



National Conference of Bankruptcy Clerks

Issue #2

May 2016

IMPACT Newsletter

Dedicated to the professional development of its members

Inside This Issue:

President's Message

Mentorship Program

Information Sharing

Local Outreach

FJC Education

Local Court Spotlight

Michigan State University News

IT Tech Tip

Benefits News

Awards Information

NCBC Member Spotlight

NCBC Election 2016

Editor's Note

NCBC Survey

Washington, D.C. Fun Facts



President's Message

By: Gina Thomas, NCBC President

Happy spring! Amazing as it seems, the NCBC/FCCA joint conference is less than four months away. By now you have seen the draft agenda and know that the Education Committee, led by Teresa Underwood, has done an outstanding job putting together high quality course options. We are honored to have the Director of the AO, Jim Duff, and two of the three Associate Directors, Laura Minor and Joe Peters, scheduled to speak with us during the conference. Unfortunately, the newest Associate Director, Jim Baugher – a longtime NCBC friend and frequent participant at our conferences - is unable to attend but he has assured us that many of his department's top projects will be discussed in breakout sessions.

We have a wonderful event planned at the Newseum, a seven-level interactive museum that features 15 theaters and 15 galleries. Since opening at its current location on Pennsylvania Avenue in 2008, the Newseum has welcomed more than six million visitors, and houses, among other treasures, the largest pieces of the Berlin wall outside of Germany. There is an amazing 9/11 exhibit, an exhibit of the civil rights journey in America and the Pulitzer Prize Photographs Gallery that features photographs from every Pulitzer Prize-winning entry dating back to 1942. By the time of our arrival, there will be an exhibit devoted to the November elections.

Conference and hotel registration is scheduled to open the week of May 9! We look forward to a great conference with our partners at the FCCA.

In non-conference news, the first few months of 2016 were very busy for the Membership Committee and its chair, Sabrina Palacio-Garcia. They did another outstanding job planning and executing the year's Member Appreciation Week (MAW). The response to new and renewed membership was overwhelming. I hope all members like their appreciation gift as much as I do! Thanks to Sabrina and her committee for a job very well done.

And while I am thanking people, Web Administrator Joe Markley and his committee, especially Dorenda Turner, deserve a nod for taking the idea of creating a jobs posting site for our website and making it a reality. I am thrilled with the immediate response – within two hours of announcing the site, we received seven job notices. [Continued on page 6]

The NCBC IMPACT

Is the official newsletter of the
National Conference of Bankruptcy Clerks

M. Regina Thomas
President

Published by the IMPACT Editorial
Committee. Suggestions and comments
are always welcome.

Please email **Jan Zari**, Impact Editor at
Jan_Zari@cacb.uscourts.gov

Becoming a Mentor— A Transition from Mentee to Mentor

By: Mona Sparks



An NCBC colleague - who recently completed the NCBC mentorship program as a mentee - was encouraged by her mentor to consider applying to serve as a mentor. This is the ultimate story of one person who accepted a challenge to step outside their comfort zone and give back to a program that helped them gain confidence and develop skills. A former mentee has now transitioned into a successful mentor - perpetuating the program and investing into the future of another court colleague. Giving back and coming full circle. What could be a better contribution than that?

What is a mentor?

Hopefully we all have had someone in our career or in our lives that has served as a mentor to us. Somehow they have encouraged us, guided us, directed us or even helped pick us up when we have fallen. Mentors come in all shapes and sizes - they may be a seasoned professional, trusted friend, family member, or business colleague.

Among the many opportunities the NCBC provides to YOU, is this popular Mentorship Program. Right now a group of mentors have been paired with a group of mentees and they are communicating and collaborating regularly – by phone, email, instant messaging, video conferencing, or text messaging. You name it—With today's technology the possibilities are endless.

Mentees are often seeking assistance with career advancement, project management, or skill development. Mentors can be an objective voice who points out a path for the mentee that might be well within reach but has somehow been overlooked.

Mentees have recently credited their mentors with assisting them to secure a promotion, prepare a presentation, or attain a goal.



Serving as a mentor can be a rewarding experience. Won't you consider applying as a mentor or mentee or encourage a co-worker who is an NCBC member to apply? Another class of mentors and mentees will be starting later this year. Check out the mentorship page and video at <http://www.ncbcweb.com/mentor-program> and see more details on the program and how to apply as either a mentor or a mentee.

What Do You Want to Showcase in Washington, D.C.?

By: The Information Sharing Committee

This year, the Federal Court Clerks Association (FCCA) and the National Conference of Bankruptcy Clerks (NCBC) are hosting a joint conference. What does this mean? You will have an even greater audience who is eager to see what your court has developed and there will be fresh eyes on your innovations!

The Federal Judiciary has a lot of knowledge and people with great skills leading district wide, circuit wide, or national projects. The Information Sharing Session invites creators of human resource, procurement, finance, IT, operations, and judicial services to exhibit your great ideas! We would like you to exhibit at this year's conference in Washington, DC your best practices, technical innovations, and other tips and tricks that make your court unit function like a well-oiled machine.

