

FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES

Jojo Annobil

Jojo Annobil is the Attorney-in-Charge of the City-wide Immigration Law Unit at The Legal Aid Society. He supervises individual case representation, policy advocacy and coordinates the Unit's collaboration with other legal services providers, community based organizations, pro bono attorneys and law students.

A graduate of Fordham School of Law, he previously worked with the Society's Criminal Appeals Bureau as a staff attorney. An expert in the intersection between immigration and criminal law, he is currently an adjunct professor at New York University School of Law where he co-teaches the Immigrant Defense Clinic. He also serves as Special Counsel to the New York State Supreme Court, Appellate Division First Department's disciplinary committee on immigration matters.

CARLA ALVAREZ-GOULD, LCSW, MSW, CMFSW

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CARLA ALVAREZ-GOULD is a New York State and Connecticut Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Certified Master Forensic Social Worker, as well as a Divorce Mediator, with a Master of Social Work degree from New York University Silver School of Social Work and advanced study and certificates in Clinical Social Work practice from Yale University School of Medicine, The Yale Child Study Center, Yale-New Haven Hospital and New York University Silver School of Social Work.

A nationally recognized expert in the field of immigrant mental health, Ms. Alvarez-Gould is a member of the International Society of Traumatic Stress Studies, Association of Traumatic Stress Specialists, the Association of Forensic Social Workers, the National Association of Social Workers, and the Autism Society of America. For the past ten years, she has worked as a consultant to immigration and criminal practice law firms to conduct clinical and forensic psychosocial evaluations and mitigation reports, providing expert testimony in several of these cases.

Beginning in 2000, she was an advisor and speaker on immigrant mental health and family issues to Governor George Pataki and then-Senator Hillary Clinton, an Adjunct Professor at the College of New Rochelle Department of Social Work, a school social worker in New York City and Westchester, and a bilingual Clinical Social Worker, specializing in trauma, in the Adult and Pediatric Emergency Department of Yale-New Haven Hospital.

Ms. Alvarez-Gould is currently in private practice, with specializations in immigrant mental health and trauma.

Kerry William Bretz, Esq.

Bretz & Coven, LLP
New York City

Kerry Bretz is a former INS trial attorney and partner at Bretz & Coven. His private practice is defined by his dedication to progressive, fair immigration laws that reflect the true value immigrants bring to the United States and the original promises of the United States as a place where people can pursue life, liberty, and happiness.

Kerry Bretz has played a major role in challenging the retroactive application of new immigration laws and mandatory detention. He was instrumental in winning major deportation cases, such as *Henderson v INS* and *Calcano-Martinez v INS*, which cases have changed the national scene on the availability of relief to aliens with criminal convictions.

Additionally, in *St John v McElroy*, Kerry Bretz helped achieve the release of a mentally disabled woman from INS custody and was awarded approximately \$88,000 in attorney's fees under the Equal Access to Justice Act by a federal court judge. Further, he obtained an additional monetary settlement to Ms. St John under the Federal Tort Claims Act for alleged abuses she suffered while detained by the INS.

Prior to private practice, Kerry Bretz was a Trial Attorney for the former Immigration and Naturalization Service. As a result, he brings a unique perspective to every client's case and can effectively strategize each individual case. He is regularly consulted by the criminal defense bar, is frequently quoted in newspapers, has appeared on reputable television programs and radio shows.

Kerry Bretz is an active member of the [American Immigration Lawyer's Association](#) and is often asked to speak at its annual conference. He is also Commissioner for the Archdiocese's Commission for the Dignity of Immigrants.

Kerry Bretz is [Martindale-Hubbell® AV-Rated®](#), the highest peer-review rating an attorney can receive.

