



# NCBC IMPACT

*Dedicated to the professional development of its members*

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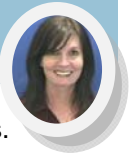
Editors Note

Issue #1

February 2014

## A New Year - Seven Resolutions of a Highly Effective NCBC

Lee Ann Bennett, NCBC President



A New Year is here and it's time once again to make those New Year's resolutions. Like so many of you, I make resolutions every January; actually love doing so as it challenges me to meet the goals I set for myself. The secret I've learned is to set goals (resolutions) I feel I can actually keep or meet. My personal resolutions usually center on my health, well-being, and staying in touch better with friends and family.

This year I decided to set New Year's resolutions for NCBC that centers on you – our most important and number one asset. There's been enough talk about doing more with less, cost containment, and downsizing. Let's change the conversation to how best to serve you as an organization and how best to engage you in the work of the organization. So, what are NCBC's resolutions? Let's take a look:

1) **Renew our focus on providing the best educational opportunities during our annual conferences.** This can be accomplished by developing new training sessions, tweaking existing training sessions, and focusing on networking opportunities during the conference. As you know, the conference this year is scheduled for July 15 – 18 in St. Louis, Missouri and work is already underway to offer an amazing educational program. As an organization, we will reach out to Clerks and ask that they invest in your professional development by spending funds to send you to the conference. We also want to expand on our educational offerings by creating more opportunities throughout the year to meet your training needs. An Outreach Committee has been formed to look at ways to grow your professional skills as a member of this organization and better position you for promotional potential within the court.

2) **Seek your input by listening to your needs and getting your involvement in committees.** This year we hope to find opportunities to tap into your skills and abilities. New committees are being considered by the Board and existing committees need additional membership.

3) **Continue with our commitment to advocate on your behalf on issues that are important to you and to the bankruptcy system.** In the past, we wrote reports and letters on the IBM shared service study, provided CACM with a positional paper on the matter of shared service, and participated in the GAO interview on consolidation and shared service (in addition to providing them with a written response). NCBC was also instrumental in getting sick leave to count towards your total creditable service for annuity computation.

## 2014 Publication Dates

February 8

May 2

August 1

November 7

Articles are due to the editor by the  
15th of the month preceding  
publication

[laura.whitehead@nceb.uscourts.gov](mailto:laura.whitehead@nceb.uscourts.gov)

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## Seven Resolutions of a Highly Effective NCBC

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4) **Continue our partnership with Michigan State University (MSU) which offers two certificate programs (credit bearing and non-credit bearing) in judicial administration, as well as a master's degree in judicial administration.** This is another terrific opportunity to better position you for a future with the court. This year NCBC will celebrate the 10 year anniversary of our partnership with MSU at the annual conference. I hope many of you will plan to attend and participate.

5) **Find ways to celebrate what we've done.** By "we", I mean the organization and its individual members. We should celebrate and promote the innovations and improvements developed by bankruptcy staff, many of whom are members of this organization. Our Awards Committee has done an outstanding job of recognizing innovations but we need your help in not leaving anyone out. Also, the Board is planning a Members Appreciation Week during this fiscal year.

6) **Continue to expand our insurance offerings in order to meet your needs.** Recently, you received information concerning an improvement to the Disability Insurance offering and information concerning a new product, Accident Insurance. We are blessed to have a true advocate in Federal First whose goal is to bring you insurance offerings that meet your needs. They are in the beginning stages of investigating critical care insurance – something you let us know you were interested in.

7) **Improve our website.** A few years ago we improved the look of our website but now it's time to update the information on the website, keep it current, and expand the information provided. We are forming a Website Committee and hope many of you will be interested in serving.

I hope these resolutions will entice you to continue your membership in this outstanding organization and that you will encourage your co-workers to join. It truly is an organization focused on your professional needs and development. NCBC is the only independent voice of the Bankruptcy Courts and it needs your membership and input. I believe working together we can achieve great things and better serve our membership and each other. I look forward to seeing you at this year's conference, receiving your input, and getting you involved. Please feel free to email me or any member of the Board with your ideas. Happy New Year to all!

