



Federal Bar Association
Capitol Hill Chapter

Capitol Assets

Spring 2018 Newsletter



April Event

The Role of the General Counsel in Government Institutions: Panel Discussion and Evening Rooftop Reception

On April 23, the Federal Bar Association's Capitol Hill Chapter cosponsored with the DC Bar Association a panel discussion on the role of the general counsel in government institutions, followed by a rooftop deck reception at the DC Bar's new headquarters. The panel featured **Judith Leonard**, General Counsel of the Smithsonian Institution; **Nancy Robinson Breuer**, Secretary and General Counsel of the National Gallery of Art; and **Elizabeth Pugh**, General Counsel of the Library of Congress. The panel was followed by a rooftop reception at the DC Bar's new headquarters in the District of Columbia's Mount Vernon neighborhood.



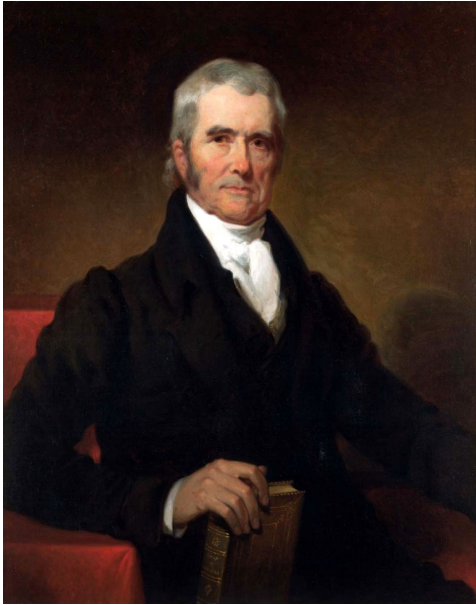
The General Counsel panelists and one of the moderators, DC Bar President Patrick McGlone, at the DC Bar's new headquarters for the April FBA/DC Bar panel discussion. Not pictured: Moderator and FBA Capitol Hill Chapter President Ethan Torrey.

Coming Events



Annual Supreme Court Luncheon

Keep an eye on your email. Details will be announced soon!

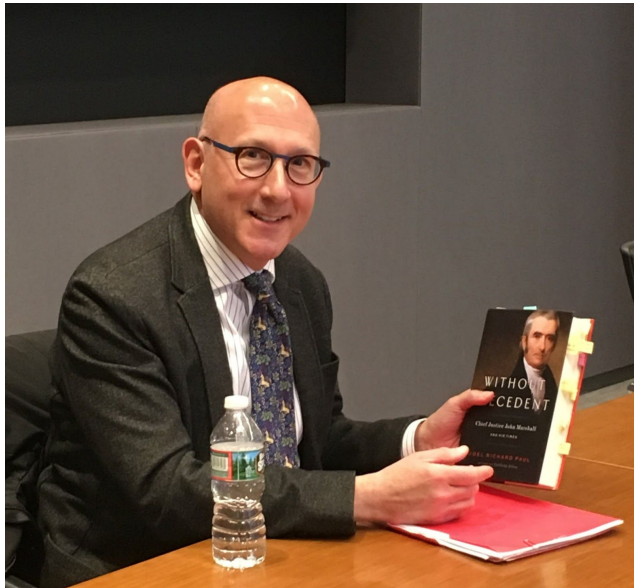


Chief Justice Marshall: *Without Precedent*

The Federal Bar Association's Capitol Hill Chapter and the DC Bar Association co-sponsored a brown-bag lunch on April 5 featuring featuring [Professor Joel Paul](#), Professor of Constitutional Law at the University of California Hastings, who spoke about his book *Without Precedent: Chief Justice John Marshall and His Times*.

