

# FDIC News

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Employee Newsletter

MAY 2025

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## FDIC Attorney's Legacy: The 'Chairmen's Baseball'

By Sonya Weakley  
Writer, Office of Communications

If you think there is no connection between baseball and the FDIC, you haven't met Fred Fisch.

Fisch was an attorney in what was known as the FDIC's Western Service Center in Irvine, California, when former Chairman Ricki Helfer came to visit, which Fisch recalled as being a rare treat. It was during the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC).

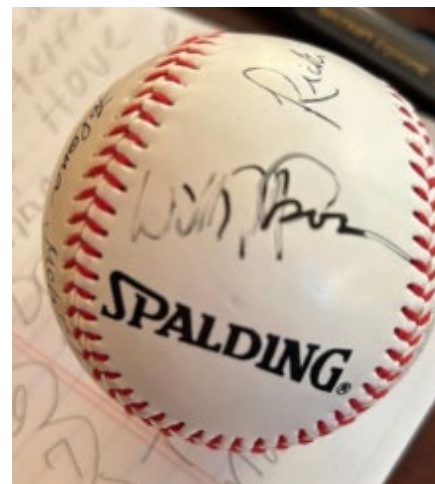
"I believe the theme that year was baseball or hit a home run, or something like that," Fisch said. "And it would've been about [19]96, I believe."

Fisch, who is Counsel in the Legal Division at headquarters, isn't sure where the ball came from—he expects an assistant went out and got it because it was brand new—but Helfer signed it and donated it to an auction at the Irvine office to raise money for the campaign.

But it wasn't until after the campaign that he saw it. A fellow attorney had purchased it, and she happened to show it to him. "I said oh, that's pretty cool. And I can't remember what I had but I said how about we trade? You get this and I get the baseball. It was probably just a few weeks after the CFC."

A year or so later Fisch moved to headquarters to take over the Freedom of Information and Privacy Program. "It was then that I got interested in who is the chairman of the FDIC," he said.

Other than Helfer, no other chairmen had ever visited any of the offices where he had worked, including the Denver



Consolidated Field Office, where he started in 1988. He closed that office in 1994 before moving to Irvine and is the last remaining employee from there.

"We had the General Counsel come once and joined us all for lunch in Denver, which felt really good, but the chairman would never come there. It was really cool that Ricki Helfer did that."

At headquarters, he started asking chairmen to sign the ball. "Every time there would be a new chairman, I would write a message and say 'Are they game to sign the ball?' And they would say 'Yes, send it over.' No one has ever declined signing it."

He then decided to collect signatures of previous chairmen. "I thought, I want to collect signatures of people that served in the past, that I read about in

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## **'Chairmen's Baseball,' from page 1**

the news, like Bill Isaac. He was always in the clip sheets."

So he sent it to former Chairman William M. Issac, and he signed it and sent it back. "I wanted to send it to [former Chairman L. William] Bill Seidman because he was like a real hero for me. He was the chairman when I started, but then Chairman Seidman passed away just as I was contemplating sending it to him."

He also missed former Chairman William Taylor, who passed away soon after taking office. "And the only other one I missed is [former Acting Chairman] John [M.] Reich, but he was Acting Chairman for just a few months," he said.

"Other than that, I have all of the chairmen going back to the '80s, back to Bill Isaac, and just the other day, it was signed by [Acting Chairman] Travis Hill, and I make no distinction between acting or permanent. None of them threw me a curve ball. They all agreed to sign."

While he can only account for nine signers, there are 10 signatures on the ball. "I'm just positive John Reich isn't on here and I know I never got Taylor or Seidman, so one of the chairmen signed it twice," he said.

"It looks to me like it's probably [former Chairman Donald E.] Don Powell's signature, but it's hard to say because it looks a little different in each example of his signature," he said.

"Oh, there's Sheila Bair, and then Gruenberg. Yeah, I knew Marty real well. I used to brief Marty when he was vice chairman because I was in charge of Freedom of Information.

"And [former Chairman Andrew C.] "Skip" Hove [Jr.]—what a legend. A real America's hometown banker. He stayed with the FDIC a long time, and he did a lot of good here. And here's [former Chairman Jelena] McWilliams, and here's the newest signature. It just says T. Hill."

Fisch said the ball has never been played or thrown and has been kept in a little wax bag. "I should probably put it in one of those baseball plastic things, and take it out of the paper, but people are going to be [asking] what's the connection? FDIC and baseball? I was joking with

my friend Tom Hearn [Counsel, Legal Division] that we're going to have to get Lloyds of London to insure this!"



