

Court Information Release



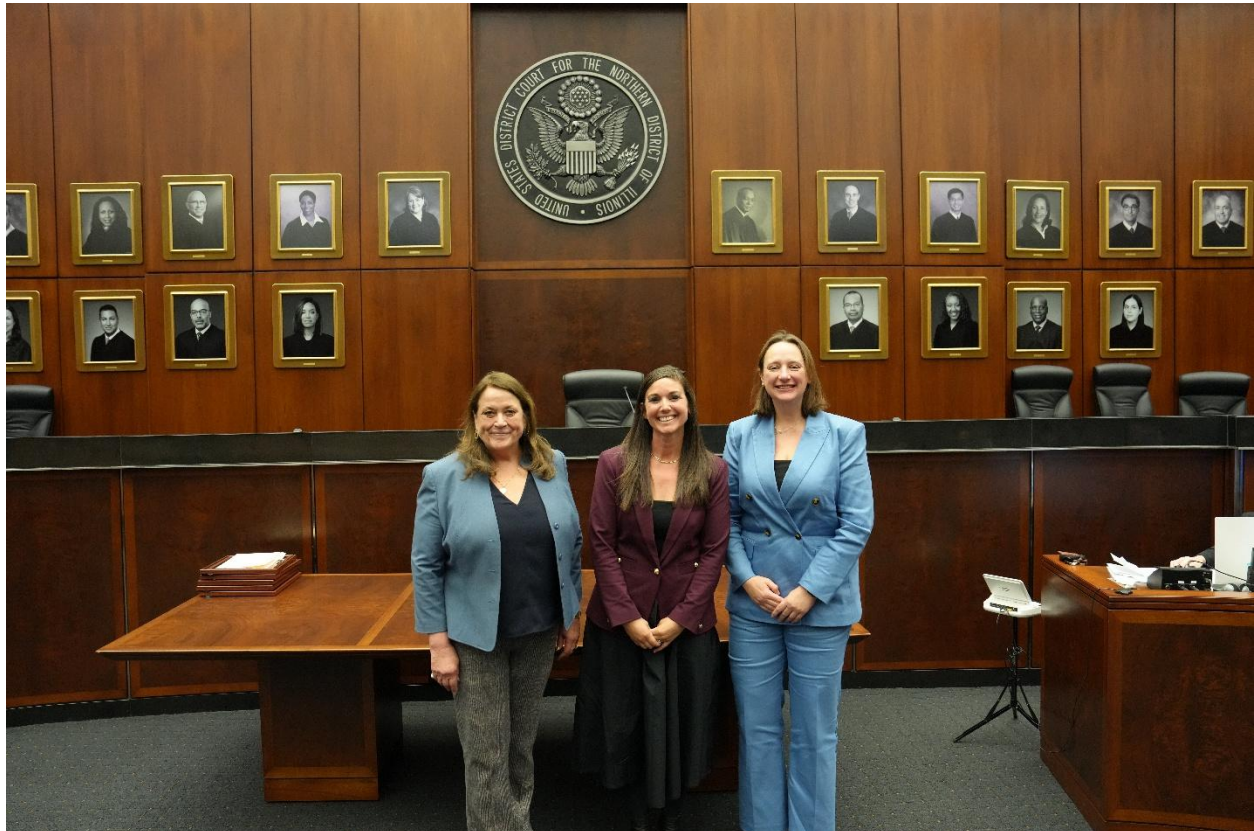
United States District Court
Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division
219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604

Release Date: May 8, 2026

Contact: Thomas G. Bruton
Clerk of the Court
United States District Court
Northern District of Illinois
219 S. Dearborn St., #2050
Chicago, IL 60604
312-435-6860

**Twenty-sixth Annual Awards for Excellence in
Pro Bono and Public Interest Service Award Winners**

26th Annual Awards for Excellence in Pro Bono and Public Interest Service



Chief Judge Kendall by Christine Argentine, President-Elect Federal Bar Association, Chicago Chapter, and Keynote speaker Judge Karoline Mehhalchick, National President Federal Bar Association



Keynote Address by Judge Karoline Mehlchick, National President, Federal Bar Association

Excellence in Public Interest Service



Brian L. Shaw and Steven Victor, Co-Chairs, 2025 National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges Chicago Conference Opening Reception Committee. Presenter: Honorable Deborah L. Thorne

Excellence in Pro Bono Service



Natalie J. Spears, Peter John Garthwaite, and Shannon Young Shin of Dentons US LLP, as well as Michelle Minseo Kim of Greenberg Traurig. Presenter: Honorable Heather K. McShain



Francis R. Greene of Greene Consumer Law. Presenter: Honorable Gabriel A. Fuentes



Steven P. Blonder, Laura Ann Elkayam, and Jason M. Rosenthal of Much Shelist, P.C., as well as Charles Robert Petrof of Access Living. Presenter: Honorable Gabriel A. Fuentes



Alexander David Marks, Joshua James Cauhorn, Shana Alexis Shifrin, and Blake A. Roter of Burke Warren MacKay & Serritella, P.C., as well as Aneel Lachman Chablani and Beatriz Adriana Diaz-Pollack of Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights. Presenter: Honorable Gabriel A. Fuentes



Patrick M. Collins of King & Spalding LLP. Presenter: Honorable Franklin U. Valderrama



Hugh C. O'Donnell of Whiteside & Goldberg, Ltd. Presenter: Honorable Franklin U. Valderrama



Raphael Ginsburg of Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan LLP. Presenter: Honorable Andrea R. Wood



Randall D. Schmidt of the University of Chicago Law School, Mandel Legal Aid Clinic. Presenter: Chief Judge Virginia M. Kendall on behalf of the Honorable Young B. Kim



Nancy J. Rich and Janet R. Widmaier of Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP. Presenter: Chief Judge Virginia M. Kendall on behalf of the Honorable Young B. Kim and the Honorable Sunil R. Harjani



Steven Neal Fritzshall and Jenette Rose Fritzshall of Fritzshall & Pawlowski. Presenter: Chief Judge Virginia M. Kendall on behalf of the Honorable Matthew F. Kennelly



Dominick L. Lanzito of Ottosen DiNolfo Hasenbalg & Castaldo, Ltd. Presenter: Chief Judge Virginia M. Kendall on behalf of the Honorable Rebecca R. Pallmeyer



Maya Ziv-El of Prairie State Legal Services. Presenter: Chief Judge Virginia M. Kendall



Dean Nicholas Panos, Christopher P Tompkins, Steven J. Tinetti, and Jeffrey P. Salvadore of Jenner & Block LLP. Presenter: Chief Judge Virginia M. Kendall on behalf of the Honorable Lindsay Jenkins



Howard Learner of Environmental Law and Policy Center. Presenter: Chief Judge Virginia M. Kendall on behalf of the Honorable Thomas M. Durkin



J. Gregory Deis, Kyla Sutter, Amber Masha, Sofia Orelo, and Marc Kadish of Mayer Brown.
Presenter: Chief Judge Virginia M. Kendall on behalf of the Honorable Matthew F. Kennelly.

Award Recipients Not in Attendance

Deborah Susan Spector of Spector & Lenz, P.C.

Mark Stephen Eisen of Benesch Friedlander Coplan & Aronoff LLP

Zac Holden of HKM Employment Attorneys LL