



THE MATTHEW REARDON CENTER  
**AUTISM**  
CONFERENCE

February 28th and March 1st, 2019  
International Trade and Convention Center  
Savannah, Georgia

## Presentations by Thomas F. Coleman

### **Session 1**

*Title – Guardianship, The ADA, and Access to Justice for People with Disabilities*

Through the film, a short lecture, and the discussion that follows, these three objectives will be advanced:

Objective 1 – Learning about injustices in current guardianship proceedings

Objective 2 – Learning how federal ADA protections apply to state guardianship proceedings

Objective 3 – Learning how to demand reform so that properly trained attorneys are appointed by state courts to represent all guardianship respondents

### **Session 2**

*Title – Safe and Legal Supported Decision-Making as an Alternative to Guardianship*

Through a PowerPoint slide show and accompanying lecture, and through the discussion that follows, these three objectives will be advanced:

Objective 1 – Learning what supported decision-making is and what it is not

Objective 2 – Learning how SDM fits into current guardianship laws

Objective 3 – Learning how to make judges consider safe and legal SDM as a less restrictive alternative to guardianship

### **Biography**

Thomas F. Coleman is an attorney whose professional career advocating for various civil rights causes has spanned more than four decades. He has participated in cases before the supreme courts of California, Alaska, Michigan, New York, and Georgia, as well as the United States Supreme Court. He has written extensively about guardianship reform and access to justice for people with developmental disabilities. His advocacy activities are depicted in a recently released documentary film titled *Pursuit of Justice*. Coleman is an advocate of safe and legal supported decision-making as an alternative to guardianship. He will be speaking on this topic at the World Congress on Adult Guardianship which will be held later this year in South Korea.