

JUDICIAL DISPATCH



A publication of the Judicial Section of the New York State Bar Association

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PRESIDING MEMBER'S MESSAGE



Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones

Greetings! I am honored to serve as Presiding Member of the Judicial Section and to follow in the footsteps of the Presiding Members who served before me. As I reflect on this new role that I assumed in June, I recognize that I am the first Latina to serve as Presiding Member of our almost 100-year-old Section. I began this journey, as we all do, as Treasurer of the Section in 2019. My invitation to serve as an Officer was due in large part, if not total part, to the efforts of two former Presiding Members of the Section: the late great Hon. Paul Feinman, a wonderful friend and a beloved mentor to us all, and Hon. Deborah Karalunas, another amazing friend and brilliant resource. I am deeply indebted to them for their commitment to diversity and inclusion and for their interest in my personal and professional development.

I also want to acknowledge the Presiding Members whom I had the privilege of serving with as I journeyed from Treasurer to Presiding Member: Hon. Denise A. Hartman, Hon. Barbara R. Kapnick, Hon. James P. Murphy, and Hon. Cheryl E. Chambers. I want to particularly recognize Justice Kapnick for her guidance and her friendship. In addition to sitting with her on the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission and the Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics, I was fortunate to serve as Secretary while Justice Kapnick was Presiding Member. We shared hundreds of emails and text messages and many late-night phone calls and became fast friends. She graciously took me under her wing and primed me for my future role as Presiding Member.

Let me also express my sincerest thanks to our immediate Past Presiding Member, Hon. Denise Hartman, for her excellent leadership during what was a tough year for her personally given the loss of her husband. Justice Hartman started her year as Presiding Member with two goals in mind – to encourage the collegiality of our Council of Judicial Associations and to keep everyone apprised on NYSBA initiatives and legislative issues of importance to the judiciary. She successfully met both.

Under Justice Hartman's leadership, we also enjoyed a wonderful virtual annual meeting in January 2022. At the annual meeting, we recognized Hon. Robert G. Main, Jr. with our Section's Distinguished Jurist Award and Hon. Kathie E. Davidson, Dean of the New York State Judicial Institute, with our Advancement of Judicial Diversity Award. Hon. Leslie Stein, former Associate Judge of the Court of Appeals, delivered the keynote address which focused on improving governmental decision-making through enhanced communications.

I am particularly thrilled this year to be working alongside the 125th President of the New York State Bar Association, Sherry Levin Wallach, who was the Guest Speaker at our first Section meeting of the new bar year held virtually on June 10. Ms. Wallach, the Deputy Executive Director of the Legal Aid Society of Westchester County, is only the third NYSBA President in the last three decades who hails from a legal services position. Passionate in her commitment to ensuring equal justice for all, Ms. Wallach is recognized as a leader on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. During her presidency, she intends to focus, among other things, on issues related to equality of justice and system reform

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Hon. Vincent M. Del Giudice, Court of Claims Judges

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Hon. Barbara R. Kapnick, Association of Justices of the Supreme Court of the State of New York

Hon. Sabrina B. Kraus, Association of Civil Court Judges of the City of New York

Hon. Gerald Lebovits, Association of Supreme Court Judges by Designation

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Hon. Mark Saltarelli, New York State Association of City Court Judges

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Hon. Shirley Troutman, National Association of Women Judges, New York State Chapter

Hon. Kathleen Wojtaszek-Gariano, Association of Judges of the Family Court of the State of New York

Hon. John Zoll, Association of Criminal Court Judges of the City of New York

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Hon. Joseph J. Cassata, Former Presiding Member

Hon. Cheryl E. Chambers, Former Presiding Member

Hon. Leland G. DeGrasse, Former Presiding Member

Hon. Denise A. Hartman, Former Presiding Member

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Hon. Ellen Spodek, Former Presiding Member

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The *Judicial Dispatch* is your newsletter. We welcome submissions on topics of interest to the members of our Section. If you have an article or announcement you would like considered for publication, please send it in electronic format to Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones, Acting Editor, at jquinone@nycourts.gov.

The *Judicial Dispatch* is looking for an Editor as well as committee members to assist the Editor. As Editor of the *Judicial Dispatch*, you stay

connected with all our member associations and keep informed on the comings, goings and needs of the judiciary in New York. You become the voice of the Judicial Section. If interested, please contact Presiding Member Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones at jquinone@nycourts.gov.

This issue of the *Judicial Dispatch* would not have been possible without the tremendous assistance of **Lori Herzing** and the NYSBA Section Publications staff; **Kirsten Downer, Esq.**, NYSBA Liaison to the Judicial Section; **Hon. Deborah Karalunas**, Former Presiding Member and Former Editor of the *Judicial Dispatch*; and **most especially, my summer college intern, Gabrielle Vardanega**, a rising senior at New York University.

To receive future complimentary editions of the *Judicial Dispatch*, you must be a member of NYSBA's Judicial Section.

The views expressed in the articles in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of NYSBA, or the Judicial Section and its Officers.

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and efficiency. Among the task forces she has created is the Task Force on U.S. Territories which advocates for equal rights for all U.S. citizens, including residents of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

During her remarks to our Section this past June, Ms. Wallach discussed her theme for the year, "Investing in the Future of Our Profession." She emphasized,

This is the year of REMEMBERship.

Remember why we became members in the first place.

Remember why we've stayed members.

Remember the impact we have on fellow attorneys and the rule of law in New York state.

Remember why Membership matters now more than ever.

Remember that we need the voices of New York judges.

I echo her sentiments. This is an exciting time to be a member of the New York State Bar Association (NYSBA) and, in particular, the Judicial Section! Our Section, organized in 1924, has an extensive and rich history – we are the longest-running Section of the NYSBA. For nearly 100 years, our Section has been at the forefront of addressing issues that are unique to the duties, responsibilities and welfare of members of the judiciary across the state, working tirelessly to ensure justice for the people we serve. In the four years I've served as an Officer, we have addressed and commented on various issues including evaluation of candidates for election for judicial office, judicial certification, court simplification, virtual proceedings and pandemic work practices, judicial protection, increased compensation for indigent representation, and proposed amendments to uniform trial court rules. As summer comes to a close and we ready ourselves for the hustle and bustle of fall, let us applaud the great work we have done and acknowledge that there is still much to do. As we prepare to welcome a new Chief Judge, let us re-commit ourselves to working with our new Chief Judge, our Governor and the legislature in improving access to the courts and the deliverance of justice.

This year our Section's efforts will be led by an awesome group of Officers – our Assistant Presiding Member Hon. Gregory R. Gilbert, who sits in Supreme Court, Oswego County; our Secretary Hon. Tanya R. Kennedy, who sits on the Appellate Division, First Department; and the newest addition to the dream team is our Treasurer Hon. Brian D. Burns, who sits in Supreme Court, Otsego County. And of course, we could not do what we do without the incredible assistance and guidance of our Section's liaison Kirsten Downer, Esq.

