



United States Bankruptcy Court

Middle District of Florida, Orlando Division
135 W. Central Blvd., Suite 950
Orlando, Florida 32801

Memorandum from
Karen S. Jennemann

DATE: August 21, 2012

TO: Bankruptcy/UCC Committee of The Florida Bar

SUBJECT: Bankruptcy Law Educational Series (BLES)

As our state-wide bankruptcy leaders, I am requesting you consider creating the Bankruptcy Law Educational Series that would accomplish two goals: (1) to promote bankruptcy legal education programs, and (2) to fund *pro bono* and other public service projects relating to the practice of bankruptcy in a particular district or the entire state.

The idea is that attendees at any BLES event would pay a small additional amount, maybe \$10 – 25, on top of the normal registration fee that would go to the BLES fund. Over time the monies would grow. The various bankruptcy bar associations who decided to sponsor BLES events then could use the increasing monies for *pro bono* or other public service projects. The benefit is that everyone contributes just a small amount to do a great good. Also, firms and others looking for a worthy cause could make direct donations to the fund.

I leave the decision as to whether this idea or something similar justifies the work required. Also, I leave all the details to your group and the various bankruptcy bar associations, but, in concept, perhaps the bankruptcy bar associations who want to participate in BLES events could enter into a Memorandum of Understanding that would agree one association would maintain the entire fund and then disburse monies as approved pursuant to your own guidelines presumably under the supervision of a BLES Board of Directors. The Court would have little or no involvement with the monies, but, I assure you the Bankruptcy Judges certainly would support programs sponsored by BLES. We see a great need for sustainable funding for *pro bono* initiatives and would like to see a permanent solution to this problem.

Judge Michael G. Williamson initially suggested this idea and has agreed to discuss the concept at your upcoming retreat. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on the idea.