

Speaker Biographies

WILLIAM PAGEN, ESQ. BIOGRAPHY

William Pagan is a 1987 graduate of the St. John's University School of Law. He obtained in undergraduate degree from Fordham University in 1984. He was admitted to the New York Bar in 1988.

He is admitted to practice in the Federal Southern and Eastern District Courts of New York and has been admitted *pro hac vice* to the United States District Court for the Districts of Puerto Rico and Hawaii, as well as New Jersey Superior Court. His professional memberships include the Puerto Rican Bar Association, American Association for Justice, New York State Trial Lawyers Association, New York County Lawyers Association, New York City Bar Association, and the Bronx, Kings, Queens and New York County Bar Associations as well as the Dominican Bar Association.

He's a member of The Pagan Law Firm, P.C. and has accumulated over twenty-five years experience in trying highly complex medical malpractice cases, serious injuries from construction, lead paint poisoning, municipal premise and general accident cases in State and Federal court in all boroughs of the City of New York, statewide in New York and *pro hac vice* nationwide.

He's a member of The National Trial Lawyers, "Top 100 Trial Lawyers."

HEATHER M. PALMORE, ESQ. BIOGRAPHY

In 20 years of practicing in New York, Heather has established herself as a solid trial attorney, having tried cases throughout the New York metropolitan area. She has tried over 100 cases throughout her career and has had favorable verdicts during her tenure. She has tried high exposure cases in the following areas: construction/Labor Law, auto, commercial premises, property, and discrimination claims. Most recently, she obtained a defense verdict in Kings County against a nationally known plaintiff's firm, after a three week trial. She began her career in the Queens County District attorney's office, where she quickly rose through the ranks as a trial attorney, trying and obtaining convictions in some of the most difficult cases to prosecute, including homicide, sexual battery, robbery and assault cases. Heather was a partner for a number of years at Conway, Farrell, Curtin & Kelly, P.C. before joining CNA as a Senior Litigation Attorney.

Awards: Elsie Van Buren Award for Public Speaking-Cornell University Top 40 Under 40 Awardee, Drum Major Award, Long Island Business News Top 50 Women in Business, New York School Board Association Awardee.

Juris Doctor: Syracuse University College of Law, 1995, with Distinction (Dean's List, Moot Court);

Bachelor of Science: Cornell University, 1992 with Honors (Dean's List, Ford Mellon Scholar – Yale University)

Admitted: New York 1995; U.S. District Courts (2000)

Member: New York State Bar, New York State School Boards Association

HONORABLE SHAWN DYLA L. SIMPSON

BIOGRAPHY

Kings County Supreme Court
320 Jay Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201
(347) 296-1081

Judicial Offices

Justice, Supreme Court, Kings County, Elected, 2017 to 2030

Acting Justice, Supreme Court, Kings County, Appointed by Chief Administrative Judge, 2011; Re-appointed 2014-2016

Judge, Criminal Court of the City of New York, New York County, Designated by Chief Administrative Judge Ann Pfau, 2004 to 2013

Judge, Civil Court of the City of New York, New York County, Elected, 2004 to 2013; Re-elected, 2014 to 2016

Other Professional Experience

Kings County District Attorney's Office

NYS Unified Court System, Court Attorney

Admission to the Bar

NYS, Appellate Division, Second Department, 1991

Education

J.D., University of Pittsburgh School of Law

HONORABLE CARMEN ST. GEORGE

BIOGRAPHY

New York County Supreme Court
80 Centre Street
New York, NY 10013
(646) 386-4613

Judicial Offices

Judge, Court of Claims, Appointed by Governor Andrew Cuomo, 2017 to 2023

Acting Justice, Supreme Court, New York County, Designated by Chief Administrative Judge Lawrence Marks, 2017 to Present

Other Professional Experience

Weitz & Luxenberg, P.C, Associate, 2014 to 2017

Levy Phillips & Konigsberg LLP, Associate, 2003 to 2014

Queens County District Attorneys Office, Assistant District Attorney, 1997 to 2003

Admission to the Bar

NYS, Appellate Division, Second Department, 1998

United States Supreme Court, 2010

United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, 2010

United States District Court, Eastern and Southern Districts of New York, 2002

Supreme Court of New Jersey, 1999

Supreme Court of New York, 1998

Education

J.D., Fordham University School of Law, 1997

B.S., St. John's University, 1993

Professional & Civic Activities

Member, Hispanic National Bar Association

Member, Long Island Hispanic Bar Association

Member, Nassau County Bar Association

Member, New York State Bar Association

Member, Hellenic Lawyers Association

Commissioner, Nassau County Commission on Human Rights, 2004 to 2008

Legal Analyst/Legal Commentator on various TV networks, 2001 to 2016

PETER S. THOMAS, ESQ., P.C.

