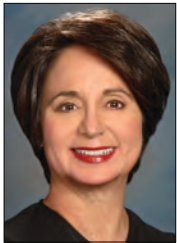




WINTER 2020

<http://community.ca9.uscourts.gov/>

A Word from the Chair



*Janis L.
Sammartino,
District Judge,
Southern
District of
California*

Every so often, we are shown that “everything old is new again.” After digging into the origin of this phrase, it has been cited as a quote of Churchill, Mark Twain, and others; and some have simply stated some version of the phrase without attribution. Now, this pertains to the recent decision we made to “rename” ourselves the Public Information and Community Outreach Committee—PICO for short! We started out as PICO in

2000 and then changed our identity to the Courts and the Community Committee in 2011. We’re back to PICO again because we wanted to broaden the scope of our mission and expand our communication about the work of the courts beyond students to the media, journalists, and adults in the communities the Ninth Circuit serves.

We are off to a fast start with the 2020 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest which began on February 15th with the launch of the official contest website at <https://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest/>. The theme for this year’s essay and video competition for high school students is “The Right to Vote: Milestone Anniversaries.” In the wake of the 15th and 19th Amendments, barriers remained to prevent United States citizens from voting. Students are being asked if formal or informal barriers remain today and what additional changes, if any, would they make to Americans’ voting rights. The contest is in its seventh year and 2020 will be the fifth circuit-wide competition. All Ninth Circuit courts are again participating. I cannot thank enough all

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Circuit Judge Richard A. Paez, left, and Bankruptcy Judge Sandra R. Klein, right, speak with symposium attendees.

Central District Hosts “Roadways to the Federal Bench: Who Me? A Bankruptcy Judge?” Symposium

The United States Bankruptcy Court for the Central District of California, in conjunction with the Judicial Conference of the U.S. Committee on the Administration of the Bankruptcy System, held a symposium October 24, 2019, for law students and lawyers to foster diversity in the bankruptcy bar and bench.

The “Roadways to the Federal Bench: Who Me? A Bankruptcy Judge?” symposium, hosted concurrently in 19 cities (Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, Minneapolis, New York, Oakland, Philadelphia, Phoenix, St. Louis, Raleigh, Seattle, and



*Stephanie J. Rettier,
Law Clerk to
Bankruptcy Judge
Sandra R. Klein*

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Judges from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, district and bankruptcy courts in the Central District of California participate in “Roadways to the Federal Bench: Who Me? A Bankruptcy Judge?” held October 24, 2019, in Los Angeles.

Washington, D.C.), included a panel discussion that was broadcasted live from Washington, D.C. The panel was moderated by Retired Fourth Circuit Judge Andre M. Davis and included District Judge Tanya S. Chutkan, District of Columbia; Bankruptcy Judge Frank J. Bailey, District of Massachusetts; and Bankruptcy Judge Robert A. Gordon, District of Maryland. The panel discussed a wide range of topics, including bankruptcy practice, how to succeed as a bankruptcy judge, diversity statistics, why diversity is important, how to improve diversity, and what students and lawyers should do to enhance their chances of one day becoming a bankruptcy or other federal judge.

Following the panel discussion, local lawyers, law clerks, and law students participated in roundtable discussions with judges from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, district and bankruptcy courts about pathways to the federal bench for candidates with diverse backgrounds. Circuit Judges Mary H. Murguia, Jacqueline H. Nguyen, and Richard A. Paez participated in the roundtable discussions as did District Judges André Birotte Jr., Dolly M. Gee, Terry J. Hatter, Jr., and Otis D. Wright, II; Chief Magistrate Judge Patrick J. Walsh and Magistrate Judges Jean P. Rosenbluth, Autumn D. Spaeth, and Karen L. Stevenson; Chief Bankruptcy Judge Maureen A. Tighe, and Bankruptcy Judges Martin R. Barash, Neil W. Bason, Catherine E. Bauer, Sheri Bluebond, Scott C. Clarkson, Thomas B. Donovan (Ret.), Victoria S. Kaufman, Sandra R. Klein, Robert N. Kwan, Ernest M. Robles, Erithe A. Smith, and Scott H. Yun.

I was surprised to learn during the panel discussion that bankruptcy judges are the least diverse bench in the federal court system, even though Americans are more likely to appear in bankruptcy court than any other federal court.

To illustrate, as of 2015, approximately 7 percent of active bankruptcy judges were people of color and 31 percent of bankruptcy judges were women yet, nationally, 40 percent of the U.S. population consists of people of color and women comprise half of the population. “Resources for Aspiring Bankruptcy Judges.” Brennan Center for Justice, September 26, 2019, <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/resources-aspiring-bankruptcy-judges>. During the roundtable discussions, it was very interesting to hear judges speak about their pathways to the bench. Regardless of how they became federal judges, the common thread among the judges was a commitment to hard work, fostering professional relationships, protecting the integrity of the federal bench, and affording all litigants an opportunity to be heard. It was truly inspiring to hear each judge’s personal story.

The symposium concluded with an ice cream sundae and espresso reception generously sponsored by the Central District of California Attorney Admission Fund. During the reception, while savoring the refreshments, participants enjoyed the musical works of law clerk Jeffrey Cozad. I am glad to have had the opportunity to participate in this unique and rewarding event and to meet numerous judges from courts around the district and beyond. And, the mini portfolio with the bankruptcy court seal that was given to the participants was a nice memento, the cherry on top of a great event!

