

Community Outreach in the Central District of California

April 2015

CONSUMER BANKRUPTCY LITIGATION PRACTICUM MOCK HEARINGS AND RECEPTION

On Thursday, April 2, the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Central District of California hosted a mock hearing and reception for the inaugural class of the Loyola Law School Consumer Bankruptcy Litigation Practicum (CBLP). The CBLP is a two-semester program during which students gain real-life experience interviewing, counseling, and assisting unrepresented individuals. The students did an impressive job during mock hearings before Judge Klein. After receiving feedback from Judge Klein, Professor Anne Wells, and the students' coaches, Christian Cooper and W. Sloan Youkstetter, the students took a tour of Judge Klein's chambers.



Consumer Bankruptcy Litigation Practicum Mock Hearing Participants. From left: Daniel Pouldar, Thomas Ramirez, Alistair Gesmundo, Jamie Lopez, Judge Sandra R. Klein, Professor Anne Wells, W. Sloan Youkstetter, Christian Cooper

Judge Klein and the students then attended a catered reception. Approximately 50 people participated in the reception, including Chief Judge Sheri Bluebond, and Judges Martin R. Barash, Neil W. Bason, Julia W. Brand, Ernest M. Robles, and Barry Russell. Clerk of Court and Executive Officer Kathy Campbell and members of her staff also participated. In addition, attorneys from all over the district and law clerks showed their support by attending.

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PLEASE RISE! LOS ANGELES DIVISION HOLDS MOCK TRIAL FOR FOURTH GRADERS

On April 20, 2015, after years in fairy-tale land, the infamous three bears finally got their day in court. In a mock trial orchestrated by Chief Judge Sheri Bluebond with the assistance of Judge Julia W. Brand and the Los Angeles Division staff, a group of nervously giddy fourth graders brought the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears to trial. Judge Bluebond got the idea to host a mock trial from Judge Tighe, who has hosted several over the years. She realized that fourth grade would be a good age and offered the opportunity to her children's elementary school.

On the day of the trial, the Canfield Elementary School students were split into two courtrooms and performed the roles of the famed fable, including Goldilocks and Baby Bear, legal representatives, jurors, and officers of the Court. Judge Bluebond's twins appeared as the judges, the Honorable Gwendolyn Smith and the Honorable Geoffrey Smith. They looked really cute in their robes! After a few rounds of spirited questioning, the Court rested. Kids played word scratchers and tested the microphones out while the jury deliberated. The excitement continued when two different verdicts were reached! Will justice ever be served for the three bears? The group discussed the question.

There are many types of mock trials. Fairy tales are commonly used for elementary scholastic mock trials as a way to introduce the concepts of trials, the vocabulary of the Court, and the roles of the individuals portrayed in the trial. Judging by the kids' lively responses during and after the mock trial, it worked. Fun and justice was had by all. Court is adjourned!



Chief Judge Sheri Bluebond with student judge, Geoffrey Smith, and students from Canfield Elementary School. Judge Julia W. Brand is standing on the right.



Chief Judge Sheri Bluebond with student judge, Gwendolyn Smith, and students from Canfield Elementary School.

April 2015 (continued)

CALIFORNIA CENTRAL BANKRUPTCY COURT HOSTS LAW DAY CELEBRATION

On April 24, 2015, the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Central District of California hosted a Law Day celebration for more than 90 high school students who are members of Junior State of America (JSA), a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization for students interested in politics, government, foreign affairs, and the law. Bankruptcy Judges Barry Russell, Sandra R. Klein, Julia W. Brand, and Martin R. Barash participated in the daylong event.



Jobs Panel Participants

The celebration began with a jobs panel, which featured speakers from the District Court, the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and the offices of the United States Attorney, Federal Public Defender, and U.S. Marshals Service. The speakers discussed their background and education, how they got their jobs, and what they liked the most and the least about their work. The Deputy U.S. Marshals even brought their tactical equipment for the students to try on. Following the jobs panel, Bankruptcy Judge Sandra Klein provided a financial

literacy presentation, which included video and audio clips to highlight important information such as budgeting and saving, using credit, debit, and prepaid cards, and credit reports and scores. The presentation also included a discussion of student loans and bankruptcy.

The Bankruptcy Court then hosted a Power Lunch, during which judges, lawyers and other professionals shared lunch with the students and discussed the law and the legal profession.

Guest speaker Professor Laurie L. Levenson of Loyola Law School discussed high profile criminal cases and her work exonerating Obie Anthony and Kash Register for crimes they did not commit. She also discussed law and justice and impressed upon students that they are the leaders of the future. The Power Lunch concluded with a spirited game of *Legal Jeopardy!* which is played like the traditional *Jeopardy!* game, but with categories such as "Bill of Rights" and "Who's Who in the Courtroom."





Student Judge Julia Sandoval and U.S. District Judge John A. Kronstadt preside over the mock trial.

The last event of the Law Day celebration was a mock trial involving a criminal “texting-while-driving” case. The students played all of the roles in the trial including the judge, prosecutors, defense counsel, courtroom deputy and jurors. District Judge John A. Kronstadt assisted the student judge and provided information about trial practices and procedures.

The Bankruptcy Court’s Community Outreach Committee, chaired by Bankruptcy Judge Sandra R. Klein, organized the district-wide Law Day celebration.
