

President's letter

My name is Alan Trust. I am a federal bankruptcy judge in the Eastern District of New York, and have proudly presided over a hectic several months as President of the EDNY Chapter of the FBA. As we are getting ready for BBQ's, picnics, 4th of July fireworks, and (hopefully) summer vacations, I want to update you on the exciting CLE programs, civic outreach, special recognition events, and future leaders' development we have undertaken, and what's next.

CLE:

Last fall we held our Seventh Annual Civil Practice Update featuring our board member, Judge Kathleen Tomlinson, and noted Supreme Court scholar, St John's Professor John Barrett. We have also sponsored an innovative implicit bias program which was introduced by EDNY Chief Judge Dora L. Irizarry, and our recurring Fair Labor Standards Act program, featuring Magistrate Judges Tomlinson, Steven I. Locke and Anne Y. Shields, as well as well-known practitioner and board member Troy Kessler. We continued our partnership with our Long Island county bar associations to offer our annual bankruptcy updates programs, headlined by Bill Rochelle, one of the country's foremost authorities on insolvency issues, at which I also spoke.

This spring we held our Seventh Annual Criminal Practice Update, anchored by Hon. (now) Second Circuit Judge Joseph Bianco, Hon. John Gleeson (Ret.), the US Attorney for the EDNY Richard Donoghue, and well-known practitioner Anthony LaPinta.

We had a vision several years ago of institutionalizing these programs. With the hard work of many board members and our gracious panelists, including several current and former federal judges, who return year after year, we have managed to do so. These programs provide high quality continuing legal education combined with numerous opportunities for networking and professional development, such as our Meet the Judges receptions which precede the Civil and Criminal programs.

Civic outreach and community involvement:

Our Chapter, again in partnership with our District Court, and with the Nassau County Bar Association, Hofstra University Law School, and the Justice Resource Center, organized, promoted and hosted the Long Island Mentor Moot Court Competition. High school students from around Long Island participate in mock oral arguments in which the students play the role of lawyers arguing before the United States Supreme Court on a constitutional question. Chapter members and non-member lawyers from several area law firms volunteered their time to serve as mentors in order to prepare the teams for the several rounds of competition. The students were judged by practicing attorneys, law clerks and federal judges. Students were able to argue at the Nassau County Supreme Court and then the Federal Courthouse in Central Islip.

In July, again in partnership with our Court, our Chapter will once again organize and present our Justice Institute, a week long, interactive learning program designed to introduce high school students to the workings of the federal courts and the criminal justice system, and to promote an enlightened and responsible citizenry. We will provide a fun and interesting format in which students will observe real court proceedings, and learn from federal judges, FBI agents, a U.S. Secret Service Agent, Deputy U.S. Marshals, law professors, federal prosecutors, and criminal defense lawyers, about their respective roles within the federal court system. Finally, the students will participate in a mock trial competition against their peers.

In addition, on Constitution Day in September, we will return to historic national park site Sagamore Hill, the Long Island home of our 26th President, Theodore Roosevelt, for a special naturalization ceremony. This year our theme will center around the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment to our Constitution, which guaranteed women the right to vote. Our guests will include an 11th grade class from an all-girls high school, who will write essays focused on the importance of having the right to vote and civic engagement. Our keynote speaker will be Myrna Pérez, Director of the Brennan Center's Voting Rights and Elections Program, and an expert on voting rights.

Special recognition events:

This past March, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals Chapter held a special celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Federal Magistrates Act at the Federal Courthouse in Manhattan. In partnership with the SDNY Chapter, we created special commemorative water bottles, which we handed out at the reception, after delivering comments to thank the magistrate judges on behalf of the FBA. Over 100 people attended. The FBA was the only bar association allowed to participate in the program. Water bottles were provided for every Second Circuit Judge and every Magistrate Judge in the Circuit.

Later that month, our Chapter held a similar event at the Central Islip court house specifically to thank the current and former Magistrate Judges of the EDNY, for which we also had plaques made up to commemorate the service of our Magistrate Judges. These beautiful plaques will list every judge to have served as a magistrate in the EDNY, and will be displayed in both the Brooklyn and Central Islip federal court houses.

