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Summer 2026

EDMIBARnewsletter

A Joint Publication of the Eastern District of Michigan Bar Association and FBA Eastern District of Michigan Chapter
- 65 years of service to our Federal Bench and Bar -

Access to Bankruptcy Court

By Kelley Donnelly

Nearly 100 members of the Eastern District of Michigan's bankruptcy bench and bar gathered on the evening of September 24, 2026, for the Hon. Marci B. McIvor Annual Fundraiser for Access to Bankruptcy Court (ABC). This annual fundraising event, named in honor of Hon. Marci B. McIvor (Bankr. E.D. Mich.) (ret.), was hosted by Warner Norcross + Judd at the firm's Detroit office. The event raised approximately $50,000 for ABC.

ABC was founded in 2010 by Judge McIvor and other leaders of the local bankruptcy bar. ABC is a unique access to justice program based in the Eastern District of Michigan. It raises funds to provide low-income individuals and families in the District—who otherwise might have no choice but to seek relief under the Bankruptcy Code without counsel—with experienced consumer bankruptcy counsel, free of charge.

Bankruptcy is a complex process. A pro se debtor is significantly less likely to receive the benefits of bankruptcy than a debtor with counsel, and pro se debtors are often worse off after an unsuccessful bankruptcy filing. The Eastern District of Michigan has one of the heaviest consumer bankruptcy dockets in the country, and there has been a steady uptick in filings, including pro se Chapter 7 filings, in recent years. Last year alone, the District had approximately 940 pro se Chapter 7 filings. ABC historically received approximately 20-40

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President's Column

Lauren Mandel

In my first few months as President of the Eastern District of Michigan Bar Association (EDMIBAR), I have often reflected on how I got here. My answer is the same as many of our past Presidents: I was invited. There are multiple reasons why "the power of an invitation" has been a forceful refrain apparently—according to a Google search—since biblical times. An invitation communicates a message of inclusion and is a low risk/high reward proposition, often leading to enrichment and positive change.

Our local colleagues who are not yet members of EDMIBAR, or who are members but are not actively involved, need to know that they are welcome in our organization. This includes lawyers throughout our District, whether they work at firms, the U.S. Attorneys' Office, the Federal Community Defender's Office, government agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses in our community, or a law school. It also includes our future lawyers attending law school. A personal gesture from me or you, asking a fellow member of the bar or a law student to join an event or attend a meeting, is how we expand our membership, thereby enriching our organization and its offerings.

Our Women's Committee is a prime example of how impactful the power of an invitation can be. Active members of our organization joined forces with less active members to form a new committee, which then planned and executed some of our best and most well-attended events in recent years. These included several panel and group discussions covering topics like "How to Survive and Thrive in an Uncivil Landscape" and "Devil in the Details" (exploring the nuances that elevate a legal practice). Those events,

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President's Column *(from page 1)*

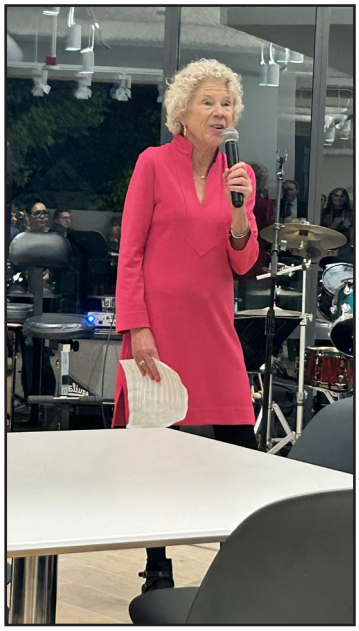
in turn, brought many new members to our EDMIBAR family. So, I ask you to extend an invitation to a lawyer or future lawyer in our community who is not yet part of the EDMIBAR family to join you at an upcoming EDMIBAR event or at a committee meeting.

I also invite those of you who are members but may not currently be actively involved to attend an upcoming committee meeting or an Executive Board/Committee Co-Chair Meeting. All are open to anyone interested in attending, and I am encouraging our committee leaders to schedule regular meetings and add them to our calendar to foster participation. Meetings are where new ideas for educational programs and social events are shared and developed. Fresh ideas for programs and events, in addition to our perennial offerings, are what keep us thriving as an organization. They bring us together as a legal community, enriching us professionally and personally, and fostering civility in our District. Our organization has grown extensively in the last several years to more than 1,400 members, but there are many practitioners in the District who we still have to reach by extending that invitation.

