

## The Bar Around The Corner: New Rochelle Bar Association



**Association Address / Phone:** 271 North Avenue, Suite 908, New Rochelle, NY 10801; 914-365-1313  
**Web site:** www.nrbar.org  
**Founded:** 1921

**Number of Members:** 150-175

**Brief Association Vision:** To promote and facilitate the administration of justice, and to elevate the standards of professional skill, integrity, honor and courtesy in the legal profession. Second only to our commitment to provide services, benefits and assistance to our members is the same commitment to our community. Sponsored programs include “Lawyer in the Classroom” and Small Claims Court Arbitrators programs. NRBA also sponsors a softball team in the City of New Rochelle American Division. NRBA annually provides scholarships in June to students chosen by the local high school, colleges and Pace Law School. We also are a proud contributor to and supporter of the New Rochelle Youth Court program, which enables youth to serve as judges, prosecutors and defense counsel to first-time low-level offenders 7–15 years old. The association also supports community programs, including First Night celebrations in New Rochelle; Legal Services of the Hudson Valley; the Adult Learning Center (which provides English literacy programs and career training for Spanish speaking immigrants); and Songcatchers (which provides accessible music instruction to those who would not otherwise be able to afford lessons). NRBA also collects non-perishable food items and cash donations for HOPE Community

Services, which provides hot meals and take-away meals four days a week to children, seniors and the working poor in Westchester. Our motto is “Career and Community.”

**Brief History:** For more than 90 years, the NRBA has informed and educated the legal profession and the public, and has assisted and responded to the demands of the legal and lay community. The NRBA membership has included ranking members of state and local judicial and legislative bodies who have formulated and endorsed policies which achieved national significance or recognition. Today, our membership continues as a link between the legal profession and the communities in which we live, work and serve.

**What is your association’s favorite meeting location?** While we hold our monthly, free-to-members CLEs at either Monroe College in New Rochelle or Hudson Valley Bank in Yonkers, our favorite spot is Five Island Park in New Rochelle, where every June we hold our business meeting, election of officers and picnic.

**What is your association’s most popular outing/social event?** The Bar holds a number of diverse and well-attended signature social events throughout the year, including our Installation of Officers and Directors Dinner in September, the Surrogate’s Court Dinner in January, where the Westchester Surrogate Judge provides an update on that court; and the Court of Appeals Dinner in April. At our Eighth Annual Dinner on April 23, we honored Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman, who will retire at the end of the year. The guest speaker was Hon. Robert Smith, retired, Court of Appeals. Special guests were Hon. Sheila Abdus-Salaam, associate judge, Court of Appeals, and retired judges Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick and Victoria Graffeo.



**Classroom innovators**—New Rochelle Bar Association Board Member Hon. Jeffrey Levin, left, Dr. Jeffrey Korostoff (retired deputy superintendent of the New Rochelle Board of Education), President Paula Johnson Kelly and Board Member Richard A. Sosis proudly receive the New York State Conference of Bar Leaders 2014 Bar Leaders Innovation Award for Small Bars in recognition of the NRBA’s Lawyers in the Classroom project.

The most popular social event is the holiday party held annually in early December. Guests include members of the judiciary, local political figures, members, families and friends.

**What is your association’s most pressing concern regarding the legal profession?** Our Bar is concerned about the overall quality of lawyering offered in communities at large. That is why providing appropriate and useful continuing legal training to both newly admitted attorneys and attorneys well-established in their areas of concentration is an important concern.

**What is your association’s goal for next year?** To continue to provide the variety of services to our members that are professionally helpful, including our free-to-members CLEs, and to expand the benefits offered members.

**What is your association’s most important current project/initiative?** Our “Lawyers in the Classroom” program, which takes place in our public schools in late April through May. The program is a joint initiative with the

New Rochelle Board of Education to introduce fourth through fifth grade students to elementary concepts of law, with the objective of teaching students the art of persuasive written and oral argument. The four one-hour classroom sessions give the students an opportunity to interact with legal professionals on a positive level. From the Board of Education’s perspective, this enrichment program provides students with a unique learning program at no cost to the school system. The NRBA was honored that this special program, now beginning its third year, received the 2014 Bar Leaders Innovation Award for Small Bars.

**How has your membership over the years helped to improve your association?** The membership has allowed us to increase our exposure in the community, expand our programs and brought in new ideas. ♦

*The Bar Around The Corner is a project of the New York State Conference of Bar Leaders, www.nyscbl.org.*