual Members of the Corporation admitted to the practice of law. Each such director must meet the following qualifications at the time of election: (a) The candidate shall have been a DRI member for a total of at least five (5) years, and (b) The candidate shall have been a member of at least one DRI substantive law committee for at least three (3) years, and (c) The candidate must have registered for and attended at least one (1) DRI Annual Meeting within the previous three (3) years, and, within the three (3) years prior to the final day of the Annual Meeting, the candidate must have 1) registered for and attended at least two (2) DRI seminars, or 2) registered for and attended one (1) DRI seminar and one (1) DRI Regional Meeting.

Please also see the DRI Board of Director and Officer Competencies, attached.

Position sought:

Second Vice President* Secretary- Treasurer National Director

*If you have declared your candidacy for Second Vice President and are not the successful candidate, will you consider the Secretary - Treasurer Officer position?

Yes No

Name **Matthew Keris**

Firm/Company **Marshall Dennehey**

Address **PO Box 3118, Scranton PA 18505-3118**

Telephone **(570) 496-4602**

Cell Phone **(570) 407-2669**

E-mail **mpkeris@mdwgc.com**

How long have you been a member of DRI?

8 years

Areas of practice:

- **All Defense:**
 - Medical Malpractice
 - Long Term Care
 - Medical Device
 - General Liability
 - Dram Shop/Liquor Liability
 - Fire Loss

Please provide your employment history in chronological order beginning with the current position.

- **Marshall Dennehey**, 2005-Present (Shareholder since 2008)
- **Perry Law Firm**, 2001-2005 (Associate)
- **Eiseman, Myers & Liero, 2000-2001** (In-House Counsel, Selective Insurance)
- **Plakins Rieffel, P.C.**, 1998-2000 (Associate)
- **Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Medical Professional Liability Catastrophe Loss Fund**, 1996-1998 (Attorney Examiner/Claims Professional)

Please describe your previous involvement in DRI, including but not limited to, leadership positions held, projects contributed to, committee memberships, presentations given, and written materials authored. Special accomplishments should also be noted.

- **DRI Leadership**
 - **Foundation President, 2021-2023**
 - Worked closely with Dean Martinez, Sean Dolan, Nancy Parz, Denise Eichhorn, Trish Cleary and Jodi Terranova on establishment of “New Foundation” including creation of long and short term goals/vision
 - Co-authored/updated Foundation bylaws
 - Attended DRI, NFJE Board Meetings; DRI Regional Meetings and Leadership Conferences
 - Developed committee guidelines
 - Established International Day of Service
 - Prepared Foundation Handbook
 - Facilitated transfer of DRI Cares and DRI For Life committees from DRI to the Foundation
 - Assisted with social media/marketing presence
 - Identified Foundation Members at Large
 - Supported Diversity Scholarship program

- Promoted NFJE fundraisers
 - Identified additional Foundation revenue sources
 - **Regional Director (Atlantic), 2019-2021**
 - Provided orientation session for first year regional directors 2021
 - Lead/organized regional director reports at DRI Board meetings 2020/2021
 - Active in all remote meetings during COVID-19 pandemic
 - Served on board during leadership transition from John Kouris to Dean Martinez
 - Attended NY, PA and NJ SLDO annual meetings
 - Organized and participated at regional “super meetings”
- **DRI Committees**
 - Law Student Diversity Scholarship Committee Member, 2023
 - IRT Steering Committee Member, 2020-Present
 - State Membership Representative—Pennsylvania, 2017-2018
 - Medical Liability and Health Care Law, 2015-Present
 - Planning committee member, 2021-present
 - Senior Living and Long Term Care, 2015-Present
 - Drug and Medical Device Committee, 2015-Present
- **DRI Awards**
 - Service Award Recipient, 2021
 - Exceptional Performance Citation, 2014-2015
- **DRI/SLDO Engagement**
 - SLDO Representative for Pennsylvania Defense Institute, 2017-2018
- **DRI Articles for The Voice**
 - “Hope,” December 2020
 - “DRI Strengthens its Foundation,” February 2022
 - “All Systems Go for the Foundation’s Inaugural International Day of Service,” July 2022
 - “What Will Year Two of the New Foundation Bring to the DRI Community?,” February 2023
 - Anticipated Article (In Progress), July 2023
- **DRI CLE**
 - “Legal and Ethical Pitfalls in Managing Dual Civil and Criminal Investigations,” DRI Medical Liability and Health Care Law Seminar, Chicago, IL, March 10, 2023
 - “Relationships Matter: A Frank Discussion of Hot Button Issues Facing Claims Professionals and Counsel,” panelist, DRI Insurance Roundtable, Chicago, IL, March 8, 2023
 - “Legal and Technical Arguments to Manage, Explain and Defend Audit Trail Information,” DRI Senior Living and Long-Term Care Litigation Seminar, Nashville, TN, September 9, 2022

- “COVID-19 Trials Learn From Those Who Know: Jury Trial Tactics During the COVID-19 Pandemic,” Co-Presented with Jeff Lowe, DRI Webinar, September 15, 2020
- **DPS Involvement**
 - Frequent routine communications with Tracy Schorle and Cheryl Palombizio on SLDO engagement

List any significant leadership commitment and involvement within the legal field other than DRI, including but not limited to other legal organizations.

