

Pro Bono News

2018 Partnership Conference Vol. 29 No. 2

2018 Legal Assistance Partnership Conference – A Word of Thanks



Wagner

The New York State Bar Association hosted the 2018 Legal Assistance Partnership Conference from October 2 – 4, 2018 in Albany, New York. More than 550 program directors, attorneys, pro bono coordinators, and other civil legal service professionals gathered to attend the conference. This year's conference theme was "Uniting for Justice" and it consisted of over 40 programs presented by over 140 subject matter experts from around the state.

We had the pleasure of hearing NYSBA President Michael Miller and Albany County Family Court Judge Richard Rivera address the conference attendees at the Opening Plenary, and Court of Appeals Associate Judge Jenny Rivera and Assemblymember Harvey Epstein speak at the Denison Ray Civil Awards and Phil Dailey Award ceremony.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to this year's Partnership Conference Steering Committee members, whose expert guidance was critical to the planning of the conference. This event would not have been possible without the hard work, dedication,

and enthusiasm of these individuals who contributed their time and energy to identify compelling topics and speakers from across the state.

I would also like to thank our generous sponsors, exhibitors and supporters who helped make this conference even better than in years past. Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to the extremely dedicated and hard-working NYSBA staff who contributed to the planning and preparation of this conference. Their hard work was visible to attendees in every detail of the conference, from the registration process to the printed CLE materials to the seamless programming.

Thank you to all those that attended, planned, and otherwise contributed time and effort to the 2018 Legal Assistance Partnership Conference!

Thank you,

Kristen Wagner
Director of Pro Bono Services

Steering Committee Members

Hon. Sergio Jimenez
Chair, Committee on Legal Aid

Edwina Frances Martin
Co-Chair, President's Committee on Access to Justice

Saima Akhtar
Empire Justice Center

Saralyn Cohen
Shearman & Sterling

Victoria Esposito
Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York

Tina Foster
Volunteer Legal Services of Monroe County

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Lauren Price
Brooklyn Defender Services

Keisha Williams
Western New York Law Center

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Exhibitors



NYSBA Section Support

- Young Lawyers Section (\$1,000)
- Corporate Counsel Section (\$500)
- General Practice Section (\$500)
- Trust & Estates Law Section (\$500)

Partnership Conference Programs and Speakers

Implicit Biases: What the Research Tells Us About Debiasing Our Practice

Speakers: Donna Hae Kyun Lee, Senior Associate Dean of Clinical Programs and Professor, CUNY School of Law and Susan Bryant, Emeritus Professor, CUNY School of Law

Practical Social Media Ethics for Lawyers

Speakers: Jay Flemma, Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York and Mark Berman, Granfer & Shore, LLP

Director Supervision of Attorneys and Paralegals: Understanding Your Ethical Obligations

Speakers: Kate Woods, Legal Assistance of Western New York, Zachary Pike, Program Director for Housing and Consumer Law Unit of the Legal Aid Society of Rochester and Robert Vitale, Supervising Attorney at Legal Assistance of Western New York

Waivers of Inadmissibility for T and U Visas: Skills for Practitioners

Speakers: Emma Buckthal, Supervising Immigration Attorney, ECBA Volunteer Lawyers Project, Inc.

Representation of Veterans: Life-Changing Legal Services

Speakers: Coco Culhane, Director of the Veteran Advocacy Project at the Urban Justice Center, Hannah Nezezon, Staff Attorney, Legal Assistance of Western New York, Kent Eiler, Director New York City Bar Justice Center Veterans Assistance Project and Peter Kempner, Volunteers of Legal Services

Improving Language Access at the Department of Social Services

Speakers: Kathryn Horn, Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc., Penny Selmonsky, Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc. and Karen Welch, Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc.

