

NCBJ DE&I Committee 2023-2024 Year-End Report

Co-Chairs: Sandra Klein; Erithe Smith

Members: Elizabeth Katz; Wendy Kinsella; Jil Mazer-Marino; Elizabeth Stong; Judge Mary Walrath; Mckay Mignault; Frank Santoro; Marian Harrison; Charles Walker; Deborah Thorne; Katherine Constantine; Kathy Surratt-States; Frances Tydingco-Gatewood; Mary Jo Heston; Jennifer Niemann; Scott Yun; Corali Lopez-Castro; Jacob Brown; Peter Russin

1) Ongoing Projects

a) 2024 Leadership Award

- The nomination process was well-advertised via email blasts and Judges' Java.
- The nomination deadline was 6/7.
- During the meeting on 7/16/24, the Leadership Award subcommittee will make a recommendation to the entire DE&I Committee regarding who should receive the award.
- The award will be presented at NCBJ annual conference in Seattle, WA.
- The artwork for the award was created by Kate Furay; a personalized bronze plaque with the recipient's name will be added to the artwork.
- There will be an article in the winter NCBJ newsletter about the recipient of the award.

b) 2023/2024 NCBJ Fellows

- Five Fellows were selected; there was a budget for six.
- JTB received many fewer applicants this year, likely because in 2023, the AO did not publicize that it was partnering with JTB as it has during previous years.
- The Fellows were invited to attend three virtual happy hours hosted by NCBJ (4PM PT/7PM ET).
 - (1) 6/12 happy hour with law clerks,
 - (2) 7/10 happy hour with judges and judges fellows are working for,
 - (3) 7/31 happy with recent Blackshear Fellows
 - In addition to NCBJ Fellows, ACB Scholars and other judicial interns are invited to participate in the happy hours.
- Because of class schedules, only two Fellows have indicated that they will attend the annual conference. One more may possibly be able to attend.
- As in past years, the NCBJ Fellows will be paired with Judicial, NextGen and Blackshear mentors, who we encourage to continue their mentoring relationships long after the NCBJ Annual Conference concludes.

c) IDEA Consortium

- The Consortium continues working on a variety of efforts.

- A video vignette project is concluding with the vignettes posted on the Consortium's website.
 - Members of the Consortium are addressing whether the Consortium should originate content or just engage in outreach (i.e., act as an information and coordination portal); most are in favor of the latter.
 - The Consortium is trying to create an electronic job board with opportunities in the bankruptcy/insolvency arena and facilitate more interaction with law schools.
- d) Duberstein
- Mary Jo Heston is working on a Duberstein handbook.
 - A Duberstein timeline for setting up a regional competition was created by Deborah Thorne's judicial assistant to encourage recruitment/involvement of more judges.
 - The DE&I Committee continues discussing ways to encourage colleagues to participate in the competition.
- e) Quarterly Newsletter Articles
- For the past few years, members of the DE&I Committee have written articles for each NCBJ newsletter addressing DE&I.
- f) Judges' Java
- Once a month there are wonderful, lengthy articles included in the Judges' Java written by Kathy Surratt-States and Deb Thorne, which highlight important DE&I events in our nation's history, our colleagues who were "firsts," etc.
- g) Mentoring Subcommittee
- Judges have filled out mentoring practices survey and the subcommittee is considering how to use the survey responses to foster mentoring of persons underrepresented in the bankruptcy community to promote the NCBJ's mission.

2) Partnering Projects

- a) The DE&I Committee continues working and collaborating with the following organizations to foster DE&I:
- American College of Bankruptcy
 - Next Gen
 - JTB
 - Blackshear

3) NCBJ DE&I Electronic Handbook – last updated in 2020

- The DE&I Committee is addressing whether it, the IDEA Consortium, or possibly another organization might be better suited to update and maintain the Handbook.

4) Meetings

- a) The Committee meets every other month and when necessary, it also addresses business more frequently via email.

5) Change of leadership

- a) Sandra Klein and Erithe Smith, who have been co-chairs of the DE&I Committee for the past two years will be stepping down and Peter Russin has agreed to take the helm. Sandra and Erithe intend to continue as active members of the Committee.