They will be joining an incredible cadre of federal practitioners dedicated to advancing justice and promoting professionalism, education, civility, and camaraderie in the Eastern District. They will enjoy an organization that is fortunate to have incredible support across the District's federal bench, including from Chief Judge Stephen J. Murphy III. They will be welcomed by my fellow officers Matt Allen, Robin Wagner, Lena Gonzalez, and Adam Wenner, as well as by Executive Director Mindy Herrmann. Our association is poised to have another successful and productive year and a strong future ahead, thanks to the dedication and strong leadership of my predecessors, most recently Charissa Potts, Hon. Andrew J. Lievense, Jennifer Newby, George Donnini, and Dan Sharkey.

I extend the invitation to you to become or continue being an active member of our EDMIBAR community. We welcome your participation and ideas on how we can continue to grow membership, improve the organization, and enhance and expand our offerings. Your acceptance of my invitation may be the beginning of your path to becoming a future leader in our legal community. So please, join us!

Bankruptcy Access *(from page 1)*



Bankruptcy Access Court Speakers.
Photo by Charissa Potts.

applications per month However, the number of applications received each month grew to over 100 per month in 2024 and remains at that level today.

ABC's goal is to provide experienced counsel to as many qualified applicants as possible. An individual whose household income is at or below 150% of the federal poverty level can apply for a free bankruptcy attorney through ABC. ABC then reviews the individual's application to ensure that he or she qualifies before matching qualifying applicants with a volunteer panel attorney. More than 40 highly experienced members of the local bankruptcy bar serve as panel attorneys for ABC and agree to handle cases for a substantially reduced rate ($450), which is paid by ABC. The discharge rate in cases assigned by ABC is approximately 95%.

In addition to providing direct legal assistance, ABC has partnered with the Wayne State University Law School and the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law to pair volunteer law students who are interested in bankruptcy law with ABC panel attorneys. Students who participate in the program obtain valuable experience assisting panel attorneys with, among other things, initial consultations with applicants, preparation of filings, and attendance at creditors' examinations and hearings. By fostering these educational partnerships, ABC strengthens the local bankruptcy bar while multiplying the impact of each panel attorney's contribution.

The McIvor Fundraiser is the primary fundraising event for ABC and has become the social event of the year for the local bankruptcy community. This year's event featured great food and drinks, live music, and ample opportunities for networking and reconnecting with old friends. Speeches were given by Judge Paul R. Hage, President of ABC, and Judge McIvor, who flew back from Florida to attend. Warner Norcross + Judd's beautiful office, adjacent to Little Caesars Arena, served as the venue for the

event. The $50,000 raised will help support ABC's operations in the coming years.

Sponsors for the McIvor Fundraiser included JAMS, Stevenson & Bullock, Dickinson Wright, Eastern District of Michigan Bar Association, Freedom Law, Hon. Lisa and Steven Gretchko, Hon. Marci B. McIvor (ret.), Hon. Steven W. Rhodes (ret.), Osipov Bigelman, Bodman, Foley & Lardner, Hon. Joel D. Applebaum and Jami A. Statham, Esq., Kerr Russell & Weber, Simon PLC/Frank R. Simon, Receiver, Wolfson Bolton Kochis, Frego & Associates, Gold Lange Majoros & Smalarz, Hon. Paul R. Hage, Huron Consulting Group, Miller Canfield, Province, Strobl Stark, Taft Stettinius & Hollister, Trott Law, and Varnum.

If you have questions about Access to Bankruptcy Court, interested in becoming a panel attorney, or would like to donate, please contact Charissa Potts at cpotts@freedomlawpc.com or visit www.accesstobankruptcycourt.com for more information.

Kinikia Essix, District Court Executive / Clerk of Court

The Court recently celebrated Constitution Day on September 17, 2026, with a public reading of the Constitution and Bill of Rights on the steps of the Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse in Detroit. Judges and members of the public were invited to attend. Constitution Day is a time to reflect on the importance of our Constitution and the fundamental role it plays in our system of government and the administration of justice. The event was organized by the Court's Civics Initiative, led by U.S. District Judge Terrence G. Berg.

