

United States Bankruptcy Court
Central District of California

Theodor C. Albert, Chief Judge
Kathleen J. Campbell, Executive Officer / Clerk of Court



JUDGE SANDRA R. KLEIN PROFILED IN DAILY JOURNAL

On September 19, the Daily Journal published a profile of Judge Sandra R. Klein. The article describes her fair-minded approach to resolving legal issues, how bankruptcy proceedings can encompass various areas of the law, and her passion for giving back to the community.

Judge Sandra R. Klein's journey and philosophy as a U.S. Bankruptcy Judge reflect her dedication to fairness, education, and community service. Raised in a hardworking family, Judge Klein credits her parents' perseverance, particularly her mother's pursuit of higher education later in life, for instilling in her a strong work ethic. Emphasizing fairness in her courtroom, Judge Klein strives to ensure that all parties feel heard and respected, even if they disagree with her rulings. "It's really important to me that all the parties feel the process is fair," she explains, highlighting the value of creating an equitable environment. Her compassionate approach has garnered respect from counsel who appear before her, including attorney Akihito Koyama, who praised Judge Klein for her patience and understanding, describing her as having "a truly compassionate judicial temperament."



(continued on page 2)



2025-2029 STRATEGIC PLAN APPROVED BY COURT AND ISSUED BY CHIEF JUDGE ALBERT

Led by Judge Julia W. Brand, the Strategic Plan Committee finalized and published the 2025-2029 Court Strategic Plan. The committee includes Judges Mark D. Houle, Martin R. Barash, and Ronald A. Clifford III; Executive Officer/Clerk of Court Kathleen J. Campbell; Chief Deputy of Operations Benjamin Varela; Chief Deputy of Administration John H. Hermann; Director of Human Resources and Court Services Beryl Dixon; Manager, Planning and Research Blake Francois; and Senior Court Analyst Dr. Estella Chavarin.

Developed with input from various bar associations, focus groups, and the public, the Committee gathered, reviewed, and incorporated feedback and suggestions. This new plan will define the Court's direction for the next five years and identify long-term issues, formulating goals and strategies to address each. To view the 2025-2029 Court Strategic Plan, please click [here](#).

Court News is published by the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Central District of California as an informational service for the practitioners and public of our Court.

Suggestions and comments are always welcome. Please email us at editor@cacb.uscourts.gov.

This issue and back issues of the Court News are available on the Court's website at <http://www.cacb.uscourts.gov/publications>

(continued from page 1)

Judge Klein’s legal career, shaped by diverse experiences, underscores her commitment to justice and education. After earning a bachelor’s degree in music education, Judge Klein pursued a Juris Doctor at Loyola Law School, leading to her judicial clerkships, an associate position in private practice, and various roles with the U.S. Department of Justice. Her innovative efforts include producing “Stop Identity Theft Now,” a pioneering public service video addressing identity theft. On the bench, Judge Klein enjoys the dynamic nature of bankruptcy law, which she describes as “a big umbrella of different areas of the law that come into play.”

Beyond the courtroom, Judge Klein actively invests in community and youth engagement. Judge Klein initiated programs like the Girl Scouts’ Justice Patch and mock trials for students, aimed at demystifying the legal system and inspiring future generations. “It’s just really important for them to see how the judicial process works,” she states, underscoring the importance of fostering trust and understanding in the community. Her mentorship extends to law students and externs, whom she guides in learning about judicial decision-making, with former extern Jason Treul describing her as instrumental in his development. Through her professional and volunteer efforts, Judge Klein exemplifies a judge deeply committed to fairness, education, and giving back to society.

COURT PUBLISHES 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

The Court marks each year with the publication of its annual report, which records the year’s achievements and challenges. In December, the Court published the 2023 Annual Report. The report details the Court’s ongoing efforts to improve service and extend access to justice through technological innovation, participation in national and regional initiatives, and community outreach.

Some of the notable accomplishments and achievements include: hosting the 2023 NCBC Conference in Anaheim; upgrading the infrastructure and courtroom technologies throughout the district; launching a new web-based mediation program; participating in the AO’s 2023-2024 Model Intern Program; conducting workshops and presentations for aspiring judges, new attorneys, law clerks, and externs; continuing the Court’s robust community outreach efforts; and the active participation of judges and court staff in numerous local, circuit, and national events, while providing exemplary service.



A PDF of the 2023 Annual Report is posted on the Court’s website, to view the 2023 Annual Report, please click [here](#).

2024 FEDERAL BANKRUPTCY RULES AND FORMS AMENDMENTS

Effective December 1, 2024, the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure will be amended to incorporate the restyled rules, amendments to Rules 1007, 4004, 5009, 7001, and 9006, and new Rule 8023.1. Additionally, Official Form 423 will be retired.

For further details on these Rules and Forms amendments, please visit <https://www.uscourts.gov/rules-policies/pending-rules-and-forms-amendments>.

HOLIDAY CLOSURES

Wednesday, January 1 - New Year's Day

Monday, January 20 - Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Monday, February 17 - Washington's Birthday (Observed)

To view the 2025 Federal Holiday Public Notice on the Court's website click [here](#).

