

U.S. BANKRUPTCY COURT ANNOUNCES CREATION OF VOLUNTEER ATTORNEY PANEL

The U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Illinois is pleased to announce the creation of a panel of volunteer attorneys to represent indigent parties on a *pro bono* basis in discrete adversary proceedings and contested matters.

The program will be administered by the Bankruptcy Court under the court's procedures with support and assistance from the Bench-Bar Liaison Committee and the Chicago Bar Association Bankruptcy and Reorganization Committee.

Judges of the court will be responsible for identifying matters in which a party (generally a debtor, but occasionally a creditor) appears to qualify and would benefit from representation. When a suitable matter is identified, the judge will notify the clerk of the court. The clerk will then contact a panel member to obtain representation for the party needing it.

The program will be limited strictly to representation in adversary proceedings and contested matters – matters that demand the kind of litigation skills *pro se* parties lack. No panel member will be expected to file a bankruptcy case, complete schedules and similar forms, or attend a meeting of creditors.

The program is also entirely voluntary. Panel members will never be required to accept representation in a particular matter and may decline a request for representation because of a conflict of interest or for any other reason.

Attorneys may join the panel by completing a short questionnaire available from the clerk of the court and submitting the completed questionnaire to the clerk's office.

For attorneys interested in the panel, an introductory meeting will be held at noon on Thursday, June 14, 2007, in Courtroom 613, Dirksen Federal Courthouse, 219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois.

The Bankruptcy Court encourages members of the bar to participate in this worthwhile program. Through the volunteer panel, attorneys have a real opportunity to improve the quality of justice in our district.