**Frederick Lee Fisch**

### **A STORIED CAREER**

Retiring from the FDIC on May 31 (See Moving On: Frederick Lee Fisch, Counsel, Legal Division), Fisch said he left the Western Service Center to come to headquarters permanently in 1997, shortly before the center was closed.

"It was just a site to liquidate assets from failed banks. And in those days we got more assets because everything that was funny or classified or wasn't performing, they wouldn't pass to the assuming bank. The FDIC would keep it, and I would help them liquidate it."

He said he was the only Wyoming lawyer in that office. "We had to liquidate all the assets from Wyoming, as well as a host of banks in Colorado and S&Ls (Savings and Loan Associations) that we put into conservatorship until the RTC (Resolution Trust Corporation) came into existence in August of [19]89. Then we handed all those conservatorships to the RTC people," he said.

"RTC, as you may know," he continued, "only had two employees by statute. Everybody that worked at the RTC was an FDIC employee, except those two executive positions. So we were all one big happy family. And that's when the liquidations started getting more complex too, and the banks started doing more creative things."

Fisch said he was the lead closing attorney at many failed institutions. "I've closed a lot of banks. I've served the FDIC in litigation and legal matters in something like 29 states, and Canada too."

Sometime in 2018, after he no longer was involved in liquidating assets, he picked up a telephone call from an external lawyer who had an interesting story.

"It turned out that he had a bond that the bank had posted in Canada because some people had gotten away with something like a million dollars, and they were Canadian citizens. They had absconded to Canada, and the bank had post a bond to go after these people.

"And then a week after they posted the bond, the bank failed, and 20 years went by, and this bond was just sitting in a bank in Canada gaining interest. Finally, they called this man who had been the lawyer for the bank. By now he was at the end of his career and he told me about it, and I said, 'thank you, it looks like this is an FDIC asset.'

"So I talked to our people in commercial lit[igation], who would've normally handled this case, and I convinced them to let me have it. So I liquidated that asset—the bond that had been filed in that case—and I collected the money for the FDIC.

"It was the very last asset of the Resolution Trust Corporation. Nobody has ever—and I've told that to a lot of people—and nobody's ever said, oh, I've got one that's older, or we got one afterward.

"So I'm proud that I was able to help liquidate that. Yeah, I've done some fun things."

### **AND THE BASEBALL?**

After Fisch retires, he is not sure what will happen to the baseball. He was thinking about giving it to the library or contacting the FDIC's former historian, Lee Davison. "I'm trying to figure out what to do with it. I want it to have some value to the FDIC.

"I also want to thank Acting Chairman Travis Hill for signing it, and his

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## 'Chairmen's Baseball,' from page 2

Executive Assistant Glenn Kivlen for shepherding this last signature though because I probably won't be able to obtain any more signatures once I retire."

Fisch is hoping someone at the FDIC will take it and continue the tradition. "That would be good. That would make me happy."

Below is the list of current and former FDIC chairmen who signed Fisch's baseball and their dates of service.

Travis Hill (Acting)  
January 20, 2025–present

Martin J. Gruenberg  
February 5, 2022–January 4, 2023  
(Acting); January 5, 2023–January 19, 2025;  
July 9, 2011–November 28, 2012 (Acting);  
November 29, 2012–June 5, 2018; November  
16, 2005–June 26, 2006 (Acting)

Jelena McWilliams  
June 5, 2018–February 4, 2022

Sheila C. Bair  
June 26, 2006–July 8, 2011

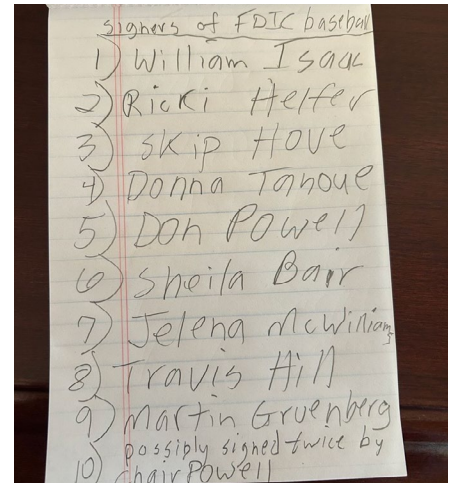
Donald E. Powell  
August 29, 2001–November 15, 2005