No member of America's founding generation had a greater impact on the Constitution and the Supreme Court than Marshall, and no one did more to preserve the delicate unity of the fledgling United States. From our nation's founding in 1776, and for the next forty years, Marshall was at the center of every political battle. As chief justice of the United States Supreme Court—the longest-serving in history—he established the independence of the judiciary and the supremacy of the Constitution and the federal courts. As the leading Federalist in Virginia, he rivaled his cousin Thomas Jefferson in influence. As a diplomat and secretary of state, he defended American sovereignty against France and Britain, counseled President John Adams, and supervised the construction of Washington, D.C. This is the story of how a rough-cut frontiersman with little formal education became one of the nation's preeminent lawyers and politicians and, with cunning, imagination and grace, shaped America's future.

Justice Marshall image credit: Henry Inman - Virginia Memory, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=9538002>



Annual Meeting

FBA Capitol Hill Chapter Annual Meeting features Sarang ("Sy") Damie, General Counsel and Associate Register of Copyrights, U.S. Copyright Office

The FBA Capitol Hill Chapter started off its calendar year with its Annual Meeting in October 2017, featuring Sarang "Sy" Damie, General Counsel and Associate Register of Copyrights, U.S. Copyright Office. The U.S. Copyright Office is a somewhat unusual agency within the Federal Government. While it has regulatory powers of a typical executive branch agency, at the same time, due to its placement within the Library of Congress, it has long been seen by many as existing within the legislative branch. This has raised interesting separation of powers issues, including fascinating constitutional litigation. Sy Damie shared his insights on these issues given his involvement in these issues over the past decade.



The Annual Meeting also provided the opportunity for past President Geoffrey Cheshire to pass the gavel to new leadership. Our Chapter President this year is Ethan Torrey, who works as Legal Counsel of the Supreme Court of the United States. The Chapter also prepared for a variety of activities for the year, including a Happy Hour at the Hawk and Dove on Capitol Hill in November, a tour of the U.S. Botanic Garden in January, and a judicial dialogue with the author of a legal book in February.

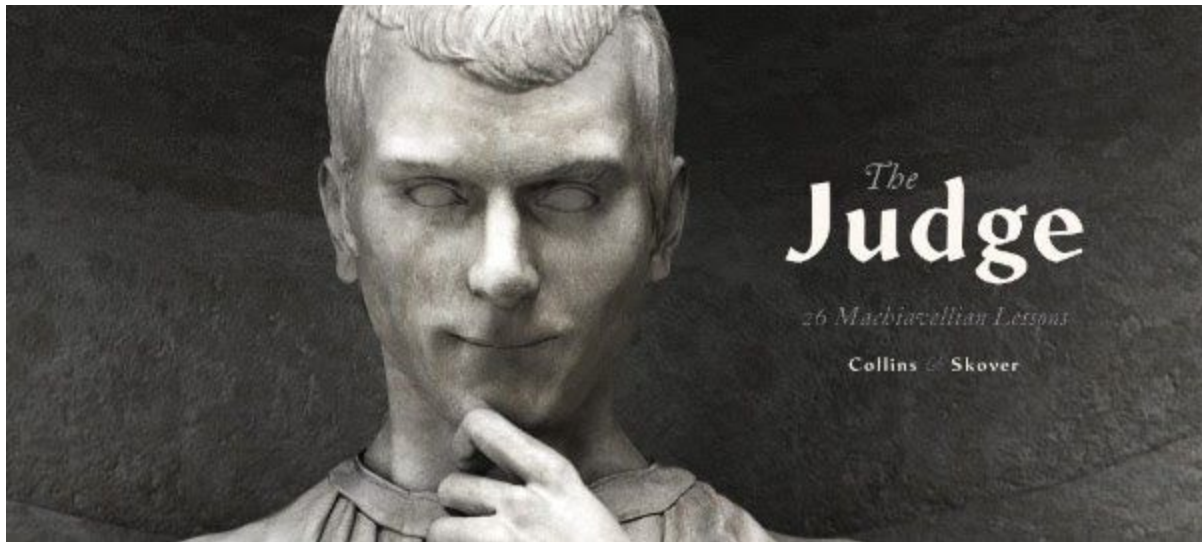
Other Chapter events included co-sponsorship of a Legislative Drafting Conference in April, as well as a discussion with the author of a book on Chief Justice Marshall that month. Details on further events, including the annual Supreme Court luncheon, will be sent by email when confirmed. Join us, and invite your colleagues! *Photo Credit: Library of Congress.*

