

U.S. Trustee Spotlight

Robert Altman, Chapter 7 Trustee, Jacksonville

By: Timothy S. Laffredi, Orlando Office of the U.S. Trustee



Pictured: Doc Gooden (Pitcher, N.Y. Mets) and Bob Altman before a game in Tampa.
Doc Gooden is the greatest pitcher Bob has ever seen.

Robert Altman is a Chapter 7 Panel Trustee for the Middle District of Florida, Jacksonville Division. Bob was appointed to the Panel in November 2002. Prior to his appointment as a Chapter 7 Trustee, Bob was already a well-established and well-respected member of the bankruptcy legal community in the Middle District. Bob devotes 85% of his practice to bankruptcy, and his extensive experience runs the bankruptcy gamut. Aside from his work as Chapter 7 Trustee, Bob has represented debtors, creditors, and other Chapter 7 trustees. Bob has also been involved in more than 100 Chapter 11 cases; has represented debtors and creditors' committees, and has been appointed as a Chapter 11 Trustee. He has significant experience in Chapters 12 and 13 as well, and even holds the honor of having filed the very first Chapter 12 case in the Middle District of Florida (Judge Funk served as the Chapter 12 Trustee)—possibly even the first Chapter 12 case in the country. Bob is currently his own boss at Robert Altman, P.A. Before that, Bob worked for several years at the Law Office of Lansing J. Roy, which handled a significant number of bankruptcy cases in the Northern and Middle Districts of Florida throughout the 1980s.

Bob is an honors graduate of the St. Johns River Junior College and the University of Florida, where he obtained a bachelor's degree in English Education. Before enrolling in law school, Bob spent three years teaching high school English and coaching high school baseball at Clay High School in Green Cove Springs, Florida. Bob attended the University of Florida College of Law, where he was active in the Civil Clinic. Before receiving his J.D. in 1982, Bob also spent a quarter teaching civics and history at Palatka High School. Bob remained very active after he graduated from law school, including publishing an article entitled *FDA: Regulation of Drug*

Court Connection
Volume No. 5 – Issue No. 1
January 2016

Production in Space, 39 Food, Drug, & Cosmetic J. No. 4 (Oct. 1984). He has also served on various committees and boards throughout his career, including as a member of the Attorney Fee Arbitration Board, a member of the Chamber of Commerce Education Committee, and both a member and subsequently the chairman of the 7th Judicial Circuit's Ethics Committee.

Bob puts in long hours, getting to the office at 6:30 a.m. and leaving around 6:00 p.m. This is an improvement from when he was younger, where he would stay at the office until around 8:00 or 9:00 p.m. His work schedule usually includes weekends, except when the Mets are playing. Bob loves baseball – the Mets in particular – and he puts in all those long hours in part because his goal is to put in an offer to buy the Mets. He says he will continue to work diligently until he has raised the \$3,000,000,000.00 necessary to purchase the team.

BOB'S PRACTICE POINTERS FOR ATTORNEYS:

- Sit down with your client yourself (not through one of your staff members) and ask all the questions required on the Statement of Financial Affairs and the Schedules.
- If a client's answer to your questions invites further inquiry, ask the follow-up questions.
- Most debtors do not understand the questions being asked in the Schedules and Statements, so it is important that you ask a question in more than one way.