Recognizing and Responding to Micro-aggressions in the Legal Profession

Speakers: Erica Ludwick, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York, Edwina Frances Martin, Deputy Chief of Staff for NYC Councilwoman Debi Rose and Milo Primeaux, Just Roots Consulting LLC

Winning Right to Counsel in Housing Cases: Practical Skills & Advocacy

Speakers: Susanna Blankley, Right to Counsel NYC Coalition, Marika Dias, Legal Services NYC and Andrew Scherer, Policy Director of the Impact Center for Public Interest Law and Distinguished Adjunct Professor at New York Law School

Sexual Harassment of Low Wage and Immigrant Workers in the Era of #MeToo

Speakers: Natasha Lycia Ora Bannan, Associate Counsel, LatinoJustice PRLDEF, Natalia Ospina, California Rural Legal Assistance, Lauren Betters, Staff Attorney, Gender Equality Law Center, and Peter Dellinger, Senior Staff Attorney, Empire Justice Center

DAP 1: Impact of Trauma on Disability Claims

Speakers: Catherine M. (Kate) Callery, DAP Co-Coordinator, Empire Justice Center, Lisa Parsons, Melissa Weiss, M.D., Chief Resident, Fourth Year Psychiatry Resident, Albany Medical Center and Louise Tarantino, Empire Justice Center

Medicaid Managed Care and Managed Long Term Care: Legal Update

Speakers: Kelly Barrett, Center for Elder Law & Justice, Belkys Garcia, The Legal Aid Society, Geoffrey Hale, Empire Justice Center, Adam Prizio, Empire Justice Center and Rebecca Wallach, New York Legal Assistance Group

Creating a Student Loan Practice

Speakers: Shanna Tallerico, Supervising Attorney, New York Legal Assistance Group and Sidney Cherubin, Director of Legal Services, Brooklyn Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project

Kinship Options and Benefits

Speakers: Susan Antos, Senior Staff Attorney, Empire Justice Center, Jessica Backer Brand, Joseph M. Connors, Professor of Law, Director of Albany Law School's Health Law Clinic, and Gerard Wallace, Director of NYS Kinship Navigator

Helping Protect Low Income Workers from Economic Exploitation: Legal Update and Advocacy Skills

Speakers: Sarah Leberstein, Jim Williams, Legal Services of Central New York, Reena Arora, Urban Justice Center, and Peter Dellinger, Senior Staff Attorney, Empire Justice Center

DAP 2: Direct Examination in Mental Impairment Cases Involving Trauma

Speakers: Montel Cherry, Supervising Attorney, Mobilization for Justice, Ann Biddle, Deputy Director, Queens Legal Services, Joseph Clark, Regional Supervising Attorney, Neighborhood Legal Services Program and Emilia Sicilia, Urban Justice Center

Identifying, Challenging and Overcoming Civil Impacts of Criminal Convictions in 2018: Tips and Tools for the Civil Legal Services Practitioner Incorporating Recent Changes in Law and Policy

Speakers: Kelly Gonzalez, Deputy Director, Center for Community Alternatives, Adam Shoop, Legal Director of the Civil Action Practice, Bronx Defenders, Christine Vogel, Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo,

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Judy Whiting, General Counsel, Community Service Society of New York

Serving LGBTQ Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence in Family Law Cases: Best Practices and Recent Legal Developments

Speakers: Bret Figlewski, Legal Director, LGBT Bar Association of New York, Kim Forte, Supervising Attorney, Legal Aid Society's LGBT Law and Policy Initiative, Jack Newton, Director of Public Benefits & LGBTQ Advocacy Unit, Bronx Legal Services, and Milo Primeaux, Just Roots Consulting, and Amy Schwartz-Wallace, Senior Attorney, Empire Justice Center

Federal Immigration Developments Affecting Health Care Access in New York State

Speakers: Domna Antoniadis, Senior Staff Attorney, Legal Health, New York Legal Assistance Group and Susan E. Welber, Staff Attorney, Civil Practice Law Reform Unit, The Legal Aid Society