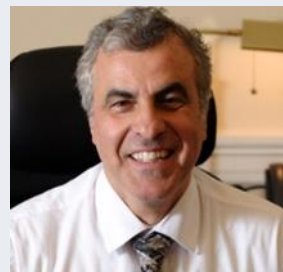
If you would like to share how your court has tackled a difficult or time consuming practice, please add your exhibit information to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2PKYCH8>

The Information Sharing Committee,
Sandi Brask
Kelly Clark
Josh Wiker
Michael Wint



NYSB Hosts Mock Trial for Students

By: Vito Genna



On January 27, fifth-grade ladies from the Girls Prep Bronx Charter School attended a mock trial before Judge Shelley Chapman at New York Southern Bankruptcy Court. They came prepared to try famous European explorers of old crimes and they performed very well. We wanted to share the video

and story with you:

<http://mashable.com/2016/02/09/bronx-girls-explorers-trial/#TfCeGnSW0qqD>

Do you have a story to share with other members? Do you have a suggestion or recommendation for the NCBC Board to consider? I will be happy to receive emails, please send to Vito Genna in Lotus Notes email and add NCBC Outreach in the subject line.

NCBC Mentorship Program

By: Carolyn Baker

“Springtime is the land awakening. The March winds are the morning yawn.” – Lewis Grizzard

New beginnings are oftentimes associated with the coming of spring. What better time to embark upon a new challenge such as the NCBC’s mentorship program? Whether you’re interested in becoming a mentor or mentee, the program is beneficial for both participants. The mentee is afforded an opportunity to discuss goals and aspirations, solicit guidance and feedback. The program provides them with an objective listener who desires to aid in their professional development. The mentor’s coaching and listening skills are enhanced throughout the process and they’re provided insight relating to staff views and ideas. It’s an avenue for a positive exchange of ideas between both parties, as well as a learning opportunity for both, and offers a safe and healthy environment to discuss court practices and procedures. The program encourages professionalism, confidentiality and a mutual respect is built between both the mentee and mentor.



I wasn’t sure what to expect when I volunteered but I quickly realized the program was outstanding! As a participant, you meet with a partner via telephone on a consistent basis. In our situation, we were also able to meet face-to-face at the NCBC’s conference in Atlanta last year after we’d corresponded for several months. We attended some of the same sessions and afterwards, discussed the experience and how we both could expand upon the knowledge gained.

The program is designed to last for six months; however, I anticipate our relationship will continue to thrive. In addition to the professional relationship we’ve gained, a personal bond has been forged as well. I would highly recommend the program to anyone interested in developing a relationship with someone from another court and having an additional resource in which to share ideas, knowledge and support. It’s a great opportunity to network!

Upon receipt of applications, the NCBC Mentoring Advisory Committee reviews them in order to match both the mentor and mentee, based on career background, experience, goals and interests. Both participants are contacted and then their meetings begin. That’s it! If you choose to participate in the program you’ll be glad you did, and will gain an experience that will last a lifetime. It’s a win/win situation for both parties so “spring” into action, get out of your comfort zone and follow the [link](#) below for more exciting details!

Federal Judicial Center On-going Efforts in Executive Education

The Center is making progress in realizing Director Fogel’s Strategic Vision for Judicial Branch Education, moving from an “events-based” approach (such as a one-time course) to a “curriculum-based” approach (such as a cluster of several courses to develop skills). This progress includes designing a leadership curriculum for judiciary executives.

The foundation of the curriculum is a set of competencies for court leaders that were identified by judges, court executives and staff. Competencies are simply the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for a person to be successful in a particular position or role. Programming, resources, and learning activities are and will continue to be designed to help participants enhance and expand their mastery of the relevant competencies.

Center staff continues to partner with an executive education [advisory committee](#) and specific program planning committees

to design and develop leadership education to judiciary executives. These advisors assist the Center in setting and prioritizing goals, assisting with and determining the learning needs of the audience, and recommending delivery methods for programming.

The groups below are the audiences for executive education:

- Chief judge programming – for district, bankruptcy, and circuit judges;
- Court unit executive programming – for new and experienced executives; and
- Deputy court unit executive programming – for new and experienced deputy executives.

For further information about any executive education programming, see FJC Online.

Contact FJC Assistant Division Director for Executive Education Lori Murphy at 202-502-4109 or lmurphy@fjc.gov for more information about on-going efforts in executive education.



Federal Judicial Center

Federal Judicial Center

Update on Education and Training for Deputy Court Unit Executives

Curious about what the Federal Judicial Center is planning for deputy court unit executives?

The FJC is working with a planning committee of deputy court unit executives (appellate, district, bankruptcy, and probation & pretrial services) to design and develop a comprehensive competency-based curriculum for deputy CUEs. The FJC will be using a framework of competencies (hyperlink to URL: <http://fjconline.fjc.dcn/sites/default/files/2015/Court%20Leadership%20and%20Managerial%20Competencies--Deputy%20Court%20Unit%20Executive.pdf>) (the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to be effective in a job) to restructure and design learning opportunities and engagements to meet the unique needs of the deputy CUE role.

While the committee will focus on the roles, responsibilities and learning needs of *new* deputy CUEs, they will also look ahead to the broader educational and learning needs of all deputy CUEs along the spectrum of their careers. The emphasis is on using the competencies as building blocks to organize and offer education and training that meets the specific needs of this group.

The planning committee recently met (hyperlink to URL: <http://fjconline.fjc.dcn/content/311132/new-deputy-cue-program-planning-meeting>) to discuss the competency framework for deputy CUEs and strategize on ways to align the competencies to meet the learning needs of this group. Committee members will work together to draft goals and develop learning activities for a 2.5-day face-to-face program that is scheduled in August for new deputy CUEs. Subsequently, additional segments will be developed for all (or "experienced") deputy CUEs using the framework.

