

District 8 April 16, 2021
Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky
Submitted by Judge Ann Breen-Greco, District 8

District 8 is planning a MentorJet program. So far, we have five law schools which will be participating. District 8 now has two new Judges in Kentucky, a state in our District that has been unrepresented until now. Both Judges will be participating in our MentorJet program and are reaching out to two law schools. Due to conflicts with law school exam schedules, we have decided to reschedule it until the fall. District 8 will also be a co sponsor for the NAWJ Human Trafficking Program to be planned for July 7, 2021

Judge Virginia Kendall who sits on the federal bench provided this update on the Northern District in Illinois: Jury trials begin again in the ND of IL April 5. All jurors and staff in the courthouse will get Covid testing during the week. Judge Nina Puglia reports that the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board is using Zoom for Government to hear its cases, including individual right of action appeals under the Whistleblower Protection Act.

Judge Heather Welch reports that In Indiana the Supreme Court began permitted jury trials to resume. Some of the Courts in Indiana have started jury trials back up beginning the first week of March.

As the liaison from the ABA Judicial Division to the ABA Commission on Women in the Profession I attended the Commission's ABA midyear meeting on February 18. The CWP is continuing its work on a number of projects including Day of Guided Conversation for women lawyers, to take place March 26, using a tool kit. Discussion will include impact of the pandemic on women, noting "caregiver bias" can impact women and finding ways to change this impact. CWP also has a Grit and Growth program to help young women develop characteristics for success. CWP will also focus on re-launching leaders, in a changed environment, based on a trend of setback for women, set for the fall of 2022. Additionally, CWP is working on Men in the Mix, encouraging male lawyers/judges to get involved in gender issues.

I participated with the ABA Judicial Division Standing Committee on Diversity in the Judiciary in planning virtual visits with elementary and high school students to engage them in law/civics related activities. Our presentations focused on rule of law and the three branches of government. I did a similar program at a high school for the ABA Judicial Division Outreach Week on March 12. These programs are similar to our NAWJ MentorJet and Color of Change programs.