Innovations in Law Student Pro Bono Opportunities

Speakers: Gayle Murphy, Pro Bono Manager at ECBA Volunteer Lawyers Project, Michaela Azemi, Public Service Advisor at Cornell Law School, Daniel Matos, 3L Law Student at Cornell Law School, Edward D Barbieri, Assistant Professor of Law, Director of Albany Law School's Community Development Clinic, and Nicole Komin, Staff Attorney and Pro Bono Coordinator at Center for Elder Law and Justice

Landlord-Tenant Cases Involving Conditions: Remedies and Strategies for the Tenants' Attorney

Speakers: Bryan Bergeron, Staff Attorney, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern NY, Marika Dias, Patrick Slagle, Supervising Attorney, Legal Assistance of Western NY, Marti

Weithman, Assistant Commissioner of HPD's Housing Litigation Division, and Travis Arrindell, Deputy Program Director, Brooklyn Legal Services

The Challenges of Justice Courts Practices

Speakers: Cheryl A. Beverson, Justice, Village of Bloomingburg Justice Court, Debra Collura, Senior Attorney, Legal Aid Society, Tara Glynn, Staff Attorney, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York, Inc., Jaime Samarel, Senior Staff Attorney, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley and Adrienne Lena Thiel, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley

Rapid Fire Technology Talks

Speakers: Anna Steele, Director of Consulting, Just Tech, Chris Schwartz, City Bar Justice Center, Jon Miller, Technology Coordinator, Legal Assistance of Western New York, Christopher Schwartz, Deputy Director of the Legal Hotline, New York City Bar Justice Center, Rochelle Klempner, New York State Court System's Division of Technology, Michael Hernandez, Director of Client Services, Just-Tech, Christine Fecko, General Counsel, IOLA Fund of the State of New York, Rebecca Widom, Chief Data Scientist, Bronx Defenders and Remla Parthasarathy, Project Leader, Crime Victims Legal Network

Best Practices in Community Economic Development Law

Speakers: Professor Carmen-Huertas-Noble, Director of the Community & Economic Development Clinic at CUNY School of Law, David Craft, Albany Law School Community Development Clinic Fellow, Professor Edward De'Barbieri, Albany Law School, Gowri Krishna, Associate Professor New York Law School, Gregory E. Kimble Jr., Equal Justice Works Fellow, Jonathan Placito, Legal Assistance of Western NY, and Michael Haber, Director Community and Economic Development Clinic and the Entrepreneurship and Intellectual Property Clinical Practicum, Maurice A. Dean School of Law, Hofstra University

School Matters: Integrating Education Advocacy into the Legal Representation of Adult Clients and Their Children

Speakers: Judith M. Gerber, Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc., Jennifer Pringle, Director, NYS Technical And Education Assistance Center for Homeless Students and Ashley Westbrook, Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc.

Changing Temporary Shelter Rules: A Tale of Two Advocacy Strategies

Speakers: Beth Hofmeister, Staff Attorney, Legal Aid Society's Homeless Rights Project, Diana Proske, Staff Attorney, Public Benefits Unit at Neighborhood Legal Services, Inc., Penny Selmonsky, Supervising Attorney Public Benefits Unit at Neighborhood Legal Services and Claudia Wilner, Senior Attorney, National Center for Law and Economic Justice

Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program Eligibility

Speakers: Meghan B. Hudson, Financial Counselor, New York Legal Assistance Group, Kathleen A. Krumpter, Senior Financial Counselor, New York Legal Assistance Group and Douglas Ostrov, Director Financial Counseling, New York Legal Assistance Group

New York State Limited Scope Representation in 2018: Ethical and Practical Implications

Speakers: Robert Elardo, Executive Director of the ECBA Volunteer Lawyers Project, Michaela Azemi, Public Service Advisor at Cornell Law School, and Edwina Frances Martin

Racial Justice - Best Practices for Lawyers

Speakers: Montel Cherry, Supervising Attorney, Mobilization for Justice, Angel S Harris, Assistant Counsel, NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Ancy Thomas, Disability Advocacy Program Attorney, Legal Services of the