During the meeting in March, the planning committee established the selection criteria for new deputy CUEs and set forth an application process, selection and timeframe for their participation in the August program. As this is finalized, details about the program will be posted on FJC Online. The August program is the first segment of the deputy CUE curriculum to be developed and implemented as part of the Center's strategic vision for competency-based education.

The new deputy CUE planning committee members are:

- Jim Barton, Chief Deputy, Texas Northern District Court
- Suzan Contreras, Deputy Chief, Texas Western Probation Office
- John Domurad, Chief Deputy, New York Northern District Court
- Stacey Drechsler, Chief Deputy, Delaware Bankruptcy Court
- Steve Gallagher, Deputy Circuit Executive, District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals
- John Marshall, Deputy Chief, Rhode Island Probation Office
- Frances McNulty, Chief Deputy, Virginia Western District Court
- Sandy Smith, Chief Deputy, California Eastern Bankruptcy Court

For more information about the program for new deputy CUEs in August and programming for deputy CUEs in general, contact FJC Education Specialist Missy Cross at 202-502-4057 and mcross@fjc.gov.

For more information about executive education programming in general, contact FJC Assistant Division Director for Executive Education Lori Murphy at 202-502-4109 and lmurphy@fjc.gov.

Local Court Spotlight: United States Bankruptcy Court, Middle District of Florida



United States Bankruptcy Court, Middle District of Florida

Michael G. Williamson, Chief Judge

Lee Ann Bennett, Clerk of Court

Divisions: 4

Number of Judges: 10

Number of Employees: 103 Chambers and Clerk's Office Staff


NCBC Local Representative(s): Susan Miguenes, NCBC Local Representative; Gull Weaver, NCBC Circuit Representative

Local Innovation: AQUA (Assisted Quality Assurance) resides on the CM/ECF server and integrates distribution of docket activity, deadlines, claims and e-orders into one dashboard which case managers use to complete almost all of their work. It allows for various Court selected methods of distribution. Since AQUA interacts with the Court's leave submission program, leave is automatically factored into distribution and supervisors may also reassign work as needed. It also provides an enhanced docket report function which includes the ability to report an error on a previously QC'd (quality control review) item and additional text to show when an item was sent for scheduling. AQUA has provided the Middle District of Florida an invaluable tool that provides the Court with more evenly distributed work, flexibility in distribution and many efficiencies.

MSU Goes to Washington...

By: Catharine M. White, Academic and Student Services Administrator

Looking Forward to Washington, D.C. with MSU



The 2016 Washington, D.C. conference in August will complete the 12th year of the affiliation between the Michigan State University (MSU) and the National Conference of Bankruptcy Clerks (NCBC). In that time, MSU, through its' Judicial Administration (JA) Program, has offered non-credit certificate course offerings at the National Conference of Bankruptcy Clerks (NCBC) annual meetings.

Since our partnering in 2004, 43 NCBC members have graduated from the non-credit bearing certificate program; 1 has garnered a credit-bearing/graduate certificate; and three have earned a Masters of Science degree. Currently, 245 students are enrolled in the program's non-credit certificate component, all in varying states of coursework.

MSU and NCBC are extremely proud of their collaboration during the last twelve years and look forward to developing strong, competent, and visionary leaders who will chart the course of court organizations across the United States and the world.

MSU Courses and Orientation/Information Session at the Washington, D.C. 2016 Conference

For students who are just joining the MSU program or those continuing their studies, **Resources, Budget, and Finance** for 7.0 contact hours and **Essential Components of Courts** for 5.0 contact hours will be offered at the 2016 conference.

The MSU orientation and information session for new and returning students will be held again this year at the conference. We welcome everyone to this session. During the session, we discuss the credentialing opportunities offered through the NCBC and MSU partnership. Additionally, students will receive information on how they can get credit for seminars and programs offered by other partner organizations such as the Federal Courts Clerks Association (FCCA), Federal Judicial Center (FJC), and the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts (AO). For students who will be writing their capstone projects within the next year, we recommend attending the session to discuss project ideas.

MSU/NCBC Student Graduation Ceremony at the Washington, D.C. 2016 Conference

A MSU Judicial Administration Noncredit Certificate Program graduation ceremony is slated for the 2016 conference. We encourage all NCBC conference attendees to attend the ceremony recognizing the personal and professional accomplishments of their colleagues. MSU is expecting approximately 5-7 NCBC graduates this year.

Future Leaders: A Research Report on Desirable Career Credentials for the Federal and State Courts in the United States

The final report is permanently posted on the Judicial Administration Program website at http://cj.msu.edu/assets/JA-Publications-Credentials_Report_Dec2015.pdf.

More Information

For more information about the MSU/JA program, please visit the program's website at <http://judicialadministration.msu.edu>. If you have any questions about building your education portfolio, please contact Cathy White at gamperca@msu.edu.

