

Penny W. Schmidt is a proud Gator, having obtained her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Florida while working full-time as a paralegal. She obtained her law degree, with honors, from St. Thomas College of Law in 1992. While in law school, she served as the Chairman of the Moot Court Board and was the recipient of American Jurisprudence Awards in the areas of Civil Trial Advocacy, Appellate Advocacy, Evidence, Wills and Trusts, and Taxation. Subsequently, she was named Graduate of the Year for the State of Florida by the legal fraternity of Phi Delta Phi. After graduation from law school, Penny worked as an Associate Attorney with the law firm of Fuller & Minor, P.A., located in Ft. Myers, Florida, becoming a partner in the law firm of Minor & Schmidt, P.A. During her tenure in Ft. Myers, she was an active member of the Lee County Bar Association, Lee County Personal Injury Association and the Calusa Inns of Court. In 1997, she and her husband relocated to the Jacksonville area where she continued her legal career with one of her current partners, Dennis R. Schutt.

Penny has been a Martindale-Hubbell AV Rated partner at the law firm of Schutt, Schmidt, & Noey since 1997. She is a member of the Florida Bar and the U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida. Additionally, Penny's memberships in the Jacksonville Bar Association and the Florida Bar Trial Lawyers Section and the Jacksonville Women's Lawyer's Association expand her professional credentials. Continuing her involvement as a legal advocate, she served as former president of the Jacksonville Association of Defense Counsel.

Her civil litigation experience has been in the areas of Personal Injury/Wrongful Death, Trucking Litigation, Insurance Coverage Disputes, Complex Commercial and Construction Defect Litigation, Contract and Business Litigation and Appellate law.

Penny is a Florida Supreme Court Certified Circuit Court Mediator, Certified Mediator for the Middle District of Florida and a Florida Supreme Court qualified Arbitrator. She has also served as a Special Master and an Umpire in residential appraisal litigation.

Penny is a member of the National Academy of Distinguished Neutrals, Florida Academy of Professional Mediators and the Florida Circuit-Civil Mediators Society. She is also a member and former Chairperson of the Alternative Dispute Resolution section of the Jacksonville Bar Association as well as a member of the Alternative Dispute Resolution section of the Florida Bar. She is a Volunteer Mediator and Arbitrator for the Florida Bar Grievance Mediation and Fee Arbitration Program, and was the former co-chairman of the Marketing and Webinar sub-committee for the ADR Section of the Florida Defense Lawyers Association. In addition, she is an adjunct professor at Florida Coastal School of Law, where she teaches Alternative Dispute Resolution to future lawyers. She has lectured to various professional organizations on a variety of mediation-related topics, such as "Getting More out of Mediation than Just a Settlement" and "A Paralegals Guide to Help Prepare Your Attorney for Mediation/Arbitration."

Commitment to positive mediation and arbitration outcomes forms the cornerstone of her professional practice. Personal attention to detail ensures the participants' respect and successful problem resolution. As a mediator, she describes her style as **"firm and direct, but engaged and creative."**