

Big Shoes, Thank you, and Talk to Me

By: Judge Jacob A. Brown



I am so honored to be your incoming chief bankruptcy judge and, to say I have big shoes to fill, is a huge understatement. We owe Chief Judge Caryl Delano a huge debt of gratitude for her service with distinction during unprecedented times. Chief Judge Delano led our Court through Covid, the untimely passings of Judges Jackson and Williamson, the onboarding of 5 baby judges, a change of Clerk of Court, and continued and increased pressure on staff and budget cuts. During this time, she continued to champion uniformity and maintained a focus on our Court's service to the bar and the public. Please join me in thanking Chief Judge Delano for her great and distinguished service.

While I am talking about big shoes to fill, I thought it would be good to remember the Middle District's past Chief Judges and their terms of service:

Judge Alexander L. Paskay	1979 – September 1999
Judge George L. Proctor	September 1999 – August 2000
Judge Thomas E. Baynes	August 2000 – March 2003
Judge Paul "Bill" M. Glenn	March 2003 – September 2011
Judge Karen S. Jennemann	October 2011 – September 2015
Judge Mike G. Williamson	October 2015 – September 2019
Judge Caryl E. Delano	October 2019 – October 2025

One of the important duties of the Chief Judge is to promote uniformity on procedures, form orders, and rules, balanced with respect for judicial independence. Our Court spends countless hours looking at ways to improve how the Court functions and, when there are matters regularly before the Court, we seek uniformity. This is balanced with the importance of judicial independence. There are and will continue

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to be times when we face similar issues and reach different decisions. That is part of a judge's job. We review, research, reflect, discuss, debate, seek input, and consider ways to be the best we can. We aren't always perfect, but we care, and we try. I could go on and on about judicial philosophy and the great work of our Court but will close for now by saying that my door will be open for the next four years should you have ideas on ways the Court can improve and be more consistent and efficient. So, if you have ideas in that regard, talk to me. Thank you.