

## | Chapter Exchange |

### FIRST CIRCUIT

#### Puerto Rico Chapter

On Nov. 14, 2011, the Puerto Rico Chapter's student division at the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico School of Law hosted a Thanksgiving luncheon. Members had the opportunity to socialize with U.S. district and magistrate judges, who were the afternoon's special invited guests, and enjoy a delicious Thanksgiving meal. The division's Board of Directors are hoping that this Thanksgiving luncheon will turn into a tradition that will continue to be held in the coming years.

### SECOND CIRCUIT

#### District of Connecticut Chapter

A record number of applicants—71—were approved and scheduled to take the oath of admission to the Supreme Court of the United States in the Hartford federal courthouse on Oct. 27, 2011. The clerk of the Supreme Court of the United States, Gen. William K. Suter (Ret.), administered the oath and delivered comments to the newly admitted members of the high court. Suter's advice to everyone who plans to argue before the Supreme Court was "Preparation, preparation, preparation." With characteristic charisma, Gen. Suter shared his firsthand views and experiences with the justices over the two decades he spent at his post in Washing-

ton. Far from exhibiting acrimony and division, the justices were portrayed as men and women of deep intellect, diligence, and professional courtesy—all executed with wit and good humor. Gen. Suter shared his recollection of an incident involving Justice Byron White. Suter recalled walking outside the Court with Justice White during a demonstration at the courthouse. When one of the demonstrators approached the men and asked, "Hey, either of you guys work here?" Justice White quickly retorted, "I don't, but he does," and casually walked away, leaving Gen. Suter alone to deal with the situation. On a more serious note, Gen. Suter shared information on recent Supreme Court opinions and upcoming arguments.

The ceremony took place in a packed courtroom in the annex and was followed by a small reception in the courthouse atrium. Lunch, open to all members of the bar and the public, followed at the Hartford Club, where Gen. Suter opened the floor to questions after he delivered his comments. The event was co-sponsored by the chapter, the Federal Practice Section of the Connecticut Bar Association, and the Connecticut Committee of the Federal Bar Council. Fern Bomchill, the FBA's national president, traveled from Chicago to attend the event; Raymond Dowd, the FBA's vice president for the Second Circuit, came from New York. The Federal

Bar Association presented Gen. Suter, an avid fan of college basketball, who played for Trinity University in Texas, with a University of Connecticut Huskies' basketball sweatshirt. In making the presentation, Patrick McHugh, chapter president, noted that, even though the state of Connecticut may be modest in size, it is disproportionate in impact not only at the federal bar but also in the NCAA.

### THIRD CIRCUIT

#### Western District of Pennsylvania

Patrick Sorek, president of the FBA's Western District of Pennsylvania Chapter, spoke at a ceremony honoring Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia on Sept. 24, 2011, at Duquesne Law School. Justice Scalia's keynote speech, which commemorated the law school's centennial, was followed by a brief tribute to Justice Scalia on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court.

### FIFTH CIRCUIT

#### Austin Chapter

The FBA's Austin Chapter, in partnership with the Judge Sparks Portrait Committee, presented the formal judicial portrait of Hon. Sam Sparks, U.S. district judge for the Western District of Texas, in tribute to his 20 years of



**Puerto Rico Chapter:** At the Puerto Rico Chapter's student division's Thanksgiving luncheon—(l to r) Camille Rodriguez, Hon. Camille Velez-Rive, Lisie Burgos, Debbie Rosa, Associate Dean Evelyn Benvenuti, Hon. Silvia Carreno-Coll, and Nicole Rodriguez.



**Western District of Pennsylvania:** At a September ceremony honoring Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia at Duquesne Law School—Patrick Sorek (at podium) with Justice Scalia. (Photo courtesy of Duquesne Duke and Robyn Rudish-Laning)



**Austin Chapter:** At the presentation of his formal judicial portrait: (left photo) Hon. Sam Sparks of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas.



**Mississippi Chapter:** At the chapter's November Meeting—(right photo, l to r) Kate Margolis, Bradley Arant, chapter treasurer; Professor Meta Copeland, Mississippi College School of Law, chapter secretary; Dean Jim Rosenblatt, Mississippi College School of Law, chapter president; Judge Edward Ellington, featured speaker; and Ryan Beckett, Butler Snow, chapter vice president.

service. Chief Judge Fred Biery presided over the ceremony which was held Dec. 2, 2011, and also featured remarks by Judges Lee Yeakel and James Nowlin. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor also provided videotaped remarks congratulating Judge Sparks on his 20th anniversary and portrait. Judge Sparks recently was honored with the prestigious American College of Trial Lawyers' award named in Justice O'Connor's honor in recognition of his independence, courage, and commitment to the rule of law. The distinguished audience included most of the judges of the Western District of Texas and justices of the Fifth Circuit and the Texas Supreme Court. In addition, more than 100 members of the FBA, law clerks, and courthouse staff attended the ceremony and the reception that followed at the Headliners' Club. The portrait, unveiled by Judge Sparks' wife, Melinda, will hang in the new Austin federal courthouse lobby, alongside artworks honoring other great judges of the Austin Division.