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Hudson Valley and Michele Yakson, Attorney, CAP, Bronx Defenders

Maintenance- Litigating under the New Statute

Speakers: Lorraine R. Silverman, Partner, Mack & Associates, PLLC and Laura A. Russell, Supervising Attorney Family Law/Domestic Violence Unit, Legal Aid Society in NYC

Group Representation in Wage and Hour Cases: Ethical Issues

Speakers: Rob McCreanor, Magdalena Barbosa, Catholic Migration Services, Maureen Hussain, Staff Attorney, Hudson Valley Justice Center and Artmemio Guerra

Navigating Short Sales: Practical Skills for the Advocate

Speakers: Zach Pike, Legal Aid Society of Rochester and Rose Marie Cantanno, New York Legal Assistance Group

DAP 3: Direct and Cross Examination Strategies for Expert Witnesses

Speakers: Michelle Spadafore, Senior Supervising Attorney & Project Director, NYLAG, German Castaneda, Paralegal, Mobilization for Justice, Rezwanul Islam, Senior Staff Attorney, Nassau Suffolk Law Services Committee and Michael Telfer, Senior Staff Attorney, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York

Using Technology to Enhance Pro Bono Projects

Speakers: Lillian Moy, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern NY, Inc., Michael Grunenwald, ProBono.Net, Devi Patel, Legal Information for Families Today, Christopher Schwartz, New York City Bar Justice Center and Alice Morey, New York City Bar Justice Center

Public Benefits Income and Resource Rules and the Impact of Lump Sum Receipt on Benefits Eligibility

Speakers: Susan Antos, Senior Staff Attorney, Empire Justice Center, Paula Arboleda, Deputy Director of Public Benefits and LGBTQ Advocacy at Bronx Legal Services and Maryanne Joyce

Transgender Healthcare: Successfully Appealing Medicaid Denials

Speakers: Jose Abrigo, Staff Attorney, LGBTQ/HIV Advocacy Project at Queens Legal Services, and Belkys Garcia, Staff Attorney, The Legal Aid Society, Milo Primeaux

Waivers for Permanent Residents: The Legal Issues

Speaker: Joanne Macri, NYS Office of Indigent Legal Services

Best Practices for Using Data to Track Outcomes

Speakers: David Udell, National Center for Access to Justice at Fordham Law School and Amy Widman, National Center for Access to Justice at Fordham Law School

Enhancing the Cultural Competence of a Legal Aid Program

Speakers: Chris O'Malley, Executive Director, IOLA Fund of the State of New York, Lillian M. Moy, Executive Director, Legal Aid Society Northeastern New York, Tanya Douglas, Director of the Disability Advocacy Project, Manhattan Legal Services and Tina Monshipour Foster, Executive Director, Volunteer Legal Services Project of Monroe County

Current Status of DACA and Alternative Remedies for Recipients

Speakers: Sarah A. Bertozzi, Managing Attorney, Journey's End Refugee Services and Hannah Vickner Hough, Immigration Staff Attorney, Legal Aid Society of Rochester

Death & Taxes: A Survey of Tax Debt Issues for Low-Income Clients and Strategies for Advocates

Speakers: Amaris Elliot-Engel, LawNY, Derek Wheeler, Staff Attorney, Erie County Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project, Catherine Isobe, Brooklyn Legal Services, Jacqueline Griffin, Brooklyn Legal Services and Mark H. Wattenberg, LawNY

Collateral Consequences: The Effects of (Alleged or Actual) Crimes on Stable Housing

Speakers: Amy Schwartz-Wallace, Senior Attorney, Empire Justice Center, Marcie Kobak, Supervising Attorney, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley, Anca Grigore, Senior Staff Attorney, Brooklyn Defender Services and Lauren Price, Staff Attorney, Brooklyn Defender Services

The Affordable Care Act in NYS in 2018: Successes, Challenges, and Responses to Federal Threats

