

Bankruptcy Paralegal, Tammy Branson, is awarded Paralegal of the Year By: Liz McCausland



If you practice in the Middle District with any regularity, if you have secured a modification for a client in bankruptcy, or if you have attended almost any bankruptcy bar social event or CLE it is very likely that you have met Tammy Branson, a paralegal at Branson Law PLLC. If you have not met her, you should! Tammy is passionate about helping clients, attorneys, and other paralegals know everything there is to know about bankruptcy and mortgage modifications in bankruptcy. This, coupled with her community service and strong work ethic, is what led to Ms. Branson being nominated for the Paralegal of the Year award given out by the Orange County Bar Association's Paralegal Section.

The Paralegal of the Year Award recognizes a paralegal who goes above and beyond the call of duty. Without a doubt, Tammy Branson, does this daily. Mrs. Branson was nominated for the award by all three of the Bankruptcy Judges for the Middle District, Orlando Division, attorneys from four separate law firms, a paralegal from a fifth law firm.

The Middle District Judges stated in their nomination that Mrs. Branson deserved the award for three reasons. First, she is the heart and soul behind her firm's pro bono efforts. Second, she is the national leader in mortgage modification mediations, speaking at national conferences and saving literally thousands of people in the Orlando area from homelessness. Third, she is an extremely competent and effective paralegal and is a leader in the bankruptcy community for staff, other paralegals, and, not unusually, lawyers both at her firm and elsewhere.

The Judges' sentiments were echoed in the other nominations. Ana DeVilliers of Price Law, spoke of Tammy Branson's generosity: "Tammy is generous with her knowledge almost to a fault. Whenever anyone needs anything, she is the first to offer assistance." Additionally, Barbara Leach of Barbara Leach Law, PL stated that "Bankruptcy is a nuanced practice. One does not wake up one day and decide to be a bankruptcy lawyer. One needs hard-core, dedicated mentors to achieve that. Ms. Branson...is my mentor."

Ms. Branson is often found tirelessly working behind the scenes of many flagship events. Most notably, Ms. Branson almost single-handedly organized the Statewide Summit on the mortgage modification mediation program held in Orlando on February 28, 2014. She prepared the needed white papers and power point presentations, secured sponsors, took reservations, and coordinated the speakers. After the success of that summit, she then went on to organize the first ever National Loss Mitigation in Bankruptcy Summit in Chicago in October 2014. Several states have now adopted the mortgage mediation program in their area as a result of that summit and always with the help of Tammy Branson. To date, Ms. Branson has travelled to Chicago, S. Carolina, Nevada and all over Florida teaching attorneys how to help their clients by getting them a loan modification during bankruptcy. The Northern District of California has even started a Mortgage Modification Mediation program and as you might guess...Tammy is flying out to help them start it off correctly.

Bankruptcy is an area of law that is often underrepresented in local bar associations. We are simply outnumbered by litigators and transactional attorneys. If there is any recognition to be given, it is from our peers and others who practice bankruptcy. It is often recognition of the attorneys and not the paralegals in the trenches with them. This is why it was particularly nice to attend the awards ceremony held by the Orange County Bar Association and watch Tammy Branson receive her much deserved award. It was a small acknowledgment of her impact on her community and those around her. It was also a shout out to those “others” that we have a superstar in bankruptcy too and on that night, as well as every day, she is one.

Congratulations Tammy!