The Court is excited to continue expanding its Civics Initiative outreach program and strengthening its connections with the communities it serves. Through the initiative, the Court is developing programs designed to help students, educators, community organizations, and members of the public learn more about the federal courts and the important role they play in our communities. Planned activities include court tours and other educational programs that will provide participants with a firsthand look at the judicial process, the work of the Court, and the overall role of the federal judiciary. We welcome schools, educators, legal organizations, civic groups, and other community partners interested in these initiatives. Our goal is to make the federal judiciary more accessible to the communities it serves and to foster a greater understanding of our judicial system. To learn more about the Court's civics outreach programs, please contact the Civics Outreach Coordinator at civics@mied.uscourts.gov.

The Court is looking forward to building on these efforts and creating new ways to connect with and serve our community. If you have any questions, suggestions or comments, please contact me at: kinikia_essix@mied.uscourts.gov.

Pictured from left to right: Marjon Neal – Court Executive's Office, Brandy Robinson – FDO, Jerome Gorgon – U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan, Barbara Radke – Executive Director of the Court Historical Society, U.S. District Judge Matthew F. Leitman, Daniel Dena – FDO, U.S. District Judge Denise Page Hood, U.S. District Judge Terrence G. Berg.

Photo by John Meiu, courtesy of Detroit Legal News Publishing LLC

A Season of Change

By Kristina Gregerson

Every fall, federal courts across the country say goodbye to law clerks whose terms of service are coming to an end, and say hello to those just beginning their terms. The Eastern District of Michigan marks this season of change—colloquially referred to as "law clerk turnover season"—with two events each year. The first is the Outgoing Law Clerk Luncheon and the second is the Incoming Law Clerk Orientation.

On August 11, judges and law clerks gathered to say goodbye to outgoing clerks at this year's Outgoing Law Clerk Luncheon. After enjoying good food and company, each judge with an outgoing law clerk was invited to talk about the clerk's background, best qualities, and future plans. This is a bittersweet event for those saying goodbye to members of their chambers' families. U.S. District Court Judge Terrence G. Berg—who had two outgoing law clerks this year—shared that "it is always incredibly hard to say goodbye to our law clerks. They provide such invaluable service, and they become our great colleagues and friends."

As with every season of change, the goodbyes are only half of the story. On September 15, the Court held this year's Incoming Law Clerk Orientation, where new law clerks were greeted with opening remarks from U.S. District Judge Laurie J. Michelson before a full day of training on topics ranging from the roles of the staff attorneys and magistrate judges to

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Participants from the Bench-Bar Golf Outing on August 12 at Northville Hills.
Photo by Mindy Herrmann

A Season of Change *(from page 3)*

insightful panels featuring current law clerks. At the helm of orientation was none other than EDMIBAR President Lauren Mandel, who is also the career law clerk to U.S. District Judge Linda V. Parker. President Mandel expressed that "it was exciting to welcome more than twenty new law clerks to our court family. I am exceptionally grateful to the experienced law clerks and court staff who took time from their daily responsibilities to prepare and present materials for the orientation and help us all administer justice efficiently, effectively, and fairly." At noon, current law clerks and judges joined the incoming clerks for lunch, where new clerks had the valuable opportunity to start connecting with judges and clerks from other chambers.

To further build these new connections, the EDMIBAR's Law Clerk Committee hosted a post-work social gathering for all law clerks at Cibo Detroit. Over drinks and small plates, clerks bonded over shared life experiences and seasoned clerks shared tips for the work ahead. To further deepen their connections with the District's legal community, law clerks are encouraged to join the EDMI Bar at https://edmibar.org/homepage-inspiro/about-edmibar/membership/ for a discounted price of $25 per year. As members, law clerks will have the opportunity to attend bar events for a reduced cost and participate in committees.

EDMIBAR Tees It Up at Northville Hills

By Katelyn M. Young and Brian D. King

At this year's Bench-Bar Golf Outing, the Chapter took friendly competition outside the courthouse and onto the pristine fairways at Northville Hills on August 12th. The morning kicked off to the sound of bagpipes heralding the start of play and welcoming our players. The Arnold Palmer signature layout gave our bar a genuine championship test—between the rolling hills, tricky wetlands, and slick greens, there was plenty of cross-examination about club selection in every cart. Over 90 members of our bench and bar enjoyed an outstanding day of golf, camaraderie, and laughs away from their dockets.