Speakers: Lisa Sbrana, Director, Office of Marketplace Counsel, NY State of Health and Elisabeth Ryden Benjamin, M.Sc.,J.D., Vice President of Health Initiatives, Community Service Society

Early Intervention Tools: Legal Risk Detector and LiveHelp

Speakers: Aimee Latorre, LawHelp NY, Molly White, Center for Elder Law & Justice, Ryan Gallagher, Legal Information for Families Today, and Ashley Coneys, Pro Bono Net

Opening Plenary

This year's Opening Plenary included welcoming remarks from NYSBA President Michael Miller and inspiring words from Albany Family Court Judge Richard Rivera. Judge Rivera's focus on diversity, inclusion, and elimination of bias set a perfect stage for the CLE panel that followed, which was presented by Donna Hae Kyun Lee, Senior Associate Dean of Clinical Programs and Professor at CUNY Law School, and Susan Bryant, Emeritus Professor of CUNY Law School.



NYSBA President Michael Miller



*Albany Family Court Judge
Richard Rivera*



Susan Bryant



Donna Hae Kyun Lee



*From left to right: Susan Bryant, Edwina Frances Martin (Co-chair, President's
Committee on Access to Justice), Lillian Moy, Donna Hae Kyun Lee*

2018 Denison Ray Civil Awards and Phil Dailey Award Ceremony

The New York State Bar Association was happy to have Court of Appeals Associate Judge Jenny Rivera and Assemblymember Harvey Epstein as the Denison Ray Civil Awards and Phil Dailey Award ceremony keynote speakers this year. The awards were presented by NYSBA's Committee on Legal Aid Chair, Hon. Sergio Jimenez, and NYSBA's President's Committee on Access to Justice Co-chair, Edwina Frances Martin.



Judge Jenny Rivera has spent her entire professional career in public service. She clerked for the Honorable Sonia Sotomayor, on the Southern District of New York, and also clerked in the Second Circuit Court of Appeals Pro Se Law Clerk's Office. She worked for the Legal Aid Society's Homeless Family Rights Project, the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund (renamed Latino Justice PRLDEF), and was appointed by the New York State Attorney General as Special Deputy Attorney General for Civil Rights. Judge Rivera has been an Administrative Law Judge for the New York State Division for Human Rights, and served on the New York City Commission on Human Rights. Prior to her appointment, she was a tenured faculty member of the City University of New York School of Law, where she founded and served

as Director of the Law School's Center on Latino and Latina Rights and Equality.

Judge Rivera is an elected member of the American Law Institute. She has published extensively on interpersonal violence, women's rights, and issues that impact the Latino community. She served on the American Bar Association Commission on Hispanic Legal Rights and Responsibilities from 2010 to 2012, and as the Reporter to the Commission authored the Commission's Report. Judge Rivera has received several awards, including the ABA Spirit of Excellence Award and the NYSBA Diversity Trailblazer Lifetime Achievement Award. She graduated from Princeton University, and received her J.D. from New York University School of Law, where she was a Root-Tilden Scholar. She received her LL.M. from Columbia University School of Law.



Assemblymember Harvey Epstein represents the East Side of Manhattan, including the neighborhoods of the Lower East Side, East Village, Alphabet City, Stuyvesant Town/Peter Cooper Village, Murray Hill, Tudor City and the United Nations. Harvey was a public interest lawyer in New York City since graduating from CUNY Law School in 1994 until he was elected the Assembly Member of the 74th

District in 2018. Throughout his career serving our city, Harvey has worked on critical economic development and housing issues; at the same time, he has worked tirelessly on dozens of pieces of legislation that help the lives of everyday New Yorkers. Specifically, Harvey's efforts during the five years he served as a tenant member of the Rent Guidelines Board were instrumental in successfully orchestrating the first rent freeze for one-year leases in the 47-year history of the Rent Guidelines Board.