### Mississippi Chapter

The November meeting of the Mississippi Chapter featured Federal Bankruptcy Judge Edward Ellington, who offered some historical information about the development of the bankruptcy court system, discussed recent court decisions that affect bankruptcy practice, and spoke about the changing demographics of those coming before the bankruptcy court. Jim Rosenblatt, dean of the Missis-



**Dayton Chapter:** At the Dayton Chapter's seminar—(l to r) District Judges Thomas M. Rose, Timothy S. Black, and Walter H. Rice and Magistrate Judges Sharon L. Ovington, Michael J. Newman, and Michael R. Merz.

sippi College School of Law and chapter president, reported on the input the chapter had provided to the chief judge of the U.S. District Court of the Northern District of Mississippi regarding realignment of divisions in that district.

### SIXTH CIRCUIT

#### Dayton Chapter

The Dayton Chapter recently sponsored a CLE seminar for attorneys seeking to be admitted to the Southern District of Ohio bar. Following the seminar and admissions ceremony, the district

judges and magistrate judges in Dayton congratulated each attorney who was admitted to the bar.

### NINTH CIRCUIT

#### Inland Empire Chapter

On Dec. 1, the Joint Federal Pro Se Clinic, which is located in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Riverside and offers onsite assistance to pro se litigants in civil actions in U.S. district court and

**EXCHANGE** *continued on page 8*



**Inland Empire Chapter:** At the grand opening of the Joint Federal Pro Se Clinic—(left photo, l to r) speakers Dennis Wagner, Chief Judge Peter H. Carroll, Judge Maureen A. Tighe, Judge Catherine E. Bauer, and Judge Virginia Phillips; (right photo, l to r) Judge David Bristow, Jennifer Loflin, Judge Oswald Parada, and Judge Sheri Pym.

bankruptcy court, had its grand opening. The chapter was honored with the presence and words of four highly esteemed and dedicated judges, who delivered the message of the day: equal justice for all. Hon. Virginia A. Phillips of the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, stated that the creation of such a clinic had been a personal project for her and one to which she has been very dedicated. Quoting Thomas Jefferson, Judge Phillips cited the need to deliver equal justice under the law to all people and expressed the hope that the clinic would help accomplish this goal, especially given the incredible need in the Inland Empire for such assistance. Hon. Peter H. Carroll, chief judge of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Central District of California, spoke of the sheer volume

of cases filed in the Eastern Division, a good percentage (almost one-third) of which involve pro se litigants. He described the clinic as something that was “much-needed and long-awaited.” Hon. Catherine E. Bauer and Hon. Maureen A. Tighe of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Central District of California, and each a long-time supporter of the creation of the clinic, expressed their relief and gratitude for the opening of the clinic.

At the grand opening, the chapter was also fortunate to have Dennis Wagner, chapter president, pledge his support for the clinic. He stated that the FBA would seek to obtain funding for the clinic and would also encourage FBA members to volunteer for it.

Finally, Jennifer Loflin, an attorney who has worked tirelessly with many

others to establish the clinic and is the program director of the Public Service Law Corporation, which administers the clinic, provided some compelling statistics justifying its creation. As of Dec. 1, 2011, the clinic had been open for seven days of service (every Tuesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.); during this time, 143 persons signed up for assistance, and 124 were actually served. **TFL**

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*Chapter Exchange is compiled by Melissa Stevenson, FBA manager of chapters and circuits. Send your information to [mstevenson@fedbar.org](mailto:mstevenson@fedbar.org) or Chapter Exchange, FBA, 1220 N. Fillmore Street, Suite 444, Arlington, VA 22201. Visit [www.fedbar.org](http://www.fedbar.org) for the latest chapter news and events.*

## Judicial Profile Writers Wanted

*The Federal Lawyer* is looking to recruit current law clerks, former law clerks, and other attorneys who would be interested in writing a Judicial Profile of a federal judicial officer in your jurisdiction. A Judicial Profile is approximately 1,500–2,000 words and is usually accompanied by a formal portrait and, when available, personal photographs of the judge. Judicial Profiles do not follow a standard formula, but each profile usually addresses personal topics such as the judge’s reasons for becoming a lawyer, his/her commitment to justice, how he/she has mentored lawyers and law clerks, etc. If you are interested in writing a Judicial Profile, we would like to hear from you. Please send an e-mail to Stacy King, managing editor, [sking@fedbar.org](mailto:sking@fedbar.org).