The bench was well represented this year, with Chief Judge Stephen J. Murphy III; District Judges Robert J. White, Michael Martin, and Shalina D. Kumar; Senior District Judges Paul D. Borman, and David M. Lawson,; Bankruptcy Judges Paul R. Hage and Mark A. Randon; Third Circuit Court Judge Kevin Cox; and retired judges Lita Popke and Denise Langford Morris all in attendance.

Adding some serious star power to the competition, members of the six-time MHSAA State Champion Northville High School Girls Golf Team were on hand at two holes, giving teams the welcome opportunity to "hire" their talent at the tee. While the course provided the challenge, the chance to catch up with colleagues across the bench and bar outside the courtroom is what truly makes this outing a beloved EDMIBAR tradition.

All the Marbles

There were, of course, scores to settle.
Congratulations to the Hurwitz Law foursome of Asher

Hurwitz, Noah Hurwitz, Colin Wilkin, and Robin Wagner (Robin Wagner Law), who clinched the victory and claimed the "All the Marbles" trophy with an impressive score of 60 (12 under par). The group came out on top of a competitive field featuring 20 teams from across the Eastern District.

Following play, several additional bar members joined the festivities for dinner, drinks, awards, and the raffle. As always, the post-round raffle kept the room lively. Lucky winners took home an array of coveted prizes, including foursomes: at Northville Hills and the University of Michigan courses; overnight stays at the Westin Book Cadillac and the Cambria; four Detroit Opera tickets; a "Bourbon Bonanza"; a Genitti's dinner-and-theater package; an Edibles Rex catering package; and an Oasis Hot Tub package.

With Sincere Thanks

The Bench-Bar Golf Outing would not be possible without the generous support of its sponsors. We are grateful to the firms and organizations that supported this year's event:

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Special thanks to the 2026 Golf Outing Committee Co-Chairs, Brian King (Bush Seyferth), Katelyn Young, Mindy Herrmann (EDMIBAR), and the staff at Northville Hills Golf for their work planning and executing the outing, and keeping the day running smoothly.

We hope to see many familiar faces—and some new ones!—when EDMIBAR returns to Northville Hills for next year's Bench-Bar Golf Outing on August 11, 2027. Watch future EDMIBAR eBlasts for additional information, or contact Mindy Herrmann at mindy@edmibar.org with questions.

Intellectual Property Committee and the New Lawyers Committee Host Summer Cornhole Event

By Christopher G. Darrow

On June 30th, the Intellectual Property Committee and the New Lawyers Committee hosted a summer cornhole social event at Campus Martius. The event was designed to promote civility within the bar by having attorneys interact in a fun social setting.

Cornhole at Campus Martius.
Photo by Chistopher G. Darrown

Over 60 attorneys and summer associates attended the event. Although the event was open to attorneys and summer associates from all practice areas, most attendees were intellectual property attorneys and summer associates from the metro-Detroit area, along with judicial law clerks and interns from the Theodore Levin United States Courthouse. Patent Examiners from the Detroit office of the United States Patent and Trademark Office also attended the event.

The cornhole social was a major success, with trophies awarded and hopes shared of repeating the event. Many thanks to Darrow Mustafa P.C. and Brooks Kushman for sponsoring the event.

Eastern District of Michigan Trial Advocacy Program Brings Hands-On Learning to Future Trial Lawyers

By Lena Gonzalez

From June 24–26, the inaugural Eastern District of Michigan Trial Advocacy Program (EDMI TAP) welcomed more than 50 early-career attorneys to the historic Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse for three days of hands-on courtroom training and mentorship.

Designed to bridge the gap between law school and the courtroom, EDMI TAP offered participants the opportunity to try their skills in a real federal courtroom under the guidance of esteemed members of the federal bench and some of Michigan's most accomplished trial attorneys. Through skills-based exercises and full courtroom simulations, participants examined witnesses, delivered arguments, and received

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Future Trial Lawyers *(from page 5)*

candid, and personalized feedback from the very judges and practitioners who shape trial practice in the Eastern District of Michigan.

The mentorship also extended beyond the exercises themselves. Over the course of the program, participants had opportunities to speak with judges and faculty, ask practical questions, and begin building professional relationships to support them as their careers develop.

Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Attendees praised the faculty, the instruction, and the opportunity to learn by doing, with many expressing interest in next year's program. One attendee reflected afterward, "I loved this program. I learned more from the faculty in three days than I learned in three years of law school." This feedback is illustrative of the desire and need for practical trial advocacy training in the Eastern District of Michigan.

EDMIBAR extends its sincere gratitude to the judges, faculty, volunteers, and sponsors whose generosity and commitment made this inaugural program possible. We look forward to continuing the program and expanding its impact in years ahead.

Attendees at the Inaugural Eastern District of Michigan Trial Advocacy Program (EDMI TAP).

Photo by Amir El-Aswad

Diversity Committee and Labor & Employment Committee Co-Host "Nuts & Bolts of the ADA"

By Alexis Amy

On June 17, 2026, over 40 people gathered at the Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse in Detroit for an insightful exploration of the core principles and applications of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Diversity Committee Co-Chair Amir El-Aswad kicked off the comprehensive three-hour event with opening remarks. Mr. El-Aswad noted that the event was designed to focus on disability, an often-overlooked concept in broader conversations about diversity. The Diversity Committee sought to host an event that would provide attendees with a deeper understanding of the ADA's role in preventing disability discrimination and ensuring equal access and opportunity for disabled individuals in public life.

Following Mr. El-Aswad, Diversity Committee Co-Chair Ki Lee Kilgore introduced the event's agenda and distinguished speakers. Michelle Crockett, a partner in Honigman's Labor and Employment Department, spoke to the audience first. Ms. Crockett enlightened attendees with her knowledge of Title I of the ADA, which addresses equal employment opportunities for disabled individuals. Ms. Crockett educated attendees on the definitions of key terms found in Title I and discussed—among other concepts—common reasonable accommodations, special rules for pregnant employees, the interactive process, undue hardship, and best practices for employers when disabled employees exercise their rights under the ADA.

Michelle Crockett shares her knowledge of Title I of the ADA.

After a short intermission, D'Antae Gooden, an associate in Honigman's Labor and Employment Department, dove into Title II and III of the ADA. He used practical examples and relevant case law to illustrate requirements imposed on public and private entities under these titles. Mr. Gooden engaged the audience with questions as he discussed topics such as: reasonable modifications and website accessibility, differences between service and emotional support animals, and damages awardable under each ADA Title.

The Honorable Susan K. DeClercq, U.S. District Judge, moderated a panel of legal experts well-versed in the ADA. The panelists—Ms. Crockett, Elizabeth Marzotto Taylor, and Rebecca Seguin-Skrabucha—offered insightful perspectives from the viewpoints of both plaintiff and defense attorneys. Judge DeClercq's thoughtful and engaging questions to panelists demonstrated her impressive background leading the Civil Rights Unit in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Ms. Taylor, an employment attorney at Deborah Gordon Law, spoke from her experience representing disabled plaintiffs who have suffered disability-based discrimination, harassment, or retaliation in employment. Ms. Seguin-Skrabucha, a member of Bodman's Workplace Law Practice Group, and Ms. Crockett shared the valuable counseling they provide to their clients, many of whom are employers navigating compliance with the ADA as well as a variety of other state and federal employment laws.

Panelists answered questions about several topics, including the difficulties of complying with the ADA's

legally mandated interactive process to identify a reasonable accommodation for a disabled employee, the "honest belief rule" that can work to protect employers' employment decisions, and remote work and leaves of absence as accommodations. The panel concluded with a lively audience Q&A, during which presenters shared ways they have approached similar scenarios with their clients.

Whether new attorneys or seasoned practitioners, attendees left the event with a stronger understanding of the ADA's core requirements across employment, public services, and public accommodations. The event allowed attendees to learn better ways to serve their clients, to understand different perspectives, and to meet new colleagues on both sides of the v.

The Diversity Committee and Labor & Employment Committee express gratitude to all panelists, attendees, and committee members for contributing to the success of the event. Our work continues, and we look forward to hosting more events exploring the diversity within our communities.

Sixteen New Assistant United States Attorneys Sworn before the Eastern District of Michigan

By Lena Gonzalez

On September 25, United States Attorney Jerome F. Gorgon Jr. presented sixteen new assistant United States attorneys (AUSAs) before the Eastern District of Michigan Court to take their Oath of Office.