In conclusion, I am beyond ecstatic that we have brought back the *Judicial Dispatch*. Our last issue was published two years ago in August 2020 and I, for one, have missed it. This publication is by us, for us, about us. It's an opportunity to showcase the on- and off-the-bench-efforts of our extraordinary 300 plus members so please join the *Judicial Dispatch* Committee.

I welcome your suggestions and ideas regarding programs, agenda items, focal points for the section, as well as any concerns or issues that you feel our Section should address, so please feel free to reach out to me by phone or email with any thoughts, ideas or concerns.

Warm regards,



Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones
Presiding Member

Upcoming Meetings

Council of Judicial Associations: Friday, September 23, 2022

Council of Judicial Associations: Friday, November 18, 2022

Judicial Section Annual Meeting Luncheon: Friday, January 20, 2023

MEET THE JUDICIAL SECTION LEADERSHIP

Judicial Section Officers



Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones

Judicial Section Presiding Member, 2022-23

Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones is a judge of the Court of Claims and Acting Justice of the Supreme Court in Kings County, where she handles both criminal and matrimonial matters. She is the first Latina to hold the position of Presiding Member of the Judicial Section of the New York State Bar Association since the section was organized in 1924. Judge Quiñones is a Past President of the Latino Judges Association and the Brooklyn Women's Bar Association and remains an active member of their boards. She also serves on the boards of the Association of Supreme Court Judges by Designation (Vice President), Judges and Lawyers Breast Cancer Alert (Director), National Association of Women Judges – NY Chapter (Vice President, Second Department), and the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York (Delegate). Judge Quiñones is a Commissioner on the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission and chairs the Second Judicial District's Equal Justice Committee, which is dedicated to ensuring the fair and equitable treatment of all court users, including litigants, court staff and the general public. She also sits on the Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics.

Judge Quiñones is a champion of mentoring programs and a frequent speaker on issues of diversity, inclusion and elimination of bias. She is a graduate of Brown University and Fordham University School of Law, where she was a Louis Stein Scholar in Public Interest Law and Ethics.



Hon. Gregory R. Gilbert

Judicial Section Assistant Presiding Member, 2022-23

Hon. Gregory R. Gilbert graduated magna cum laude from Siena College in 1988 with a B.A. in Political Science and from Albany Law School

of Union University in 1991. He was elected to the New York State Supreme Court in 2016 and serves in Oswego and Onondaga Counties. Justice Gilbert is currently the Assistant Presiding Member of the NYSBA Judicial Section and serves as Acting Administrative Judge for the Fifth Judicial District in the absence of Administrative Judge Hon. James P. Murphy.



Hon. Tanya R. Kennedy

Judicial Section Secretary, 2022-23

Hon. Tanya R. Kennedy is an Associate Justice of the Appellate Division, First Department, Supreme Court of the State of New York. She is a Past President of the National Association of Women Judges; Executive Committee Member of NYSBA's Women in Law Section; member of the Board of Directors of the New York City Bar Association; Board of Overseers of the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law; and an Advisory Board Member of Penn State Law. She is also a member of the Committee on Pattern Jury Instructions, Association of Justices of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, and a former Adjunct Professor at Fordham University School of Law. Justice Kennedy is a frequent conference speaker who has received numerous professional awards, including the 2022 Award of Recognition from the New York Women's Bar Association; NYSBA's 2021 John E. Higgins, Esq. Diversity Trailblazer Award; the 2021 Distinguished Alumna Award from Penn State University; the 2017 Diversity Leadership Award from Penn State Law; and the 2015 Alumni of the Year Award from Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law.



Hon. Brian D. Burns

Judicial Section Treasurer, 2022-23

Hon. Brian D. Burns is a Supreme Court Justice in Cooperstown, New York. He previously served two terms as an Otsego County, Family, and Surrogate Court Judge, where he created and

presided over a Family Drug Treatment Court, Opioid Intervention Court, and an Integrated Domestic Violence Court. He currently serves on the New York State Family Violence Task Force, the Advisory Committee for the Attorney for Children's Office for the Third Department, and the Sixth Judicial District Committee on Equal Justice in the Courts and Gender Fairness Committee.



Kirsten Downer, Esq.

Judicial Section Liaison

Kirsten received her Juris Doctor from Albany Law School in 2007 and has been a staff attorney in NYSBA's Publications Department since 2008. She became the liaison to the Judicial Section and Council of Judicial Associations in 2019 with the retirement of the incomparable Pat Wood. Kirsten is a first-generation immigrant from the island of St. Kitts.

Former Presiding Members



Hon. Denise A. Hartman

Presiding Member, 2021-22

Hon. Denise A. Hartman has served as an Acting Supreme Court Justice in Albany County since her April 2015 appointment to the Court of Claims, where she manages full civil docket. Since January 2021, Judge Hartman has served as the presiding member of New York's Litigation Coordination Panel. Also in January 2021, she began training with the National Court and Science Institute as a member of New York's delegation of resource judges for matters emanating from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Before her judicial appointment, Judge Hartman served as an Assistant Solicitor General in the New York State Attorney General's Office and as a confidential law clerk at the Appellate Division, Fourth Department. She received her Juris Doctor degree, magna cum laude, from the

Syracuse University College of Law in 1983, and her Bachelor of Science degree from Cornell University College of Engineering in 1977.



Hon. Barbara R. Kapnick
Presiding Member, 2020–21

My name is Barbara Kapnick, and I was the Presiding Member of the Judicial Section from June 2020 through June 2021. Although I was sworn in at our Annual Luncheon at the Hilton in January 2020, I didn't officially take office until June 1, 2020, in the midst of the pandemic, and my entire tenure was conducted virtually. Although we would usually have held our Judicial Council meetings in the beautiful Conference Room at the Appellate Division, First Department, the Court in which I preside, that was not possible during my term as Presiding Member. Nonetheless, I believe our Section provided a forum for our judicial associations to keep up with all the important and constantly developing issues throughout the State, and we had a very successful and well-attended virtual Annual Luncheon in January 2021 featuring Secretary Jeh Johnson as our keynote speaker. The success of our Section that year was a testament to the hard work and dedication of our outstanding New York State judiciary, and I wish my friend Justice Quiñones, who served as my superb secretary, a very successful year as Presiding Member.



Hon. James P. Murphy
Presiding Member, 2019–20

Hon. James P. Murphy is the Administrative Judge for the Fifth Judicial District. Judge Murphy served as the Presiding Member of the Judicial Section of the New York State Bar Association (2019-20). He is also an elected Fellow of the New York Bar Foundation and previously served as a Member of NYSBA's House of Delegates. Judge Murphy was elected as a Justice of the New York Supreme Court in 2004, and reelected in 2018, to serve the Fifth Judicial District which includes Onondaga, Oswego, Oneida, Jefferson, Lewis, and Herkimer Counties. Justice Murphy

was previously elected three times to the Onondaga County Legislature where he served with distinction and rose to the leadership position of Chair of the Ways and Means Committee.