BIOGRAPHY

CAREER PROFILE:

Peter is a highly talented, skilled and knowledgeable attorney with 24 years experience in both civil and criminal law with a demonstrated track record of providing unmatched legal service. Peter has over 375 combined Civil and Criminal jury trials to verdict in the Supreme, Civil and Criminal courts of the City and State of New York to his credit. Peter recently secured a \$13.5 Million dollar verdict in a wrongful death case in Queens County. Peter is an expert in all aspects of Trial Practice, Personal Injury Litigation, Labor Law, Medical Malpractice, Criminal Defense, Commercial Litigation, Evidence and Appeals. Peter has outstanding research and documentation skills. He is adept at investigating complaints, preparing responses, trial notebooks and interviewing potential clients and witnesses. With particular skills in evaluating the appropriate value of a case, preparing court documents, marked pleadings, jury charges, verdict sheets, memos of law and subpoena requests, he is always prepared. Peter has excellent presentation and communication skills.

EDUCATION:

J.D. – C.U.N.Y at Queens College, 1992

B.A. – S.U.N.Y at Stony Brook, 1989

PROFESSIONAL LICENSES:

State Bar of New York, 1993

State Bar of Connecticut, 1993

Federal District Court - Eastern District of New York, 1995

Federal District Court - Southern District of New York, 1995

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

American Bar Association

Association of Trial Lawyers of America

Board of Directors of the Brandies Association

New York State Trial Lawyers Association

New York State Bar Association
Queens County Bar Association
Queens County Bar Association Judiciary Committee

AREAS OF PRACTICE:

Personal Injury Litigation, Plaintiff and Defense
Medical Malpractice Litigation, Plaintiff
Labor Law
Products Liability
Criminal Defense
Commercial Litigation
Family Law
Contract Law
Real Estate
Per Diem of counsel to more than 40 different law firms

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:

1995 - Present Law Offices of Peter S. Thomas, P.C.,
108-18 Queens Blvd., Forest Hills, NY 11375,
1993 - 1995 Law Offices of Rubenstein & Flatow,
16 Court Street, Brooklyn, NY 11241

CLE SEMINARS TAUGHT AT QUEENS COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION:

Jury Selection in a Civil Case
Trying Liability and Damages in a Motor Vehicle Accident Case
Trying Liability and Damages in a Trip/Slip and Fall Case
Nuts and Bolts of a Civil Trial
Digging Up Dirt on your Adversary's Witnesses

LECTURES:

Lectures on starting and maintaining a solo practice given at CUNY Law School at Queens College, Cardozo Law School, New York Law School and Hofstra Law School.

Additional Skills:

Oral and written fluency in English, French, and Spanish
Windows, WordPerfect, PowerPoint, Word, Westlaw, Lexis-Nexus, and Excel

MICHAEL C. TROMELLO, ESQ.

TROMELLO, MCDONNELL & KEHOE

EMPLOYMENT:

CNA Insurance:

Director/Managing Trial Attorney – CNA - Melville Staff Counsel (2001 to Present)

I supervise and direct all aspects of insurance defense litigation from pleadings through trials and appeals for CNA and its insureds. Our team presently consists of 11 attorneys, 3 paralegals and 7 support staff. We are defending approximately 650 tort cases and 350 WC cases venued in Queens, Nassau and Suffolk Counties. In addition, we prosecute approximately 75 subrogation cases per year.

Director/Managing Trial Attorney – CNA - New York City Staff Counsel (1996 to 2001)

I supervised and directed all aspects of insurance defense litigation from pleadings through trials and appeals for CNA and its insureds in New York City. Our team once consisted of 28 attorneys and 14 support staff. We defended approximately 1600 tort cases venued in New York, Kings and Richmond Counties.

Director/Managing Trial Attorney – CNA - Syracuse Staff Counsel (1992 to 1996)

In addition to handling an individual tort case load of over 200 cases, I supervised and directed all aspects of insurance defense litigation from pleadings through trials and appeals for CNA and its insureds in all counties in "Upstate" NY. (North of Rockland Co.) Our team consisted of 4 attorneys and 3 support staff.

Senior Trial Attorney - CNA - Long Island East Staff Counsel (1988 to 1992)

As a Senior Trial Attorney, I was responsible for all aspects of insurance defense litigation from pleadings through trials and appeals. I regularly handled 125 to 150 tort cases and 40 to 50 premium collection cases. I was responsible for all large subrogation cases and monitored subrogation cases assigned to other staff attorneys. In conjunction with the Managing Attorney, I developed a manual to assist in the processing of large volumes of *Affirmative Litigation*. (Subrogation & Premium Collections)

New York State Attorney General (1987 to 1988)

As the Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Civil Prosecutions Bureau for Suffolk County, I conducted and supervised civil litigation on behalf of NYS to collect money owed from individuals, insurance companies, private agencies, estates, vendors, outside laboratories and hospitals. I trained and coordinated the efforts of a unit of 12 individuals (attorneys, paralegals and support staff); prepared and monitored the unit's budget and submitted periodic reports on the unit's activities to the NYS Attorney General.