### Mary Louise Mitterhoff Appointed Chief, Court Services Office



As part of the ongoing reorganization efforts of the Administrative Office (AO), Director Judge John Bates appointed chiefs for several of the new offices established under the AO restructuring.

Most of the divisions under the prior Office of Court Administration make up the new Court Services Office (under the Department of Program Services), and, more specifically, comprise the newly-formed Court Services Office. This office is now aligned along functional lines rather than being organized by court types.

Long-time AO employee Mary Louise Mitterhoff has been appointed to lead the Court Services Office. For more information about the Court Services Office, please see her Nov. 27 memo: <http://jnet.ao.dcn/court-services/newly-established-court-services-office-information>.

Please join the AO in congratulating Mary Louise on her appointment and supporting her in this role.

## NCBC Scholarship/Tuition Assistance Program

Kris Botts, Awards Committee Chairperson, Iowa Southern

2014 is the second year of the NCBC Scholarship/Tuition Assistance program created to assist deserving, qualified NCBC members in their pursuit of continuing education. The program currently has an annual budget of \$4000. Recipients will receive up to \$500, which can be used for attendance at the annual conference or for approved continuing education courses. Eligibility requirements are as follows:

- ◆ Must be a current NCBC member and in good standing for a minimum of the last two consecutive years.
- ◆ Must be a deputy clerk, currently employed by the U.S. Courts.
- ◆ Must complete the application process before the deadline provided.
- ◆ Applications must be received no later than May 15, 2014.

The application is available on the NCBC website at: <http://ncbc.memberclicks.net/scholarship-info->

## The Awards Committee Needs You!

Kris Botts, Iowa Southern

The NCBC Awards Committee needs your help! We are looking for volunteers to serve on the committee to help find valuable and talented individuals within our court community for potential awards and to help review and award the NCBC's Scholarship Assistance Tuition Program.

If you would be interested in volunteering for this committee, please contact Kris Botts at [Kris Botts@iasb.uscourts.gov](mailto:Kris_Botts@iasb.uscourts.gov) by February 28, 2014, for more information.

## Upcoming Opportunities for NCBC Members

Eileen Garrity - District of Massachusetts

This year we will be holding elections for the following positions:

- Treasurer
- Board of Governors (2 positions)
- President Elect

Regina Thomas was voted in by the Board to fill the position when Lee Ann Bennett took over the Presidency after John Horner's resignation. Regina will formally be a candidate for this election.

Please watch your emails in the coming months regarding how to declare your candidacy for one of the openings listed above and election deadlines.

Also available are two staff positions:

- Web Liaison
- Impact Editor

## NCBC Mentorship Program Update

Kirsten L. Mahoney - California Northern

After a successful pilot program in 2012, the official NCBC Mentorship Program was launched in February 2013. Upon a rigorous review of many high quality applications, a final 18 participants were chosen - 9 mentors and 9 mentees. In May, these participants commenced their six-month mentorship relationship working towards previously set goals. In November, their official program ended and we asked all participants to share what they thought of the program.

Based on their monthly check-ins and final program evaluations, the participants benefited greatly from the program with all individuals reporting they would recommend the program to their colleagues and nearly all rating the program as excellent. Among the many aspects of the program the mentees appreciated, they highlighted how much they valued their mentor for providing them new insights and motivation as shared by the following two program participants in their own words.

*“My mentor was simply great. She really challenged me and I learned a lot about how to be a better court employee. I have really enjoyed the opportunity to grow and learn about resources available to NCBC members. It is a relationship, I believe, that will continue way past the 6 months allotted for the program.”*

*“My mentor was very motivational and inspirational to me. He encouraged me to go out of my comfort zone, which I did, and supported me along the way. He gave insight and suggestions on achieving my goals. I am very thankful for the opportunity to participate in the program and happy to have a new friend in our court system.”*

As is evident by the responses below, the mentors also spoke positively about their participation focusing on being able to pass on their knowledge-rich experience and building the next generation of court leaders.