In 2019, Judge Murphy was appointed by Chief Administrative Judge Lawrence Marks as Administrative Judge in the Fifth Judicial District. For the preceding 14 years, Justice Murphy had been assigned to the General Civil Trial Part. In addition to his Supreme Court duties, Justice Murphy was appointed in 2007 by then Chief Administrative Judge Jonathan Lippman to serve as District Coordinating Judge for the Town and Village Courts in the Fifth Judicial District where he oversaw approximately 240 local judges until 2019. He also serves on the New York Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics and the Executive Committee of the New York State Bar Association.



Hon. Cheryl E. Chambers
Presiding Member, 2018–19

Hon. Cheryl E. Chambers is an Associate Justice of the Appellate Division, Second Judicial Department. She is a Past Presiding Member of the Judicial Section and the Council of Judicial Associations (2018–19). Justice Chambers serves on the New York State Bar Association House of Delegates, as a member of the State Bar's Finance Committee, as a member of the State Bar's Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and as a member of the State Bar's Executive Committee of the Criminal Justice Section. Justice Chambers also serves as a director and Vice President of the New York Bar Foundation.

Justice Chambers serves on the Board of Directors of the Judicial Friends and the Association of Supreme Court Justices of the City of New York. She is a member and has served in leadership positions in many professional associations including the New York County Lawyers Association, the Brooklyn Bar Association and the Metropolitan Black Bar Association where she served as Chair of its Board of Directors.



Hon. Conrad D. Singer
Presiding Member, 2017–18

Hon. Conrad D. Singer is a Supreme Court Justice in the Tenth Judicial District. He also served 15 years as an elected NYS Family Court Judge. Judge Singer served as the Presiding Member of the Judicial Section and the Council of Judicial Associations (2017-18) and was also co-chair of the Section's Diversity Committee. Additionally, he served five terms as president of the NYS Family Court Judges Association and he was a recipient of the NYS Family Court Judge of the Year Award in 2013. Judge Singer has been a member of numerous OCA committees.

Judge Singer is a former assistant district attorney and private practice attorney. Judge Singer is also a former Village Justice and past Chief of his local fire department. He is a recipient of the Nassau County Medal of Valor and the recipient of numerous citations.



Hon. Marsha Steinhardt
Presiding Member, 2016–17

Hon. Marsha Steinhardt retired from the Supreme Court bench in Kings County on December 31, 2020, after a remarkable thirty-year career. She is best known as the Judge presiding in the Medical Malpractice Trial Readiness Part, where she conferenced (and frequently settled) every post-note of issue malpractice case in the borough. Marsha has received numerous honors from various organizations including both plaintiff and defendant bar associations. She currently is a mediator/arbitrator with NAM (National Arbitration and Mediation) where she specializes in litigation involving medical malpractice. The Judge spends half the year in Boca Raton, Florida, sharing the sunshine with her husband, Jeffrey Feldman and the couple's little dog, Goldie.



Hon. Ellen M. Spodek

Presiding Member, 2014–15

Hon. Ellen M. Spodek was elected to the Civil Court of Kings County in November 2002. She served in Civil Court from January 2003 until May 2005, when she was appointed to Family Court. She served in Family Court through December 2006. Thereafter, Justice Spodek was appointed as the Supervising Judge of Civil Court, where she served from January 2007 until December 2008. Justice Spodek was appointed to the Supreme Court by Governor David Paterson in May of 2008, and then elected to the Supreme Court in November 2008. In April 2021, she was appointed Acting Administrative Judge for Kings County Supreme Court, Civil Term, while Justice Knipel was recovering from Covid. She is a graduate of SUNY Albany and Fordham Law School.

From 2009 to 2011, Justice Spodek served as the Co-President of Judges & Lawyers Breast Cancer Alert, (JALBCA), a bar association dedicated to promoting awareness of breast cancer and education of the diagnosis, treatment, and cure of the disease. She continues to serve on JALBCA's Board. She is a proud recipient of the Brooklyn Bar Association's Annual Recognition Award as well as the Volunteer Lawyer's Project Terri and Nick Letica Award for creating the CLARO clinics which represent unrepresented litigants in consumer credit cases. She was also a recipient of the Brooklyn Women's Bar Association's Sybil Hart Kooper Award, as well as the Catholic Lawyers Guild Ecumenical Award.



Hon. Rachel Kretser

Presiding Member, 2013–14

Hon. Rachel Kretser was appointed to the Albany City Criminal Court in December 2005, and was elected to that position in November 2006, becoming the first woman ever to serve on a criminal court bench in the Third Judicial District. In 2016 she was appointed Acting County Court Judge for Domestic Violence matters. Since her retirement from the bench

in January 2017, Judge Kretser has been an adjunct professor at Albany Law School and a Judicial Hearing Officer. In early 2018, she was appointed by Presiding Justice E. Garry to the Third Department Appellate Division Civil Appeals Settlement Panel.

Judge Kretser is active in numerous professional and community organizations. She currently chairs the OCA Third Judicial District Gender Fairness Committee and serves on the NYSBA House of Delegates and the Center for Women in Government board of directors. She chaired the N.Y.S. Bar Association's Judicial Section in 2013–2014 and co-authored the 2014 NYSBA Judicial Diversity Report. She is a Past President of the N.Y.S. Association of City Court Judges, the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York, and the Capital District Women's Bar Association. She is a founding member of the CDWBA Legal Project and the Women's Bar Foundation, and is a Life Fellow of the NYS Bar Foundation. She is a lifetime member of Hadassah, serves on the steering committee of the Brandeis Baruch Society and is a member of the United Jewish Federation of NENY. In recognition of her dedication to the profession and to the community, she has received a number of prestigious awards including the Ruth Shapiro Memorial Award from the NYS Bar Association and the Marilyn Menge Award from the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York. Judge Kretser is a licensed private pilot.



Hon. Deborah H. Karalunas

Presiding Member, 2011–12

Hon. Deborah H. Karalunas is a graduate of Cornell University and the Syracuse University College of Law. Following a federal court clerkship, Karalunas was in private practice for 20 years. In 2002 she was elected to serve as a Supreme Court Justice in the Fifth Judicial District. She was re-elected in 2016. Karalunas loves being a judge and says helping litigants resolve disputes, whether by advocacy, settlement, motion practice or trial is tremendously gratifying.