The group brings a diverse range of experience and high degree of professional accomplishment to the office, Gorgon said.

"With these sixteen AUSAs, we have a wealth of valuable experience," Gorgon said. "Nine come from big law, and they each exchanged money for mission and we know that's true of every AUSA who is in this courtroom today, and every member of the bench. You're here because you believe in the collective good, the public good, and the mission that each of our branches of government is entrusted to carry out."

"We also have six Sixth Circuit clerkships among this group, and we'll have another one who's starting in a few weeks," Gorgon continued. "We also have five district court clerkships. We have five state Supreme Court clerkships among our hires, four assistant state attorneys general from three different states, three state prosecutors from four counties, one former assistant solicitor general, one U.S. Marine, one Army Ranger, a former teacher, engineer, and journalist. They bring a wide array of life experiences, but they all have this in common: That they are excellent, and they're well prepared to serve our office, the public, and provide good product before this court."

Judge Stephen J. Murphy presided over the ceremony. Distinguished members of the legal community—including former Chief Justice Robert Young, former U.S. Attorney Matthew Schnieder and newly appointed Judge Michael C. Martin—attended the ceremony in support of the newly sworn-in prosecutors.

A complete list of those sworn in is as follows:

- Dominic Barceleau
- Katherine Boothroyd
- Wiliam Broman
- Frank Dame
- Julia DeLapp
- Lena Gonzalez
- Jacob Hoppe
- Zachary Kitzmiller
- Garett Koger
- Jessica Kraft
- Robert Kuhn
- Thomas Philbrick
- David Porter
- Daniel Shin
- John Turrettini
- Barrett Young

EDMIBAR warmly welcomes these new AUSAs to the Eastern District!

Annual Dinner Attendees.

Photo by John Meiu, courtesy of Detroit Legal News Publishing LLC

2026 Annual Dinner

By 2026 Annual Dinner Committee

EDMIBAR's Annual Dinner was held on June 4, 2026, at the Westin Book Cadillac. The Annual Dinner honors the judges serving our District and features the presentation of awards, including the Cook-Friedman Civility Award. By all accounts, the Annual Dinner was a huge success and well attended by both the bench and bar.

Outgoing EDMIBAR President Charissa Potts kicked off dinner by introducing the federal judges in attendance, including Chief Judge Stephen J. Murphy III; District Judges Paul D. Borman, David M. Lawson, Mark A. Goldsmith, Terrence G. Berg, Laurie J. Michelson, Linda V. Parker, Jonathan J.C. Grey, Susan K.

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Annual Dinner *(from page 7)*

DeClercq, and Robert J. White; retired District Judges Sean F. Cox and Victoria Roberts; Magistrate Judge Anthony P. Patti; and Bankruptcy Judges Lisa S. Gretchko and Paul Hage. President Potts then presented Chapter Recognition Awards to five EDMIBAR members in recognition and gratitude for going significantly above and beyond in their contributions to the organization over the preceding year. This year's awardees were Judge DeClercq, Kelley Donnelly, Tom McNeill, David Mellem, and Patrick Seyferth.

After the presentation of the Chapter Recognition Awards, Judge Lawson presented the 2026 Cook-Friedman Civility Award to attorney Kenneth Mogill. Ken's gracious acceptance of the award demonstrated why he is such a worthy recipient. Ken recounted his stellar career in the law while emphasizing the need for all of us to remain committed to the rule of law, high ethical standards, and representation of those less fortunate. Ken's commitment to the practice of law may only be outdone by his commitment to his wife of 45 years, Maureen Shaughnessy, and their family, who proudly watched Ken accept the award.

Spring Women's Event Attendees.

Photo by Mindy Herrmann

The evening concluded with remarks from incoming EDMIBAR President Lauren Mandel. She began by introducing her fellow 2026-2027 Officers: President-Elect Matt Allen, Vice President and Treasurer Robin Wagner, and Secretary Lena Gonzalez. President Mandel then spoke about the year ahead for EDMIBAR.

A special note of thanks to the event sponsors, without whom the Annual Dinner would not have been possible, and, of course, to Mindy Herrmann, EDMIBAR Executive Director, whose dedication made this event—and the organization as a whole—such a success!

Book Club Discuss Independance Day by Steve Lopez.

