



NCBC IMPACT

Dedicated to the professional development of its members

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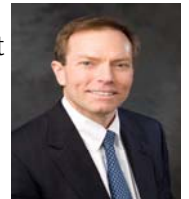
Issue #1

January/2013

NCBC President's Outlook for 2013

John Horner

There are many serious issues facing the federal court system as we begin a new year. The reduction in funding for the courts that has occurred the past few years is likely to continue. The bankruptcy courts will once again adapt to provide services with fewer resources.



Looking at the performance of the bankruptcy court clerks' offices in the past provides a reason for optimism for the future. The bankruptcy courts have a history of innovation and improvement. The desire to improve services and reduce costs still permeates the culture of the bankruptcy courts.

As always, the NCBC will be involved in assisting our members and the bankruptcy courts in this process of continual improvement. This edition of the *Impact* includes articles on the Automatic Docketing Interface (ADI), Case Management Assist, and "Working Smarter, Not Harder." These articles are just three examples of the emphasis that the NCBC places on assisting the courts and our members in developing greater efficiencies.

The Baltimore bankruptcy court and the NCBC education committee are planning another great educational program for this year's annual conference. Ideas and information presented at the annual conference flow to the individual courts and provide another avenue for sharing cost saving ideas and promoting better internal processes.

Despite the bleak budget outlook, one of the shining lights for the bankruptcy court system is the innovation that continues to occur in the bankruptcy courts. This provides hope and encouragement as we embark on a new year.

The New Year will also signal the commencement of the annual membership drive that will start on January 21, 2013. Please remember to renew your membership.

2013 Publication Dates

January 4

March 8

May 3

July 5

September 6

November 1

Articles are due to the editor by the 25th of the month preceding publication

laura_whitehead@nceb.uscourts.gov

Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund

A subcommittee has been formed to determine the distribution of contributions from the Hurricane Sandy relief fund. Eileen Garrity, Kris Botts, and John Horner are on this subcommittee. This edition of the *Impact* has more information about the relief fund.

Awards Committee to Administer Scholarship/Tuition Assistance Program

The Awards Committee has been charged with administering the program that will award scholarships to our members for the annual conference. If you are interested in this program, please see the article about the scholarship fund in this edition of the *Impact*.

Membership Committee Kicks Off Annual Membership Campaign

The Membership Committee will be kicking off the annual Membership Campaign on January 21, 2013. The NCBC's strength comes from the continuing support of its members. Please remember to renew your membership.

Benefits Committee Announces Names of Courts to Receive Education Program Provided by Gallagher Benefit Service

The Benefits Committee has been reviewing the current benefit offerings to determine the level of interest in other insurance products. The districts of North Carolina Eastern, Alabama Northern, and Illinois Northern have been selected by the committee to receive the financial/retirement education program provided by Gallagher Benefit Service.

Education Committee Makes Plans for 2013 Conference Education Program

The Education Committee, in conjunction with the Baltimore court, is developing the education program for the NCBC's annual conference. The conference will be held in Baltimore, MD from August 12 to 15, 2013. Thanks to all of your 2012 conference survey responses, the Education Committee is well underway in designing an educational program with your thoughts and comments in mind. During the last two meetings, the Committee was in the process of identifying plenary speakers and different breakout sessions for 2013. As usual, the committee is going to great lengths to ensure that the conference provides diverse educational opportunities for all NCBC members.

Mentorship Program Available in Early 2013

The Mentorship Pilot Program has officially ended and has proven to be a success. With feedback from the pilot participants, the Mentoring Advisory Committee (MAC) is now in the process of fine-tuning the formal Program which will commence in early 2013. We are pleased with the tremendous amount of interest shown in the program and are thrilled to be able to provide such a beneficial offering for NCBC members. Look for an announcement concerning this program in January 2013. The MAC members are: Adair Kowach, Djuanna Gholston, Eileen Garrity, Tracie Williams, Eric Cyman, Kathy Bernart, Garbo Cheung-Jasik, Harry Pagan, La Tia Sanders, Eddy Emmons and Kirsten Mahoney.