Justice Karalunas also teaches New York Civil Practice at Syracuse University College of Law, is a member of the New York State Committee on Pattern Jury Instructions, and is an active member of many bar and judicial associations. She served as President of the Central New York Women's Bar Association, the Presiding Member

of the Judicial Section of the New York State Bar Association, and on the Board of Directors of the Onondaga County Bar Association.

Justice Karalunas was the 2009 recipient of the Syracuse University College of Law Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award, the 2017 recipient of the Central New York Women's Bar Association's inaugural Karen DeCrow Award, and a 2018 Public Service Honoree of the Armenian Bar Association.

Justice Karalunas lives in Jamesville, New York with her husband, George. In her spare time, Justice Karalunas gardens, jogs (slowly), hangs out with her family (particularly her grandchildren), reads light fiction, and listens to contemporary Christian music.



Hon. Leonard B. Austin

Presiding Member, 2007–08

Hon. Leonard B. Austin was appointed to the Appellate Division, Second Department as an Associate Justice in 2009. Prior to his election to the bench in 1998, Justice Austin was engaged in the private practice of law. In 1999, Justice Austin was assigned to a dedicated Matrimonial Part in Suffolk County. Thereafter, Justice Austin was assigned the Commercial Division in Nassau County until his elevation to the Appellate Division.

During his tenure in the Commercial Division in Nassau County, Justice Austin drafted the original Statewide Rules of the Commercial Division of the Supreme Court. In addition, since 2004, he has served on the Pattern Jury Instruction Committee which is responsible for drafting jury charges and regularly updated commentaries on the law. He is the author of several articles dealing with Equitable Distribution and New York City's Forfeiture Law, as well as an article in the Banking Law Journal entitled The Impact of New York's Commercial Division on Banking Litigation. Justice Austin has served as the President of the American College of Business Court Judges, the Theodore Roosevelt Inn of Court and Presiding Justice of the Judicial Section of the New York State Bar Association.

Justice Austin has authored numerous opinions which have significantly impacted New York jurisprudence. In addition, Justice Austin is a frequent lecturer to the Bar in the fields of e-discovery, appellate practice, commercial and matrimonial law and civil practice. He is an Adjunct

Professor of Law at Hofstra University School of Law. Justice Austin is a graduate of Georgetown University in 1974 and Hofstra University School of Law in 1977.

Having retired from the bench in early 2022, Justice Austin is now an arbitrator/mediator with National Arbitration and Mediation (NAM) and is of counsel to the Law Offices of Steven Cohn, PC



Hon. Michelle Weston
Presiding Member, 1997–98

Hon. Michelle Weston's judicial career began in 1989 when she was appointed to Criminal Court by Mayor Ed Koch. In November 1990 she was elected to the Supreme Court. She was the

first African-American female elected in the Second Judicial District. In April 1993 she was appointed to the Appellate Term.

Justice Michelle Weston is one of five jurists sitting on the Appellate Term in the Second, Eleventh and Thirteenth Judicial Districts. Justice Weston was the Presiding Member of the NYSBA Judicial Section from 1997 through 1998. She also served as the Chair of NYSBA Committee on Procedures for Judicial Discipline from 2013 through 2017. In addition to hearing appeals at the Appellate Term, Justice Weston presides over medical malpractice trials in Kings County Supreme Court.

MEET THE COUNCIL OF JUDICIAL ASSOCIATIONS (CJA) PRESIDENTS



Hon. Shahabuddeen A. Ally
Asian American Judges Association of New York

Hon. Shahabuddeen (Shah) A. Ally is the Supervising Judge of New York County Civil Court. Shah was elected to the New York City Civil Court in 2018 and began his judicial career in the Bronx Criminal Court. Shah was elected as President of the Asian American Judges Association of New York (AAJANY) in February 2022. Shah is also a Commissioner of the Franklin H. Williams Commission – having been appointed by the Chief Judge in July 2020. Shah resides in the Washington Heights neighborhood of Manhattan with his wife, Judge Alicea Elloras-Ally, Kings County Family Court, and their teenage son and puppy!

The Asian American Judges Association of New York (AAJANY) was established in 2013 with the core mission to promote the common professional interest of its members and advance the inclusion of Asian American Judges at all levels of the State court system. We currently have 51 members statewide – representing 4.06% of the Judiciary. Of our total membership, 44 members are based in New York City and seven based in counties outside of NYC. A majority

of our members are appointed (29 members) versus elected (22 members).



Hon. Daniele Chinaea
Association of Housing Court Judges

My name is Daniele Chinaea. I am the current President of the Association of Housing Court Judges. I am a lifelong New Yorker, raised in the Bronx and living in Brooklyn. Other than living in Washington, DC while I attended George Washington University, I have never lived anywhere else. I graduated from Benjamin N Cardozo School of Law in 2002. I started my legal career at Paul Weiss Rifkind Wharton and Garrison LLP as an associate in their corporate bankruptcy practice. After having my amazing daughter in 2008, I was looking for something new. In 2010, I joined the Housing Court as the Court Attorney for Hon. Michelle Schreiber. In June 2016, I was appointed as a Housing Court Judge by the Hon Lawrence Marks; and was reappointed to a second term in June 2021.

The Association of Housing Court Judges represents the 50 New York City Housing Court Judges. We serve in a dedicated Part of the Civil Court of the City of New York in which we resolve residential landlord-tenant disputes and ensure

the quality and safety of the City's rental housing stock. Landlord-tenant law is a very nuanced area of law and the work we do affects everyday New Yorkers and the owners of some of the most varied, valuable, and strictly regulated real estate in the Nation. We are a highly dedicated and exuberant bunch; and I am honored to be their Board President. I serve alongside the Hon. Frances Ortiz, Vice President; Hon. Christel Garland, Secretary; and Hon Jack Stoller, Treasurer.



Hon. Vincent M. Del Giudice
Association of Judges of the Court of Claims

Hon. Vincent M. Del Giudice is the President of the Association of Judges of the Court of Claims. The Association represents the 56 Judges of the Court who are Acting Supreme Court Justices by statute. These judges sit in Supreme and Family Court presiding over criminal matters and civil matters not related to the State or any State Agency.



Hon. Curtis J. Farber

New York State Association of Lesbian and Gay Judges

Hon. Curtis J. Farber presently presides in the Criminal Term of the Supreme Court of New York County. Justice Farber's judicial career began in 2012 when he was appointed by then Mayor Michael Bloomberg to serve as a Judge of the Civil Court of the City of New York. He was once again appointed by Mayor Bloomberg the following year, this time to serve as a Judge of the Criminal Court of the City of New York, where Judge Farber presided in both Kings County and New York County. Judge Farber was appointed to the Supreme Court bench in 2018 by Chief Administrative Judge Hon. Lawrence Marks. He was reappointed to the bench by Mayor Bill De Blasio in 2019. Judge Farber received his B.A. from George Washington University in 1983 and earned his J.D. from Boston University in 1986. Judge Farber was an Assistant District Attorney in Bronx County from 1987–1992, and in private practice from 1992 until his appointment to the bench.

