



Dear Colleagues,

We are honored to be co-chairing the Select Commission on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion established by the Board of the American College of Bankruptcy last March.

The Mission Statement of the DEI Commission is as follows:

To develop a comprehensive plan that instills mindfulness regarding all aspects of diversity, equity and inclusion, and actively promotes those values through the resources and endeavors *of the College and Foundation*.

Foremost, we write today to thank those Fellows who participated in the DEI program held on Zoom on June 30. More than one-hundred and thirty Fellows took part in the program done in collaboration with the Education Committee through the able assistance of Denise Neary and moderator, Judge Craig Goldblatt. During the breakout sessions that followed Judge Goldblatt's interview of the co-chairs, many Fellows actively contributed comments and suggestions concerning DEI programming they are involved with. Most, if not all, of your ideas were recorded and have been incorporated in the ongoing work of the Commission. Thank you.

Our next all Fellows meeting for a continuing discussion concerning the important work of the Commission has been scheduled for **Monday, September 13 at 4:00 P.M. EST** via Zoom, [you may RSVP at this link](#). Please join us for that update. It will also provide you with an opportunity to contribute your thoughts and exchange ideas with the Commissioners in small group breakout sessions.

We want also to take the opportunity to thank those Fellows (45% response rate) who partook in the anonymous survey (and we wanted to let you know that another one may be in the offing; we are hoping for 100% participation). The information produced in the survey(s) is very helpful to the Commission's work and in the promulgation of strategies that we hope, if approved by the Board, will help the College and Foundation reach the very achievable goals set forth in the Mission Statement. And as President Melissa Kibler noted in her Essay in College Columns at the formation of the Commission: "That which is measured, improves." The results from the survey(s) will be published in the Interim or Final Report of the Commission. Those reports are being expertly written by the noted author and ethics scholar, Professor Nancy Rapoport, the Commission's very able Reporter.

Last, but certainly not least, we write to also invite you to visit the DEI Commission's new dedicated section on the College's website [at this link](#). The DEI Commission tab on the website (which is active but still under construction) contains the following: Events and Meetings; Correspondence from the DEI Commission; Press Releases; and Resources. We are very excited to add one new feature under the DEI Commission tab that we are calling: "Hear my Story/Be the Voice." Under this section, the DEI Commission will include short "stories" or mini-autobiographies (that are sure to interest you) of Fellows who will be sharing their unique experiences or encounters relative to themes of diversity, equity and inclusion either during their professional careers, or before.

The first story we are featuring is one authored by Judge Chuck Case (ret.) regarding his time in the Peace Corps, which you can read [at this link](#). Chuck is a longstanding Fellow in the College and a wonderful writer. He is also this year's recipient of the prestigious

Founder's Award that the International Insolvency Institute (III) plans to present to him at its New York meeting in October, [See this link](#). Over many years, Chuck has made outstanding contributions to international insolvency law, which have included multiple teaching expeditions to a plethora of countries, many in the developing world and in war-torn regions around the globe. Chuck's DEI story is quite touching and relevant to the Commission's work as we strive, together, as Fellows to instill mindfulness regarding all aspects of diversity, equity and inclusion and to actively promote these values through the resources and endeavors of the College and Foundation.

If you have a positive short story concerning DEI that you want to share and have featured under the "Hear my Story/Be the Voice" section of the DEI Commission's tab on the College's website, [please email it to us](#). The goal here is for the College and, more importantly, the distinguished Fellows who give life to this prestigious institution, to take the road (historically) less travelled towards making the practice of bankruptcy law and the debt restructuring industry in general better reflect all the persons impacted. That goal can only be achieved if we are able to witness the humanity in persons of different skin color, gender, sexual orientation, or other diverse characteristics, and if we each take individual actions on a continual basis along the lines suggested in the oft-quoted words of Commissioner Richardo Kilpatrick: "Expand your rolodex"!

Thank you for your continued support of the Select Commission on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. We are looking forward to seeing you at the All -Fellows Luncheon in Indianapolis at the NCBJ in October, where the keynote speaker will be Isabel Wilkerson, Pulitzer Prize—winning and bestselling author of *Caste* and *The Warmth of Other Suns*.

All the best,

Judges Jeffery P. Hopkins and Laurel M. Isicoff

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