NCBC Scholarship/Tuition Assistance Program

Eileen Garrity

U. S. Bankruptcy Court, District of Massachusetts

Last year the board approved the creation of a scholarship/tuition assistance program to assist deserving, qualified NCBC members in their pursuit of continuing education. The program currently has an annual budget of \$4,000.00. Recipients will receive up to \$500.00 which can be used for attendance at the annual conference or for approved continuing education courses. Eligibility requirements are as follows:

- Must be a current NCBC member and in good standing for a minimum of two (2) consecutive years.
- Must be a deputy clerk, currently employed by the U. S. Courts.
- Must complete the application process before the deadline provided.

The application is available on the NCBC website at: <https://ncbc.memberclicks.net/conferences>. You must be logged in to access this information.



NCBC Sponsors Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund

Kris Botts

U. S. Bankruptcy Court, Southern District of Iowa



Members of our court family have suffered devastating losses from Hurricane Sandy. In response the NCBC has established a relief fund to help our court family in need.

Knowing our membership consists of helpful and caring people, we ask that you consider contributing to the Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund. This is a way for all of us in the bankruptcy courts to help our friends and colleagues who have been directly impacted by the storm. One hundred percent of the money donated will be given to court employees in need of assistance. To date, our organization has raised over \$2,000.00 in relief funds with checks still coming in.

The NCBC greatly appreciates donations of any size. Please make your checks payable to the NCBC Relief Fund and mail to:

Celia Strickler, NCBC Business Manager
1450 Blue Horizon Circle
Bradenton, FL 34208

Deadline for donations is January 31, 2013.

Please note that contributions are not tax deductible because NCBC is not a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

News From the Benefits Committee

Ann Iannarelli, Benefits Coordinator

U. S. Bankruptcy Court, Middle District of Florida

Gallagher Benefits Offers Training on Roth TSP

Discover
Roth TSP

I had the pleasure of attending a Roth TSP class presented by Phyllis Conary at the 2012 NCBC Conference in San Francisco. I was particularly interested in her course because she taught a benefit and retirement seminar for my court a few years ago. The reviews from my colleagues were outstanding.

As a former federal employee, Phyllis is familiar with benefits and has witnessed the retirement process in action. She gave us valuable insight into the various retirement options and the “dos and don’ts” when you’re getting ready to take that leap.

Phyllis covered every aspect of the FERS and CSRS programs including TSP, Social Security, and Medicare. We discussed spousal benefits, and the pros and cons of taking health and life insurance into retirement. A considerable amount of time was spent reviewing the benefits available to active employees such as, FEDVIP, FEHB, FEGLI, the Flexible Spending programs and Long-term Care insurance.

To make the day complete, we were taught how to calculate the basic annuity and FERS supplement using our own service computation information.

The training was excellent. I can’t say enough about the importance of empowering our colleagues with the knowledge of their federal benefits. It alleviates anxiety and promotes better utilization of benefits.

Gallagher Benefits offers this wonderful service to all of our members. They will customize a program to fit your court’s needs. They are just a phone call or a click away.

Please contact Gallagher at (415) 536-8611 or visit their website at <https://www.federalfirst.com/>

Automated Docketing Interface (ADI) is not a new concept, but one that is gaining momentum among bankruptcy courts looking to manage their work with fewer staff. The recent work measurement formula reduced bankruptcy court staffing nationally by 30%. Courts like mine were disproportionately hit by a 35% decrease. For the first time since 1994, our court was found to be overstaffed virtually overnight.

The question now is, how do we get the work done with fewer staff than we had last year? The downsizing trend in bankruptcy courts is expected to continue over the next three years due not only to the federal budget cuts but the judiciary's internal budget cut in the form of Shared Administrative Services (SAS). Part of the answer may lie in the emerging technology introduced by ADI.

The first self-help training program was facilitated the last week of November by Joe Markley, Director of Automation, NC-M, with the assistance of Wade Feltman, Automation Programmer, FL-N, and Karl Gerdes, Management Analyst, Bankruptcy Court Administration Division. Coming together for a three-day training event were operational and IT staff from a number of courts including: Kerry Kahl and Deborah Pulse, TN-W; Todd Finney and Lauren Leath, PA-W; Julie Gibson and Traci Abrams, FL-N; Yvonne Cherokee and Tina Roberson, NC-E; Kevin Freeman and Robin Vanhoy, NC-W; Dianna Weaver, LA-W; and Marie Randolph and Jason Wenning, OH-N. The training was hosted in Wilson, NC, by the Eastern District of North Carolina. The purpose of the training was to expose ADI to both operational and programming staff from the attending courts and to allow them to not only learn its usefulness, but to actually create an ADI program that the courts could take back home and implement immediately. Each of the courts represented were able to do just that by creating one or more programs throughout the training event. Additionally, professional contacts were made and friendships born that will be able to continue the work begun in NC-E to flourish in their home courts.