Office of the District Attorney, Queens County (1983 to 1987)

As an Assistant District Attorney, I was assigned to the Supreme Court Trial Bureau where I conducted over 30 felony jury trials to verdict. I conducted all related pre-trial hearings and non-jury trials. Other assignments included the Criminal Court and Grand Jury Bureaus.

The City University of New York (CUNY) (1975 to 1983)

As the Assistant Director for Governmental Relations, my primary responsibility was to provide the Director with written memoranda on Federal, State and Municipal legislative proposals concerning education, labor, civil rights, pensions, torts, and contracts. Other responsibilities included assisting in the development and implementation of legislative strategy and acting as the unit's liaison to the Chancellor, his Cabinet, the 18 CUNY College Presidents and the Student Organization representing the University's 160,000 students. In addition, I prepared and monitored the unit's annual budget and handled all administrative matters for the unit's multiple offices which were located in Albany, Washington, D.C., & NYC.

Education:

B.A., Political Science, Queens College (1974)
M.S., Urban Affairs & Administration, Hunter College (1978)
J.D., New York Law School (1982)

Bar Admissions:

New York State - Appellate Division, 1st Department (1983)
U.S. District Court - Southern and Eastern Districts (1987)

THOMAS P. VALET, ESQ.

BIOGRAPHY

Thomas P. Valet practices with the Long Island based firm, Rappaport, Glass, Levine & Zullo, LLP. Before joining RGLZ in 2017, Tom was a founding member of the Rheingold, Valet law firm, where he practiced for more than 30 years.

The majority of Tom's legal career has been devoted to representing plaintiffs in medical malpractice and mass tort cases. Tom is the Past President of the Trial Lawyers Section of the New York State Bar Association and continues to serve on its Executive Committee. He is a current Officer of the New York State Trial Lawyers Association. Tom also served for many years on the Special Committee on Medical Malpractice for the New York City Bar Association, on which he served as Chair for three years.

Tom graduated from Hofstra Law School in 1985 and lives on Long Island with his family, including two sons who are lawyers practicing in New York.

HONORABLE MICHELLE WESTON BIOGRAPHY

Justice Michelle Weston is an Associate Justice of the Appellate Term for the Second, Eleventh, and Thirteenth Judicial Districts. In addition to hearing appeals at the Appellate Term, Justice Weston presides over medical malpractice trials in New York State Supreme Court. Justice Weston's judicial career began in 1989, when she was appointed to Criminal Court. In 1990, she became the first African-American woman elected to Supreme Court in the Second Judicial District. Justice Weston served in the Criminal Term until February 1995, when she was assigned to the Civil Term of Supreme Court. Since then, Justice Weston has presided over matrimonial, guardianship, and medical malpractice actions. Prior to joining the bench, Justice Weston served as an attorney for the Legal Aid Society, followed by private practice.

In addition to her judicial duties, Justice Weston has served as Chair of the Judicial Section, and as Chair of the Committee on Procedures for Judicial Discipline of the New York State Bar Association. She is also an adjunct professor at Brooklyn Law School, where she teaches the Judicial Seminar. Justice Weston is a lifelong resident of Brooklyn.

JESUS M. ZENO, ESQ. BIOGRAPHY

Mr. Zeno has been litigating civil cases since 1986. Since 1990, his law firm in Brooklyn, NY, has specialized in civil litigation. Ninety five per cent of the cases involve all types of personal injury, products liability, medical malpractice, police brutality, 1983 cases and labor law matters. Five percent of the cases involve contested matrimonial, contract, and real property litigation. The firm's work also entails motion practice, conferences, framed issue hearings, arbitrations, jury trials, summary jury trials and bench trials. Mr. Zeno has tried cases to verdict in most of these areas of law on behalf of his firm and other law firms. Mr. Zeno has appealed and argued cases in the Appellate Division.

Prior Employment:

Paul S. Mirman & Associates, associate attorney, personal injury litigation.

Gutman & Mintz, associate attorney, housing litigation.

Law Offices of Peter A. Mc Kay, associate attorney, criminal, matrimonial and immigration.

Education: Baruch College (CUNY) BBA, Syracuse University College of Law JD.

Bar Admission: New York State, Eastern District of New York, Southern District of New York; United States Supreme Court, Washington, DC; State of New Jersey, United States District Court, District of New Jersey.

Bar Association:

Puerto Rican Bar Association - Board Member, Co-chair of the litigation Committee, Co-chair of the Trial Academy Committee, Nominating Committee, Judiciary Committee and Social Media Committee.

New York State Academy of Trial Lawyers

New York State Bar Association- Trial Lawyers Section

Former Member of the New York State Trial Lawyers Association

Former member of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America

Pro Bono: Brooklyn Bar Association; Volunteer Legal Program: Uncontested divorce.

Panelist – Nuts & Bolts of a Trial: Prima Facie Case and Ethics for the Trial Lawyer. Puerto Rican Bar Association two day seminars.

Other Activities: Since 2009 Presiding Judge and scorer in the Empire City Mock Trial Competition; Empire City Mock Trial Championship Competition.