*“I found the mentorship program a great way to share my experiences as a long time court employee with someone who was interested in learning and expanding their own knowledge. It felt good to be able to make a positive impact on someone's life.”*

*“The program gives an opportunity for an ambitious person in a court setting at just about any position to connect with a mentor to gain perspective and bounce ideas off that could help an ongoing career.”*

In conclusion, based on the feedback from participants, the NCBC Mentorship Program is a valuable resource for its members. It provides an opportunity for those more seasoned NCBC members to share their wisdom and knowledge with their less experienced colleagues so that both parties can learn and grow in their careers with the US Bankruptcy Court.

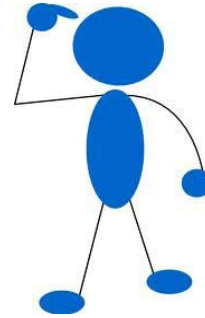
If you are interested in participating in the program either as a mentor or mentee, please look for the Mentorship Program 2014 announcement from NCBC in the near future.

## 2014 NCBC Membership Committee Update

**M. Regina Thomas, Membership Committee Chairperson, GANB**

The Membership Committee has a lot on its plate for 2014, but we plan to start with the basics.....

Are your membership dues current? That seems like an easy question, but we are learning that it may not be all that clear. After some digging around, it appears that renewal notices have not always been sent on a timely basis (or at all?) so members may not know to renew their memberships. We are addressing this glitch going forward, but need your help now.



Please login to Memberclicks and check your membership status.\* If your dues are current, thank you! If not, please consider renewing at this time. One of our highest priorities is to scrub our membership database to insure we have the best, most up-to-date information available.

Another of our priorities in 2014 is to show our members how much we appreciate you ... every day. You will certainly want to be a member in good standing when the surprises are announced!



We will soon have available a full list of the 2014 Circuit Liaisons and Local Representatives. Please do not hesitate to reach out to one of your colleagues for the latest on the NCBC and its activities.

Thank you for your continued support of the NCBC and its important mission. If you are interested in working to promote and increase our membership, please feel free to contact me at [Regina\\_Thomas@ganb.uscourts.gov](mailto:Regina_Thomas@ganb.uscourts.gov)

\*If you have any trouble accessing your profile, please send me an email for help!

## Get Cash for Your Accidental Injuries

James De La Torre, CRPC

The NCBC Board is pleased to announce a new benefit program for its members. As a federal employee, you now have access to a new group accident insurance plan, insured by Lincoln Financial Group, a Fortune 500, A+ rated insurance company and endorsed by NCBC. NCBC continues to identify programs to benefit their members and solutions to help fill gaps in their benefits.

Through your FEHB Program you have access to really good health insurance for you and your family. Unfortunately, no one health plan covers 100% of everything, deductibles, co-insurance, and co-pays can add up – and in the event of an accident – these unexpected costs can add up quickly.

**What is Accident Insurance?** Accident insurance helps you handle the medical and out-of-pocket costs that add up after an accidental injury. This includes emergency treatment, hospital stays, surgeries, and medical exams, and other expenses you may face, such as transportation and lodging needs.

Example of How Accident Insurance Works – A high school student suffers a sports injury (broken leg) at a sporting event.

| Benefit Triggers                  | Accident Plan Pays You           |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Ambulance                         | \$150                            |
| Treatment in Emergency Room       | \$150                            |
| Diagnostic Imaging Exam           | \$100                            |
| Surgery                           | \$1,000                          |
| Hospital Admission                | \$1,000                          |
| Hospital Confinement              | \$600 (\$200 per day, at 3 days) |
| Crutches                          | \$25                             |
| Follow-up Physicians Visit        | \$300 ( \$50 at 6 visits)        |
| <b>Total Benefit Paid to You:</b> | <b>\$3,325</b>                   |

Regardless of which health plan you are enrolled under, Lincoln Financials' accident plan has you covered. Benefits paid from FEHB plans are paid directly to the medical providers, benefits paid from Lincoln are paid directly to you so you can decide the best way to spend it.

