



# Federal Bar Association

## Tampa Bay Chapter

### News and Updates | December 2023

#### Chapter Recognizes Winners of 2023 High School Essay Contest

The Tampa Bay Chapter of the Federal Bar Association is pleased to recognize the winners of the Tampa Division's 2023 High School Essay Contest. The contest attracted over 500 entries from high school students in the Tampa Division of the Court.

The student winners were recognized at a ceremony held at the Sam M. Gibbons United States Courthouse in Tampa on December 11, 2023. All ten students, their families, and friends attended the ceremony. Principals Dr. Stephen Covert of Pine View School, Mark Watson from Strawberry Crest High School, Katie Rocha from Newsome High School, and Kimi Hellenberg from Plant High School were in attendance along with teachers including Chris Pauling, Kendall Nickerson, Charles Leadingham, and Brian Ayres.

The Chapter extends its sincere gratitude and appreciation to all of its members who volunteered to grade the student submissions, Judges Bucklew, Covington, Sansone, and Tuite, as well as FBA Outreach Coordinator Kelly Cheney and Community Outreach Chair Ellon Lyons.

Additional information regarding the contestants and winning essays can be found on the Court's [website](#).

Click [here](#) to read the winning essay!





## Upcoming Events

January 31 - Advanced Mediation & Settlement Strategies for Handling the Toughest Situations

February 1 - YLD's Skating into the 80s

August 7-9 – The Honorable Elizabeth A. Kovachevich 33rd Annual National Seminar on Federal Sentencing

Check out our weekly newsletter for more details!

## Call for Announcements

The TBCFBA welcomes its members to share



announcements and photographs of personal milestones, e.g. birth or wedding announcements, in its monthly newsletter. Anyone interested in sharing personal milestones should email [Erik Johanson](mailto:Erik.Johanson@tbcfba.com).

## Registration is Open for Next Year's Mentoring Program

Registration is NOW OPEN for our Mentor/Mentee Program! We are excited for this upcoming year's program where you will enjoy regular communications and events with your pairing and others in the program. Please

## Mentoring Program Celebrates End to Year with Laser Tag Event

The FBA Mentoring Program created exciting and outside-of-the-box experiences to bring our mentees and mentors together. After identifying the mentees' unique interests, we scoured our legal community for the mentor with the unique skills or personality to match each mentee.

To kick off our mentoring year, we channeled our favorite bowling movies, dusted off our shoes, and had a night out at Splitsville. Despite our legal reasoning skills not translating to strikes on the lanes, everyone had a great time commiserating over gutter balls.

Throughout the year, our mentoring pairs met individually for lunches and coffees, discussing assigned monthly topics from interviewing to internal marketing and individual concerns or issues mentees were experiencing. We want to thank all of our mentors for their commitment to these informal gatherings.

This summer, we also hosted a Zoom Panel titled "Mentoring from the Judicial Perspective," which was composed of Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Robert Luck, U.S. District Judge for the Middle District of Florida Marcia Morales Howard (Jacksonville Division), and United States Magistrate Judge for the Middle District of Florida Robert Norway (Orlando Division). The panel was moderated by UF Law Student Tyler Kendrick and Mentoring Committee Co-Chair Jon Philipson. The judicial panel offered candid stories about their mentoring experiences and wonderful advice about the mentoring process. We wanted to thank our judiciary for its participation.

We then kicked the fall off with an exciting night of laser tag. Although only one team was victorious, none of us will forget the fun and excitement of running around like kids, enjoying each other's camaraderie.

check out our website [here](#) for more information as well as the registration form! The deadline to register is January 31, 2024!



Finally, we capped the year off with a delicious ice cream social at Dairy Joy with family and friends.

Thank you to all of our mentors and mentees for a great year.



### Chapter Presents Discussion on Artificial Intelligence with LexisNexis

On Thursday November 16, 2023, the Chapter welcomed Ian McDougall, Esq., the Executive Vice President & General Counsel of LexisNexis Legal & Professional Division. Mr. McDougall gave an insightful presentation on The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Legal Practice and Litigation: Where We Are and Where We Are Going. Attendees also learned how LexisNexis uses artificial intelligence in its services. Thank you to Mr. McDougall for speaking with our membership and to the Middle District of Florida Bench Bar Fund for its support of this program. And another special thanks to Jerry Nagle and Judge Sneed for their help in coordinating this wonderful program.

### Chapter Hosts Annual Luncheon at University Club

On Thursday, December 14, 2023, the Tampa Bay Chapter of the Federal Bar Association hosted its prestigious Annual Membership Luncheon at the University Club. This year's Annual Luncheon featured State of the District addresses by United States District Judge Mary Scriven, Chief United States Bankruptcy Judge Caryl Delano, United States Attorney Roger Handberg, and Federal Defender Alec Hall. The Annual Luncheon also included a wonderful discussion about the Chapter's busy year and gave several awards to our wonderful members. The Annual Luncheon concluded with Rosemary Cakmis' presentation of the George C. Carr Memorial Award to Jim Skuthan. Thank you to all those who attended and contributed to the Chapter's success in 2023.







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*For questions or to submit announcements or other content,  
please contact [Erik Johanson](#).*

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