So, what is ADI and why is it so important? ADI is a program that can be used by extracting information from ECF and passing it to the ADI program to be entered automatically onto a case docket. It has been suggested that 30% or more of docket entries performed by a case administrator can be automated. ADI allows courts to program modules in various languages to create the XML files used for automated docketing.

Some of the proven programs that can automate docket events include:

- Notice of Assets & Request for Notice to Creditors in Chapter 7 Cases
- Notice to Creditors to File Claims
- Notice of Motion to Avoid Lien
- Financial Management Reminder Notice in Chapter 7 & 13 Cases
- First Day Orders in Chapter 11 Cases
- Order Converting Case [Chapter 13 to Chapter 7]
- Order on Motion to Extend Time to Object to Exemptions [Chapter 13]
- Order to Show Cause on Motion to Dismiss for Failure to Provide Tax Returns
- Docketing of Returned Mail

The above list just scratches the surface of the innumerable events that can take advantage of the ADI programming and reduce the case administration workload on bankruptcy clerk's offices nationally.

Continued on page 6

ADI Initiative

Ken Hirz

Continued from page 4

ADI scripts can be submitted for sharing on Quickr at <http://quickr.uscmail.dcn>. Once logged into Quickr using your Lotus Notes login and password, search for ADI Repository.

I want to not only recognize Joe Markley for his extraordinary efforts as a trainer for the above event, but to acknowledge his receipt of NCBC's Outstanding Service Award announced at the 2012 NCBC Annual Conference at the Marriot Marquis in San Francisco. The award was given for his service in the development and implementation of the ADI program and sharing with, at the time, ten other bankruptcy courts. Joe was also a featured trainer in demonstrating locally developed applications (ADI) at the 2012 Bankruptcy Court Operational Practices forum at the Hyatt Regency Peachtree in Atlanta, Georgia, in August. I also want to thank NC-M, NC-E, and FL-N for hosting and supporting the recent training event that should kick-start further development and continue to promulgate automation in the bankruptcy community.

For more information on the use of ADI contact Karl Gerdes at karl_gerdes@ao.uscourts.gov or 202-502-1538.



Working Smarter Not Harder

Danette Neff

U. S. Bankruptcy Court, Eastern District of California

What can be done to improve productivity and the quality of work in these times of fiscal austerity? There is, of course, no single action that can solve the budget issues the courts are enduring.

Part of the answer lies in adopting a perspective - one of doing more and better quality work with fewer resources. Also, we must consider a mechanism to recognize and encourage productivity, continuing to improve upon processes that can be done right the first time.

In an effort to make this our mantra, the following components will help:

Leadership

- Provide curriculum to give leaders (supervisors, work leaders, etc.) the skills they need to maximize effectiveness.

Quality Commitment

- Establish a culture of continuous improvement.
- Employee/customer involvement through participation in teams, committees, etc.
- Base decisions on data and the use of statistical problem-solving tools.

Process Improvement

- Set aside established assumptions about the way work should be done.
- Come up with new processes that more closely reflect court/customer requirements.
- Designate employees/customers from all levels to examine fundamental court processes and suggest improvements.
- Utilize knowledgeable work measurement groups to study how the court currently operates, gather data, and suggest improvements and future directions.

Motivation/Incentives for Internal and External Users

- Sense of ownership.
- Taking pride in producing high levels of quality and productivity.
- Managing stress.
- Instilling accountability to external users and the public as a whole for good government.
- Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credits for attorneys.

It's also important to identify processes that are already being done right the first time, those processes are our successes! Empowering employees and customers at all levels is essential and can be achieved by tapping into the talent, wisdom, initiative and commitment of employees and customers. After all, who knows better than the actual "users" how to get the job done right the first time? With leadership, commitment to quality and process improvement we can take the organization beyond present levels of efficiency, effectiveness and quality. As we continue working towards the concept of working smarter, not harder, we can enable employees to do more with less.

CM/ECF Next Gen Update

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On December 6th, the 2013 Next Generation of CM/ECF Bankruptcy Working Group had its kick-off orientation call. Judge Tamara Mitchell (AL-N) and Charlene Hiss (OR), co-chairs, welcomed the new members and described the work of the group in the year ahead, including current CM/ECF work and acting as the Change Control Board for NextGen requirements changes that arise from the design process. As in the past, minutes of the CM/ECF Working Group's monthly conference calls will be posted to the J-Net for the benefit of the entire court community.