Photo by Mindy Herrmann

Building Community and Finding Fulfillment: Recapping Our Spring Women's Event and Book Club Event

By Mindy W. Herrmann

One of EDMIBAR's central pillars is creating space for meaningful and lasting connection across our bench and bar. That mission was on full display this past May as EDMIBAR hosted its Spring Women's Event, bringing together women attorneys, judges, and legal professionals from across Southeast Michigan for an evening of camaraderie, reflection, and candid conversation.

Hosted by Warner Norcross + Judd in the firm's Detroit office, the evening featured special guest speaker Professor Bridgette Carr from the University of Michigan Law School. Professor Carr delivered an engaging and thought-provoking presentation focused on happiness and well-being in the legal profession. Her chosen topics resonated deeply with practitioners navigating the fast-paced, and high-stakes demands of federal practice. Rather than offering superficial wellness advice, Professor Carr explored the deeper drivers of professional fulfillment, personal values, and intentional career alignment.

Following her remarks, attendees broke out into three smaller discussion circles tailored around different stages of legal practice:

Early-Career Practitioners: Navigating the steep learning curve, establishing a professional identity, finding sponsors and mentors, and setting early boundaries.

Mid-Career Attorneys: Managing complex case loads, balancing leadership and business development with growing personal/family demands, and redefining professional goals.

Senior & Experienced Leaders: Reflecting on career transitions, sustaining passion and purpose in practice, giving

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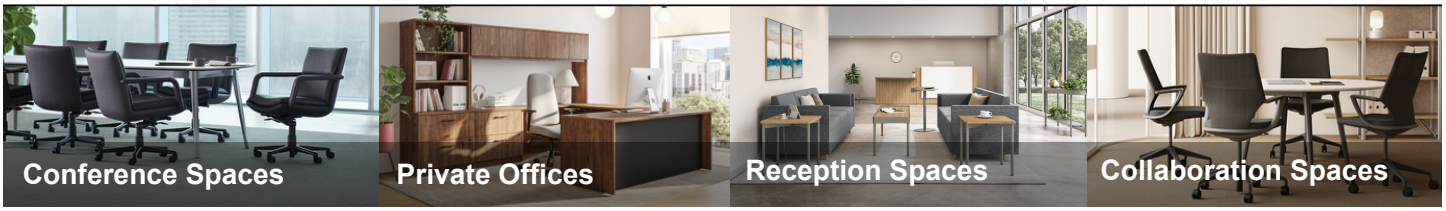

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WOMEN'S BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

Building Community and Finding Fullfillment *(from page 8)*

back through mentorship, retirement planning, caregiving, and paving the way for the next generation of women in the law.

This small-group format sparked honest, unvarnished dialogue, allowing attendees to exchange practical advice, share common challenges, and forge authentic peer-to-peer connections.

The energy and community built during the May event carried straight into the summer months. Wanting to keep the conversations going, Women's Committee member Jennifer Salvatore hosted an informal follow-up book club at her home.

In a relaxed, welcoming backyard setting, members gathered to catch up and dive into a dedicated discussion of Independence Day by Steve Lopez—a book exploring emotional, identity, and lifestyle questions surrounding retirement. This smaller offshoot gave attendees an even more intimate space to share perspectives, reflect on work-life priorities, and nurture the friendships sparked earlier in the year.

Gatherings like these demonstrate what makes EDMIBAR special: providing not just premier professional programs, but a genuine, supportive community where colleagues become trusted friends and mentors.

Mark your calendar for our next Women's Event on January 27th for the No-Book Book Club! We'll be diving into the provocative ideas behind Bill Perkins' bestseller, Die with Zero—a fresh look at balancing wealth, health, and memorable life experiences. Don't worry if your reading list is already full: no reading is required to join the conversation! We'll start together in a large group before splitting into small, engaging breakout circles to share perspectives and real-world takeaways.

Visit our calendar to sign up and bring a friend!

Bankruptcy Committee Brings Federal Court to Cass Tech for Third Consecutive Year

By Kelley Donnelly

Judge Mark Randon, Cass Tech alumnus, Gives Students a Taste of Federal Judiciary Proceedings.

The Bankruptcy Committee continued its tradition of community engagement this spring, bringing a live federal court session to Cass Technical High School in Detroit for the third year in a row. Presiding over the April 6th proceedings was Judge Mark Randon—a proud Cass Tech alumnus—who returned to his alma mater to give students an up-close look at the federal judiciary in action. The event offered students an experience far beyond the classroom, transforming their school into a working courtroom for the day.

