

# NCBJ Conference News

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## Public Outreach Highlights

Compiled by Marc Barreca, Western District of Washington, presented in alphabetical order by state.

### Central District of California

In February 2018, Sandra Klein (C.D. Cal.) hosted more than 50 first year law students from Loyola Law School, her alma mater, to her courtroom. After the students observed hearings, Sandra spoke with the students, answering their questions about what they had observed and about being a lawyer and a judge. She also participated in a panel discussion regarding women in management at the University of California's Anderson School of Management, from which she graduated in 2009. Sandra organized a program for the Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles called: "Protecting the Family Jewels II: What You Need to Know about Estate Planning for You and the Seniors in Your Life."

Maureen Tighe (C.D. Cal.) hosted more than 115 fifth grade students from Beckford Charter School at the San Fernando Valley courthouse for a Goldilocks mock trial. A few weeks later, Martin Barash (C.D. Cal.) hosted a group of third graders from Brawerman Elementary School for another Goldilocks mock trial. Martin spoke with the students after the trial and they were eager to talk about how they arrived at the verdict.

Meredith Jury (C.D. Cal.) was a panelist and Martin Barash was the moderator of the Financial Elder Abuse program that was hosted by the Central District Consumer Bankruptcy Attorney Association. The panelists included representatives from the Abuse Prevention and Ombudsman Services at WISE & Healthy Aging; the Los Angeles County Elder Abuse Forensic Center; and the Executive Director at the Mental Health Advocacy Services, Inc. More than 50 people participated in the program.

In March 2018, Sheri Bluebond (C.D. Cal.) and Julie Brand (C.D. Cal.) hosted mock trials for approximately 70 fourth graders from Canfield Elementary School in Los Angeles. Although two juries in two separate trials rendered slightly different verdicts,



*Goldilocks was found guilty by both elementary school juries in the mock trials held by Sheri Bluebond (C.D. Cal.) (above) and Julie Brand (C.D. Cal.) (below).*



Goldilocks was convicted of committing most of the criminal offenses with which she had been charged based on her conduct while at the home of Mama, Papa, and Baby Bear. Sandra Klein organized and hosted the Central District of California's Law Day 2018, with the theme: "The 14th Amendment: What Does Equal Protection Mean to Students" and with guest speakers Loyola Law School's Professor Kimberly West-Faulcon, a constitutional law scholar, and Dr. Terrence Roberts, who was one of the "Little Rock 9" students. District Judges Virginia Phillips (C.D. Cal.) and John Kronstadt (C.D. Cal.), and bankruptcy judges (all C.D. Cal.) Sheri Bluebond, Thomas Donovan, Victoria Kaufman, Erithe Smith, Barry Russell, and approximately 50 students and

50 volunteers participated in that event. Maureen Tighe (C.D. Cal.) hosted a visit from Antelope Valley College students who participated in an interactive writing seminar led by a bankruptcy attorney.

In April 2018, seven students from South Pasadena High School's "Bildungsroman" (coming of age) Club, along with a teacher and parent chaperone, visited the courtroom and chambers of Barry Russell (C.D. Cal.). The students presented Barry with a card of thanks and a gift. Maureen Tighe organized a career fair for approximately 35 students from Santa Clarita's College of the Canyons. Ten federal agencies participated, including the FBI, DEA, and the U.S. Probation Department. Erithe Smith (C.D. Cal.) hosted the third annual Federal Courthouse Exploration (FED) Day at the Santa Ana courthouse. Twenty-four students participated in the event, which began with a welcome from Erithe and a courtroom lecture about the Constitution and Bill of Rights by Theodor Albert (C.D. Cal.) and Mark Wallace (C.D. Cal.).

Scott Clarkson (C.D. Cal.) prepared an interactive session for a short lesson on hearsay using a prepared script. During lunch, Sandra Klein spoke to the students about the ten things she wished that she had known when she was in high school. The program concluded with Catherine Bauer (C.D. Cal.)



*Barry Russell (C.D. Cal.) hosted several high school students from South Pasadena in April 2018.*

speaking to the students about being an Assistant U.S. Attorney and a tour of the U.S. Marshals facility, during which a Deputy U.S. Marshal gave a sobering talk about why the students would never want to be incarcerated and how the toughest people on the streets often cry when put behind bars. Sandra Klein also participated in a speed mentoring event, during which she and other judges and lawyers met and provided career advice and guidance to UCLA and Pepperdine University law students. Sandra

served as a judge during the Stephen O'Neil Trial Advocacy Mentoring Program for high school students held at Loyola Law School.

### **Southern District of California**

*Reprinted from U.S. Courts News, April 12, 2018*

For two years, Margaret Mann (S.D. Cal.) has taught financial literacy at the annual Success Inside and Out Workshop offered by the national Association of Women Judges at the Las Colinas jail in Santee, California. In 2017, Margaret worked with other CARE volunteers to teach 100 women preparing to transition back to the community about responsible spending and how credit mistakes can be corrected and avoided. The CARE program Margaret oversees also teaches financial literacy for young people in the juvenile courts and hopes to conduct workshops at a men's prison. The judge and her staff coordinate with the national CARE organization to ensure their materials are current and include relevant multimedia resources.

