



UNITED STATES TRUSTEE'S CORNER

By: Jill Kelso, Orlando Office

Justice Department Announces Acting Director of the U.S. Trustee Program

Attorney General Pamela Bondi recently selected Ramona D. Elliott to serve as Acting Director of the Justice Department's U.S. Trustee Program (USTP).

Elliott has 31 years of federal service, the majority of which has been with the USTP. Since 2011, she has served as Deputy Director and General Counsel for the Executive Office for U.S. Trustees in Washington, D.C. As the USTP's chief legal officer, she has overseen the formulation of the USTP's national legal policies in consumer and business cases as well as litigation strategies in significant matters before bankruptcy courts and in appeals. This includes leading the USTP's efforts culminating in the Supreme Court's historic decision in *Harrington v. Purdue Pharma LP*, 144 S. Ct. 2071 (2024), holding that the Bankruptcy Code does not authorize non-consensual third-party releases. Elliott was previously Acting Director of the USTP from April 2022 to February 2023. She is the USTP's liaison to the Judicial Conference's Advisory Committee on Bankruptcy Rules and a Fellow of the American College of Bankruptcy.

The USTP's mission is to promote the integrity and efficiency of the bankruptcy system for the benefit of all stakeholders — debtors, creditors and the public. The USTP consists of 21 regions with 88 field offices nationwide and an Executive Office in Washington, D.C. Learn more about the USTP at www.justice.gov/ustp.

Guy A. Van Baalen Appointed as Acting U.S. Trustee for Florida, Georgia, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands

Guy A. Van Baalen has been appointed by Attorney General Pamela Bondi as the Acting U.S. Trustee for Florida, Georgia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands (Region 21). Van Baalen replaces Mary Ida Townson, who resigned in August after four years of distinguished service to the U.S. Trustee Program (USTP).

Van Baalen joined the USTP in 1989 as an attorney in the field office in Buffalo, New York, and has held several leadership roles. Since 2019, he has served as the

Assistant U.S. Trustee in charge of the office in Tampa, Florida, and he will remain in that position while overseeing Region 21. For the previous 23 years, he was the Assistant U.S. Trustee in charge of the office in Utica, New York, and he has held the same position in an acting capacity in other USTP offices in Florida and New York. In addition to his other duties, Van Baalen serves on a working group supporting the USTP's oversight and supervision of small business reorganizations filed under subchapter V of chapter 11.

Van Baalen received a bachelor's degree from the State University of New York at Albany and a law degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Eric Jacobs Appointed to Chapter 7 Panel of Trustees for the Middle District of Florida – Tampa and Fort Myers Divisions

Guy A. Van Baalen, Acting United States Trustee for Region 21, is pleased to announce the appointment of Eric Jacobs to the chapter 7 panel for the Middle District of Florida - Tampa and Fort Myers Divisions. He will be assigned to Fort Myers only at this time.

Mr. Jacobs concentrates his practice on corporate restructuring, chapter 11 bankruptcy, complex civil litigation, and business litigation. He counsels small businesses in restructuring, including reworking corporate governance, finances, and equity structure, and represents chapter 7 trustees and other fiduciaries in fraudulent transfer litigation and other avoidance actions. He also represents creditors and debtors in collection matters, garnishment proceedings, and supplementary proceedings. Mr. Jacobs has significant experience representing debtors and creditors in discharge actions under Sections 523 and 727 of the Bankruptcy Code.



Mr. Jacobs previously worked with two boutique chapter 11 firms in the Tampa Bay area, gaining experience in restructuring, business litigation, and complex civil litigation matters in both federal and state court, where he represented both businesses and individuals. He also served as a judicial intern for U.S. Chief Bankruptcy Judge Alexander Paskay. He is a member of the American Bar Association, the Hillsborough County Bar Association, and the Tampa Bay Bankruptcy Bar Association (TBBA), where he is a volunteer at the TBBA pro bono clinic assisting pro se individuals through the bankruptcy process. He is also an active member of his local community, serving as president of his homeowner's association.