

2016-2017 Circuit Professionalism Report Summaries

First Circuit

The First Judicial Circuit Bench and Bar Professionalism Committee planned its annual CLE cruise with the Escambia-Santa Rosa Bar Association and First Circuit legal community, which took place November 9-13, 2017. Due to the feedback from its focus groups, the Committee formed a subcommittee to create a formal mentoring program within the First Circuit, which will be implemented in the upcoming year. The focus groups also led to the Committee's decision to hold a land-based symposium every year rather than every other year. The Committee hosted a series of professionalism socials and lunches for attorneys and judges. The Committee also implemented a program where individual judges in the Circuit host lunches, for which local Bar members can sign up to discuss concerns and topics of interest in a smaller setting. A statement on professionalism and the Local Professionalism Panels was included in the First Circuit uniform case management orders.

Second Circuit

The Second Circuit Professionalism Panel hosted three lunches with local judges regarding professionalism concerns, entitled the Professionalism Sidebar Series. The Panel works in tandem with the Tallahassee Bar Association and other voluntary bar associations to provide information on professionalism to the legal community.

Third Circuit

The Third Judicial Circuit Professionalism Panel and Committee sponsored and hosted events alongside the Third Circuit Bar Association and the Young Lawyer's Division to promote professionalism and encourage interaction between attorneys and judges. The Committee will continue to further its culture of informal mentorship in the coming year.

Fourth Circuit

The Fourth Circuit is home to the Jacksonville Bar Professionalism and Mentoring Committee. In the last year, the Committee hosted several training seminars, CLEs, and judicial receptions that focused on professionalism. The Committee has been planning a Professionalism/Technology Seminar at THE PLAYERS Championship for CLE credit, to be held on May 9, 2018, and a Youth Law Day, details TBD. The Committee also presented its Jacksonville Bar Association Professionalism Award to Mike Tanner at its Annual Professionalism Seminar. The Committee encourages members, especially new attorneys, to become part of the mentoring program it offers in conjunction with the Fourth Judicial Circuit, aiming to heighten civility, professionalism, and competence in the circuit. The Committee also voted to rename the Bench and Professionalism Committee to the Bench and Bar Professionalism and Mentoring Committee. The Jacksonville Bar Association has been selected as the recipient of the 2017 Voluntary Bar Association Pro Bono Service Award.



Fourth Circuit members attend a professionalism meeting.

Fifth Circuit

The Honorable Thomas D. Sawaya of the Fifth District Court of Appeal was awarded the Fifth Circuit Professionalism Award. The Committee has been working towards its 2018 Professionalism Conference, scheduled for April 20, 2018, which will fulfill both CLE and judicial diversity education requirements. The Committee also developed a program on LGBTQ persons and the transgender community in the court system. The Committee is sponsoring an essay contest for high school students focusing on professionalism and diversity. The Committee developed mentoring programs and supports the Circuit's Inns of Court.

Sixth Circuit

The Sixth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee participated in various programs and seminars put on by local bar associations, including the St. Petersburg Bar Association and the Clearwater Bar Association's 2016 Wild Wild West Bench & Bar-B-Que; the Clearwater Bar Association's 2017 Professionalism Symposium; the Sixth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee's 2017 Criminal Professionalism Seminar; and the St. Petersburg Bar Association's Changes in Latitude – Changes in Attitude Professionalism seminar and wellness fair. The Committee also began planning for their professionalism seminar that occurred on February 9, 2018. Additionally, the Committee participated in the St. Petersburg Bar Association Mentoring Program.

Seventh Circuit

The Seventh Circuit Professionalism Committee co-hosted its biennial Professionalism Symposium in May 2017 with all four local bar associations, the Volusia County Bar Association, the St. Johns County Bar Association, the Flagler County Bar Association, and the

Putnam County Bar Association. The Symposium included three CLE credits, both general and professionalism. The Committee then began preparations for the next Professionalism Symposium, to take place in 2018.

Eighth Circuit

The Eighth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee hosted the Judicial Mentoring Program, which pairs new judges with experienced judges to help them transition from practicing law to serving on the bench. The Committee has used this program as a way to stress the importance of professionalism to new judges. The Committee also participated in various Inns of Court events, including the AmazeInn Race event, to enhance mentoring relationships through team activities and a presentation on the use of technology in the legal profession. The Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association hosted its annual Professionalism Seminar at the University of Florida Fredric G. Levin College of Law. The YLD attempted to focus more on family and wellness and additionally hosted six Judicial Luncheons to encourage conversation with judges, magistrates, and hearing officers. The Local Professionalism Panels hears and closes approximately three to four complaints per year.