Accident insurance is available to employees and their families and is ideal for: young families; families with children in sports; families with teenagers; and all active employees both young and old. It's also affordable just \$20.00 a pay period covers you, your spouse and all of your children regardless of their age.

For more information and to view a presentation visit, call or email us at

[www.fedadvantage.com/accident](http://www.fedadvantage.com/accident)

866-973-6605

[jdelatorre@fedAdvantage.com](mailto:jdelatorre@fedAdvantage.com)

*James De La Torre has conducted federal benefit and financial planning seminars in all of the country. He is a key note speaker at federal conferences and works with federal professional organizations on ways to improve the communication of federal benefits to their membership. Jim has appeared as a guest on "Fed Talk" on the Federal News Radio network, discussing the gaps in federal benefits*

## 2013 NCBC Scholarship/Tuition Assistance Recipient Shares Her Experience

Cheryl Rapp, District of Alaska

Greetings to my court family across the United States from here in Anchorage, Alaska. My name is Cheryl Rapp and I have worked at the bankruptcy court in Anchorage for almost 10 years. I was hired as a Judicial Assistant in 2004 and when funding for recall judges to have staff went away I was transferred to the clerk's office budget. I continue to work for Judge Ross in chambers and in the courtroom for both Judges as an in court clerk but my title is now deputy clerk and I am on the clerk's office payroll.

Due to the budget concerns we are all having at our courts, I had applied for and received notification that I was one of the recipients of the new NCBC Scholarship / Tuition Assistance Program last spring. I applied with the hope of helping to defray costs for the conference if I were selected from my court to attend. I planned to complete the last two courses I needed for the Michigan State University ("MSU") Judicial Administration Noncredit Certificate Program. I had been working on this five year program steadily completing most of the courses at a conference each summer. It is such a nice way to get continuing education at the excellent programs offered by the NCBC and FCCA and a wonderful way to network with colleagues away from the demands of our jobs and to return to work refreshed and ready for new challenges.

Last spring my father was diagnosed with inoperable metastatic Stage IV lung cancer just after we returned from a two week vacation in Hawaii with two of my siblings. He had stopped smoking many years ago but had developed asbestosis from 17 years of working with asbestos in the insulation industry here in Alaska. As my father's first born and his primary care giver at the time, I knew that I would not be leaving his side to travel anywhere and was about to turn down the scholarship when Kris Botts suggested I consider taking the courses online. Words cannot adequately convey how encouraging it was for me to receive this suggestion from Kris and to have the realization that there was a way to put caring for my father's needs first and then be able to timely complete the MSU courses at my own pace. I accepted the scholarship and helped my siblings in caring for our father and held his hand as he took his last breath and passed on to eternity.

With the financial assistance afforded by the NCBC Scholarship, I completed the online courses for Essential Components of Courts and Visioning & Strategic Planning. These were the last two courses I needed for the MSU program. In addition to these online courses, I attended two seminars offered locally which related to my work at the court. I can't begin to tell you how great it feels to have been able to accomplish these goals. Thank you to each one of you and to the members of the scholarship committee for making this possible.

# Spotlight on Court Developed Programs

## Welcome to eFinCert

Brent Laymen - North Carolina Middle



Due to changes to Rule 1007(b)(7), Financial Management Course providers are now allowed to file (docket) the course completion certificate on behalf of the debtor(s). This creates extra work for the clerk's office, due to maintaining more limited filers, and for the providers, who will need to remember multiple logins. Is your court dreading setting up more limited filers for Financial Management Course providers? Fret not! eFinCert is here!

eFinCert (Electronic Financial Management Course Certification) allows a person from the Internet to file a Personal Financial Management Course Certificate for either the debtor or the joint debtor without having a CM/ECF login. As of Jan 28, there are 39 courts "live" on eFinCert. For a usage update, check out <http://caselookup.ncmb.circ4.dcn/reports/eFinCert-status.htm>.