### **District of Massachusetts**

On March 1, 2018, the Massachusetts bankruptcy judges met with Massachusetts Probate and Family Court judges at an event titled a Probate Court/Bankruptcy Court Summit. Chief Judge Melvin Hoffman (D. Mass.), Joan Feeney (D. Mass.), Frank Bailey (D. Mass.) and Christopher Panos (D. Mass.) were at a Sheraton in Framingham, Massachusetts, with twelve Probate and Family Court judges, while Elizabeth Katz (D. Mass.) was in her courtroom in Springfield, Massachusetts with three Probate and Family Court judges. She described the bankruptcy process for individual debtors and, with the other judges, presented four hypothetical cases. For the first two presentations, the judges in Springfield appeared via video. After those background presentations, the judges met in smaller groups to discuss the hypotheticals. Frank and Elizabeth developed the hypotheticals, edited by the Chief Probate and Family Court Justice Angela M. Ordoñez. Feedback has been very positive. If anyone would like a copy of the hypotheticals, please contact Elizabeth.

Joan Feeney (D. Mass.) hosted 65 high school students and volunteer lawyers at the John W. McCormack Post Office and Court House in Boston for a financial literacy session that included mock bankruptcy hearings.



## Eastern District of Tennessee

The bankruptcy court hosted 15 students from 2 high schools for a full-day program called “Justice for All.” The goal of the program was to inspire students from two of the most underprivileged inner-city high schools to consider entering the legal field (either in law enforcement or as a lawyer or judge). After a tour of the courthouse, including time with the U.S. Marshals Service (during which the deputies brought out the USMS “toys”), the students heard from a panel of four attorneys, two law school administrators, and three law students who discussed their paths to the law and how they overcame obstacles related to poverty or challenging family situations. Following the panel presentation (called “Pursuit of a Dream”), the students were treated to lunch with the panelists as well as federal and state judges and the deputy USMs for informal discussions. After lunch, the group convened in a courtroom for a mock trial related to First Amendment rights (based on *Tinker v. Des Moines School District*) in which students served in the roles of judge, clerk, attorneys, parties, witnesses, and jurors. The day ended with a panel of state and federal trial and appellate judges discussing their paths to the bench and how they overcame challenges. Because the schools’ budgets cannot accommodate field trips, the Federal Bar Association and two local law schools sponsored not only lunch but also the costs of transporting the students to the courthouse and the expense for substitute teachers for the chaperones. A local bar foundation just approved a grant request that Suzanne Bauknight (E.D. Tenn.) prepared on behalf of the Federal Bar Association so that the court can continue to offer this program twice yearly to the most under-served schools in the county. She was inspired to develop this program based on the Washington State “Color of Justice” program (sponsored by the National Association of Women Judges), which was highlighted on the BPP forum last August.

Also, on April 11, 2018, Suzanne Bauknight (E.D. Tenn.) hosted four bankruptcy class students from the Lincoln Memorial University Duncan School of Law. They prepared briefs and presented oral argument on a debtor’s motion for contempt against the creditor who repossessed a vehicle when the debtor failed to reaffirm or redeem after filing a statement of intent that proposed to retain and pay for



*Suzanne Bauknight (E.D. Tenn.) sponsored a program for underprivileged high school students in April.*

the vehicle. The adjunct professor, Tom Dickenson, is a former chapter 7 trustee and current bankruptcy attorney who serves as the co-chair of the local bar’s bankruptcy section.

## Western District of Washington

*Reprinted from the Ninth Circuit’s Judges Education Committee Newsletter, Spring 2018*

Acting on the recommendations of the “Increasing Diversity” study, bankruptcy judges Christopher Alston (W.D. Wash.) and Mary Jo Heston (W.D. Wash.) held a bankruptcy outreach event at Seattle University School of Law on February 21, 2018. The judges, along with law professor and practitioner, Dillon Jackson, and two area bankruptcy professionals, Aditi Paranjpye and Binah Yeung, spoke to approximately 50 attendees. Each of the panelists provided information on their unique career paths, what they enjoy about bankruptcy, and their recommendations for being a good practitioner.

Chris was pleased with the program, stating that he felt they had “changed at least one heart and one mind about going into bankruptcy practice.” The students were engaged and interested in learning more and were still asking questions at the end of the allotted time.

Chris urged judges or groups to enact outreach efforts. Planning for the event included two brief conference calls and outreach to the law school community, which was undertaken by law professor Diane Lourdes Dick. For future events, the judges are considering directly inviting the law school affinity groups as well as minority and other bar associations. Based on the program’s success, Chris and Mary Jo intend to return to Seattle University School of Law regularly. They also plan to extend this program to the law schools of the University of Washington and Gonzaga University.