Ninth Circuit

The Ninth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee presented three professionalism awards at their Professionalism Awards Ceremony on March 10, 2017. The Committee awarded the James G. Glazebrook Memorial Bar Service Award to the Honorable Arthur B. Briskman; the William B. Trickel, Jr. Professionalism Award to Charles T. Wells; and the Lawrence G. Mathews, Jr. Young Lawyer Professionalism Award to Karen Persis. The Committee also hosted seminars on various topics, including a Civility Matters series, Professionalism in Negotiations, a social media series, and a professionalism presentation to students at Barry University Dwayne O. Andreas School of Law and Florida A&M University College of Law. Several local voluntary bar associations participated in the 13th annual Minority Mentoring Picnic, which was well-attended. Going forward, the Committee will be planning its major seminar event entitled Professionalism and the Attorney-Client Relationship; participating in the Legal Aid Society's Breakfast of Champions fundraiser; and participating in various mentoring programs in conjunction with the Orange County Bar Association (OCBA), the OCBA Young Lawyers Section, and the Central Florida Association of Women Lawyers.



Ninth Circuit Professionalism Awards recipients. Pictured left to right: The Honorable James E.C. Perry; Charles T. Wells, Esq.; The Honorable Arthur B. Briskman; and Karen Persis, Esq.

Tenth Circuit:

The Tenth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee presented its annual Professionalism Award to Marion Moorman at its Professionalism Dinner. The Committee also presented its Justice Achievement Award to a non-lawyer who has had a significant impact on the improvement of the administration of justice in the circuit. The recipient of this award was Terri Jones from the Public Defender's Office. Chief Judge Donald Jacobsen created a lunch seminar series to teach professionalism and trial skills. The Committee also hosted various events including a new lawyer orientation in conjunction with the Tenth Judicial Circuit Willson American Inn of Court and planned a Fairness and Diversity Summit that was held in December 2017.

Eleventh Circuit:

In 2016, the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee created the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee Excellence in Professionalism Award to honor an individual for his or her service on either the Professionalism Committee or the Local Professionalism Panels. The Committee also planned its Fifth Annual New Attorney Breakfast that was held on October 20, 2017. The Local Professionalism Panels have been in place and running smoothly within the Circuit. Additionally, members of the Committee are actively promoting professionalism and civility by participating in many projects in the circuit, including mentoring programs and panel discussions. The Committee plans to continue to work on its mentoring program and develop a series of lunch seminars. Finally, the Committee planned its Fifth Annual Professionalism and Civility Summit that was rescheduled for February 9, 2018. The event focused on the law schools and their role in promoting professionalism.

Twelfth Circuit

The Twelfth Circuit Local Professionalism Panel Committee is responsible for reviewing complaints filed in the circuit. Though the Twelfth Circuit does not have a professionalism committee, it carries out professionalism activities through local bar associations, including the

Manatee County Bar Association (MCBA), the Sarasota County Bar Association (SCBA) and the SCBA's South County Division. Each has engaged in a number of lunches, seminars, and meetings which actively promote ethics, civility, and professionalism efforts. On March 14, 2017, the Judge John M. Scheb American Inn of Court awarded its annual Professionalism Award to Attorney Kathi "Kate" Halvorsen. Finally, the MCBA Young Lawyers Division hosted its Second Annual Professionalism Roundtable on March 15, 2017. This event brought together experienced judges and practitioners with young lawyers to share their experiences about the practice of law and tenets of professionalism. The Roundtable event was followed by a one-hour CLE on mediation.

Thirteenth Circuit

The Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee is made up of five subcommittees. The Professionalism Awards Subcommittee awarded its Third Annual Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Award to David Rowland at the Hillsborough County Bar Association's Twentieth Annual Bench Bar Conference Membership Luncheon. The Promotions Subcommittee has distributed information regarding the Local Professionalism Panels, including how to make a professional complaint. The CLE & Events Subcommittee gave multiple presentations to educate the circuit on professionalism topics and issues. Committee Member Thomas Newcomb Hyde created a presentation promoting professionalism which has received ongoing CLE accreditation and has been presented at events throughout the state. The Local Professionalism Panel Subcommittee is receiving complaints and resolved 22 cases during the reporting period. The Medical/Legal Subcommittee has been involved with the Black Robe Program, an annual effort partnering judges, lawyers, doctors, medical students, and faculty from the schools of medicine and pharmacy; the event was held on October 25, 2016.



