



# FEDERAL BAR ASSOCIATION SOUTH FLORIDA CHAPTER

## Message From the President

The Federal Bar Association is dedicated to advancing federal practice and collaboration between the federal bench and bar. The FBA's South Florida Chapter is the 5th largest in the country. Thanks to our past Chapter presidents, the strong participation of our federal judges, and the hard work by our committees, our Chapter's educational and social events provide something for everyone – law students, law clerks, experienced lawyers, public servants, and judges.

In September 2014, our Chapter received the Presidential Excellence Award from the national FBA in recognition of our activities. We also received awards for our newsletter and our continued high growth. Also, Vanessa Snyder, Chair of our annual dinner committee, won the national FBA's younger federal lawyer award.

This year we created two new committees – Publications and Pro Bono. The Publications committee connects our Chapter with the wider audience of the national FBA by publishing judicial profiles and articles by our Chapter's members. Candace Duff's profile of U.S. Magistrate Judge John O'Sullivan was published in the October 2014 issue of *The Federal Lawyer*.

The Pro Bono committee is working with our federal judges to recognize lawyers who have handled pro bono cases and to encourage others

to do the same. We are working together with the Broward and West Palm Beach Chapters of the FBA, as well as with the Bankruptcy Bar Association. Our joint effort is led by U.S. District Judge Seitz and U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Isicoff.

Also, this year Bruce Yasukochi joined our Chapter as our pro bono CPA. We also re-designed our Chapter website, [www.fba-sdfla.org](http://www.fba-sdfla.org).



Ana Maria "Ani" Martinez

We are also grateful that U.S. District Judge Darrin P. Gayles has joined our Board to serve along with Judges Williams, O'Sullivan, and Palermo. We also thank Chief U.S. District Judge Moore for his support.

This year we honor U.S. District Judge Moreno, who has worked tirelessly for the federal bench and bar and our wider community.

Congratulations Judge

Moreno! You have our sincere thanks for your decades of service.

My heartfelt thanks to our Chapter leaders and committee members for your impressive energy and teamwork. And thanks to our judges who have given their time to participate in our activities and who have given us such strong support. I look forward to working with all of you under Candace Duff's leadership as our new Chapter president.

### 2014-2015 OFFICERS

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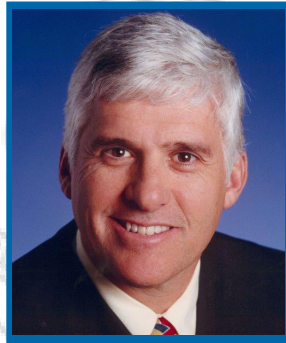
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**Edward B. Davis Award for Service to the Federal Bench and Bar.** This year’s recipient of the Honorable Edward B. Davis Award for Service to the Federal Bench and Bar is the Honorable Federico A. Moreno. It is impossible to have practiced in the Southern District of Florida in the last 22 years and not know who Judge Moreno is. Judge Moreno is as well known for his quick wit and sense of humor as he is for his profound wisdom and pragmatism in the courtroom. However, one should not assume based upon his keen sense of humor that he has a casual attitude in the courtroom: Judge Moreno will not tolerate any disrespect displayed toward the litigants who seek justice before him or the system he oversees. These qualities are what make Judge Moreno so respected and admired, not only in the Southern District of Florida, but across the country.



Born in Venezuela, Judge Moreno was raised in South Bend, Indiana, where his parents were professors. He bleeds gold and blue for his alma mater Notre Dame, where he famously developed a friendship with “Rudy” of movie fame. He is dedicated to his family: his wife of 36 years, Chris Moreno, and his three successful children. His road to the Federal Bench is well known: Judge Moreno rose from County Court Judge to Circuit Court

Judge, culminating in his appointment by President George H.W. Bush to the Federal Bench — all in the span of three years. Seventeen years later, he was entrusted with the role of Chief Judge of the Southern District of Florida. Throughout his seven-year tenure, he oversaw the District and was an active participant in court committees and meetings as he provided a guiding light for progress, and, indeed, led the way for significant change where necessary, while maintaining the status quo where change was not needed. Comprised of four massive buildings, the Federal Courthouse seemed divided and spread out; however, as Chief Judge, Judge Moreno laced together the different buildings and recently welcomed the Bankruptcy bench and bar to the Federal complex.

Judge Moreno is an inspiration to young practitioners who appear before him and a pleasure to seasoned attorneys who have come to expect his ever pragmatic and efficient manner (and wicked sense of humor). Judge Moreno is a people’s judge, a lawyer’s judge and a judge’s judge. Though he has received just about every award that a jurist can receive, we are delighted to honor him with this year’s award. Judge Davis was an inspiration and good friend to Judge Moreno and no doubt would be proud to lend his name to an award honoring his colleague and friend.



