

# The Bench Press

*The Federal Judges Association Newsletter*

July 2024

Dear Federal Judges Association (FJA) Members:

The month of July brings to our attention the history of our nation's independence, celebrated with fireworks, tributes about our nation's accomplishments, parades and backyard barbecues, and long days of daylight. As we celebrate our nation's independence, let us be reminded that we too, as an independent judiciary, are committed to preserving our principles of integrity and impartiality.

Despite the blazing record high temperatures, AAA reported that 71 million Americans traveled over the Fourth of July weekend to enjoy the warmth of the sun and spend more time with family and friends. Enjoy the rest and relaxation that July brings to interrupt our heavy schedules and tremendous workloads.

FJA President, J. Michelle Childs,  
United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit



## Member Spotlight

### **The FJA Spotlights the Honorable Joseph F. Bianco**

The Federal Judges Association is honored to recognize our member, the Honorable Joseph F. Bianco, in his newest capacity as a United States Circuit Judge for the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. Judge Bianco graduated from Georgetown University *magna cum laude* and from Columbia Law School, where he was a Kent Scholar and served as editor of the Columbia Law Review. He began his legal career as a law clerk in the



Chambers of the Honorable Peter K. Leisure in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. Thereafter, Judge Bianco practiced as an associate at the law firm of Simpson, Thatcher, and Bartlett before eventually serving as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York from 1994 to 2003, where he ultimately served as Chief of the Organized Crime and Terrorism Unit. Judge Bianco went on to work as Counsel with Debevoise & Plimpton LLP in its Litigation Department in 2004. He subsequently returned to the United States Department of Justice in the role of Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Division from 2004 until 2006, supervising the Counterterrorism Section, the Fraud Section, the Appellate Section, and the Capital

Case Unit.

On July 28, 2005, Judge Bianco was nominated by President George W. Bush to serve as a district judge for the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York. He was confirmed by the United States Senate on December 21, 2005, and he received his commission on January 3, 2006. During his time as a district judge, Judge Bianco presided over every federal case on Long Island involving the international criminal gang MS-13 for a decade, which included over 100 defendants. Judge Bianco served in his role as district judge until 2019, when he was nominated by President Donald J. Trump to serve in his current role as a circuit judge for the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. He was confirmed by the Senate on May 8, 2019, and he received his commission on May 13, 2019. Judge Bianco's favorite proceedings over which he has presided are naturalization ceremonies, and he has administered the oath and welcomed over 40,000 new citizens in hundreds of ceremonies during his career.

Judge Bianco currently serves as co-chair of the Second Circuit's Justice for All: Courts and the Community civic education program initiative. The reach of the Justice for All initiative currently extends over three states and strives to promote civics for high school students, to increase public understanding of the role and operations of the courts, to bring courts closer to the community, to help increase points of contact between the courts and the communities the courts serve, and to help ensure that the courts are accessible and effective public institutions. The Justice for All initiative offers students the opportunity to participate in an annual, week-long "Justice Institute Camp," a twelve-week after-school program at the federal courthouse in Manhattan, and a mentor moot court competition on Long Island. The Justice Institute Camp has proven so successful that the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts in Washington, D.C. has featured the camp as a model for district courts throughout the Nation. Since becoming a judge, Judge Bianco has also personally hosted over 400 field trips at the courthouse for Long Island schools.

Judge Bianco previously taught courses (and won several adjunct professor of the year awards) at Fordham Law School, Hofstra Law School, Touro College, and St. John's University School of Law. He currently serves as an adjunct professor of law at his alma mater, Columbia Law School, where he teaches Criminal Adjudication and Domestic and International Terrorism courses.