### How is it Used?

eFinCert is simple to use!

- First enter the case number:

- Then select either the debtor or join debtor, attach the certificate, complete information about the provider, and submit!

- Once the certificate is submitted, the user sees a confirmation screen
- If the user entered a valid email address, he will receive an electronic notification of filing (NEF).

But wait! Not only does eFinCert let the certificate be filed, eFinCert can remove case flags and terminate deadlines for the Court, saving the Court time spent for both docketing and conducting quality control.

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## CM/ECF Next Gen Update

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**Next Generation CM/ECF Working Group:** The Bankruptcy CM/ECF Working Group held its monthly calls as scheduled on the third Thursday of the month. In addition to the regular monthly NextGen development status updates, the group discussed amended Bankruptcy Rule 1007(B)(7) which became effective Dec. 1, 2013, and allows, but does not require, personal financial management course providers to notify the court that the debtor has completed the required course by filing the certificate on the debtor's behalf. When they do, the debtor is not required to file *Debtor's Certification of Completion of Instructional Course Concerning Personal Financial Management* (Official Form 23).

The group reviewed and commented on the relevant limited filer training materials developed by the Office of Systems Deployment and Support (OSDS) Training Branch, posted here: <http://training.sdsd.ao.dcn/CourseResource.aspx?id=1271>.

The Department of Justice's Executive Office of the U.S. Trustee notified the Financial Management Course Providers of this rule change, forward information and/or training materials to this new set of CM/ECF limited filers and direct them to courts' websites for information on becoming a limited filer. Because these providers are new users to the CM/ECF system, they will each need to file limited filer agreements and have limited filer accounts set up. To make this set up easier for the clerk's office, there is a new starter dictionary event posted to the OSDS Training page for the upcoming change: <http://training.sdsd.ao.dcn/CourseResource.aspx?id=1271>.

The group also considered a policy issue related to current CM/ECF functionality that facilitates the reporting of prior bankruptcy cases on the docket (public or private), as well as a couple of Emergency Modification Requests (EMR). Please see the **NextGen Monthly Status Report** on JNet for regular updates: <http://jnet.ao.dcn/resources/national-applications-and-systems-supported/case-managementelectronic-case-files-cmecf-next-generation>.

For questions regarding the Next Generation CM/ECF Project, please contact Robby Robinson, Court Services Office (*Robby Robinson/DCA/AO/USCOURTS*); Charlene Hiss, Co-Chair, Bankruptcy Clerk of the District of Oregon (*Charlene Hiss/ORB/09/USCOURTS*); Richard Goodier, Office of Judicial Services (*Richard Goodier/DCA/AO/USCOURTS*), or the Hon. Tamara Mitchell, Co-Chair, Northern District of Alabama (*Tamara O Mitchell/ALNB/11/USCOURTS*).

For questions about implementing AO provided CM/ECF Easy-Fixes, or questions about any of these MRs, please contact the OSDS (formally SDS) Bankruptcy CM/ECF Help Desk at 210/301-6332.

## 2014 NCBC Conference Update



Jennifer Dawson , Missouri Eastern , Cathy Hart, Illinois Southern & Susan Ryan, Missouri Eastern

The Clerks of the Bankruptcy Courts for the Eastern District of Missouri and Southern District of Illinois, Dana McWay and Donna Beyersdorfer, and their staffs are thrilled to host the 2014 NCBC Conference in St. Louis and enthusiastically invite YOU to join them on **July 15-18, 2014**.

This year's NCBC Conference is sure to be one you won't forget! The conference hotel is well situated in the heart of downtown St. Louis and offers many wonderful amenities. The NCBC Conference will offer a wide variety of breakout sessions sure to benefit your work and personal life, dynamic plenary speakers, and many networking opportunities for you to spend time with your fellow NCBC members.