**Judge Gayles Joins the Chapter’s Board.**

The Honorable Darrin P. Gayles, recently-appointed District Court Judge of the Southern District of Florida, has joined fellow District Court Judge Kathleen M. Williams and Magistrate Judges John J.

O’Sullivan and Peter R. Palermo on the South Florida Chapter’s Board of Directors. Federal judges from around the country are active in the leadership of their Federal Bar Association chapters. We are grateful that our Chapter’s leadership also includes members from the federal judiciary. We thank Judge Gayles for joining us!

**Women Lawyers Initiative Events.** On November 6, 2014, the Women Lawyers Initiative will host its kickoff event at the new offices of Coffey Burlington. The Honorable Beth Bloom, one of our newest district court judges for the Southern District, will speak about her career and her perspective on the impact of women on the law. A cocktail reception will follow Judge Bloom’s remarks.

**Looking Forward.** *It has been a pleasure to serve this Chapter under the great leadership of its past presidents: Bill Ropollo, Celeste Higgins, Brett Barfield, Bernie Pastor, and Ani Martinez. They have inspired this Chapter to make some great accomplishments, including, but not limited to winning awards, growing our chapter into one of the largest in the Federal Bar Association, and putting on some great programs. I am honored to have been selected to lead this Chapter into the next era and look forward to continuing to serve its members, the bench, the bar, and the community, with the support of a great board and dedicated members. This year we plan to focus on member retention and member service, developing a pro bono initiative, and developing programming in specific areas of federal law and practice, among other things.*

**President-Elect, Candace Duff**



**FBA Luncheons.** In May 2014, we were honored to have the Honorable Magistrate Judge Alicia M. Otazo-Reyes and the Honorable Magistrate Judge Alicia O. Valle speak at the FBA Luncheon. Judge Otazo-Reyes began the discussion by focusing on the potential threat to magistrate consent jurisdiction based on evolving case law. Judge Valle followed and offered the sold-out crowd insight into her experience transitioning to the bench and some pointers for attorneys who appear and file briefs before her.

On October 2014, we were privileged to welcome the Honorable Adalberto Jordan from the U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit, and Honorable Vance E. Salter from the Florida Third District Court of Appeal. The topic of their presentation was pro bono participation, which coincided with the upcoming pro bono recognition week. Judges Jordan and Salter both spoke passionately about the topic, emphasizing the importance of pro bono work and the benefits it confers upon both the community and the lawyers who take on pro bono cases.

Both judges touted, respectively, the revamped Southern District of Florida and Miami-Dade County websites, which now make it easy for attorneys to register to work on a pro bono case. In a moment of levity, Judge Jordan indicated that this may be the only time where an attorney



is permitted to forum shop, as one can pick and choose which case they want, which means the attorney can choose which judge they will be assigned to and in which county the case will be held. Judge Salter stressed the need for pro bono assistance in the state system, particularly in the family division, where approximately 85% of litigants are pro se. Judge Jordan explained the predominant type of cases available in the federal system and also explained the process of doing pro bono appellate work. He noted that while oral argument is not guaranteed in pro bono appeals, there is a high likelihood oral argument will be granted in those cases because a judge will have already flagged them as being complex enough to require the services of an attorney.

### **Executive Board Member Vanessa Snyder Receives FBA's 2014 Younger Federal Lawyer Award.**

Vanessa Snyder was selected to receive the 2014 Younger Federal Lawyer Award by the Federal Bar Association. Vanessa is an Executive Board Member of the FBA South Florida Chapter. The Younger Federal Lawyer Award is given each year to only five outstanding attorneys employed by the United States Government nationwide for their significant contributions to the legal profession and their respective communities. Vanessa is currently serving as an Assistant United States Attorney for the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida. In the last year, Vanessa prosecuted over 50 criminal cases, including 10 jury trials. Vanessa was selected to receive the award this year for her outstanding work prosecuting violent crime as a member of the Violence Reduction Partnership and white collar crime through the Stolen Identity Refund Fraud Strike Force, as well as for her significant contribution as a Board Member to the FBA South Florida Chapter.

**Boardroom Lunches.** During the summer of 2014, the South Florida Chapter hosted four "Boardroom Lunches" at various locations around Miami. The Boardroom Lunch series offers an opportunity for a small group of FBA members (usually twenty or so) to interact in an intimate, casual setting with prominent local leaders and members of the judiciary. There is no cost to attend, and food and drinks are provided by our Chapter. These lunches are one of the many benefits of Chapter membership.