Future leaders

The EDNY Chapter has always believed that the future lies in our ability to welcome the next generation of attorneys through law school outreach programs.

We have a very active law student membership and relationship with our law schools. To date, the Chapter has four (4) law student divisions: Hofstra, Touro, St. John's and Brooklyn law schools. The Board has recruited faculty members from these law schools to interface directly with the Board. The Board has also facilitated the creation of FBA Law Student Divisions at these four schools. The Chapter continually meets with law students at these local law schools and attends several law schools functions each year. Additionally, law student representatives frequently attend Chapter events and Board meetings; the student liaison from Touro is on our Board. Law students attend all of the Chapter's events free of charge, including our Meet the Judges receptions and CLE programs. With the assistance of the Chapter, the divisions also plan their own events.

Judge Joanna Seybert, Judge Ramon Reyes, Judges Tomlinson, Locke and myself, as well as Dina Miller, past Chapter President, Jacqueline Moran, our Law Student Committee Chair, Annemarie Jones, Chair of Public /Media Relations Digital Strategy, and Katy Cole, also a past Chapter President and current Hospitality Chair, have spoken at recent Law Student Division events. These include a litigation vs. corporate law career path panel discussion at St. John's law school, a new board member pinning ceremony at Touro law school, a panel discussion at St. John's on how to succeed in your summer internship/job, and a panel discussion on federal practice at Hofstra law school.

In addition, we have hosted or aided in several law student events. One is our Day in Federal Court, which we held in June 2019. We had over 40 law students attend in our Central Islip court.

They attended court observations, had lunch with judges and law clerks, and attended panel discussions with representatives of the FBI, the US Attorney, the US Marshall, as well as Pre-Trial and Probation services.

In addition to these events, our Chapter was instrumental in the establishment of a pro se legal clinic at the Central Islip Federal Courthouse, staffed by students from Hofstra Law School, to which the Chapter made a financial contribution.

Learning and member event:

This June, with the assistance of membership co-chair Keith Gutstein, we also were fortunate enough to host a special event at the Holocaust Memorial & Tolerance Center of Nassau County. The senior curator provided us a behind-the-scenes look at the life, work and collection of Judge Cecelia Goetz (1917-2004), including a tour of the exhibition, an up-close look at rare artifacts, and a discussion with the curator. Judge Goetz was the only Jewish female prosecutor to deliver an opening statement at Post-Holocaust International Military Tribunals (IMT), commonly referred to as the Nuremberg Trials. Her dedication to her work earned her the reputation and nickname of "Aggressive War Chief." Later in life, she was appointed as the first woman bankruptcy judge in the EDNY, a position she served in with distinction until she retired in 1993.

Social media presence:

Under the direction of Public /Media Relations Digital Strategy Chair Annemarie Jones, our Chapter has a revamped Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/Federal-Bar-Association-Eastern-District-of-New-York-Chapter-1093953104019736/>) open to all members and non-members, which page is updated with Chapter events and activities. Additionally, the Chapter has a dedicated open group on Instagram - our Instagram "handle" is @fba_edny. You can find pictures from many of our terrific events on our social media pages.

The Chapter is creating a LinkedIn page which will be launched in the fall.

Looking ahead:

Over this coming year we will again offer our Civil Practice, Bankruptcy, and Criminal Practice Updates programs. We are also planning our first cyber law program for this fall, and a federal civil rights and diversity program for 2020.

We no doubt have lofty goals - but we are so fortunate to have the energy, drive and commitment of so many of our board members and committee chairs who are listed below. We have benefitted greatly by the willingness of our judges, professors and practitioners to give of their time to provide scholarship to our current lawyers, ready our law students for rewarding careers, and help educate our youth about the work of the federal courts. I encourage each of you to promote membership in the FBA and our Chapter within your firms, to your colleagues and to our future generations of lawyers.

Have a good summer!

Judge Alan S. Trust,
President, EDNY Chapter, FBA

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