As in years past, the students proved to be an exceptionally engaged audience. Their questions were thoughtful and probing, reflecting genuine curiosity about the law and the legal process. The Bankruptcy Committee extends its gratitude to Judge Randon for his continued participation and to Cass Tech for welcoming the Bankruptcy Court year after year.

Sixteen New Assistant United States Attorneys shown just sworn in before the Eastern District of Michigan.
Photo by Akash Sidhu

Law Clerk Committee Hosts Inaugural Law Clerk Swearing-In Ceremony

By Taylor Elyse Mills

In a profession riddled with old-fashioned rituals and "hear ye" language, being sworn into a court's bar can seem like yet another antiquated hoop for attorneys to jump through. But these ceremonial acts play an important role in reminding us of our membership in and responsibilities to our legal community.

Because the practice of law is a uniquely self-regulating profession, it is on each of us to form a strong community that holds attorneys accountable to our collective commitments of acting with integrity and respect. Though our judicial system may be adversarial, how we engage with one another in court still should reflect the

oath we take to practice in that court. Indeed, taking an oath before the court is, in many ways, a promise to our peers.

In the spirit of celebrating our community, EDMIBAR Law Clerk Committee Co-Chair Sarah Resnick Cohen and President Lauren Mandel planned an inaugural ceremony on May 20, 2026, for federal law clerks to be sworn into the Eastern District of Michigan and the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. There was an air of reverence and joy as the clerks, judges, friends, and family filled the seats of the Theodore Levin Courthouse's historical "Million Dollar Courtroom."

President Mandel, career law clerk to Judge Linda V. Parker, moved for the admission of the law clerks to the Eastern District of Michigan, with Judge Terrence G. Berg presiding over the proceedings. Judge Stephanie Dawkins Davis presided over the Sixth Circuit proceedings upon a motion for admission from Co-Chair Cohen, a former Sixth Circuit law clerk. Judge Paul Hage also joined in the festivities by swearing some of the clerks into the Eastern District of Michigan Bankruptcy Court upon a motion for admission from his career clerk, Kelley Donnelly.

Attendees at the Inaugural Law Clerk Swearing-In Ceremony. Photo by Akash Sidhu

The judges shared their pride and enthusiasm for the occasion, and Judge Berg closed the ceremony by reading Abraham Lincoln's "Notes for a Law Lecture" in which Lincoln urged lawyers to be honest, diligent, and fair peace-seekers. Hearing the clerks recite their oaths and Lincoln's words read aloud in the opulent courtroom, it was as though little had changed since Lincoln first recorded his principles for good lawyering. But seeing the diverse gathering of clerks and judges from different backgrounds, genders, and nationalities was a reminder that much has changed for the better. In the words of Former Judge Jane Bolin, the first Black woman to become a judge in the United States, "Those gains we have made were never graciously and generously granted."

That Monday afternoon, this District and Circuit's legal communities gained 28 newly admitted practitioners through a meaningful ceremony that respected the profession's traditions while celebrating its growth. Cheers and welcome to the newest members of the Eastern District of Michigan and the Sixth Circuit!

Join the EDMIBAR Newsletter Committee!

We are looking for more members to join the EDMIBAR Newsletter Committee. If you would like to be part of an award-winning publication that keeps the Eastern District legal community informed of upcoming and past events, please reach out to our Co-Editors, David Mellem and Zainab Sabbagh, at David_Mellem@mied.uscourts.gov and zsabbagh@wnj.com. Thank you, as always, for being a reader.

Calendar of Events

November 9	**Motion Day**
November 10	**EDMIBAR Rom and Historical Society Luncheon**
December 8-9	**51st New Lawyers' Seminar**
December 10	**Holiday Party**
January 20	**Open Meeting of Committee Co-Chairs/Executive Board**
January 27	**Women's No-Book Book Club**
February 10	**EDMIBAR McCree Luncheon**
April 14	**EDMIBAR Gilman Luncheon**

Local updates and further developments at www.edmibar.org and national chapter updates at www.fbamich.org Log-in with your user name and password FIRST in order to save time and obtain Member pricing

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Eastern District of Michigan Chapter

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