

# AMERICAN BANKRUPTCY INSTITUTE JOURNAL

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## ABC Update

BY BETTIE KELLEY SOUSA

### What Happens in Vegas....

Take a fun-loving group of lawyers and professors and plop them in Las Vegas for a weekend, and what did they do? Well, we don't really know, other than they ensured that the tests administered to American Board of Certification (ABC) candidates met the rigorous standards required for certification. Like other Vegas activities, the details aren't for sharing.

The ABC is honored to have a Faculty Committee composed of dedicated volunteers without whom there would be no ABC. It takes a Faculty Committee to prepare examination questions, update questions and answers when the law changes, and grade the examinations. The integrity of certification testing requires that the circle of people who know the details of the examinations is kept rather small.

Keep in mind that these tests can't be no-brainers. Oversight by the ABA Board of Legal Specialization and various states' bar specialization groups requires that the application process and the tests meet high standards. Periodic reviews by a psychometrician confirm that the ABC's examinations do in fact distinguish specialists among the lawyers practicing in the crowded fields of business bankruptcy, consumer bankruptcy and creditors' rights law.

Board certification means something. In this age of awards-gone-wild, passing an examination, completing the other requirements of certification and maintaining certification are worthy accomplishments that reflect hard work and commitment. Perhaps not all high school graduates are special, but board-certified lawyers are. So too are the members of ABC's Faculty Committee.

ABC hit the jackpot with its Faculty Committee and its dean of faculty, Prof. **Nancy Rapoport**, who currently juggles her ABC duties with a few of her other "hobbies," such as serving as interim dean at the William S. Boyd School of Law at University of Nevada in Las Vegas, teaching

as the Gordon Silver Professor of Law, writing an award-winning blog and dancing competitively. Similarly prized are the members of the Faculty Committee: Prof. **Laura Bartell** (Wayne State University School of Law; Detroit), **Steven M. Berman** (Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP; Tampa, Fla.), Prof. Gregory M. Duhl, Prof. **Alexander L. Edgar** (Office of the U.S. Trustee; South Bend, Ind.), **Laurence M. Frazen** (Bryan Cave LLP; Kansas City, Mo.), Prof. **Jessica Gabel** (Georgia State University College of Law; Atlanta), Prof. Nicholas L. Georgakopoulos, Prof. **Reynaldo Valencia** (St. Mary's University School of Law; San Antonio), Hon. Thomas F. Waldron (ret.), Prof. **William H. Widen** (University of Miami School of Law; Coral Gables, Fla.), and Prof. **Mary Jo Wiggins** (University of San Diego School of Law; San Diego).

In June, Profs. Gabel and Duhl came to Vegas and met with Prof. Rapoport and ABC's treasurer, **Candace Carlyon** (Shea & Carlyon, Ltd.; Las Vegas), who served as "local counsel" and was kind enough to help with logistics. Prof. Bartell and Mr. Berman joined the discussion by phone. As this year's ABC chair, I don't care what those participating in the Faculty Committee retreat did in Vegas (although I hear that at least two of them visited the new Mob Museum!). I just hope they had time for some fun. They deserve it. **abi**

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