MSU and NCBC Five-Year Plan of Course Offerings

Interactive Online Course Delivery Option

The NCBC board approved a five (5) year plan for courses offered through the 2018 conference year. The schedule of courses offered, along with the number of contact hours, appear below:

NCBC
2014
Purposes and Responsibilities of Courts (6) Leadership (6)
2015
Court and Community Communication (5) Caseflow Management (8)
2016: Combined FCCA and NCBC Conference*
Essential Components of Courts (5) Resources, Budget, & Finance (7)
2017
Information Technology Management (6) Human Resources Management (7)
2018
Education, Training and Development (5) Visioning and Strategic Planning (5)
NCBC Total Hours Available: 60

The MSU Judicial Administration Program is again offering students the option of enrolling in instructor-led courses as a means of completing their required coursework toward the Judicial Administration Non-Credit certificate. In these interactive courses, a program graduate, with a specialty in a given area, facilitates discussions with students throughout the duration of the online course. Students have the opportunity to exchange ideas, share thoughts, ask questions, and provide feedback with their court colleagues. Students are responsible for reading the online course material, participating in discussion groups, and completing the final course evaluation. These courses are offered between September and April. The schedule of available interactive courses appears below:

Date	Noncredit Online Course Offering	Contact Hours	Course Fees
9/5/16 To 9/25/16	Purposes and Responsibilities of Courts (Core)	6	\$72.00
9/26/16 To 10/9/16	Court and Community Communication (Elective)	5	\$60.00
10/10/16 To 10/30/16	Resources, Budget, and Finance (Core)	7	\$84.00
10/31/16 To 11/13/16	Education, Training, and Development (Elective)	5	\$60.00
11/28/16 To 12/11/16	Visioning and Strategic Planning (Elective)	5	\$60.00
1/9/17 To 1/29/17	Caseflow Management (Core)	8	\$96.00
1/30/17 To 2/12/17	Leadership (Core)	6	\$72.00
2/13/17 To 2/26/17	Essential Components of Courts (Elective)	5	\$60.00
2/27/17 To 3/19/17	Information Technology Management (Core)	6	\$72.00
3/20/17 To 4/2/17	Human Resources Management (Core)	7	\$84.00

MSU students are reminded that, in addition to this schedule of courses offered at NCBC conferences, they can also complete the required coursework for any MSU/JA program course by participating in either of MSU's **two online course** delivery options: **traditional and interactive**.

[President's Message, Continued...] This site is on the public page of the website; no login and password is needed. Please share this resource with the HR personnel in your courts so we can publicize as many employment opportunities as possible.

As you read this message, Lee Ann Bennett and I will have participated in the semi-annual legislative visits with judges from the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges' Legislative Committee. This twice a year trip is an excellent opportunity for NCBC to partner with the NCBJ and to thank congressional leaders for their budget support for the judiciary over the past few years. It is also an opportunity to educate them on the innovations and efficiencies of the federal courts. It is an honor for the NCBC to participate in these meetings. My thanks to Lee Ann for her continued hard work in this area.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Washington, DC in August!

Don't Get Tangled in the World Wide Web

From: Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts

You've heard it before: Clicking on links or attachments in suspicious emails can lead you to seemingly safe websites that are purposefully designed to gather your personal information¹ or to entice you to download malicious software². But did you know you can also end up tangled in these Internet traps when you simply navigate to a site which, behind the scenes, has been compromised by a hacker?³ Hackers are known to compromise legitimate websites (usually by adding fraudulent online advertisers to the legitimate ones) in order to direct users to harmful sites that canvass for and exploit weaknesses on the end user's computer⁴. In this manner, just visiting a site can result in your machine being victimized.



Increase protection automatically

Even with the best of intentions, you may end up being redirected to or otherwise fooled into visiting a malicious website. A major firewall vendor analyzed three months of Internet traffic circulating through its customers' networks, and found that the source of 90% of malware was simple web-browsing, while only 6% was tainted emails.⁵ You can limit or prevent infection by ensuring your security patches are up-to-date, running antivirus software (such as the [Symantec Endpoint Protection](#) software, which is available via an enterprise license – free for judiciary employee's work and personal computers), and employing web-filtering software.

In addition, make sure you have good back-ups. **Why?** One of the fastest-growing attacks today is “ransomware,” which is malicious software that uses encryption to lock up your data until you pay a ransom to have it unlocked.⁶ Data from the judiciary's Security Operations Center indicates that we are not immune to this threat and are also seeing a significant uptick in its occurrence. So, whether at home or at work, make sure your information is backed up so that you can restore your data for free – no ransom!

You mention web-filtering software, what is it?

Web filters automatically block access to known malicious websites. The filter analyzes and flags malicious websites, adding them to its regularly-updated catalog of harmful sites. The result is that you can't access these websites, so they can't infect your device or steal your information. And, if a legitimate site is incorrectly categorized as harmful, access to it can be easily permitted by contacting your local IT staff.

How do I obtain web-filtering software?

Free web-filtering products for personal use include [K9 Web Protection](#) and [McAfee SiteAdvisor](#). Court-unit IT staff looking to protect the local area network from web-based threats should consider using [Websense](#), which is available to courts under an enterprise licensing agreement. Additionally, support for implementing Websense is available from the Department of Technology Services, [AO Technology Office](#).

¹ Judiciary Security Tip: [Phishing: Don't Get Hooked!](#)

² Judiciary Security Tip: [Email Security: Thinking Outside Your Inbox](#).

³ Kaspersky: [What are Web Threats?](#)

⁴ Hackread: [Yahoo Ad Network Hacked, Infecting Millions of Devices with Malware, Ransomware](#).