*Photo courtesy of St. Louis CVC*

St. Louis offers endless sites to see and things to do. You'll probably run out of time before you run out of options! Unique attractions, historic sites, charming neighborhoods, great shopping, delicious dining, and exciting entertainment options are around every corner. While many cities claim to be "family-friendly," St. Louis really means it! Not only are there plenty of activities and attractions that are geared toward kids of all ages, but many of them are FREE, which makes St. Louis a budget-friendly destination for families.

### **Things to See and Do in St. Louis – FREE!**

**The Museum of Westward Expansion**, located under the Gateway Arch, allows visitors to experience the Old West. Visitors take a journey into the past and see the tools, guns, animals and a covered wagon of the pioneers who helped create our nation.

**Citygarden** is a beautiful green space located in the heart of downtown St. Louis. Citygarden hosts 24 sculptures and contains trees, shrubs, perennials, native grass, wildflowers, bulbs, and groundcover.

The St. Louis Zoo located in Forest Park is divided into six distinct zones where visitors can visit animals from all over the world including elephants, apes, lions, giraffes, and snakes.



*Photo courtesy of St. Louis CVC*

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## 2013 NCBC Scholarship/Tuition Assistance Recipient Shares Her Experience

Cheryl Rapp, District of Alaska

*Continued from page 11*

**Laclede's Landing** is located on the banks of the mighty Mississippi River. This area still has cobbled streets that create a special charm reminiscent of St. Louis' past history. Laclede's Landing is home to over twenty restaurants, clubs, shops, and attractions.

**Anheuser-Busch Brewery**, home of the famous Budweiser Clydesdales, offers tours to visitors of all ages. Tours include an in-depth look at how some of America's favorite beers are crafted

There is SO MUCH more to see and do in St. Louis! Visit the St. Louis NCBC web site <http://www.ncbc2014.com/> to learn more about these attractions, the many other fun and family-friendly venues, the rich history of St. Louis, and beneficial information about the NCBC Conference.

The theme for the conference is displayed in our logo: **New Heights We Climb and Bridges We Cross**. Coming together in St. Louis and working together at the conference will serve our community well. We are sure you will thoroughly enjoy your experience in St. Louis. Be sure to mark your calendar for **July 15-18, 2014** and Meet Us in St. Louis!



## 2014 NCBC Conference Information Sharing Exhibitors Needed

The Information Sharing Committee is accepting applications for exhibitors at this year's conference.

The bankruptcy courts have a long history in creating, collaborating, and sharing ideas with other court units and the Information Sharing Session is a perfect venue to introduce your new and exciting ideas.

If you want to share your innovative way of approaching a difficult or time consuming process, please email your response to Corey Behrman by May 30, 2014 at [corey\\_behrman@ilsb.uscourts.gov](mailto:corey_behrman@ilsb.uscourts.gov) with your exhibit information.

The Information Sharing Committee will review the responses and set out to create the best experience for our entire bankruptcy court family.

# A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Dear readers,

Happy New Year!

The editorial committee and I look forward to another year of serving the NCBC membership and providing you with a high quality newsletter. Please note that the newsletter will be published quarterly this year rather than every two months. A special edition will be published in the event information needs to be distributed to members between publication dates.

As you can tell from the information contained in this issue, there are several opportunities for members to get involved with NCBC this year. I hope you will give careful consideration to these opportunities.

Laura Whitehead, Editor

2014 editorial committee members: Dailin Pena (FLSB); Heather Aslett (UTB); John Kohler (CACB); Leslie Murin (DEB) and Pat Borokhovich (OHNB).

This is one of the stunning views from the conference hotel. The St. Louis Gateway Arch is the tallest national monument in the United States.



*Photo courtesy of Laura Whitehead*

**2014 Conference St. Louis, Missouri**

**July 15—18, 2014**

**Host Courts: Missouri Eastern and Illinois Southern**