Donna A. Tanoue  
May 26, 1998–July 11, 2001

Andrew C. Hove, Jr.  
June 1, 1997–May 26, 1998 (Acting);  
August 20, 1992–October 7, 1994 (Acting);  
October 17, 1991–October 25, 1991 (Acting)

Ricki Helfer  
October 7, 1994–June 1, 1997

William M. Isaac  
August 3, 1981–October 21, 1985 🏠



List of Signers

# The FDIC's Established, Professional Career Counseling Service Offers Vast Range of Services

By Sonya Weakley  
Writer, Office of Communications

When Nigel Franklin started thinking about next steps in his career, he immediately turned to the FDIC Career Counseling and Coaching Program



Nigel Franklin

offered through Employee Life and Career Development (ELCD).

"I had been in a position for a while, and I was starting to look inwardly at what can I do to improve myself?" Franklin said. "I was starting to think, what are my next steps? Do I want to go into a leadership role?"

Having started at the FDIC as a student intern in the Division of Administration (DOA), Franklin said he learned about the career counselors during his internship.

So, when he saw an FDIC job posting that was of interest, he contacted Alan Berry, a contract career counselor based in Atlanta. "The first step was trying to get my resume in shape to apply to an announcement. Then from there it was interview prep."

Stephen Kapostas, Compliance Examiner in the Division of Depositor

and Consumer Protection (DCP) in the New York Region, also learned about the career counseling program as an intern,



Stephen Kapostas

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and he viewed it as being similar to career services offered in college. “I think initially I used it as an exploratory [tool]—what can these services offer me?”

Besides helping him prepare his resume for Expressions of Interest, he has found career counselor Jessica Bickley, who is based in the New York Region, particularly



**Jessica Bickley**

helpful for general career development discussions. “She’s very good at asking like probing questions, almost uncomfortably, but in a good way.”

### WIDE RANGE OF SERVICES

Bickley, Senior Career Counselor, has worked with the FDIC in New York since 2011. She described the role of the counselors as “everything from soup to nuts.”

In addition to reviewing resumes, preparing for interviews, and discussing career options, the career counselors administer and interpret skills assessments, which they say can be helpful to giving people insight into their strengths; assist in relationship building, team building, and other types of professional communication; and help with writing Career Development Plans.

She said assessments are useful for career decision making and for marketing. For example, one assessment helps people identify accomplishments they are most proud of at the FDIC or elsewhere. “What do these accomplishments say about you, your interests, your values, your skills? This helps to show

how their interests and values match the employer’s interests and values.”

She emphasized that the career counseling services are confidential and that all the counselors are very familiar with private-sector job search techniques and processes. “We can help people create private-sector resumes, build interview skills in the private sector, and learn about the vast job search and networking resources in the private sector,” Bickley said.

The counselors also work with people who are considering retirement, Bickley said. Whether they are thinking about how to find meaningful activities, finding another job, or pursuing a completely different career, the counselors can help them figure out how to spend their time in a way that is meaningful to them.

She added that ELCD offers an online webinar series called “Retirement by Design,” based on a book of the same name, usually twice a year.

Berry, who has been working five years with the FDIC in Atlanta, has been involved in coaching for 38 years in both higher and adult education.

He said most of his clients have been interested in moving up in the FDIC. “People love working here. It is a demanding organization, but people



**Alan Berry**

understand what they are doing, and how what they’re doing fits into the bigger picture of the mission of the FDIC.”

If that is not possible, he said his role is to provide a clearer perspective on what is available by helping people weigh their options. “What if this happens, what should I do? What if that happens? What do I do if nothing happens? Or if something happens that I wasn’t prepared for. That’s the benefit of having a coach because I’m not going to be vested in the decision.”

He helps employees figure out what they like and don’t like, rather than telling them what to do. “If you didn’t like this job, what would be the



**Jeanine Stewart**

opposite side and what would be good? Because a bad experience gives you good information.”

Jeanine Stewart has been an FDIC career counselor for about a year and a half, having worked recently in leadership development consulting and higher education, and she has a Ph.D. in neuroscience.

She said it is helpful that the career counselors and coaches also have a strong relationship with the clinical counselors because sometimes people who come to the career counselors need to speak to a clinician first.

“All kinds of personal issues are bleeding into your perspective on your career, and sometimes a conversation will pop up against things that are outside

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our scope of practice,” she said. “We’re all very well trained and bound by a code of ethics. We make sure that people have what they need in place, whether it’s counseling or different kinds of support.”