- **Pennsylvania Defense Institute (PDI), 2004-Present**
 - President, 2014
 - Executive Board, 2009-2013
 - Board of Directors, 2007-2009, 2015-Present
- **Pennsylvania Association for Health Care Risk Management (PAHCRM), 2007-Present**
 - President, 2012, 2016
 - Board of Directors, 2017-Present
- **American Legal Connections, 2021-Present**
- **Pennsylvania Coalition for Civil Justice Reform, Medical Malpractice Attorney Work Group, 2020-Present**

Why do you wish to join the board of directors or become an officer and what skills, abilities and attributes identified in the Board of Director/Officer Competencies can you bring to the role?

I wish to continue my DRI leadership involvement as a National Director to better the defense practice by enhancing our profile and better promoting our unique role in the legal system in the eyes of our clients and the general public. If elected, it will continue five consecutive years of active involvement with DRI governance, serving as a Regional Director and then DRI Foundation President. I am a conscientious individual and a good listener who sincerely wishes to help others. My active involvement in multiple organizations indicate that I am a hard worker and who is respected by my peers. For me, becoming a National Director is a logical progression in an organization that I love for all that it has offered me, including lasting friendships and greater visibility within my profession.

What suggestions would you make to move the organization forward?

We need to continue to demonstrate DRI’s worth to defense counsel and clients. No other legal organization supports the distinct challenges civil defense lawyers face, legally, emotionally and from the business side. DRI needs to continue to advocate for the betterment of defense practitioners. Our clients also need to appreciate the challenges of our practice and

understand how DRI can enhance their business, primarily from an advocacy standpoint. What is confusing to me is how our clients and some defense lawyers flock to organizations who seek to diminish the influence of defense counsel, and then wonder why verdicts and settlements continue to increase and how the trial lawyers are so successful with lobbying and election efforts. I do not think it is coincidence that the trial lawyers gains correlate to efforts to diminish defense counsel's role in litigation management. DRI has made great efforts to curb the "membership drain" over the past five years. As another way to promote DRI membership, it needs to better educate our practice and our clients on the NFJE, the Center and our educational/networking opportunities and how they are unique assets that can counter the success of the trial bar. When our clients see DRI's worth and successes from an advocacy perspective, I feel that they will be more inclined to embrace, rather than devalue the role of counsel. It is a win-win scenario for defense counsel and our clients.

Describe one transformational/defining experience in your professional life you have been involved with and what you learned from that experience.

My legal career began in medical malpractice claims and I did not get my own individual routine trial experience until 2005 when I began at Marshall Dennehey, primarily in defending MVA cases. In one of my first trials, I represented a defendant driver who was a struggling single, young unwed mother of two who had a hard time finding the time to help me with her trial. She was scared and nervous. We somehow won the case and afterwards, she wrote me a beautiful handwritten personal note thanking me for my efforts, stating she was honored to have me represent her. That note is posted at my desk and I see it everyday. Since that time, my practice has changed dramatically and I represent large corporations with vast amounts of insurance. However, few, if any, corporate clients have ever written me a sincere "thank you" note like I received from my young client. If they have, it was not as meaningful. Her note has kept me grounded and reminds me that lawyers impact people positively no matter how large or small their case. Irrespective of the complexity of the legal issue, each client, whether it be a corporation or individual, deserves the same, high level of advocacy.

Describe the greatest challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for DRI over the next five+ years.

Challenges that DRI faces in the future includes membership and greater engagement by young lawyers. These challenges, if handled correctly, can be the best opportunity for DRI to grow. DRI's management change and embracement of data-driven decision making is beginning to yield positive results. The specific data demonstrates where DRI's is making progress and where it can improve with certain membership demographics. I do not believe

other competing member organizations are leveraging this information to DRI's degree, and which gives it an advantage. As DRI continues to embrace data, I am certain we will have better membership engagement and better understand what DRI offerings are most sought by younger attorneys. That should continue to be a focus of DRI.

DRI strives to be governed by a diverse board of directors—in terms of race, ethnicity, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, location, and/or professional level, and other facts that enhance diversity and inclusion --- who can and will help advance DRI's goals through the power of collaboration. In what ways have you demonstrated a commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in your work, and how will your DE&I experience inform your contributions as a Board member?

One of the strengths of DRI is its diverse membership and dedication to promoting DE&I. As the Foundation's President in its most recent incarnation, it has given me the unique opportunity to influence its future. Over the past two years, the Foundation leadership have been working towards elevating DE&I's cause equivalent to DRI Cares and DRI for Life. As the Foundation grows financially through member donations, the Foundation hopes to expand its support of DE&I by offering even more diversity scholarships and for greater dollar amounts. The Foundation will look for other opportunities to promote DE&I. I have also been honored to have been a part of the Law Student Diversity Scholarship Committee Member this year, which was a great experience in hearing the stories of the students and their challenges in getting to law school. The promotion of DE&I will continue to be my priority as a DRI National Director.

Is there anything else you would like to add that has not already been previously stated?

DRI is "hitting its groove" under Dean Martinez's stewardship and I want to maintain the positive momentum generated by the current EC in terms of fiscal accountability, engaged decision making and long-term plans for growth. In my brief period time since serving on the Board of Directors, I have had the good occasion of serving in Foundation leadership, which has given me greater familiarity with DRI in ways I did not experience as a Regional Director or SLDO representative. It has provided me a greater appreciation for other parts of DRI and the importance of integrated management. If elected as a National Director, my goal is to give back to this great organization, its members and and leadership through teamwork, vision and direction. I look forward to this opportunity