Awards Criteria

Denison Ray Civil Awards

The Awards are named in memory of career legal activist Denison (Denny) Ray, who led legal services programs in New York and other states.

The Civil Legal Services Staff Attorney Awards recognize individual attorneys' extraordinary commitment to:

- The provision of creative, skilled, and zealous representation of low-income clients;
- Collaboration with pro bono volunteer attorneys from the private bar to expand access to justice opportunities for low-income clients; and/or
- Efforts to inspire, mentor, and support colleagues in the delivery of exceptional legal representation to low-income clients.

The Director Award recognizes outstanding leadership at a civil legal services or pro bono program by an executive director or legal director who inspires the kind of extraordinary commitment by staff and service to the community set forth in the above criteria.

The Nonprofit Organization Award recognizes extraordinary commitment to:

- Strengthening access to justice initiatives;

- Delivering or facilitating the provision of civil legal services to low-income and/or disadvantaged clients;
- Increasing the provision of pro bono services; and/or
- Marshaling resources to maximize services to the community.

Phil Dailey Award

Much of the advocacy work in civil legal services and pro bono programs is done by advocates who are not attorneys. The Phil Dailey Award was created on 2016 in memory of Phil Dailey, a Paralegal at Legal Assistance of Western New York in Geneva, NY, to acknowledge the vital services of non-attorney staff who demonstrate an excellence and dedication to providing equal access to justice.

Selection criteria:

- A non-attorney staff member of a civil legal services or pro bono provider who is recognized for creative, skilled, and zealous representation of low-income clients; and/or
- Collaboration with pro bono volunteer attorneys from the private bar to expand access to justice opportunities for low-income clients; and/or
- Efforts to inspire, mentor, and support colleagues in the delivery of exceptional legal representation to low-income clients.

Awards Committee

Award recipients are selected by a committee consisting of the chairs of the President's Committee on Access to Justice, the Committee on Legal Aid, the Pro Bono Coordinators' Network, and the Director of the NYSBA's Department of Pro Bono Services.

2018 Honorees

Civil Legal Services Staff Attorneys

Jennifer Metzger Kimura, Staff Attorney, Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo



Left to right: Edwina Frances Martin, Jennifer Metzger Kimura, Hon. Sergio Jimenez

Jennifer Metzger Kimura is a staff attorney in the Civil Unit at the Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc. She currently serves as a public defender in Buffalo City Housing Court, defending homeowners with code violations. She also represents many clients throughout Erie County in need of housing related representation in the areas such as City and County In Rem tax foreclosures, landlord/tenant issues, and fair housing law.

Prior to her joining the Legal Aid Bureau, she was a staff attorney at Housing Opportunities Made Equal, Inc. (HOME), a non-profit fair housing organization fighting housing discrimination in Western New York. During her time at HOME, her primary focus was housing discrimination litigation, but throughout her tenure, she also extensively reviewed, drafted, and reported on various jurisdictions' Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Studies which were submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. She continues to be invested and passionate about preserving affordable housing throughout Western New York and often collaborates with other municipalities and organizations to educate

and encourage development of affordable housing in their neighborhoods.

Jennifer's dedication to providing justice to low-income individuals and families extends past the area of housing. Her career also includes volunteering to defend low-income

individuals in federal detention who were facing deportation. Seeing the challenges and burdens these individuals endured during deportation proceedings had a major impact on her, and she later organized a Naturalization Drive and CLE with a local refugee resettlement organization. The program served to train pro bono attorneys to handle citizenship applications for lawful permanent residents that were eligible to apply for citizenship.

Jennifer remains involved in the legal community and is an active member of the Minority Bar Association of WNY where she has held multiple positions within the organization. Her most recent position was a member of the Judicial Ratings Committee. She is a strong advocate for diversity and she is a co-founder of the Diversity and Inclusion committee at the Legal Aid Bureau where she currently sits as Vice-Chair. She also sits on the Erie County Family Court Disproportionate Minority Representation committee and the Erie County Bar Association's Minority Outreach committee. Jennifer was recently named one of WNY's 40 under 40 by Buffalo Business First.