Based on the client’s needs, she may refer them to a different counselor or coach who has a different background.

One of the things she likes about the FDIC “is that I get to engage with folks at every level. I think a lot of people may not realize that this benefit extends to their dependent children and partners.”

While she uses assessments, Stewart said she prefers to take a narrative approach. “I am interested in understanding what the client’s objectives are, helping them shape their perspectives through conversations that we have.”

### BEYOND THE JOB SEARCH

Joleen Macek, Lead Human Resources Development Specialist in ELCD who oversees the career counseling contract, said the career counselors and coaches can also advise on ways to negotiate such issues as salaries and relocation. Other services include assessing education and training needs and options. “They can



**Joleen Macek**

help anyone who is interested in getting a certificate or going back to graduate school,” she said.

They can also help with career success strategies, such as time management, writing performance management statements, having crucial conversations,

giving and receiving feedback, briefing, and other soft skills, using techniques such as role play.

“They can give you some suggestions for how to phrase feedback so that it will be heard and meaningful,” Macek said. “I think people don’t think about speaking with a career counselor or coach about these skills. It’s not just about job search. It’s really to support employees in their careers.”

### ONGOING SUPPORT AVAILABLE WHENEVER NEEDED

Now an Internet Coordinator in the Division of Risk Management Supervision (RMS), Franklin, who has been with the FDIC for 17 years, said the Career Counseling service has been instrumental in guiding him through his career. Any time he wanted to apply to a position, he would put time on Berry’s calendar.

After starting as an intern in Benefits, he was a generalist in DOA, and moved to work on employee engagement programs such as Team FDIC and Workplace Excellence in the Office of the Internal Ombudsman. While there, he decided to apply for the Special Assistant Rotation Program.

Berry helped him prepare for that interview, and when he was accepted, Berry served as his coach for the program. “In that program they give you a mentor, but sometimes I wanted advice on how to engage in certain conversations with my mentor, and it was helpful to have a third-party perspective,” Franklin said.

He was first assigned to FDITECH and became part of the Chief Information Officer Organization (CIOO), which led to his current position. He recently was accepted to the Leadership Excellence Acceleration Program (LEAP), and again Berry served as his coach during the application process.

Franklin said he often talks to Berry about general work-related issues, such as how to respond to a particular email. “If you build a rapport with somebody, they have more context. They know things that you’ve been through, and they can give you a perspective on a way people might see you that you may not see yourself.”

Similarly, Kapostas, who has been with the FDIC for five years, said he has found Bickley very helpful in walking through career decisions and thinking about opportunities to apply for. “I’ve spoken to her regularly to prepare for important discussions.”

When he participated in the Leadership Connect program, which involved conducting informational interviews with executives throughout the agency, Bickley helped him prepare the discussion for those calls.

He appreciates that she pushes him out of his comfort zone. “So you have to come up with something on the spot and be vulnerable, but she’s very kind, helpful, and friendly. She makes it an easy environment to do that. It’s good practice so that when you are in a less friendly environment, it’s a lot easier.”

She was particularly helpful in pulling his public sector resume together to apply for Expressions of Interest, and he was selected for the Standardized Work Paper Oversight Committee. He said she also provides a number of resources and is knowledgeable about where to look for them, internally and externally.

### A LONG AND SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM

Macek said the career counseling program dates to 1999, when a one-year pilot Career Management Program began. It was so well received that it became a permanent program in 2000, and the career counselors were part of it.

At first counseling was only available to employees, but in the following years it was expanded several times—to children 16 and older and spouses of relocating employees in 2006, to domestic partners in 2009, and to all spouses in 2022.

The program has grown from an initial staff of two counselors in headquarters to the current level of 12, including three in the headquarters region; two each in Atlanta, Dallas, and Chicago; and one each in New York, Kansas City, and San Francisco. All the counselors are contractors. Many have their own practices or businesses, and all have extensive experience.

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The counselors work one to three days a week, typically Monday through Thursday, but recently Friday hours have been added. Employees can meet with any counselor/coach that is available at any location by scheduling an appointment through a confidential scheduling service in the MyEnroll benefits enrollment system. “So if they have an immediate need, then usually there are appointments available,” Macek said.

All counseling sessions are conducted virtually, generally through Teams, to allow for maximum flexibility. “For example, if an employee has an immediate need, such as an interview the next day or coaching for a particular job, they can meet with anyone,” Macek said.

