

Harold Oehler is a full-time federal and state certified mediator. He serves on the Executive Council of the Florida Bar's Alternative Dispute Resolution Section and the Florida Bar's Consumer Protection Law Committee. He is the primary author of the *Florida Mediation Best Practices Handbook* and created the "Litigator Mediator Forum" to provide trial lawyers and mediators a platform to collaboratively improve the mediation process. Harold received the Florida Bar ADR Section's 2022 "MVP Award" for most outstanding contribution towards improving mediation in the State of Florida.

Harold is the former Chairman of the Mediation and Arbitration Section of the Hillsborough County Bar Association. The HCBA awarded Harold its "Red McEwen Award" given to the member of the Bar whose service and contribution will have an everlasting, positive impact on the legal community.

EDUCATION

Harold, a Tampa native, received his law degree from the University of Florida College of Law with honors. He served as President of the Trial Team. As a law student, he won both the Trial Advocacy and Appellate Advocacy competitions. He received the highest grade in his class in Negotiation.

Prior to law school, Harold received his undergraduate degree from the University of South Florida, Magna Cum Laude, where he served as Student Body Vice President, Assistant to the Chairman of the Florida Board of Regents, Terrell Sessums, and President of the USF Ambassadors.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Harold was a partner and trial lawyer in one of Tampa's largest and most prominent law firms. He handled a number of significant cases including a successful 17-week jury trial, which was the longest personal injury jury trial in Pinellas County history at that time. He represented some of the largest companies in the Bay Area and handled a diverse array of civil litigation involving employment, commercial, insurance, consumer, contract, personal injury, construction and product liability claims.

Harold spent the next 21 years as General Counsel of a national automotive retailer which ultimately went public. He oversaw all litigation across the country and represented the company at all mediations. He managed all

insurance claims and worked directly with adjusters. He negotiated the company's contracts across the country. He successfully lobbied for laws utilizing mediation to settle disputes. Harold received a national service award from his industry for creating a program widely utilized across the country to resolve litigation using mediation. Harold was awarded "Corporate Counsel of the Year" in 2009 (Hillsborough County Bar Association) and 2014 (Tampa Bay Business Journal).

SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

As Corporate Counsel, Harold led the creation of a national employee-funded foundation which donated over two and a half million dollars to children's charities. The Foundation was instrumental in building the first long-term care facility for victims of human trafficking in the Tampa Bay area, in addition to an emergency shelter for abused and neglected children in Brandon, Florida and the first medical clinic in the Southeast dedicated to treating homeless youth. The Foundation recognized Harold's 15 years of service to at-risk children by naming him an Emeritus board member for life.