⁵ USA Today, [Malware now spreads mostly through tainted websites](#).

⁶ Trend Micro: [Ransomware one of the biggest threats in 2016](#).



Social Security Changes for 2016—What You Need to Know

By: James De La Torre, CRPC

Major changes have come to Social Security retirement benefits and now is the time to check in to see how these changes may affect your plans. The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, signed into law November 2, 2015, effectively eliminated two highly-discussed Social Security claiming strategies: **file and suspend** and **file restricted**. These two strategies have gained in popularity by married couples as a way to increase lifetime Social Security income. These two strategies were first unintentionally introduced back in 2000 as part of The Senior Citizens freedom to Work Act and were considered to be “loopholes” in Social Security.

A small number of people have been grandfathered and are not impacted by the new law: Those who are already receiving benefits are not impacted and people who turn 66-years old before April 20, 2016, can still file and suspend benefits; but it must be done by April 30, 2016. Additionally, the file and restricted strategy continues to be available to those age 62 years of age or older by December 31, 2015.

As for the rest of us, we are no longer able to benefit from these strategies and also need to be aware of some other changes that were part of the Bipartisan Budget Act. The complexity surrounding these changes can be a daunting task to explain, therefore, I'll use examples to try to clarify.

File and Suspend – Old Rules

The idea behind file and suspend was to permit one spouse at full retirement age (65-67), usually the higher earning spouse, to file for retirement benefits only to suspend them. Once suspended, the other spouse would then file for, and receive spousal benefits. While all this is going on, the higher earning spouse is earning 8% while waiting until age 70 (delayed retirement) to begin receiving monthly social security benefits. This results in the higher earning spouse getting a 132% increase in social security benefits at age 70.

File and Suspend – New Rules

Under the new rules, when the higher earning spouse suspends his benefits, he will also suspend any benefits payable to his spouse or children.

File Restricted – Old Rules

A restricted application allowed individuals to get spousal benefits while delaying their own Social Security retirement benefit. This strategy let their own benefit grow from full retirement age (65-67) to delayed retirement age (70) with the 8% delayed retirement benefits. For example, Jim and Mary are both 60, when they reach their full retirement age under Social Security Jim expects to receive \$25,000 a year while Mary expects \$20,000. Mary claims her benefit first and Jim files a restricted application to receive spousal benefits from Mary in the amount of \$10,000. Jim's benefit continues to grow and at age 70 he will begin to receive his own monthly benefits from Social Security.

File Restricted – New Rules

Under the new rules, a spouse born in 1954 or later who files for Social Security will be deemed to have files for both their own and spousal benefits, and will receive whichever benefit is higher. In effect, it kills the strategy.

Widow / Widower Benefits

Surviving spouses are not impacted by the tax law change. The survivor is eligible for a widow or widower's benefit equal to 100% of the deceased spouse's benefit. The rule also applies to a divorcee whose former spouse has died, as long as the couple was married for at least 10 years, and the divorcee remains unmarried until age 60.

Divorced Benefits – Old Rules

An ex-spouse who has been married for 10 years can collect a benefit based on the former spouse's work record even if he or she is not collecting benefits. However, that ex-spouse must be more than 62 years old.

[Continued on page 9]

Divorced Benefits – New Rules

Under the new rules, divorced spouses who are younger than 62, before December 31, 2015 will not be able to collect spousal benefits only while their own retirement benefits continue to grow up to age 70. Now, when the divorcee makes a claim they either receive their own benefit or a spousal benefit, whichever is higher.

While the new law has tightened up ways for us to exploit Social security, many retirees still have opportunity to bring value to using Social Security while planning for retirement. For most retirees, it still pays to delay Social Security benefits. Individuals who wait receive the 8% per year delayed retirement credits from their Full Retirement Age until age 70. For many, they will need to increase their Social Security benefits and tap into other financial resources (TSP, Savings, Investments) to fill in the retirement funding gap.



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 and the financial impacts employees face. Jim holds a Charter Retirement Planning Counselor’s (CRPC) designation from the College of Financial Planning and is a member of the Financial Planning Association. Please direct questions or comments directly to James at jdelatorre@fedadvantage.com.

And the Winner Is...

By: Maggie Ferere, Awards Committee

AWARD NOMINATIONS

DUE

May 1 – June 15

DON'T MISS THE
DEADLINE

SUBMIT YOUR
NOMINATION FORM
NOW

www.ncbcweb.com/awards

In this day and age, is it any wonder that we have awards for everything? We love to reward excellence, exceptional performance, exuberance, and exemplary expertise. We have Pulitzers, Oscars, Nickelodeon Kids’ Choice Awards, Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Awards, Superior Taste Awards, the Heisman Trophy, the Los Angeles International Competitions for Wine, Spirits, and Olive Oil, and my all-time favorite, the World Beer Cup. We even have awards for our pets and reward them when they do something good. There are almost as many awards as there are apps. I stopped counting at 55, but here’s a wiki list for all you award enthusiasts: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_prizes,_medals_and_awards.

In the spirit of tradition, it’s only fair that our National Conference of Bankruptcy Clerks contribute to the list of awards. We currently offer the following awards: Outstanding Service, Outstanding Achievement, Special Service, Administrative Excellence, Outstanding Public Service, Distinguished Service, and the prestigious Judge Ralph H. Kelley Outstanding Achievement Award. A complete description of awards is available on the NCBC website: <http://www.ncbcweb.com/awards>. The nomination period runs from May 1 through June 15. Award recipients will be announced at this year’s conference in Washington, D.C.