Judge Bianco is an ordained Deacon in the Roman Catholic Church, and he currently ministers as a permanent deacon of St. Peter of Alcantara Parish in Port Washington, New York. He recently spoke to local lawyers, judges, and others, during his presentation, "Two Robes: Being a Federal Appellate Judge and Catholic Deacon," sharing:

*“My faith has always given me the strength and perseverance to face any difficult challenges that have come across my desk as a prosecutor and as a judge, and all other aspects of my life, because I know God is with me always.”*

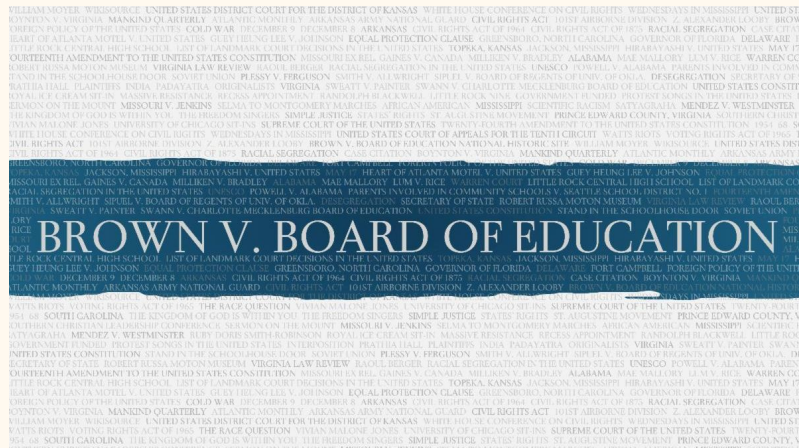
Judge Bianco and his wife are the proud parents of six children.

## Committee Updates

Our committees are working for you! Here are some highlights of their accomplishments.

### Education

*Co-Chairs: Leo M. Gordon and Pamela Pepper*



The United States Supreme Court’s decision in Brown v. Board of Education has been part of the fabric of our jurisprudence—and our lives—for seventy years now. It has become so entrenched in the minds of lawyers and judges that we rarely give it much consideration after studying it in law school; it simply is a fact of life. But there were real-life people behind the Brown decision. Did the litigation accomplish what the plaintiffs and their supporters had hoped? What about those who watched the decision play out in our own lives in the decades following the 1954 decision? What was its real-life impact on students and on the larger population? On June 26, 2024, Professor Cornell William Brooks, the Hauser Professor of the Practice of Nonprofit Organizations and Professor of the Practice of Public Leadership and Social Justice at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government, discussed these questions with FJA members Judge Roger Gregory of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit and Judge Carlton Reeves of the Southern District of Mississippi. The amazing conversation—“A Conversation on Brown Three Score and Ten Years Later: Looking Back and Thinking Ahead”—was distributed to FJA members in a June 27, 2024 email, and now it is available on the Members Only section of the FJA’s website under “Webinars/Thirst for Knowledge Program.” Judge Gregory was starting his senior year in high school when his school (belatedly) integrated; Judge Reeves started first grade the year Mississippi schools were forced to integrate by the Supreme Court’s decision in Alexander v. Holmes County Board of Education. Professor Brooks guides Judges Gregory and Reeves through a discussion of their lived experiences of Brown and how it impacted them personally. The three discuss the difficult question of whether Brown achieved the goals of the plaintiffs and the proponents of the lawsuits, as well as the mark Brown has left on

Fourteenth Amendment jurisprudence. It is a conversation both sobering and inspiring. The FJA Education Committee hopes that every FJA member finds the time to watch this extraordinary conversation.

The Education Committee's next presentation will feature two FJA members from the Southern District of Florida, U.S. District Court Judge Robin Rosenberg and U.S. District Court Judge Beth Bloom, describing their "Civil Discourse and Difficult Decisions (CD3)" program and discussing how FJA members might implement it in their own communities. It is a logical and timely follow-up to the Brown discussion. That program will be released to members this summer.

[View July Webinar](#)

## International Rule of Law

*Chair: Cynthia M. Rufe*



**International Association of Judges**

*promoting an independent judiciary worldwide*

Attached is the newsletter from the International Association of Judges (IAJ) citing to its many objectives, services, and plans for the coming year, starting with its Annual Meeting in Capetown, South Africa.

This report is a comprehensive review of past, current, and future plans of the IAJ, which is actively devoted to preserving judicial independence and autonomy around the world. Click the link below for more articles and reports for your interest.

Our delegation will attend the annual meeting and has submitted reports to the four Study Commissions which will be posted on the website as well. Thank you for your interest.