It is particularly helpful for employees

on the East Coast to be able to meet after work hours with counselors in later time zones. A summary of each counselor’s background is available on FDICnet, so employees can decide if a particular counselor may best suit their needs for a session.

Not all the counselors have office space, but in-person onsite meetings can be arranged with individual counselors. Counselors often conduct in-person group sessions for teams, and they are instrumental in developing webinars on a wide range of topics.

Bickley said the demand for career services has definitely increased since she started in 2011. She said ELCD programs had more than 11,000 participants in its services and programs in 2024. “Right



now, career counseling and job search services are really important and really needed by employees.

Franklin highly recommends taking advantage of the career counseling service. “They’re not fortune tellers, but it’s just good to think through things and process things and try to be prepared.” 🏠

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## Briefs

### View the FDIC Board of Directors Meeting

May 16, 2025

The [FDIC Board of Directors](#) will meet in open session at 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at FDIC Headquarters, 550 17th St., NW, in Washington, D.C. Employees [may view the agenda](#) and are [invited to view the live webcast](#) of the meeting. Anyone requiring assistance to view the meeting should email [disabilityprogram@fdic.gov](mailto:disabilityprogram@fdic.gov).

### New Roles in CISR and DCP

May 20, 2025

The FDIC recently announced changes in leadership for the Division of Complex Institution Supervision and Resolution (CISR) and the Division of Depositor and Consumer Protection (DCP). Arthur J. (Art) Murton, Deputy to the Chairman for Financial Stability and Director of CISR, will retire from the FDIC on May 31, 2025. Jenny Traille, Senior Deputy Director of CISR, will serve as Acting Director of CISR. Leonard Chanin has returned to the FDIC as Deputy to the Chairman for Consumer Protection and Innovation.

### FDIC to Release Latest Quarterly Banking Profile

May 22, 2025

FDIC Acting Chairman Travis Hill [will announce bank and thrift industry earnings for the first quarter 2025](#) in a live press conference at 10 a.m. Eastern Time, Wednesday, May 28, in the Board Room at the Main Building, 550 17th St NW, Washington DC. The [Quarterly Banking Profile \(QBP\)](#) provides comprehensive data on bank and thrift earnings, balance sheet results, and performance ratios. Members of the press have been invited to join in person. 🏠

# Moving On

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**Name:** Fredrick Lee Fisch

**Most recent position:** Counsel

**Division/Office:** Legal

**Location:** Virginia Square, Arlington, VA

**When and where joined the FDIC:**

September 12, 1988, Denver Consolidated Field Office (closed)

**Career highlights:** Managed an operating water utility for FDIC as receiver; served as Corporate Counsel to the Board for five open nursing homes, all successfully operated for one year after appointment, solely by an all-FDIC employee Board of Directors; collected the signatures of nine FDIC Chairmen on a baseball donated to the Combined Federal Campaign (CFCo and originally signed by former Chairman Ricki Helfer; resolved the very last known asset of the Resolution Trust Corporation (RTC)

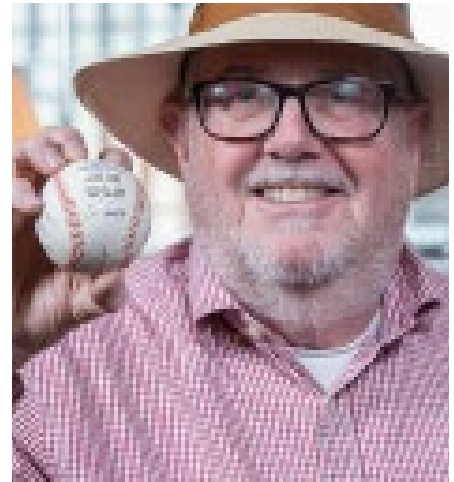
while working as an FDIC contracting lawyer; spent 16 years in Legal Division senior management and more than 20 years as a staff attorney.

**Retirement date:** May 31, 2025

**Plans for retirement:** Working on projects in limbo, hiking the Verde Valley, enjoying peace and relaxation with my family, traveling. Going to be based in Sedona, Arizona, a place I found due to FDIC receivership activity.

**Additional comments and thoughts:**

I first became aware of the FDIC in my youth but did not realize I would spend more than half my life guarding and protecting the Corporation—36 years and nine months. The many brilliant colleagues, friends, contacts and other staff are what make up the FDIC. You have all made it so special for me. 🏠



**Fredrick Lee Fisch**