We have an award to fit everyone. How’s this work? We have an NCBC Awards Committee that solicits nominations. Yes, it’s that simple. We ask YOU to recognize and reward EACH OTHER. Surely all of us have come across at least one individual who’s got us thinking, “Hmm, that was a good idea. Wish they could get an award.” Well, stop right there, people. They CAN get an award! Whether it’s for a great Operations idea, or community contributions, or recognition for years of service, there’s an award for that! Remember when you earned that badge for building a periscope out of a milk carton? Or when you cleared that last hurdle in the big race? Or when you got that standing ovation at your stage debut? It still feels great to be recognized. Want to share that awesome feeling with others?

Here’s your chance to make sure somebody YOU know gets their just desserts. On May 1, heed that call to action! It’s an opportunity to recognize and honor individuals who matter and make a difference. The process is simple. Between May 1 and June 15, go here: <http://www.ncbcweb.com/awards> and click on the Award Nomination Form. After you’ve logged in, complete the form and submit. In 25 words or less, you can make a difference in someone’s life, someone who deserves to be recognized for some special act or contribution. Start now and don’t delay. Trust me, you’ll make their day.

NCBC Member Spotlight: Jennifer Mahar



The NCBC Member Spotlight is a new feature coming to the IMPACT that allows NCBC members across the nation to get to know one another. If you would like to be featured in a future NCBC Member Spotlight, please contact a member of the Editorial Staff. In this issue, we meet NCBC Member Jennifer Mahar!



Name: Jennifer Mahar

Position: Court Services Specialist

Court: Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division – Detroit Office

Time with the Judiciary: 6 years as of September 2016.

How long have you been a member of the NCBC and how do you get involved?

I became a member of NCBC shortly after beginning employment with the court. During this time, I volunteered and became the Local Representative for NCBC. It's been a wonderful experience thus far, and I am currently enrolled in the MSU program. I am also participating in the mentor program and have learned a great deal!

What is your favorite NCBC Conference experience?

Considering Atlanta was my first conference – I would have to say Atlanta! A fantastic experience meeting colleagues from all over the country, attending the various workshops and MSU classes in person.

How would you like to be more involved with NCBC in the future?

I plan to complete the MSU program within the next year – working on ideas currently for the capstone project. I would love to attend future conferences to meet everyone. Also, I plan to stay involved as the Local Representative and to continue serving on the Editorial Committee.

“I Declare, I Declare” Candidates’ Statements By: Eileen Garrity

The following are statements filed by NCBC members declaring their candidacy for President-Elect, Treasurer and two (2) open positions on the Board of Governors. Ballots will be distributed in mid-May but please take this time to familiarize yourselves with the candidates. Thank you and be sure to vote in May!!!!

Candidate for President-Elect

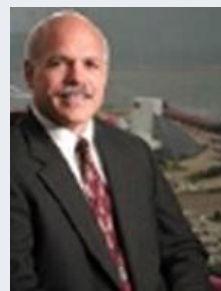
**Edward J. Emmons,
Clerk of Court, Northern District of California**



Greetings! Because of an unanticipated vacancy, I was elected by the Board to serve as president-elect for the 2016 year. However, I must be elected by the membership and I look to you for your support. I have served two terms as an elected member of the Board of Governors and am currently the business manager for our organization. While serving on the Board, I was the Chair of the Education Committee for three conferences and was the project manager for the 2012 conference in San Francisco, CA. During this time, my experiences have been very exciting, rewarding and meaningful and I want to continue my efforts and contributions in another capacity. I believe the success of any organization is through its collaborative voices and the contributions of its members and I would be honored to serve as your president-elect. Thank you for your consideration and I appreciate your vote of confidence.

Candidate for Treasurer

**Ken Hirz,
Clerk of Court, Northern District of Ohio**



I am honored to submit my name in nomination for the position of Treasurer of the National Conference of Bankruptcy Clerks. I have been a member of NCBC since 1993. I served on the NCBC Board of Governors 2001-2003, after hosting the 2001 Annual Conference in Cleveland, Ohio. This was a most memorable and enjoyable event that featured a presentation by former Director

Ralph Mecham and a night at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum. I have assisted the Board over the years having twice served on the Nominating and Awards Committees and have reviewed hotel contracts and provided other assistance as requested. Since 2008, I've served as President Elect, President [2010-2012], Past President and Treasurer since August 2013. This year will be the 17th annual conference I have had the pleasure of attending since 1998. Your vote of support would be most appreciated.

Candidate for Board of Governors
Kelley Rousseau,
Administrative Specialist, Western District of Tennessee



I am honored to submit my name in nomination for a Board of Governors position with NCBC for the 2016 – 2018 term. Since becoming a member of NCBC and attending several conferences, I have seen what a positive influence the NCBC is to the bankruptcy courts and their employees. I would truly be honored to serve on the NCBC Board of Governors. Since beginning my career with the Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Tennessee in 2004, I have served my court as Personnel Analyst, Administrative Analyst, and Administrative Specialist. Within those positions, I have been afforded the opportunity to hold duties within many different departments of the court including Human Resources, Training, Intake, Finance, Property and Procurement, Budget and Emergency Preparedness. In addition to those duties, I oversee and conduct our court’s educational outreach program with the main focus being the Credit Abuse Resistance Education (CARE) program and am an alumna of the 2008 Federal Court Leadership Program. In 2008, 2010 and 2015, our court hosted the Human Resources Forum. Each year I was given the opportunity to assist our Human Resources Manager in planning, organizing and executing each successful forum. If selected to serve on the Board of Governors, I feel that my skills and abilities will help the NCBC continue to achieve its main goal to provide its members with training and development opportunities, be an advocate for the bankruptcy clerks and the bankruptcy system, and provide leadership and input on a national level. Thank you for your consideration and I would be honored to receive your vote.