A very special thanks to the Local Roadways Committee, led by Judge Erithe A. Smith which also included Judges Sandra R. Klein and Scott H. Yun; Robbin L. Itkin, Esq., former Ninth Circuit LRCC member; and Administrative Specialist Jessica Garibay and all of the Clerk’s Office staff who contributed to making the symposium a huge success. □

Pacific Islands Girl Scouts Earn First Justice Patch

With eyes wide open, Girl Scout Daisies Aycee Quitugua and Brianna Pangelinan pointed anxiously at the jury box as they waited for their chance to sit on a juror's seat inside the courtroom of the United States District Court for the District of the Northern Mariana Islands.

It was the first time that most of the 43 NMI Girl Scouts, ranging from kindergarteners to eighth graders, had ever entered the federal courthouse. A similar experience took place a few months earlier, when the Girl Scouts in Guam became the first scouts on the island to earn a justice patch.

Inspired by Bankruptcy Judge Sandra R. Klein's Girl Scouts Justice Patch Program and talk at the 2019 Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference, participants from the District Court of Guam was particularly excited by the prospect: Chief Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood had been one of the first "Girl Scout Greats" award recipients in 2012 as part of the national Girl Scouts' 100th anniversary celebrations. Other members of the District of Guam family also had a history with the Girl Scouts and were more than ready to start the Justice Patch Program back home.

The Justice Patch Program was designed to help young girls gain a greater understanding of the judicial system and how it operates. The scouts got to tour the courthouse and meet with women from all sectors of the judiciary and legal fields, including judges, law enforcement officers, attorneys and others. Some participated in mock trials and some took part in iCivics programs online. All activities contributed toward earning the justice patch. In Guam, 45 scouts received their patch following the afternoon event.

Judges with the U.S. District Court for the District of the Northern Mariana Islands



Story written by Cynthia V. Ecube, Ninth Circuit Lawyer Representative for District of Guam, and the NMI Girl Scouts.



Girl Scouts from Guam, above, and from Northern Mariana Islands, below, participate in the Districts of Guam and NMI's inaugural Justice Patch Program.



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the chief judges and clerks of court for their ongoing support. So far, we've exceeded 100 entries in three weeks: a record!

The PICO Committee is looking ahead to a busy 2020 with a number of activities involving naturalization ceremonies at ballparks and the celebration of Constitution Day on September 17. One of our districts may be taking a cue from our colleagues in Tennessee by organizing a community reading of the United States Constitution. Stay tuned for more information as plans evolve! I am very proud to tell you about a unique and noteworthy project that opened right here in the Edward J. Schwartz U.S. Courthouse. "Portraits of Justice" is an art exhibit that features illustrations from some of the most famous real-life courtroom dramas in American history. The work of 26 artists is showcased throughout the courthouse and considering all the school groups and visitors we have had since the January opening, the Southern District of California is proud to be the venue for such an important exhibit.

The PICO Committee mourns the loss of one of our most active members, Senior Circuit Judge Raymond C. Fisher, who died February 29. Judge Fisher was a member of the Judicial Conference of the U.S. Committee on Judicial Branch and was co-chair of its Subcommittee on Civic Engagement and Education. His great ideas and enthusiasm for the work of the committee were inspiring. We wish Nancy and his family our deepest sympathies.

In closing, I want to add that we are fortunate to have great staff support who take our ideas and help us implement all the projects we develop. We have been fortunate to have had great staff support over the years from the Office of the Circuit Executive: Alex Clausen, audio/video specialist; Chandan Toor, web developer; and Katherine Rodriguez, communications administrator. Dr. Kari Kelso, the administrator of The Justice Anthony M. Kennedy Library and Learning Center in Sacramento, and Assistant Circuit Executive Renée Lorda who is now supporting the work of PICO and other Public Information Unit responsibilities in addition to her work with the Conference and Education Unit. We look forward to a dynamic and innovative 2020. □

Patch *continued from page 3*

followed suit a few months later, joining with the CNMI Superior Court to host the program. After attending presentations from an all-female panel of judges, law enforcement officials and lawyers, the scouts were presented the unique justice patch by judges as parents and volunteers cheered them on.

"It was a pleasure to host the young scouts at the courthouse," said Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona of the NMI district court. "It was a lot of fun to watch the eager girls interact with women in the various roles that comprise the justice system. By having the girls speak directly with these professionals from our island community, I hope that they can see themselves in these roles in the future," Judge Manglona added.

Chief Judge Tydingco-Gatewood had equally positive things to say. "Civics education is a major focus of the federal judiciary as a whole, and so it was an honor to host and participate in the Guam Girl Scouts Justice Patch Program," she commented. "I was proud to see many future leaders gain a deeper understanding and respect for the rule of law and the federal court system, including the roles that judges and lawyers play in the administration of justice. On top of the character and leadership building facets that are found in most of our civics education programs, the scouts learned the importance of civic responsibility particularly in our third branch of government," Chief Judge Tydingco-Gatewood said.

Although the designs of both patches differed, they both included two very important symbols: the scales of justice and the turtle, representing the deliberate pace of justice in our nation.

Both districts plan to make the Justice Patch Program an annual event and hope that other courts throughout the U.S. will be inspired to start their own! □



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