[Read IAJ Newsletter](#)

[Visit IAJ Website](#)

## Judicial Security

*Chair: Esther Salas*

We are pleased to report that the House Appropriations Subcommittee recently released the draft Fiscal Year 2025 Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations bill. The Federal Bar Association's advocacy has helped secure a \$10 million allocation for initial funding of the state and local government grant program authorized in the **Daniel Anderl Judicial Security and Privacy Act of 2022**. The President's Budget Request included the \$10 million figure, and the appropriators have honored that request. While the subcommittee markup is the first step on a long path for this bill, and while we expect Congress to have to rely upon Continuing Resolutions this Fall to keep the government operating, to have our priority request funded in the bill's text at the full amount of \$10 million puts the federal judiciary in a great position.

This would not have occurred without the advocacy of FBA members in their communities, during Capitol Hill Day and over the past few months. Inspired by Judge Salas, attorneys and judges have come together to make the case for this much-needed funding over the past two years so that the personal information of federal judges and their families can be removed from state and local government websites and we can better ensure judicial security.

We will continue to keep our members updated on the progress of this important legislation.

## Membership

*Chair: Nannette Jolivette Brown*



The Membership Committee welcomes the following new members to the FJA:

Seth Robert Aframe (1st Cir.)  
Jamal. N. Whitehead (W.D. Wa.)

The following judges have been confirmed since our May newsletter. Please join us in welcoming them to the judiciary and encourage their membership in the FJA!

Krissa Marie Lanham (D. Az.)  
Eric Claude Schulte (D.S.D.)  
Camela Catherine Theeler (D.S.D.)

## Quadrennial

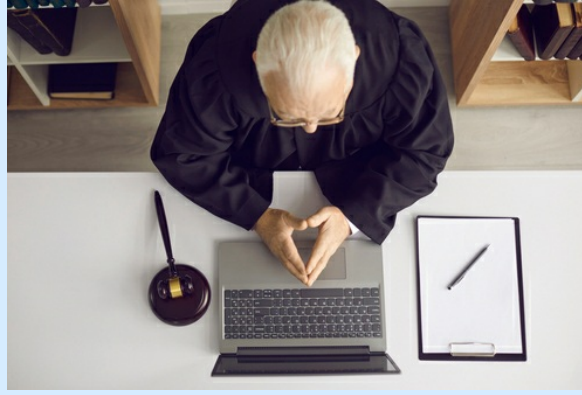
*Co-Chairs: Cathy Bissoon and Sara Darrow*



**FJA Heads to D.C. April 27-29, 2026**

## Senior and Retired Judges

*Co-Chairs: Larry Piersol and James G. Carr*



The Judicial Resources Committee asked for more specific recommendations from the Subcommittee considering senior judge staffing. The Subcommittee has not met since that time. The FJA will be in attendance at the next Zoom meeting of the Subcommittee.

## Announcements

### **Please Complete the HRMIS Demographic Survey**

Last month, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AO) sent an email to all judges asking them to complete the HRMIS demographic survey form. The HRMIS survey is for all employees, including circuit judges, district judges, magistrate judges and bankruptcy judges. It is not limited to clerk's office and other court employees. Although it is voluntary, your participation is critical to the completeness of the AO's annual report on the state of the judiciary. The AO bases its demographic survey of the courts on self-identification in the HRMIS survey.



If you haven't already done so, the FJA urges all judge to complete the survey. If you cannot locate your email, we have provided the link to the survey below. Once you click the link, you will be directed to Jenie, and the survey will appear there after you log in.