Candidate for Board of Governors
Mona Sparks,
Chief Deputy Clerk, Eastern District of Kentucky



I am pleased to announce my candidacy for re-election to the NCBC Board of Governors. During the upcoming elections, I appreciate the consideration of your vote. I value the NCBC and the strength it brings as an organization to the training, education and sense of community for our membership. I have attended previous NCBC annual conferences in Cleveland (2001), Cincinnati (2004), Chicago (2005), San Francisco (2013), St. Louis (2014), and Atlanta (2015) and I am looking forward to seeing you in Washington D.C. later this year.

Having been elected to the NCBC Board of Governors in 2014, I have been serving as the chair of the Mentorship Committee and the chair of the Awards and Scholarship Committee.

Working with these committees has allowed me to represent the NCBC membership in a very tangible way. My interaction with those serving as mentors and mentees has been encouraging to me personally and working with the committee to identify award and scholarship recipients has been very fulfilling. Although I have been a member of the NCBC for almost 30 years, I still believe the organization offers many opportunities and benefits to today’s members.

Throughout my tenure working at the Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky, I have had the opportunity to meet and work with many of you. In my local court, I currently serve as Chief Deputy Clerk. Previously I held the positions of intake clerk, financial deputy, budget analyst and financial manager so I am very familiar with a variety of day-to-day bankruptcy court activities. I bring 36 years of bankruptcy court knowledge, skills and abilities with me to the seat on the Board of Governors.

As a graduate of the Federal Court Leadership Program (class of 2000) and a summa cum laude graduate holding a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration, I willingly use my experiences to keep the NCBC on a pathway toward prominence.

Whether we have worked together on a national committee, met at a previous conference, or participated together in some other way, please be assured that if I am re-elected I will use my expertise to continue to represent the values and programs important to our organization. I appreciate your vote and I look forward to representing you on the NCBC Board of Governors.

Candidate for Board of Governors
Sabrina Palacio-Garcia,
Self Help Desk Team Leader, Central District of California



Please accept the following statement as my declaration of candidacy for the Board of Governors position:

Since joining the NCBC in June of 2010, I immediately became the local representative for CACB for two years, followed by two years as the 9th Circuit Liaison as well as a sitting member of both the awards and membership committee. In 2014, I was honored to receive your votes to assume the position of Board of Governor. My declaration today is a request for you to provide me with the honor and privilege to serve in this capacity again.

For those who I haven’t had the pleasure of meeting yet, here is a little bit about myself:

In my current duty and role as the Pro Se Self-help Desk Team Leader for the Central District of California, I liaison between our five divisions self-help desk which are staffed with pro bono attorneys who provide free legal services to those debtors unable to afford it. Additionally, I have successfully completed numerous projects to enhance the efficiency of the overall operations of the district such as the creation and

implementation of AO's pathfinder project, electronic Self Representation software (eSR) that will enable self-represented debtors (Pro Se) to prepare and submit petitions electronically. I also oversee our intake department. In my spare time I LOVE couponing and spending time with family.

As your current Board of Governor, I was tasked with chairing the Membership Committee. I chair this committee proudly with much enthusiasm, commitment and unyielding dedication. Serving in this capacity has been a tremendous pleasure. I especially enjoyed the comradery of the membership from coast to coast and the NCBC board members. Together with the committee members, we have held two successful membership drives, some pretty exciting Membership Appreciation Weeks, and awarded over 50 lifetime member certificates and pins. I have learned a lot from my experiences as your current Board of Governor and know I have much more to offer our membership and bankruptcy community.

I am thoroughly convinced that given another opportunity to serve the membership in this endeavor will not only continue to enhance my professional growth and provide valuable wisdom applicable in my career path but also continue to strengthen our membership.

I humbly submit my declaration and candidacy for a chance to serve you once more and my gratitude for affording me the opportunity to serve from 2014-2016.

Candidate for Board of Governors
Matt Brittain,
Automation Analyst, Middle District of North Carolina



My name is Matt Brittain and I am an Automation Analyst for the Middle District of North Carolina. I am honored to submit my name as a candidate to serve on the Board of Governors for the National Conference of Bankruptcy Clerks. I joined the NCBC in 2004 and have remained an active member ever since.

The NCBC plays a crucial role for the bankruptcy courts. With ever increasing budgetary constraints and limited local court resources, the NCBC is a vital organization providing opportunities for networking, staff development, training, and shared best practices.

I have been with the court since 2003 as an Operations Specialist, Trainer, and, since 2011, Automation Analyst. I have had the opportunity to work with both the day-to-day operations of the Clerk's Office and the information technology that supports the court. This has given me a very unique perspective of these two different but complimentary sides of the court. I believe that advancements in information technology will continue to improve processes in the courts each year, but I also know that a court is only as good as the people that are doing the work in the office day in and day out.