The NYS Association of Lesbian and Gay Judges was established in 1993. Its objectives are to increase the visibility of LGBTQIA+ judges in both the legal community and community at large, address the priorities and needs of the LGBTQIA+ members of the judiciary, to ensure diversity, inclusion and equal treatment for all persons who are employed by or utilize the judicial system, and to serve as an information resource for individuals identifying as LGBTQIA+ who aspire to judicial service.



Hon. Barbara R. Kapnick

Association of Justices of the Supreme Court of the State of New York

Hon. Barbara R. Kapnick was first elected to the Civil Court in 1991, appointed an Acting Supreme Court Justice in April 1994, and was elected to the Supreme Court, New York County in 2001. She was assigned to the Commercial Division in 2008, where she handled many

high-profile cases, and was appointed to the Appellate Division, First Department in January 2014, where she continues to preside.

Justice Kapnick currently serves as President of the Association of Justices of the Supreme Court of the State of New York and was the President of the Supreme Court Justices Association of the City of New York from 2013–2014. She is a Past Presiding Member of the Judicial Section of the New York State Bar Association and a Past President of the Jewish Lawyers Guild. Justice Kapnick was a member of the Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics from June 2008 – June 2018, and now serves on its Ethics Faculty. Justice Kapnick sits on the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission, promoting racial and ethnic fairness in the courts, and on the Commercial Division Advisory Council.

The Association of Justices of the Supreme Court of the State of New York represents all the elected Supreme Court justices throughout the state – active, certificated and retired – and supports a strong and independent elected judiciary. The Association works hard to support all the judges of the court system and to protect the safety and integrity of the hard working and dedicated judges in every part of the state. The Association is not shy about speaking up on issues that affect the administration of justice in New York, and will always continue to support the independence of the judiciary.



Hon. Sabrina B. Kraus

New York City Civil Court Judges Association

Hon. Sabrina B. Kraus is President of the New York City Civil Court Judges Association. Judge Kraus is a graduate of Cardozo Law School and spent 15 years as a Real Estate Litigator after graduation. In 2006 Judge Kraus was appointed as a Housing Court Judge, and she sat in that Court through 2016 when she was elected to Civil Court. Judge Kraus currently serves as an Acting Supreme Court Justice presiding over a General IAS Part in New York County. Judge Kraus is Past President of the Housing Court Judges Association and currently on the Board of the Jewish Lawyers Guild and the Iranian American Bar Association.

The New York City Civil Court Judges Association plans an annual educational conference with the Housing Court Judges as well as permutations throughout the year on topics which have most recently included implicit bias and

court merger. The Association also holds an annual dinner for its new judges and advocates on behalf of its members with OCA.



Hon. Gerald Lebovits

New York State Association of Acting Supreme Court Justices

Hon. Gerald Lebovits, a judge since 2001, is president of the NYS Association of Acting Supreme Court Justices, made up of almost 300 judges statewide. He was also president of the Housing and Civil Court judges. Lebovits additionally is an adjunct professor at Columbia, Fordham, and NYU law schools.



Hon. Karl E. Manne

New York State Magistrates Association

Hon. Karl E. Manne has been engaged in the private practice of law since 1993 with his primary office located in Herkimer County. His practice includes real estate transactions, civil litigation, criminal defense and bankruptcy. He has served as a Town Justice for the Town of Herkimer since 2007, and also has served as a justice for the Village of Herkimer. Judge Manne also currently serves as Village Attorney for the Village of Mohawk, Town Attorney for the Town of German Flatts, and Town Attorney for the Town of Frankfort. He is a former President of the Herkimer County Bar Association and member of the Attorney Grievance Committee for the Fifth Judicial District; he currently serves on the NYS Bar Association Professional Discipline Committee and the NYSBA Committee on Procedures for Judicial Discipline. Karl resides in Herkimer with his wife of over 31 years, Jennifer, and they have two adult children.

Judge Manne serves as the current President of the New York State Magistrates Association (NYSMA), an association of 2800 members made up of sitting and retired town and village justices. NYSMA represents the approximately 1,200 town and village justice courts statewide, which are presided over by both attorney and non-attorney judges elected by the communi-

ties in which they serve. Town and village justices make up approximately two-thirds of all sitting judges in the State of New York.



Hon. Frank P. Milano
New York State Court of Claims "A" Judges Association

Hon. Frank P. Milano has served in all three branches of New York State government, has been an elected and an appointed judge, has presided in both local and superior courts and has presided over both civil and criminal matters.

Judge Milano has for the last 16 years been a Court of Claims Judge, and for most of that tenure has also served as an Acting Justice of the Supreme Court presiding over felony criminal jury trials in addition to adjudicating monetary civil claims against the State of New York.

Members of the New York State Court of Claims "A" Judges Association are the Constitutionally established body of judges that, pursuant to § 2(2)(a) of the Court of Claims Act, are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate to adjudicate monetary claims brought against the State of New York. Many members of the Association also are and have been designated as Acting Justices of the Supreme Court to additionally adjudicate civil and criminal matters traditionally addressed in Supreme Court and in County Court.



Hon. Michael M. Mohun
County Court Judges Association of the State of New York

Hon. Michael M. Mohun is the current president of the County Court Judges Association of the State of New York. The association meets annually. This year's meeting is September 19–21 at the Gideon Putnam in Saratoga Springs. As judges whose primary jurisdiction is criminal matters, we have been subject to the implementation of laws that have a significant impact on the criminal justice system: raise the age, bail reform, discovery reform, less is more and most recently an overhaul of the pistol permit process.

The pandemic greatly affected the administration of justice. The county court judges relied on virtual appearances to facilitate the timely adjudication of cases. With the state of emergency ending, this tool was not available to many of us. The Association actively supports allowing all county courts to utilize "virtual" technology. Upon reaching 70 years of age next year, I will retire. It has been my distinct honor to serve.



Hon. Stacy L. Pettit
The Surrogates Association of the State of New York

Hon. Stacy L. Pettit is the current President of the Surrogates Association and is the Surrogate's Court Judge of Albany County. Her career as an attorney, prior to becoming a judge, included positions as chief clerk in Surrogate's Court, principal appellate court attorney for the Appellate Division, Third Department, and a lengthy career in private practice concentrating in trusts and estate administration and Surrogate's Court litigation. She is an Editorial Board Member and author for Warren's Heaton on Surrogate's Court Practice, and she serves on the Judicial Institute Curriculum Advisory Committee. She has been an active member of the Trusts & Estates section of the New York State Bar Association throughout her career, having served as chair of the committee on Surrogate's Court, as a member of the executive committee, and as a delegate to the New York State Bar House of Delegates.