[Complete Survey Here](#)

## Members in the News



## **U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana Receives the 2023-24 Guardian of Diversity Award**

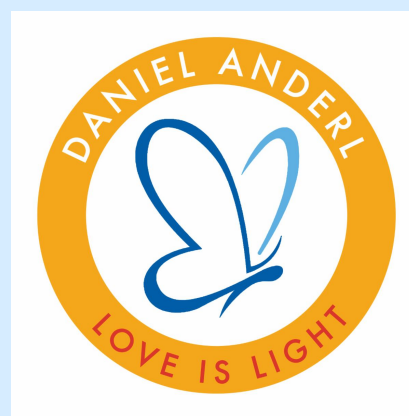
The Louisiana State Bar Association awarded the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana the 2023-24 Guardian of Diversity Award in recognition of its outstanding work to promote diversity. The Court presents thought-provoking programs and CLEs about diversity. It conducts naturalization ceremonies that highlight the diversity of new citizens. And the Court has worked to improve diversity in its workforce and jury pool. Led by the Court’s first African American Chief Judge, Nannette Jolivette Brown, the Court is honored to be recognized as a Guardian of Diversity.

[Read More](#)

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## **Grand Opening of Danny's Pantry**

The District of New Jersey’s Board of Judges has approved the opening of a food pantry that will be named in honor of Judge Salas’s son, Daniel Anderl. This pantry, which will be known as “Danny’s Pantry,” was established in remembrance of the fourth anniversary of Daniel’s tragic death. In the goal to transform sorrow into positivity, the District Court of New Jersey is opening the food pantry to assist families in need with connections to the Court. The District of New Jersey has several “problem-solving courts,” including NJ POP, a pretrial court in Newark that serves individuals with criminal histories driven by drug addiction who have pled guilty and are on pretrial release awaiting sentencing, and reentry courts in Camden, Trenton, and Newark that seek to help defendants rehabilitate and avoid recidivism. Participants in these problem-solving courts will have access to the pantry.



This initiative will not only alleviate the burdens faced by poverty-stricken families and individuals but will also allow the Court to become more connected to the surrounding

community. In a time of much controversy and strife, it brings Daniel’s parents great joy to know that the Court is doing its part to spread light and love to the community it serves.

[Read More](#)



## Federal Judges Grapple with Escalating Threats The Florida Bar

The Florida Bar recently published an article discussing the escalating threats experienced by the federal judiciary in recent years.

The article features commentary from two FJA members from the Middle District of Florida, Chief U.S. District Judge Tim Corrigan and U.S. District Judge Thomas Barber, the Chair of the Federal Judicial Security Committee for the Middle District of Florida. Judge Corrigan remarked, “You cannot have a functioning, independent judiciary if the physical security of judges and their families is at risk.”

To read the article, please click the link below.

[Read More](#)



Member Judges around the country are actively involved in civics and service to the community. FJA gives a shout out to the following members:

A class of second grade students from Southwark School, a public K-8 school in South Philadelphia, visited the Eastern District of Pennsylvania and the Third Circuit Court of Appeals on May 22, 2024. The students are enrolled in Southwark’s two-way Spanish immersion program. They came to the courthouse with their teacher, Olinda Ayala, to build upon their classroom studies about United States Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor’s life and career. The students were welcomed by E.D. Pa. **Chief Judge Mitchell S. Goldberg** and Clerk of Court George V. Wylesol and met with E.D. Pa. **Judges Juan R. Sánchez** and **Nitza I. Quiñones Alejandro**, and Third Circuit Court of Appeals **Judge L. Felipe Restrepo**. During their time with the judges, the students learned more about the federal courts and courtroom procedures, and had an opportunity to learn from the judges and ask them questions about their backgrounds and careers. The Eastern District of Pennsylvania



and the Third Circuit are fortunate to have several Spanish-speaking judges, and the students and the judges conducted their visit in Spanish.

**U.S. District Judge Diana Saldana** of the Southern District of Texas was recently recognized as a United Independent School District Community Hero for launching the Kazen Fellowship Program, which aims to offer paid summer internships for eligible high school students at the federal and state courthouses. [Read More Here.](#)

The University of North Dakota School of Law welcomed **Judge Ralph Erickson** of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit as its 2024 Rodney S. Webb Distinguished Jurist-in-Residence. The highly anticipated visit marked the return of the jurist-in-residence program after an eleven-year hiatus. [Read More Here.](#)

Hundreds of lawyers and community members joined Minnesota federal judges, including **Chief U.S. District Judge Patrick J. Schiltz** of the District of Minnesota, in a recent courthouse event fostering awareness of disability rights. [Read More Here.](#)

