



The Contest

The Public Investors Advocate Bar Association (PIABA) sponsors this contest for papers touching on securities law and securities arbitration and will pay over \$3,000 in awards to law students with prizes at \$1,500, \$1,000, and \$750 for the top three entrants. The PIABA Bar Journal will publish the first place paper and, in years past, has also made offers to publish other papers from the contest. Papers must be submitted by **Friday, March 28, 2025**.

Eligibility

The competition is open to all students attending a law school in the United States.¹ PIABA employees and externs (except for students working less than 20 hours per week) are not eligible to enter the competition.

Criteria and Judging

All entries will be judged anonymously by the Competition Judges, who will select the winning submission(s). PIABA will notify the award winner(s) in early April.

Entries will be judged based on the following criteria: quality of research and authority provided; accuracy and clarity of the analysis; compliance with legal writing standards and technical quality of writing, including organization, grammar, syntax, and form. Strong preference will be given to articles that advocate pro-investor positions, provide updates on or surveys of securities or ADR law, and/or are consistent with PIABA's mission of promoting the education and interests of the public investor in securities and commodities arbitration, protecting public investors from abuses in the arbitration process, and making securities and commodities arbitration fair through legislative reforms to arbitration forum providers. The Judges reserve the right not to award any prizes if it is determined that no entries are of sufficient quality to merit selection that year.

¹ Full-time students who are not law students but who write law-related papers as part of a course at an American law school may also enter

Format

The text of a submission must be double-spaced, with twelve-point font and one-inch margins. Any Question(s) Presented section, the Statement of the Facts / Statement of the Law section, the Argument section, and/or the Conclusion together are a minimum of 15 pages and a maximum of 30 pages. If the submission covers both a topic among those listed above and a topic not listed above, only the topic listed above will be evaluated. Submissions will not be penalized for arguing a position that would limit investor rights rather than expand them.

Submission Deadline

The submission deadline is 5 pm eastern on Friday, March 28, 2025. Submissions are accepted via the online submission portal only (*see, Submit your paper* below). The contestant's name and other identifying markings such as school name are not to be on any copy of the submitted entry. PIABA will assign a random number to each entry and will record this number on all copies of each submission. Neither the contestant's identity nor their academic institution will be known to any Competition Judge. Each entrant may submit only one entry.

About James E. Beckley

James E. Beckley – a passionate securities arbitration activist and an accomplished scholar – was well known for defending and promoting the rights of public investors. Along with his advocacy skills, he was as a prolific and outstanding writer. Mr. Beckley served on the Securities Industry Conference on Arbitration, an organization created at the request of the Securities and Exchange Commission to maintain and update the Uniform Code of Arbitration for securities arbitration, and to serve as a sounding board on issues of fairness in arbitration. At the time of his death in 1999, Mr. Beckley was the Public Investors Arbitration Bar Association (“PIABA”) President. This competition and award has been established to honor his legacy.