The Surrogates Association of the State of New York provides educational and social programs for the judges of the Surrogate's Courts in each county of the State. There are 82 judges presiding in the Surrogate's Courts in the counties of New York State. Our members include full-time Surrogates as well as those who also preside in County Court, Family Court or as Acting Supreme Court judges. The Association is an important resource to all our judges. Our meetings and communications provide the opportunity to get to know each other well and to feel comfortable in reaching out to one another for information and advice on the law, court management and procedural issues unique to our courts. As an association, we not only provide networking and educational opportunities, we also comment on and support legislation affecting our courts and our court users, and advocate for our members with issues of importance to improve our courts. The friendships created through the association are important to us as individuals and enhance our abilities as judges.

Hon. Erik S. Pitchal
New York City Family Court Judges Association

Hon. Erik S. Pitchal is the president of the New York City Family Court Judges Association and has been on the bench since 2013. Prior to his judicial appointment, he had a varied career in and around the law, as a trial attorney, professor, and consultant, with most of his work focused on advocacy for children and their families. He represented children in Family Court cases; litigated federal class action civil rights cases; managed a university-based policy institute; created a law school clinical education program; and taught family law and juvenile law at several law schools, including a study-abroad program in Sweden. He has written numerous law review articles and policy reports and has extensive experience training lawyers and allied professionals in child welfare and juvenile justice. Judge Pitchal received his J.D. from Yale Law School and his B.A. in public policy from Brown University. In 2005, he was named Child Advocate of the Year by the American Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division, and in 2017 he received the Stevens Award from the Harry Truman Scholarship Foundation in recognition of his legal career in public service. He is a former law clerk to Judge Robert Patterson of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

The NYC Family Court Judges Association consists of judges appointed and/or assigned to that court, as well as retired Family Court judges. The Association conducts two full-day CLE seminars per year; advocates for the interests of its members with OCA and with the other branches of government; and provides a variety of social and fellowship opportunities.



Hon. Ralph J. Porzio
Supreme Court Justices Association of the City of New York

Hon. Ralph J. Porzio was elected in November 2018 as a New York State Supreme Court Justice in Richmond County, where he currently presides. Judge Porzio is admitted to practice law in New York, New Jersey, Colorado and Federal Courts. Further, he serves as a President of the Supreme Court Justices Association of the City of New York and is an active member of the Association of Justices of the Supreme Court of New York, New York State Bar Association, Staten Island Trial Lawyers Association, American Bar Association, Richmond County Bar Association,

Columbian Lawyers Association of Brooklyn and Staten Island Women's Bar Association.

The goals of the Supreme Court Justices' Association of the City of New York are to represent New York State Supreme Court Justices who serve in the City of New York; to promote the betterment of the Courts of the City and State of New York and the improvement of the working conditions of the Supreme Court Justices in New York City, and the condition of the courthouses and court facilities in which they serve. In general, the SCJACONY efforts to foster a spirit of good will and unity among all members of the New York City Judiciary.

Membership is open to all elected and appointed Justices of the State Supreme Court who are sitting in the Supreme Court in the five boroughs of New York City, and any Justices of the Supreme Court who are elected from any of the five counties of New York City and are assigned to sit in neighboring counties, and any retired, elected or appointed Supreme Court Justice who sat in the Supreme Court in New York City. Annual dues are \$50 for active members and \$30 for retired members.



Hon. Walter Rivera

Latino Judges Association

Hon. Walter Rivera was nominated by Governor Andrew Cuomo to the New York State Court of Claims on June 14, 2017 and was confirmed by the Senate on June 19, 2017. He sits in the White Plains District. Prior to his appointment, he served for five and a half years as a Town Justice at the Greenburgh Town Court, Westchester County. Judge Rivera currently serves on the Chief Judge's statewide ADR Advisory Committee, the Advisory Panel to the NYS Judicial Institute, and as Co-Chair of the Court of Claims Equal Justice in the Courts Committee. Judge Rivera is also a founding member of the Hudson Valley Hispanic Bar Association. Throughout his legal career, Judge Rivera has remained passionate about mentoring countless high school, college, and law students who aspire to join the legal profession.

The purpose of the Latino Judges Association is to promote access to judicial office and success within the Judiciary for members from the Latino community who are committed to the highest standards of excellence and professionalism, and thereby support a strong judiciary that is representative of New York State's diverse

communities. In furtherance of its purpose, the Association supports increased access to judicial positions for persons from the Latino community based on individual skill, talent and ability, and promotes the advancement of Latinas and Latinos within the Bench and Bar including appointment to leadership positions with administrative and policymaking authority.

The Association sponsors continuing judicial education programs for its members, publicly honors individual achievement and success of persons who have worked to improve the judicial system and diversify the legal profession, and encourages and facilitates public service by the Association's members. In recognition of its members' oath to the guarantees and protections afforded under our State and Federal constitutions and laws, the Association promotes equality and justice under the law, supports efforts to maximize access to justice for those unable to afford representation, promotes a strong and independent Judiciary and fidelity to the rule of law, and encourages public confidence in the judicial system by fostering the highest standards of excellence, professionalism and ethics within the legal profession.



Hon. Mark Saltarelli

New York State Association of City Court Judges

The New York State Association of City Court Judges (NYSACCJ) is an organization of approximately 180 sitting and retired City Court judges. City Court judges comprise approximately 15% of all the judges in the State of New York.

The NYSACCJ tracks legislation at a state level and works with the Office of Court Administration Committee on City Courts to draft legislation to improve the administration of justice and in City Courts throughout New York State. NYSACCJ works with state agencies, local and state bar associations, and other judicial associations to improve the efficiency and increase communication of issues of mutual concern. Also, it provides an opportunity to learn and share experiences with fellow judges.



Hon. Verna L. Saunders

Judicial Friends Association

Hon. Verna L. Saunders is a Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York who currently presides over matters involving Complex Litigation, including Asbestos and Mesothelioma cases. Prior to her election to Supreme Court, Justice Saunders served as the Presiding Justice of the Harlem Community Justice Center. Justice Saunders has also served in the Civil and Criminal Courts of New York, as well as presiding five years as a Housing Court Judge, adjudicating landlord-tenant disputes in New York City. Justice Saunders has served as a board member of the Judicial Friends Association, Inc. and she is the current President of Judicial Friends. Since 1976, the Judicial Friends Association has sought the fair and just treatment of racial and ethnic minority judges, judicial and non-judicial staff and attorneys. It is the oldest established organization committed to racial and ethnic equality in the field of law in the State of New York. The Association serves to educate and advocate on behalf of the judiciary, court staff, and attorneys on relevant issues relating to racial and ethnic equality.