With regard to the on-going work of the NextGen Expert Panels, design work continues with the cross-court expert panels in all the task areas prioritized for Release 1.0 - Central Sign On, Workspace, Calendar, Reports, Judges Review Packet (which includes case at a glance) and Bankruptcy Case Opening and the project staff is now posting a monthly project status report to the J-Net which may be found at http://jnet.ao.dcn/Information_Technology/National_Systems_Supported/CMECF_Next_Generation/Project_Status_Report.html.

If you have questions regarding the Next Generation CM/ECF Project, they should be directed to [Robby Robinson](#), Bankruptcy Court Administration Division, [Charlene Hiss](#), Co-Chair, Bankruptcy Clerk of the District of Oregon, [Richard Goodier](#), Bankruptcy Judges Division, or the [Hon. Tamara Mitchell](#), Co-Chair, Northern District of Alabama. You can also check for updates on the [Next Generation of CM/ECF J-Net page](#).



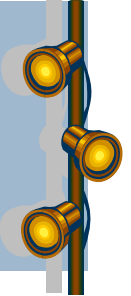
2013 NCBC Conference
August 12, - 15 in Baltimore,
Maryland

Spotlight on Court Developed Programs

Case Management Assist (CMA)

Sheila Sewell

U. S. Bankruptcy Court, Western District of Oklahoma



Case Management Assist (CMA) is a dynamic tool developed by Oklahoma Western that transforms the way work is processed in the Bankruptcy Court.

Case managers no longer run reports in CM/ECF to find their work. Work is imported from CM/ECF and organized in the CMA user's customized and color-coded To Do Box. Case numbers in a user's To Do Box link to the Case Information Screen where cases are displayed in a user-friendly format and CM/ECF editing pages are accessible through Court specific hyperlinks. Quality control work marked as QCok in CMA is recorded in CM/ECF. Notes entered in CMA are not viewable on the CM/ECF docket.

No two Bankruptcy Courts are identical in practice and procedure. CMA has been designed to permit Courts flexibility in using the program. Work can be assigned by terminal digit, judge, teams, office, chapter, case number, case type, random pooling, or by a combination of methods. CMA can be used by Courts with divisional offices or those with only one office. Because CMA operates on a Court's CM/ECF dictionary, event changes are not required to install and to use CMA. CMA is so flexible that a district court has installed and successfully implemented the program!

Court size is not a factor in using CMA. Small, medium, and large sized Bankruptcy Courts use CMA today. The program is in use or is being implemented in about thirty Courts nationwide.

In these tough fiscal times, CMA has proven to be a cost-cutting resource. In the three years that the program has been used in Oklahoma Western, case administrator staffing has fallen 40% due to retirements and separations. Although caseload has dropped 10%, today's staff continues to quality control review 100% of all filings and completes a second level quality control review of 40 to 45% of filings without complaint.

CMA provides an efficient way for supervisors to reassign work, to track errors made by external and internal users, and to monitor work performance. Reports in CMA provide case management and user performance information. Case administrators, financial deputies, supervisors, chambers staff, and other Court personnel who use CM/ECF will find that Case Management Assist will make "your work...easier."

For more information, visit the CMA Connections page (from the DCN) at <https://connections.ao.dcn/communities/community/CMAssist>.

To discuss CMA use or to schedule a WebEx, contact sheila_sewell@okwb.uscourts.gov, scott_bellingham@okwb.uscourts.gov, or penny_wallis@okwb.uscourts.gov.

Note

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Dear readers,

Happy New Year! The 2013 editorial committee plans to provide more articles that focus on the work performed in the courts this year. In a time where we are working with reduced staff, sharing streamlined procedures, court developed programs and ways to deal with the stress are imperative. Working Smarter, Not Harder” is a new series introduced in this issue of IMPACT. “Spotlight on Court Developed Programs” is a series introduced last year. In order to keep these series alive, we need your help. Please consider submitting an article on one or both of these topics.

If you have information to share, but writing articles is not your forte, contact me and an editorial staff member will be assigned to work with you or to write the article on your behalf.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Laura Whitehead, Editor



**It's NCBC membership
renewal time!**