Mary Beth Conway, Managing Attorney, Volunteer Legal Services Project of Monroe County



Left to right: Edwina Frances Martin, Mary Beth Conway, Hon. Sergio Jimenez

Mary Beth Conway is Managing Attorney at Volunteer Legal Services Project of Monroe County, based in Rochester, NY. Mary Beth oversees VLSP's Matrimonial and Family Law Unit, which represents low-income individuals who are survivors of domestic violence. Since she started working at VLSP in 1999, Mary Beth has been a trailblazer creating programs, partnering with community agencies, and recruiting and training pro bono attorneys. Her dedication to serving victims of domestic violence has changed the lives of countless individuals who would otherwise not have had any meaningful access to justice.

Mary Beth recruits, trains, and provides continuous advice and assistance to pro bono volunteer attorneys who represent clients in relation to divorce, family offense proceedings, custody, child support and spousal support matters. She places 100-120 cases with volunteer attorneys every year. In addition to the direct representation she oversees, she runs VLSP's custody clinic and pairs clients with volunteer attorneys for advice, counsel, and brief service. Mary Beth continues to attend evening advice clinics at Willow Domestic Violence Center and also at Strong Memorial Hospital through the HEAL Program.

Mary Beth's unparalleled expertise has been recognized by her peers, clients, and community agencies and partners addressing the needs of this

vulnerable population. In 2010, Mary Beth was the recipient of Willow Domestic Violence Center's Stop the

Hurt Award. In 2017, Mary Beth was appointed to serve on the NYSBA/WBASNY Domestic Violence Initiative. This groundbreaking collaboration brought together dedicated attorneys and judges throughout New York State to expand services for victims of domestic violence.

Legal Services Director

Barbara Finkelstein, Executive Director, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley



Left to right: Edwina Frances Martin, Barbara Finkelstein, Hon. Sergio Jimenez

Barbara Finkelstein oversees every aspect of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley (LSHV), the largest provider of free civil legal services to almost 600,000 poor and low-income individuals in Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, Orange, Rockland, Sullivan and Ulster Counties.

Since Ms. Finkelstein became Exec-

utive Director in 1995 and now CEO, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley has increased its budget by eightfold, and has grown to a 135-person staff with a \$16 million-dollar budget and nine offices. She is the first woman to lead the organization.

Ms. Finkelstein's accomplishments on behalf of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley are many. Under her leadership LSHV has made great strides in securing funding from public and private sources to increase services to low income residents of the Hudson Valley facing civil legal problems affecting the necessities of life. Motivated by a desire to make justice a promise for every member of society, Ms. Finkelstein created partnerships with governments, community-based organizations, and law schools to ensure solutions to the problems facing the low-income population. She has expanded free civil legal services to the neediest and most marginalized communities in the seven-county region to make justice a reality for every member of society.

Among her many achievements are the creation of domestic violence, family law, children's advocacy, veterans and military families, foreclosure and

LGBTQ units. Significantly in 2014 Ms. Finkelstein created an LSHV affiliate, the Hudson Valley Justice Center, to serve clients without status whom LSHV cannot serve due to Legal Services Corporation restrictions. Prior to joining LSHV, Ms. Finkelstein was the Assistant Project Director at Queens Legal Services where she directed

services to clients and assisted with overall program operations.

In addition to her leadership of LSHV, Ms. Finkelstein is a member of Chief Justice Janet DiFiore's Permanent Commission on Access to Civil Legal Services in New York, The New York State Bar Association's Committee on Legal Aid, Vice President of the New York Legal Services Coalition, and Secretary of the Board of Non-Profit Westchester.

Ms. Finkelstein received her J.D. from Rutgers School of Law – Newark, and her B.A. from Hunter College of the City University of New York.