**Chief U.S. District Judge Tim Corrigan** of the Middle District of Florida was awarded the 2024 William M. Hoveler Judicial Professionalism Award. Sponsored by the Standing Committee on Professionalism, the Hoveler Award recognizes a “judge who best exemplifies strength of character, competence, commitment and civility as a jurist, lawyer, and public servant.” [Read More Here.](#)

## Upcoming Events



**THE NATIONAL JUDICIAL COLLEGE**  
in collaboration with  
**CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS JUDICIALES**

**NJC Course**

**Judicial Renaissance IV**

The College's annual Judicial Renaissance program, in collaboration with the Centro de Estudos Judiciais, and in partnership with the Federal Judges Association and LGBTQ+ Judges, will be held in the historic and culturally rich city of Lisbon, Portugal.

Judicial Renaissance is an innovative and transformative experience for the judiciary. It is an intellectual retreat that transcends the boundaries of conventional legal education, immersing judges in the deep and diverse currents from which the law itself has emerged. Here, participants will traverse the vast landscapes of history, philosophy, the arts, humanities, and sciences, uncovering the rich tapestry that informs the very essence of jurisprudence.

This is more than just a study program—it is an intellectual odyssey that rekindles the ageless pursuit of wisdom and justice. It is a concourse where legal minds come to learn from the past and grasp the big ideas shaping our future. With guidance from a cadre of luminaries across varied disciplines, judges will explore enduring human achievements and the foundational principles of justice.

For more information, contact the Registrar's Office at: (770) 784-6347 or email [registrar@judges.org](mailto:registrar@judges.org).

The program is open to all judges, including those who are not currently practicing law. All participants must be members of the Federal Judges Association or the LGBTQ+ Judges Association.

**Sep. 9-12, 2024**  
**Lisbon, Portugal**

**Tuition: \$2,850**  
**Register at [judges.org/jr4](http://judges.org/jr4)**

Registration fee includes tuition, travel, cultural activity (including a dinner) and some meals. Registration does not include airfare, lodging or dinner. Sponsors/partnerships are welcome to participate in activities for an additional fee.

This course may be eligible C.J.E. credit hours. Due to the international scope of this course, and collaboration with other international schools of judicial training, NJC cannot predict the number of C.J.E. credits that will be reported by your state.

In partnership with

**FJA**  
Federal Judges Association

**LGBTQ+ Judges**

[www.judges.org](http://www.judges.org)

### Judicial Renaissance, National Judicial Conference

The FJA has partnered with the National Judicial College to join them for a seminar and conference in Portugal.

During Judicial Renaissance, judges rediscover the foundations of justice as embodied within the scope of lasting human achievements.

**WHEN:** September 9-12, 2024

**WHERE:** Portuguese Center for Judicial Studies

Attendees can also enjoy several field trips during the conference, including trips to Setubul and to Quinta da Bacalhôa, where they will tour the Palace and Museum.

There is also a dinner cruised planned on the Tagus River. The Tagus River serves as an

important source of water for agriculture providing irrigation to local farms. With its beautiful landscapes and abundant resources, it is no wonder that this important river has been so vital in shaping both Spanish and Portuguese history since ancient times!

[Learn More](#)



Greetings from the Federal Judicial Center! The **Appellate Judges Education Institute** will be held on **November 14-17, 2024**, at The Westin Boston Seaport District Boston, MA. Reimbursement authorization has been approved for eligible appellate judges.

**Summit Agenda:** Check-in and registration for the summit begins at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, November 14, 2024. The formal summit begins at 1:00 p.m. and concludes at 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, November 17, 2024.

The Appellate Judges Education Institute Summit provides appellate judicial education and gathers federal and state appellate judges from across the country for practical, cutting-edge, educational programming. This is an educational opportunity you will not want to miss. Click the button below for additional information about the program.

[Learn More](#)

### August Edition | *The Bench Press*

Have a submission for the upcoming edition of The Bench Press? Please share it by **August 8, 2024**. We would love to share your special news with the membership. [Email us!](#)

[Email Us Your News](#)



**J. Michelle Childs**  
President

**Mary Scriven**  
**Communications Committee Chair**

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