

ABI and ABC Announce New Partnership

The American Board of Certification (ABC) is pleased to announce that after an extensive search, it has engaged ABI to serve as its new management company. This new partnership is a natural product of the almost 30-year history between the ABC and ABI.

ABI's History with the ABC¹

In 1992, ABI's leadership developed an objective certification program for business and consumer bankruptcy lawyers. Known initially as the American Board of Bankruptcy Certification (ABBC), the ABC was sponsored and housed by ABI that same year as a nonprofit organization "dedicated to improving the quality of the bankruptcy bar,"² and stated that "[t]he rigorous ABBC certification standards are designed to encourage bankruptcy practitioners to strive toward excellence and to recognize those attorneys who are especially knowledgeable in the bankruptcy field."³ The certification standards were developed after months of in-depth review of ethical regulations, applicable judicial and administrative decisions, and an exhaustive review of existing and proposed state bar-endorsed certification programs. In 1992, more than 300 attorneys applied for certification.

The ABC's initial officers and directors consisted of many ABI members, including bankruptcy lawyers, judges and law professors. In 1993, the ABC obtained accreditation from the American Bar Association. Then in 1998, the Commercial Law League of America's program to identify commercial law practitioners with special expertise was merged into ABBC, which then became the ABC.

Since 1998, ABI has continued to partner with and support the ABC. Specifically, ABI provides meeting exhibit space at several of its major conferences for the ABC to

conduct certification exams. Further, ABI provides space for the ABC's Board of Directors to meet, and for the ABC to host receptions annually at ABI's Winter Leadership Conference and Annual Spring Meeting. ABI also reserves session time during its Annual Spring Meeting for an ABC-designed panel.

In 2017 ABI redesigned the ABC's website, and it currently hosts the website on ABI's servers. The ABC also assisted in the production of the ABC review course that is currently housed and sold on ABI's website. In addition, ABI regularly provides the ABC with this column space in the *ABI Journal* to spotlight ABC members and activities.

Under the new management agreement, ABI (as an independent contractor) will bring its experience and talent to provide the ABC with vital support. Focusing on improving efficiency and technology for the ABC, ABI will manage the ABC's operations, including interfacing with ABC board-certified attorneys, overseeing certification applications and renewals, compiling reaccreditation applications with governing bodies, marketing, updating and managing the directory of board-certified attorneys, coordinating the ABC's events and board meetings, and much more.

ABI Executive Director **Amy Quackenboss** states that "ABI is honored to have been selected to serve as the ABC's management company. We look forward to many more years of collaboration. I am very excited to be working with the ABC's Executive Committee and Board of Directors on this new endeavor." The ABC's Executive Committee includes Chair **Robert C. Furr** (Furr & Cohen, PA; Boca Raton, Fla.), President **Kirk B. Burkley** (Bernstein-Burkley, PC; Pittsburgh), President-Elect **Patricia B. Fugée** (FisherBroyles, LLP; Perrysburg, Ohio), Treasurer **Donna T. Parkinson** (Parkinson Phinney; Sacramento) and Secretary **Mary Beth Ausbrooks** (Rothschild & Ausbrooks, PLLC; Nashville, Tenn.). For more information about the ABC, please visit abcworld.org. **abi**

¹ Patricia B. Fugée, "Happy 25th Birthday, ABC!," XXXVI *ABI Journal* 10, 40, 72, October 2017, available at abi.org/abi-journal.

² *ABI Annual Report*, 1991-92, at p. 14.

³ *Id.*