Admitted to Practice:

Connecticut 1991
New York 1992
Florida 1996
U.S. District Court, Southern District of NY 1994
[U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit](#) 1996
U.S. Court of Appeals, Third Circuit 1998
[U.S. Court of Appeal, Fifth Circuit](#) 1999

Languages: Spanish

Education:

Juris Doctor, City University of New York Queens College 1991
Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude, [Herbert H. Lehman College of the City University of New York](#) 1988

Angela Olivia Burton is the Director of Quality Enhancement for Mandated Family Court Representation at the New York State Office of Indigent Legal Services (ILS). ILS was established by the Legislature in 2010 pursuant to Executive Law Article 30 to “to monitor, study and make efforts to improve the quality of” legal representation provided for indigent persons pursuant to County Law Article 18-B . Operating under the direction and pursuant to policies established by its Board of Directors, chaired by the Chief Judge of the New York State Court of Appeals, ILS assists county governments and indigent legal services providers in their efforts to provide high quality, effective assistance of counsel to persons who are legally entitled to a lawyer but cannot afford to hire one. She joined ILS in September of 2012 to oversee the state’s efforts to improve the quality of mandated representation in family court and related surrogate’s courts proceedings.

Prof. Burton is currently on leave from the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Law, where she has taught courses in lawyering practice, family law, children’s rights, and the child welfare system. Prior to joining the CUNY Law faculty, she was Director of the Children’s Rights and Family Law Clinic at Syracuse University College of Law, where she supervised students in the representation of children and adults in state and federal courts. She was a law clerk for Court of Appeals Judge Fritz W. Alexander II (deceased), an associate at the law firm of Debevoise and Plimpton, and taught in the Lawyering Program at New York University School of Law. She has published and presented on a range of topics relating to clinical legal education, children’s rights, and the child welfare system. She currently serves as a Commissioner on the New York State Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children, and is a member of the National Association of Counsel for Children. Prof. Burton is a graduate of New York University School of Law and Cornell University.

Marie-Eleana First, Attorney at Law

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Marie-Eleana First is an attorney in private practice. Licensed to practice law in the State of New York and admitted to the United States Eastern and Southern District Courts in the State of New York, Ms. First graduated from Brooklyn Law School, J.D. and The University of Massachusetts Boston, B.A., magna cum laude. She works on a variety of immigration matters including removal proceedings, political asylum, cancellation of removal, family and employer-based petitions and artist visas. She is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and serves on the Board of Directors for the Queens County Bar Association. Ms. First appeared on the O'Reilly Factor and The John Gibson Show in 2007 advocating for the rights of undocumented persons and foreign nationals in the United States. She formerly co-chaired the New York State Bar (NYSBA) Intellectual Property Section's Young Lawyers Committee.

Joanne Macri, Co-Chair of the NYSBA Committee on Immigration Representation

Prior to joining the NYS Office of Indigent Legal Services as the Regional Director, Ms. Macri served as the director of the Criminal Defense Immigration Project (CDIP) and the Immigrant Defense Project of the [New York State Defenders Association \(NYSDA\)](#). On behalf of NYSDA, Ms. Macri travelled across New York State training criminal defense attorneys on the immigration consequences of New York criminal convictions. For her service, Ms. Macri was recognized by the [New York State Bar Association Criminal Justice Section](#) for her Outstanding Contribution to Criminal Law Education.

She is currently an adjunct professor at the State of New York [University at Buffalo Law School](#) where she has taught immigration law, immigration law practice and criminal/immigration law. Ms. Macri is also currently serving as the co-chair of the [NYSBA Special Committee on Immigration Representation](#) which has recently published a report on the quality of improving immigration representation in New York State. Ms. Macri has also previously served on the [NYSBA Immigration Litigation Committee](#), the [New York City Bar Association Criminal Justice Operations Committee](#) and the Western New York [American Immigration Lawyers Association](#) Chapter Subcommittees for Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Protection. Joanne Macri received her Honors Bachelor degree from the [University of Ottawa](#) and her Juris Doctorate from [Albany Law School](#).

Labe M. Richman, Esq.

Attorney at Law

New York City

Profile:

Admitted: 1983, New York; 1989, U.S. District Court, Southern and Eastern Districts of New York and U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit; 1994, U.S. Supreme Court

Law School: J.D., cum laude, Cardozo Law School

Biography: Member, Cardozo Law Review, 1980–1981. Adjunct Professor, New York Law School, 2004–2007. Recipient, Innovative CLE Program Award for research, development and presentation of "Effective Trial Communication Techniques: The Application of Advertising, Drama and Psychology to Trials," New York County Lawyers' Association, October 21, 2003. Author: "Deported Defendants: Challenging Convictions From Abroad," The New York Law Journal, June 14, 2006; "Opening Within the Rules," The New York Law Journal, July 17, 2002; "May Jurors Question Witnesses?" The New York Law Journal, September 25, 2003; "Interrogations and Confessions," Criminal Defense Techniques, Chapter 3 (Matthew Bender, 1988); see further articles and lectures on this site. Also, more accomplishments are listed below in greater detail.