If elected as a Board Member, I will use my knowledge of bankruptcy court operations and information technology to explore new processes, systems, and ideas that will directly benefit judiciary employees. I will work with fellow board members to contribute to the growth and future of the NCBC, and I will continue to promote the ever important role of the NCBC in recognizing and supporting the dedicated group of people who make up the court family.

I would appreciate your vote. Thank you for considering me for a position on the Board of Governors.

Candidate for Board of Governors
Marcella R. Lockert,
Courtroom Deputy, Southern District of Indiana



Greetings from Indiana Southern/Indianapolis Division: My name is Marcella R. Lockert and I hold a position of Courtroom Deputy. At this time I would like to announce my candidacy for the NCBC Board of Governors. This year will mark my 15-year anniversary with the federal courts. I remember that first day as if it was yesterday. As civil servants, longevity is the common thread we all share.

I became a member of NCBC in 2007 and was afforded the opportunity to attend the conference in Seattle, Washington that same year. That entire experience, from the speakers to the attendees, left a lasting impression on me. Attendance at subsequent NCBC conferences only reinforced my strongly favorable impression of the organization, and generated this desire to now be of service to the group.

In 2011, my clerk of court invited me to co-chair the local planning committee of the Operations Forum. I was elated to become part of the hosting team. Indiana Southern had one main objective; our job was to ensure our fellow federal friends had a memorable time while visiting our beautiful city. And we did just that!

Currently, I am enrolled in the Michigan State Judicial Administration Program, and I'm on track for graduation this summer. Additionally, as a member of several committees within our office (Courtroom Deputies Group / Court Operations Group / Court Operations Support / Employees Recognition Program and Combined Federal Campaign), I have a broader perspective on all the moving parts that must work together for any Clerk's office to be successful.

I am a strong team player with the ability to inspire collaboration and respect. Also, I am organized, fair, dependable and responsible. All of these strengths make me the ideal candidate.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and vote for the Board of Governors position!

Editor's Note

By: Jan Zari



Hello and Happy Spring NCBC Members! We are only a few short months away from our joint NCBC/FCCA Conference in our nation's capital, Washington, D.C.! This year's conference will allow us the unique opportunity to share our conference experience with our colleagues at the Federal Court Clerks Association (FCCA) in what promises to be a fantastic opportunity to gather, learn from, and network with one another in the heart of our nation's capital. Once again, the Editorial Committee will be hosting a booth at this year's Information Sharing session, so please stop by and say hi!

2016 has been a busy year for the Editorial Committee with the addition of 2 new committee members, Jennifer Mahar and Justin Olmos! As a committee, we are excited to roll out some new features in the IMPACT and our NCBC Blog (<http://www.ncbcblog.weebly.com>) that you will be seeing in the coming months.

One new feature that we've rolled out this year is our NCBC Member Spotlight. We want to hear about YOU! Whether you are a new or seasoned member of the NCBC or are new to your Court, we encourage you to share your story with the membership. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to be featured or would like to recommend someone to be featured in a future edition of the IMPACT.

We are also looking to line up local Courts who would like to be featured in our Local Court Spotlight. If you would like to have your Court featured, please contact me as well.

As always, if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, would like to be a part of the Editorial Committee, or submit an article for the next issue of the IMPACT, please feel free to contact me at Jan_Zari@cacb.uscourts.gov.

NCBC Survey

By: Vito Genna

Want a chance to win a \$25 dollar gift card? Help the NCBC learn more about your interests and needs by completing a survey that will be sent soon via MemberClicks. All active NCBC members that complete the survey within two (2) weeks following its distribution are eligible to win one of four (4) \$25 dollar gift cards. Eligible candidates must provide their name and contact information on the survey – we need to know who you are in case you win!



Washington, D.C. Fun Facts



Conference Website Available soon!

Look for the link on www.ncbcweb.com or www.fcca.ws

- **The DC War Memorial**, which honors local residents of Washington, DC, is the only memorial dedicated to World War I on the National Mall.
- There's a bathtub in the basement of the **U.S. Capitol**! Four marble tubs were installed in 1859 when most senators lived in boarding houses on Capitol Hill that had no running water so they came to work – and to wash. One of these baths can still be seen today.
- When the **Washington Monument** opened in 1884, it was the tallest structure in the world until the Eiffel Tower in Paris opened in 1889.
- The **Library of Congress** is the largest library in the world with more than 160,000,000 objects in its collection. The Library is based on the personal collection of President Thomas Jefferson, which contained more than 6,000 books.
- Visit the **National Archives** to see the original Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.
- The **Statue of Freedom** is the bronze statue on the top of the Capitol dome. It looks small from afar, but it's more than 19 feet tall and weighs nearly 15,000 pounds.
- The **Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial** is one of the National Mall's newest memorials, having opened in 2011. The newest memorial is the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial.
- Instead of chiseling the "F" in "future," the letter "E" was mistakenly carved into Lincoln's second inaugural address on the north wall of the **Lincoln Memorial**. It has been touched up, but you can still see the typo.
- George Washington never lived in DC. **The White House** was actually completed a year after he died and the second U.S. President, John Adams, was the first to live there.
- The only president buries in DC is Woodrow Wilson, who is entombed at the **Washington National Cathedral**.