

**Michael G. Williamson View from the Florida Bankruptcy Bench
and Special Recognition of Mary Maddox**
Presented by The Business Law Section of the Florida Bar
By: Stephanie C. Lieb, Esq., Program Chair

The 39th Michael G. Williamson View from the Florida Bankruptcy Bench program was held November 2 and 3, 2023, in Tampa and Miami. The seminar is one of the signature events of the Business Law Section of The Florida Bar. United States Bankruptcy Judge Michael Williamson was founder of the seminar prior to his appointment to the bench and served as Program Chair until 2022. When he passed away in November 2022, the Business Law Section renamed the seminar in his honor, and Judge Colton now serves as the Judicial Chair.

The Tampa program took place at the Center for Advanced Medical Learning and Simulation on November 2, and the panel featured Chief Judges Karen Specie (ND/FL) and Erik Kimball (SD/FL) along with Middle District Chief Judge Caryl Delano and Judges Catherine McEwen, Roberta Colton, Lori Vaughan, Grace Robson, Jacob Brown, Jason Burgess, and Tiffany Geyer. The program in Miami was held at the Kovens Conference Center at Florida International University on November 3 and featured Chief Judges Specie, Kimball, and Delano, Judge Colton, and Southern District Judges Robert Mark, Laurel Isicoff, Mindy Mora, Scott Grossman, Peter Russin, Corali Lopez-Castro, and Paul Hyman. Attorney Liz Green of Baker Hostetler in Orlando was the program moderator both days, and the discussion was lively, informative, and entertaining.

I have had the privilege of serving on the program's Steering Committee since 2008, and I can assure you that each and every year, the committee works its hardest to make the program a success. And it is not just the Steering Committee – the bulk of the work is done by each of the judicial panelists, and it is hard to appreciate from the outside looking in just how much work goes into the preparation.

Rightfully so, Judge Williamson expected perfection from the Steering Committee each year. There has been one person in particular over the course of time who has been instrumental in making sure we met Judge Williamson's expectations, one person who each of the Steering Committee members and the panelists have leaned on to make sure his/her piece of the puzzle came together, and that is Mary Maddox. And it was my privilege to present Mary with special recognition at the Tampa program.

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Mary served as Judge Williamson’s judicial assistant from September 2000 until he passed away and is now Internal Controls Analyst with the Middle District of Florida Bankruptcy Court. However, she continues to be instrumental in the planning of the seminar. As I stated in my remarks on November 2, Mary needs a good title, or descriptive nickname for her role in planning the program, and I have tried my best. She’s the head of enforcement, she’s the chief cat herder, she’s the glue that holds it all together, and she has been the glue for decades. I do not think she would appreciate “The Glue;” in fact, she would not want a title at all. She does it all, working extraordinarily hard with absolutely no expectation of recognition. But the Steering Committee felt it was important to recognize her for her contributions to the success of this program over these many years.

So, on behalf of the Business Law Section, thank you to Mary Maddox for her decades of tireless work and unwavering support for the Michael G. Williamson View from the Florida Bankruptcy Bench program.



Mary Maddox
(Photo courtesy of Ryan Really)