April Event:

FBA Capitol Hill Chapter Co-sponsors the Fifth International Conference on Legislation and Law Reform

The Federal Bar Association Capitol Hill Chapter co-sponsored a major event April 12-13, the annual International Conference on Legislation and Law Reform, held at the Washington College of Law at American University in Washington, D.C. This conference focused on how laws are written in the United States and around the world at the international, national, and subnational levels. Each year the conference draws speakers and attendees from around the world, and provides an unparalleled opportunity for a wide range of experts to meet and exchange knowledge and perspectives on a topic of great importance to governance: the drafting and reform of laws.

The [2018 conference agenda](#) included over 20 speakers hailing from across the world, including Australia, Belgium, China, Ethiopia, Ghana, the Netherlands, South Africa, Sweden, Uganda, the United Kingdom, and the United States. This event included Continuing Legal Education programming, two breakfasts, two lunches, and an evening reception, with discounted prices for Federal Bar Association members and law students. If you missed it this year, look for it next year! Find out more at <https://ilegis.org/>.



February Event: "The Judge: 26 Machiavellian Lessons"

A lunch break offers time to stimulate your mind with deeper, big picture thinking. In February, the FBA Capitol Hill Chapter joined with the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on Law and National Security for a brown bag lunch at Ropes and Gray in Washington, D.C. featuring a dialogue between Chief Judge D. Brooks Smith, U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals, and Professor Ronald Collins, University of Washington Law School, to discuss "The Judge: 26 Machiavellian Lessons" (Oxford University Press, 2017).

Few ethicists would advise policymakers to adhere to the canonical political strategies of Niccolo Machiavelli's classic, "The Prince," as judges are expected to work above the realm of politics in the lofty ideals of the law. In the "The Judge," however, Professor Collins and co-author David Skover argue that Machiavelli can indeed speak to judges, and model their book after "The Prince." The February brown bag offered chapter members an opportunity to break from the sometimes tedious day-to-day work of attorneys and view the law in a larger, more philosophical way.

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January Event: Chapter Tour of the U.S. Botanic Gardens

Federal Bar Association Capitol Hill Chapter members took a break from the gray days of winter this January by visiting a local treasure--a year-round lush green oasis right in the Capitol Hill neighborhood, the [United States Botanic Garden \(USBG\)](#). Located at the base of the U.S. Capitol, the USBG is a living plant museum that informs visitors about the importance of plants to the well-being of humans and to Earth's fragile ecosystems.

On this guided tour of the USBG Conservatory, chapter members visited the indoor gardens and galleries with a knowledgeable USBG guide, Elizabeth Barton, and learned about the diverse plants within the USBG. The resplendent diversity of form, color, fruit, and fragrance reminds us that plants make our lives possible and enjoyable.

Scroll down to enjoy photos of this event taken by chapter member Stephanie Hemmert!

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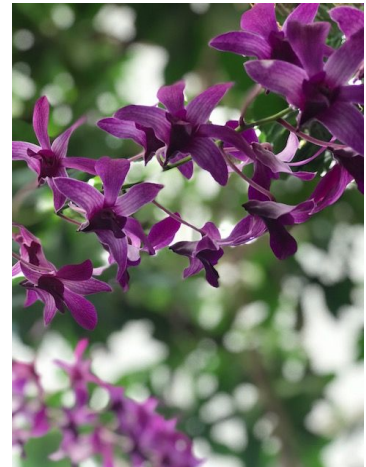


Photo credit: Stephanie Hemmert.

What would you like to see covered in this newsletter? Contact Jana Patterson at janagagner@gmail.com. Thank you!



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