



Our NEW Student Loan Management Program Starts October 1, 2019

By: Hon. Karen S. Jennemann

In January 2019, the Bankruptcy Court formed a district wide committee of lawyers to evaluate and recommend ways to assist parties either repaying or collecting outstanding student loans involved in bankruptcy cases. The committee comprises Christie Arkovich (Tampa), Adina Pollan (Jacksonville), Robert Branson (Orlando), and Charles Moore (St. Petersburg). Tammy Branson is the Chair, Organizer, and Cheerleader for the group. We thank each of these committee members for their input and hard work. Representatives of the national student loan servicers and the Department of Justice were asked but declined to join the committee.

On March 6, 2019, the Committee recommended we move forward with a Student Loan Management Program incorporating a portal, called Loan Spotify, created by Default Mitigation Management, LLC to facilitate transparent communication between borrowers, lenders, guarantors, and servicers of student loans. Over the next few months, the Bankruptcy Judges, helped by the committee and valuable input from the Departments of Education and Justice, hashed out the details in the Third Amended Administrative Order Prescribing Procedures for Student Loan Management Program. The program is effective on October 1, 2019.

We hope parties with student loan issues will consider using the Student Loan Management Program and understand many other bankruptcy courts across the country are looking to implement similar programs. As we learn from our experiences over the next few months, we will continue to improve and refine the program. So, stay tuned.

And, if you want more information, Christie Arkovich wrote a companion article giving more background.