A group of judges with their western-themed booth at the Judicial Pig Roast

Fourteenth Circuit

The Fourteenth Judicial Circuit Bench-Bar and Professionalism Committee sponsored its annual Professionalism Awards Ceremony on May 4, 2017, at which Justice Alan Lawson spoke. At the

ceremony, the Committee awarded the Larry G. Smith Professionalism Award to Attorney Todd Brister. Planning for the 2018 professionalism awards ceremony began, holding that the event will occur on May 3, 2018, with Justice Ricky Polston as the keynote speaker. The Committee communicates primarily via email.

Fifteenth Circuit

The Palm Beach County Bar Professionalism Committee awarded the Sidney A. Stubbs Professionalism Award to Michael Mopsick. The Committee also planned events, such as a Professionalism Enhancement CLE Spring Seminar in conjunction with American Board of Trial Attorneys and an informal spring event titled Meet Your Mentors Because It Matters. Further, the Committee held meetings to plan methods for outreach to new attorneys, breakfast meetings, and the Local Professionalism Panel. The Local Professionalism Panel now publishes redacted closing recommendation letters for complaints they receive in the monthly Palm Beach County Bar Association bulletin for informational purposes.



Palm Beach County Bar Association Professionalism Committee Co-chairs Larry Rochefort and Kara Berard Rockenbach present the annual Sid Stubbs Professionalism Award to Michael Mopsick.

Sixteenth Circuit

The Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Local Professionalism Committee has a joint membership with the Local Professionalism Panel, which welcomed a new chair and members during the reporting period. Members of the Committee both hosted and attended various functions to discuss procedural and ethical e-filing issues, including a reception for the judges of the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit and Third District Court of Appeal. The Committee is chaired by County Judge Ruth Becker of Monroe County, and includes membership of two additional county judges and six local attorneys appointed by the chief judge. Complaints are routed to the chair and quarterly meetings are scheduled to discuss complaints, with additional meetings held as necessary.



Ethics CLE presentation. Individuals in the photo include Circuit Judge Bonnie Helms, Calvin Allen, MCBA President Dustin Hunter, Public Defender Robert Lockwood, and Al Kelley.

Seventeenth Circuit

The Broward County Bar Association Professionalism Committee collaborated with the Young Lawyers Section and other voluntary bar associations to host various professionalism-related events, such as Approaching the Bench (discussing courtroom decorum and professionalism); the Annual Diversity Luncheon; the Advocating for Change: The Young Lawyer's Guide to Local Politics seminar (discussing how lawyers should behave and present themselves in the community); and the 2017 Got Civility? Seminar promoting civility in the legal profession. Committee members also participate in the Broward County Bar Association Mentorship Program.



Participants of the Seventeenth Circuit's Women Attorneys: What Does Professionalism Mean to You? Seminar. Pictured left to Right: Brian Koch, Hilary Creary, Harold Pryor Jr., Beth Feder, George Odom Jr., Judge Fabienne E. Fahnestock, Nancy Brodzki, Judge Jennifer Wigand Hilal, Stefanie Moon, Kemie King and Braulio Rosa.

Eighteenth Circuit

The Eighteenth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee participated in numerous professionalism events hosted by the Brevard County Bar Association, the Seminole County Bar Association, and various local Inns of Court. The Seminole County Bar Association awarded its Seminole Legal Aid Association Award to the Seminole County Legal Aid Veterans Team and the Whigham Gray Award to Jennifer Frank during its December awards ceremony. The Brevard County Bar Association awarded its Professionalism Award to Iraq War veteran and cancer survivor, Renee Dial.

Nineteenth Circuit

The Nineteenth Circuit Professionalism Panel partnered with the local voluntary bar associations in hosting professionalism events, luncheons, and evening programs to benefit the attorneys of the circuit. Events included the annual Bench Bar Conference, which offered professionalism-centered CLEs and judge/attorney interaction regarding professionalism. The Martin County Bar Association awarded its Second Annual Professionalism Award to Preethi Sekharan at their judicial reception.



Pictured left to right are Preethi Sekharan, recipient of the Second Annual Professionalism Award; The Honorable Steve Levin; Dr. Rama Sekharan; and Dr. N.C. Sekharan at the 2016 Martin County Bar Association Judicial Reception.

Twentieth Circuit

The Twentieth Judicial Circuit Professionalism Committee attended various seminars, events, and functions to promote professionalism in the Circuit. These included Circuit Mock Trial Competitions hosted by local bar associations; the Lee County Bar Association Pro Bono Awards Luncheon; Inn of Court presentations; and a judicial panel seminar from the Second District Court of Appeal regarding courtroom etiquette and other professionalism-related topics.