Phil Dailey Award

Deborah O'Shea, Pro Bono Coordinator, Onondaga County Bar Association



Left to right: Edwina Frances Martin, Deborah O'Shea, Hon. Sergio Jimenez

Deborah O'Shea was hired 14 years ago by the Onondaga County Bar Association to coordinate its

fledgling Volunteer Lawyers Project (VLP). She was challenged to initiate pro bono opportunities for attorneys which could address the most pressing legal needs in the Syracuse community. First to be identified were the housing problems which brought over 10,000 families to eviction court each year. The goal became to schedule volunteer attorneys in court five days a week to represent tenants through this emotionally difficult process. Understanding at the time the difficulty of being a solo coordinator obligated to train attorneys on the court defenses, Deborah sought funding through IOLA to write and produce a 50 minute video "A Day In Landlord Tenant Court" where attorneys watch court cases play out illustrating best practices on the defenses.

Through recruitment, training and the support of volunteer attorneys VLP grew to represent over 1000

families this past year.

Along with eviction Deborah developed uncontested divorce programs, Talk To A Lawyer community opportunities, estate planning clinics, veterans clinics, not-for-profit incorporation and an annual Elder Law Fair serving over 400 seniors. Grant writing, public speaking events to community partners and law firm recruitment became the requisite building blocks for long term program success. Each program was developed with the needs in the community in mind. The message to all VLP attorneys who volunteer, as well as the law students who VLP mentors, is to encourage them to find hope in even the most discouraging of cases thus empowering our clients at a time they are most vulnerable. Of great joy to Deborah has been the five years serving as the Co-Chair of the NYSBA Pro Bono Coordinators Network working alongside of Saralyn Cohen. The professional connections with leaders from all across the state have solidified VLP program decisions because Deborah knew whose expertise to query to avoid missteps. Working with fellow civil service providers, the courts, volunteer attorneys, law students and most importantly the clients VLP serve has made for a truly meaningful career.

Prior to moving to Syracuse Deborah Coordinated the Gifted and Talented Programming for the Rome City School District. After leaving education she was hired and spent 5 years as the Executive Director for the Rome Art and Community Center. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Anthropology at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque.



List your organization at **NYSBAProBono.org** today!

The New York State Bar Association's Pro Bono Immigration Portal:

Is a new and exciting initiative created to address the growing needs of our immigrant communities and public service organizations, inspired by an overwhelming response of New York attorneys wishing to contribute and help out in any way they can. Browse available opportunities and volunteer directly, or use the tailored referral service to get connected with volunteer opportunities at organizations that work closely with immigrants.

Questions?

Email probonoport@nysba.org
or call 518-487-5641.



THE NEW YORK
BAR FOUNDATION



NYSBA



Left to right: Pam McDevitt (Executive Director, NYSBA), Hon. Sergio Jimenez (Chair, Committee on Legal Aid), Michael Miller (President, NYSBA), Hon. Jenny Rivera (Associate Judge, Court of Appeals), Edwina Frances Martin (Co-chair, President's Committee on Access to Justice), Assemblymember Harvey Epstein



Left to right: Edwina Frances Martin (Co-chair, President's Committee on Access to Justice), Mary Beth Conway, Barbara Finkelstein, Michael Miller (President, NYSBA), Jennifer Metzger Kimura, Deborah O'Shea, Hon. Sergio Jimenez (Chair, Committee on Legal Aid)

Photo Gallery

Did you spot yourself or your team?
Email probono@nysba.org for a copy of your photo.











NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

PRO BONO DEPARTMENT

One Elk Street, Albany, New York 12207-1002

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Do You Have A Story To Share...

- **Have you worked on or do you know of a special pro bono project?**
- **Has a pro bono case made a difference in the lives of others?**
- **Has an individual attorney or firm gone above and beyond to provide pro bono assistance?**

We invite you to submit articles showcasing excellence in pro bono service for upcoming editions of the Pro Bono Newsletter. For more information, go to www.nysba.org/probono.

