

Date: June 25, 2012

PRESS RELEASE

CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT MENTORING PROGRAM

APPROVED FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

Chief Judge Carol Bagley Amon, on behalf of the Board of Judges of the Eastern District of New York, announces the implementation of a Mentoring Program (“the Program”) designed to increase the diversity of the members of the Criminal Justice Act Panel (“the CJA Panel”) and to ensure quality representation for indigent defendants. The program was designed by the Court’s CJA Panel Committee (“the Committee”) to identify and help prepare viable candidates from the state and federal criminal defense bar to qualify for consideration for appointment to the CJA Panel. Although an important objective of the program is to encourage increased participation of women and minorities on the CJA Panel, the Program is open to all interested, qualified candidates.

Mentors who are experienced and respected members of the federal criminal bar, including private counsel, federal defenders, former prosecutors, and CJA Panel members, will be paired with qualified Mentees. Qualified Mentee candidates include state and federal practitioners with five or more years of criminal experience, including substantial trial and in-court experience, as well as strong research and writing skills, and who are admitted to the Eastern District Bar or will be admitted as soon as possible. Orientation and CLE programs for Mentors and Mentees will be coordinated by the Committee.

Mentees will work closely with their Mentors on randomly assigned newly presented cases that will expose the Mentees to myriad issues across the spectrum of representation in federal courts. Mentees will not be paid under the Criminal Justice Act but will provide their services *pro bono* as they invest in a potential future as a federal criminal defense attorney. Mentees who successfully complete the Program will be encouraged to apply to the CJA Panel. However, appointment to the CJA Panel is not guaranteed. At the conclusion of the program, both Mentors and Mentees will be asked to fill out evaluation forms that will assist the Committee in improving the Program over time.

Additional information about the Program, application and evaluation forms, which can be accessed and submitted electronically, will be made available on the Court’s website at www.nyed.uscourts.gov under the CJA tab at the top of the webpage after June 26, 2012 or you may contact Gary Villanueva, Esq. at garyvillanueva@aol.com or the Hon. Cheryl L. Pollak, U.S. Magistrate Judge, Chair of the CJA Committee, at Cheryl.Pollak@nyed.uscourts.gov.