The Judicial Friends "Stand Firm for Truth and Justice" and works diligently to promote diversity within the judiciary and court system by demanding truth and justice, transparency, and fairness within it. Its members promote and model professionalism, courtesy, dignity, decency, honesty, and fair treatment in their everyday lives. These qualities are demonstrated as well in the Judicial Friends' organizational pursuits and programming which includes scholarships to law students; judicial internships and mentoring; community events, such as the annual Law Sermon and Black History Month celebrations; continuing legal education and professional development for its members; and partnership with judicial and bar associations on initiatives which advance the cause of justice in our society.



Hon. Shirley Troutman

National Association of Women Judges – New York Chapter

Hon. Shirley Troutman is an Associate Judge of the New York State Court of Appeals and the President of The National Association of Women Judges – New York (NAWJ-NY). NAWJ-NY is a chapter of our national organization, which works to fulfill the national mission while also focusing on issues that affect New York.

The National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ) was formed in 1979 and upon its founding established its mission “to promote the judicial role of protecting the rights of individuals under the rule of law through strong, committed, diverse judicial leadership; fairness and equality in the courts; and equal access to justice.” Since its inception NAWJ has been committed to establishing a diverse membership, welcoming both women and men as its members and being inclusive of those from the LGBTQ community. The organization has as its members those who serve as trial, appellate, administrative, tribal and military judges on federal, state and tribal courts at every level of the judiciary. In addition, NAWJ members include members of international tribunals, attorneys, law clerks, law students and law professors who are committed to its mission.



Hon. Kathleen Wojtaszek-Gariano

New York State Family Court Judges Association

Hon. Kathleen Wojtaszek-Gariano is a judge for the Niagara County Family Court in Niagara Falls, New York. She was elected the first female Family Court Judge in Niagara County in 2011 and was re-elected in 2021 for her second term. Judge Wojtaszek-Gariano received her B.A. degree from the University at Buffalo in 1989 and her J.D. from Cleveland-Marshall College of Law in 1993. She began her career in 1994 as a general practice attorney where she handled primarily matrimonial and family court cases. She was an Attorney for the Child during this period and served as an Assistant County Attorney, working in Family Court prosecuting Persons in Need of Supervision and Juvenile Delinquency cases. She then served as Court Attorney in Niagara County Family Court for ten years before being elected to the bench. Judge Wojtaszek-Gariano joined the board of the New York State Family Court Judges Association in 2014, becoming Secretary in 2018 and currently serving as President.

The New York State Family Court Judges Association promotes and supports New York State Family Court Judges who are committed to the highest standard of excellence and professionalism. In furtherance of its purpose, the Association provides a unified presence within the Court administration system that promotes case efficiency, environmental safety, financial security and personal wellness to Family Court Judges. It represents the member judges of the Association and relays interests and concerns affecting the judicial practice to the members of the New York State Legislature and the New York State Office of Court Administration. The Association makes it a priority to offer judicial continuing education specifically tailored to the work of the Family Court throughout the State of New York and promote efficiency in the administration of justice in Family Court in the protection, treatment and rehabilitation of children and families.



Hon. John Zoll

Criminal Court Judges Association of the City of New York

Hon. John Zoll was appointed an Interim Civil Court Judge in September 2010. He was re-appointed as a New York City Criminal Court Judge in 2011 and designated an Acting Supreme Court Justice in 2018. He currently serves on the Criminal Term of Queens County Supreme Court. Prior to becoming a judge, Judge Zoll served as the Supervising Court Attorney to the Hon. Deborah Stevens Modica in Queens Criminal Court. He also previously served as a criminal defense attorney with the Legal Aid Society (1991–1996) and Queens Law Associates, PC (1996–2004).

In 2021, Judge Zoll became President of the Association of Judges of the New York City Criminal Courts. The Association represents the judges appointed to the Criminal Court of New York City and those who are serving as Acting Justices of the Supreme Court in the Criminal Term of Supreme Courts throughout the five boroughs. The Association seeks to enhance the judicial experience for our members through annual educational seminars and social get-togethers, where members share experiences and knowledge with their colleagues. We also are responsive to any individualized needs that may arise with any of our judges. Our Association is a diverse, highly experienced group of judges working in some of the busiest courts in the country.



A RECAP OF THE JUDICIAL SECTION'S 2022 ANNUAL LUNCHEON

By: **Hon. Denise A. Hartman**

To all of my judicial colleagues, it was my privilege to preside over the Judicial Section's Annual Meeting during Bar Week in January. Again, it was held virtually, but we did our best to preserve comradery and our traditions even within the limitations of remote conferencing. And, as we have now resurrected the *Judicial Dispatch*, I have the pleasure of recounting the event, especially for those who were unable to join us.

As is customary, our first order of business was to vote and then swear in our new officers for the term beginning June 1, 2022. Chief Administrative Judge Larry Marks graciously conducted the ceremony. Recently confirmed Court of Claims Judge Joanne D. Quiñones, who sits in Kings County Supreme Court, assumed the mantle of Presiding Member; Supreme Court Justice Gregory R. Gilbert from Onondaga County was sworn in as Assistant Presiding Member; Appellate Division, First Department Associate Justice Tanya R. Kennedy was sworn in as our Secretary; and Supreme Court Justice Brian D. Burns from Otsego County was sworn in as our new Treasurer. We extended our heartiest congratulations to our Section's new officers.

We were next honored by the opening remarks of NYSBA's then-President T. Andrew Brown, who reminded us of the cherished relationship of the bench and the bar in delivering justice to the best of our abilities. And later, in her closing remarks, former Court of Appeals Judge Leslie E. Stein spoke to us about her initiatives as Director of the Government Law Center at Albany Law School, among them to improve governmental decision-making through enhanced communications among the branches of government. Their remarks were much appreciated.

In between our speakers' presentations, we continued the tradition of presenting awards to two of our most outstanding jurists. On behalf of the Judicial Section, I had the pleasure of presenting the 2022 Distinguished Service Award to the Hon. Robert G. Main, Jr., a four-hatter in Franklin County, New York – County Judge, Surrogate Judge, Acting Family Court Judge, and Acting Supreme Court Justice. Judge Main was described to me as one of the unsung heroes in our court system. Service in our judicial system was practically baked into Judge Main's DNA. He was a fifth-generation attorney in his family, and, in finding his way to the bench, he followed the footsteps of his father, former associate justice Robert Main of the Appellate Division, Third Department.

Having retired at the end of last year, Judge Main was the senior trial judge in the Fourth Judicial District and the longest tenured Surrogate in the state. Along the way, he founded both the Adult Treatment Court and the Family Treatment Courts in Franklin County. He also presided over the Integrated Domestic Violence part of Supreme Court. Since 2019, Judge Main co-chaired the Tribal Court Committee serving the New York Federal-State-Tribal Courts and Indian Nations Justice Forum, where he spearheaded a local pre-trial supervision initiative which attracted national attention. Off the bench, Judge Main was actively involved in efforts to expand and improve health care services in Franklin County. Suffice it to say that Judge Main poured his energy into public service for more than 30 years, earning the great respect of his fellow jurists and of members of the community in which he so ably served.