The first Boardroom Lunch of the summer featured guest speaker Eric Bustillo, the Securities and Exchange Commission's Regional Director in Miami. He was extremely engaging, providing insight into the functions and specialties of the Miami Regional Office. He fielded multiple questions and took the time and care to provide detailed responses to each. The guest speaker at the second Boardroom Lunch was the Honorable Robert N. Scola,

District Judge, who gave a presentation on writing skills that was both informative and humorous. He shared his insights and preferences on everything from font size to footnotes and then fielded questions from the FBA members in attendance. For the third installment of the lunch series, our Chapter welcomed Michael Caruso, the Federal Public Defender for the Southern District of Florida. Mr. Caruso discussed his experience overseeing one of the busiest and most diverse federal public defender offices in the country and gave his unique insight into the joys and challenges of life at the Public Defender's office. For the fourth and final installment of the Boardroom Lunch series, our Chapter was joined by George Piro, FBI Special Agent in charge of the Miami Field Office. Mr. Piro discussed his fascinating seven-month experience as the lead interrogator of Saddam Hussein after his capture in Iraq.

## Upcoming Events

Awards/Installation Dinner  
*October 24, 2014*

Women Lawyers Initiative  
Hon. Beth Bloom  
*November 6, 2014*

FBA Luncheon  
Amy Howe, SCOTUS Blog  
*November 19, 2014*

FBA Luncheon  
*January 7, 2015*

Annual Judicial Reception  
*February 5, 2015*

FBA Luncheon  
Chief Judge Moore  
*March 11, 2015*

Visit our new website at  
[www.fba-sdfla.org](http://www.fba-sdfla.org)

*If you are not already a member, join the FBA's South Florida Chapter today! Members have access to a wide array of events involving the judiciary, notable speakers, and lawyers in our community. Please visit our website for more information, <http://fba-sdfla.org/membership>.*

*Become a mentor today!*  
Email Yaniv Adar at  
[yadar@homerbonner.com](mailto:yadar@homerbonner.com)

## Newsletter Editors

Clayton Solomon  
Stephanie Casey

Have a suggestion for future newsletter content?

Email the committee at  
[federalbar.southflorida@gmail.com](mailto:federalbar.southflorida@gmail.com)  
Attn: Newsletter Committee

**Law Student Division.** The Division serves as a liaison for three student divisions of the FBA at FIU, UM, and St. Thomas. On June 10, 2014, the Chapter hosted a networking event between law students and practitioners at Batch Gastropub in Miami, and was attended by over 200 attorneys including law students, judges, and judicial clerks.

In addition, on September 24, 2014, the Chapter participated in a Bar Association Fair at St. Thomas University School of Law. Oliver A. Ruiz (St. Thomas Class of 2001) attended on behalf of the Chapter, and spoke with several students who expressed interest in joining the Chapter and attending the many events held throughout the year to benefit law students. The St. Thomas chapter is named after the Honorable Peter R. Palermo.

On September 29, 2014, the Miami Law Student Division held a Public Interest Luncheon at the University of Miami School of Law. The luncheon provided a unique opportunity for UM Law students



to learn about federal public interest jobs and also receive advice on how to best position themselves to be competitive for those positions. The event was moderated by David S. Weinstein, a partner at Clark Silverglate, and featured Assistant Federal Public Defender Helaine Batoff, Assistant United States Attorney Daniel Bernstein, and Securities and Exchange Commission attorney Russell Koonin.

On October 21, the Law Student Division hosted a "Fall Mentorship Kickoff Event" at Batch Gastropub. The mentorship event was sponsored by Becker & Poliakoff.

**Please contact Yaniv Adar if you would like to be a mentor: [yadar@homerbonner.com](mailto:yadar@homerbonner.com).**



McAliley, White and Case (Jensen, N.D. Fla.), and Paul Schweip, Coffey Burlington (Milburn, 6th Circuit). The panel discussed wide-ranging issues affecting South Florida including Everglades restoration, manatee protection, climate change readiness, and the complexities of litigating disputes with multiple interested constituencies, including public agencies. Over 30 current and former federal clerks were in attendance.

**Pro Bono Committee.** During the week of October 19–25, 2014, all of the FBA Chapters in the Southern District of Florida, together with the Bankruptcy Bar, are celebrating National Pro Bono Week 2014. The Chapters will be working with the Bankruptcy Bar to recognize attorneys who have taken pro bono cases in the past and to encourage attorneys to sign up to either take a case, be a contact to help the court find pro bono attorneys for specific cases, or be a mentor to other attorneys who take pro bono cases. Pro se clinics will also be held throughout the week in the Miami, West Palm Beach, Fort Lauderdale, and Stuart/Port Saint Lucie Divisions of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court. For a complete calendar of events, and for information about current pro bono and volunteer opportunities, please visit the court websites, <http://www.flsd.uscourts.gov> and <http://www.flsb.uscourts.gov>. If you have any questions, please contact Ryan Zagare at [rzagare@kennynachwalter.com](mailto:rzagare@kennynachwalter.com).