BANKRUPTCY FRAUD PROSECUTIONS

The following information has been provided by the Office of the United States Trustee:

United States Trustee v. Nasir Mahmood Cheema; USBC Case No. 6:23-ap-01088-RB

Nasir Mahmood Cheema filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy protection on November 18, 2022 (the first chapter 7). Debtor listed a home in Fontana with \$402,189 of equity, a 2020 Honda Accord with no equity, various personal and household items, and cash totaling \$3,670. The non-priority unsecured debt totaled \$849,650.16, which included a judgment of \$600,400.16 entered by the Arizona Superior Court, County of Mariposa on May 5, 2022. Debtor did not list any gifts given or transfers made within 2 years of filing and claimed no affiliation to any businesses. Debtor did not appear at any of the three noticed 341(a) meetings and the proceeding was dismissed.

On July 14, 2023 Cheema filed a second chapter 7 petition using the same petition, schedules and statements as in the first chapter 7 proceeding. An investigation conducted by the United States Trustee revealed that in early 2022 debtor had transferred ownership of his primary residence to his adult children as a gift with no consideration, despite having approximately \$400,000 in equity. Shortly thereafter debtor instructed his children to transfer the property back to him. Debtor authorized the sale of real property in Nevada as President and Treasurer of a Nevada corporation in May 2022 and received \$165,375 in net sale proceeds, which he spent on discretionary purchases, and \$20,000 gifts to each of his three children. When questioned by the chapter 7 trustee, the debtor admitted that he has engaged in these transactions because his creditors sued him and obtained a \$600,000 judgment. The chapter 7 trustee has filed a notice of assets and will be pursue administration of the estate.

On August 21, 2023, the United States Trustee filed an adversary proceeding to deny debtor's discharge pursuant to 11 U.S.C. §§ 727(a)(2), (a)(4) & (a)(5). On December 16, 2024, the United States Trustee obtained a stipulation with debtor for entry of judgment in favor of the United States Trustee pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 727(a)(10). An order granting the stipulation was entered on December 17, 2024.

TOP 10 CASES OF INTEREST*

Debtor	Case Number	Chapter	Filed	Assets	Liabilities
Better Nutritionals, LLC.	RS-22-14723-MH	7	12/20/22	\$50 - \$100 million	\$100 - \$500 million
Beverly Community Hospital Asso.	LA-23-12359-SK	11	04/19/23	\$1 - \$10 million	\$100 - \$500 million
Heycart Inc.	SA-24-10483-TA	11	02/28/24	\$1 - \$10 million	\$10 - \$50 million
Ittella International LLC	LA-23-14154-SK	11	07/02/23	\$10 - \$50 million	\$10 - \$50 million
K3B Enterprises, LLC	SV-24-10406-VK	11	03/14/24	\$10 - \$50 million	\$1 - \$10 million
The Litigation Practice Group P.C.	SA-23-10571-SC	11	03/20/23	\$1 - \$10 million	\$10 - \$50 million
Manning Land Company, LLC	LA:24-16757-VZ	11	08/22/24	\$10 - \$50 million	\$10 - \$50 million
Synapse Financial Technologies, Inc.	SV-24-10646-MB	11	04/22/24	\$10 - \$50 million	\$10 - \$50 million
Thomas Vincent Girardi	LA 20-21020-BR	7	12/18/20	\$50 - \$100 million	\$50 - \$100 million
Windsor Terrace Healthcare, LLC	SV-23-11200-VK	11	08/23/23	\$1 - \$10 million	\$1 - \$10 million

*Based on a combination of asset and liability levels, and/or name recognition.

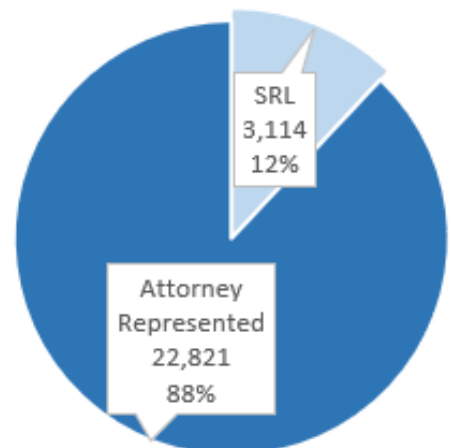
BANKRUPTCY STATISTICS

The data below represents filings year to date thru December 31, 2024. Statistics based on internal filings data.

Divisional Filings YTD	Ch 7	Ch 11	Ch 13	Total	% change from previous YTD
Los Angeles	8,881	186	1,785	10,852	22.44%
Northern	1,268	21	218	1,507	20.56%
Riverside	6,766	36	1,142	7,944	28.03%
San Fernando Valley	1,756	69	406	2,231	17.24%
Santa Ana	2,855	79	456	3,390	20.04%
Total	21,526	330	4,007	25,924	23.18%

Business Filings	Ch 7	Ch 11	Ch 13	Total
2024 YTD	1,246	330	54	1,630
2023 YTD	999	314	63	1,376

Central District of CA - Filings YTD



The interactive Statistics Dashboard is a feature on the Court’s website that provides up-to-date filing and closing data for chapter 7, 11, and 13 cases, as well as adversary proceedings. Users can view data sorted by division or from the entire Central District, or they can choose to view only pro se (SRL) or business cases. The Statistics Dashboard also displays year-by-year and month-by-month comparisons; another option compares each month of the current year to the corresponding month of the prior year. Access the “Interactive Statistics” through the link: <https://ecf.cacb.uscourts.gov/ecfstatsdash>