Hannah Shapiro

Hannah Shapiro is a Senior Staff Attorney in the Legal Aid Society's Domestic Violence Immigration Law Project. Ms. Shapiro provides representation to immigrant survivors of domestic violence securing a full range of immigration benefits for clients including Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) self-petitions, battered spouse waivers, U-visas, asylum, cancellation of removal, adjustment of status, employment authorization, inadmissibility waivers, consular processing and naturalization. Ms. Shapiro also engages in extensive community outreach, coordinates the New York City VAWA Advocates meetings, and regularly provides trainings on domestic violence and immigration law issues. Prior to joining the Legal Aid Society, Ms. Shapiro worked as a Staff Attorney in the Family Law Unit of Queens Legal Services Corp. providing comprehensive legal services to victims of domestic violence in immigration, family, and matrimonial matters. Following law school, she was selected through the U.S. Department of Justice Attorney General's Honor Program to serve as a Judicial Law Clerk and then Attorney Advisor at U.S. Immigration Court in New York City. Ms. Shapiro has also published two scholarly articles, including "*Battered Immigrant Women Caught in the Intersection of United States Criminal and Immigration Laws: Consequences and Remedies*," 16 TEMP INT'L & COMP. L.J. 27 (2002) and "*The Future of Spousal Abuse as a Gender-Based Asylum Claim: The Implications of the Recent Case of Matter of R-A*," 14 TEMP INT'L & COMP. L.J. 463 (2000). Ms. Shapiro is a graduate of Temple University Beasley School of Law.

CLAUDIA SLOVINSKY AND ASSOCIATES, PLLC

Claudia Slovinsky has been an immigration and nationality attorney for over thirty five years and founded her firm, Claudia Slovinsky and Associates, PLLC, in 1980. She represents businesses and corporations, foundations, non-profit organizations and art and educational groups with all of their immigration law needs. She also represents individuals in removal proceedings, complex immigration trials and appeals, both before administrative tribunals and the federal courts.

Ms. Slovinsky is the former chair of the Committee on Immigration and Nationality Law of the New York City Bar Association and currently serves on the steering committee of the Judge Katzmann Immigration Study Group and the Advisory Committee to the Legal Action Center of the American Immigration Council. She is a frequent national lecturer on immigration issues both to the immigration bar and lay audiences and is the author of numerous articles in professional publications. Ms. Slovinsky is serves on the program committee of the American Friends Service Committee Immigrant Rights Program, and is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and the National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild. She is an adjunct professor of law at New York Law School.

Ms. Slovinsky graduated from Douglass College (Rutgers University) in 1972 and Rutgers Law School, Newark in 1975. After graduation, she worked as a staff attorney at various legal services programs in New York and New Jersey, where she established immigration departments at each office. She is admitted to the Bar in New York and New Jersey, the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey, U.S. District Court for the Southern and Eastern Districts of New York, and the Court of Appeals for the Second and Third Circuits.

Manuel (Manny) Vargas is the founder and currently Senior Counsel of the Immigrant Defense Project in New York. A nationally known expert on the immigration consequences of criminal convictions, he is the author of several legal resource materials for advocacy on behalf of immigrants accused of crimes, including *Representing Immigrant Defendants in New York* (5th ed, 2011), and the *Removal Defense Checklist in Criminal Charge Cases*, and provides training and immigration law backup assistance on criminal/immigration issues. Mr. Vargas has also played key roles in federal and state litigation defending the legal rights of immigrants at risk of detention and deportation from the United States based on criminal charges. Mr. Vargas' advocacy work on behalf of immigrants has been recognized by the New York State Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (2011 Lifetime Achievement Award), American Immigration Lawyers Association (2007 Jack Wasserman Award for Excellence in Litigation in the Field of Immigration Law), and the New York State Bar Association Criminal Justice Section (2002 Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Delivery of Defense Services).