

AMERICAN BANKRUPTCY INSTITUTE JOURNAL

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ABC Update

BY C.R. "CHIP" BOWLES, JR.

The ABC History Channel Presents: Meet Our Founders



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Good day, fellow bankruptcy and creditors' rights lawyers! This article marks the start of a recurring feature of this column: interviews with some of the founders of the American Board of Certification (ABC) and those who were early ABC members. These articles will not only provide fun and interesting facts about the early days of this organization, but will illustrate why being certified as a specialist in consumer bankruptcy, business bankruptcy and/or creditors' rights law, as well as participating in ABC activities, is important to the development of your career.

As you will see from the forthcoming articles in this series, the ABC is far more than just another "legal honor" that becomes a reason to purchase another certificate or plaque for your office wall. It is an organization that is dedicated to identifying quality bankruptcy and creditors' rights attorneys through careful testing of an applicant's knowledge of that area of the law, as well as a detailed and peer-reviewed background check. This means that an ABC-certified attorney is more than just the "winner" of a name recognition or popularity contest, as their certification is determined by their demonstrated legal integrity, practice and knowledge of applicable law.¹

Further, being an ABC-certified attorney is an excellent marketing and networking opportunity for any lawyer, as the experiences of its

prominent certified attorneys, which will be covered in the future interviews, will show. These benefits not only will help your practice's bottom line, but will also make you a far more effective attorney.

In the coming months, ABC members such as **Jack Butler** (Hilco Global; Northbrook, Ill.), **William L. Norton, III** (Bradley Arant Boult Cummings LLP; Nashville, Tenn.), **Jim Sweet** (Kerkman Dunn Sweet DeMarb; Madison, Wis.) and **John Ames** (Bingham Greenebaum Doll LLP; Louisville, Ky.) will discuss the ABC's impact on their careers and why it is such a critical professional group in the areas of bankruptcy and debtor/creditor law. Stay tuned for the next episode of the ABC's History Channel for more details! [abi](http://abi.org)

Reprinted with permission from the ABI Journal, Vol. XXXIII, No. 10, October 2014.

The American Bankruptcy Institute is a multi-disciplinary, nonpartisan organization devoted to bankruptcy issues. ABI has more than 13,000 members, representing all facets of the insolvency field. For more information, visit abi.org.

¹ Although the application and certification process is rigorous and peer-reviewed (see Van C. Durrer II, "Top Myths Regarding Bankruptcy Certification Debunked," XXXI *ABI Journal* 3, 62, April 2012), for experienced and knowledgeable practitioners applying for certification, taking the test is not (1) overly time-consuming, (2) extremely expensive, (3) oppressively difficult and/or (4) fattening.