Judge Quiñones then had the pleasure of presenting the 2022 Advancement of Judicial Diversity Award to the Hon. Kathie E. Davidson, Dean of the New York State Judicial Institute, in recognition of her efforts to promote diversity and inclusion at all levels of the judiciary throughout New York State. Before becoming Dean, Judge Davidson served as Administrative Judge for the Ninth Judicial District – she was the first woman appointed to that role and the first African American to be appointed Administrative Judge outside of New York City. Judge Davidson was also the first African American woman appointed Supervising Judge of the Family Courts in the Ninth Judicial District, where she led the court with groundbreaking initiatives benefitting children and families. Now, as Dean of the Judicial Institute, Judge Davidson's responsibilities include overseeing the creation and delivery of training seminars for newly elected and appointed judges as well as continuing education programs for judges and lawyers throughout the state.

Among her diversity and inclusion efforts are Judge Davidson's service as Commissioner with the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission and her leadership in the implementation of a faith-based court initiative while she served as Administrative Judge of the Ninth Judicial District. Judge Davidson also previously served as Chair of the Westchester County Stakeholders' Girls Justice Initiative, now known as Gender-Responsive Initiatives and Partnerships or GRIP, which was designed to promote healing and provide opportunities, justice and supportive interventions to improve outcomes for participants who are at risk for involvement in the



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juvenile justice system, particularly girls of color and individuals who face challenges because of their gender identity, gender expression and/or sexual orientation.

A few words before I close. Please let me express my sincerest gratitude to all of you for the privilege of serving in the leadership of the Judicial Section of the New York State Bar Association. May the Judicial Section, under the new leadership of Presiding Member Quiñones, thrive and continue to provide a valuable forum to promote comradery and communication among the judges, and with esteemed members of the bar, as we work together to improve our judicial system to better serve our communities and the public at large.



Welcome by Hon. Denise A. Hartman, 2021–22 Presiding Member



Hon. Robert G. Main, Jr., Recipient of the 2022 Distinguished Jurist Award.



Hon. Barbara R. Kapnick, 2020–21 Presiding Member, casts the ballot for the 2022–2023 slate of Judicial Section Officers.



Hon. Kathie E. Davidson, Recipient of the 2022 Advancement of Judicial Diversity Award.



Swearing in of Judicial Section Officers by Chief Administrative Judge Larry K. Marks.



Hon. Leslie Stein, Director, Government Law Center, Albany Law School and Former Associate Judge of the New York State Court of Appeals presents Keynote Speech – Improving Governmental Decision-Making Through Enhanced Communications.



Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones, Incoming Presiding Member, being administered the oath of office by Chief Administrative Judge Larry K. Marks.

THE JUDICIAL INSTITUTE: APPROACHING 20 YEARS

By: **Hon. Kathie E. Davidson, Dean of the Judicial Institute**

It has been a pleasure to serve as the Dean of the New York State Judicial Institute for the past year. I am grateful for this opportunity and thank Chief Judge Janet DiFiore and Chief Administrative Judge Lawrence Marks for their ongoing support. It has been very enlightening and illuminating to hear from most of the judges across the state, by way of surveys, phone calls, Teams meetings, and conversations on how best to serve their educational needs. Further, understanding that the educational needs of court attorneys, court attorney referees, and support magistrates may require a different focus from time to time, we have specifically designed programs tailored to meet their educational needs. With a little over a year in this role under my belt, it is a good time to talk about the objectives and direction of the Judicial Institute going forward.

Established under Judiciary Law § 219-a, the New York State Judicial Institute is a statewide, year-round center for judicial education, training, and research designed to enhance the quality of New York State's courts and ensure the State's Judiciary sets the standard for decisional and operational excellence around the country. Recognizing the importance of an informed and up-to-date court system, the Judicial Institute's charge is to provide educational and training programs for the judges and justices, quasi-judicial personnel, and the attorneys of the Unified Court System (UCS). Ultimately, the public's confidence in the work judges do allows the courts to function with impartiality and independence, which directly benefits the people who rely on the courts to resolve disputes efficiently, fairly, and skillfully. Effective judicial education necessarily involves a process of self-analysis, self-assessment, and the willingness of the judiciary to adjust as the law becomes more complex and nuanced.

The primary objective of the Judicial Institute's programming is to provide UCS judges and justices with the necessary knowledge, skills, and expertise to resolve the disputes before them. To accomplish this, the Judicial Institute continually develops and refines curricula focused on the core competencies New York State's judges and justices must possess to ensure the fair and efficient administration of justice. Further, the Judicial Institute is proactive in planning and implementing educational programs relating to the enactment of new legislation, e.g., the Child Victims Act, New York's Bail and Discovery Reform Laws, and other legislative initiatives.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic required the Judicial Institute to re-imagine how it

executes its charge, as in-person programming, at least for a time, ceased. Undaunted, the Judicial Institute began utilizing Microsoft Teams as a virtual educational teaching platform. Our roster of programs, presented remotely via Teams, includes, but is not limited to, substantive law lectures taught by leading experts in the country. I can say with confidence these programs do not deviate from the Judicial Institute's high educational and programming standards.

In keeping with the Chief Judge's Excellence Initiative, the Judicial Institute provides skills-based programming designed to enhance the efficiency with which the State's courts perform their key duties, including, but not limited to, the resolution of motions and trials. For example, new this year, to develop and improve judicial skill sets, the Judicial Institute provided a series of vignettes of nuts-and-bolts issues for the new judges at the Judicial Institute's 2022 New Judges Seminar.

The 2022 Judicial Summer Seminars is another example of skills-based programming designed to improve judges' decisional and operational excellence. These three in-person seminars, held in June and July 2022, targeted judges and justices sitting in specific courts and court parts and allowed the Judicial Institute to address head-on case management and backlog issues and access to court (and justice) issues, which were among the negative, COVID-19 pandemic-related impacts on New York's court system. The theme for these seminars was "Empowering Our Judiciary: Pursuing Excellence Through Education." The seminars' focus was primarily on the centrality of case flow management and reducing case backlogs.

To ensure that New York judges of all experience levels fully understand their responsibility to conduct jury trials that are fair, orderly, efficient, and consistent with the court system's aim to ensure procedural justice for all litigants, the Chief Judge charged the Judicial Institute with developing several jury trial simulation series geared to judges of several courts/court types in New York State, including Supreme Civil, Local Civil (i.e., NYC Civil Court, City Court, and District Court), Criminal, DWI, Landlord-Tenant, Matrimonial, and Surrogate's Court. The Judicial Institute's first jury trial simulation series, which focuses on Supreme Court, Civil Term, is designed to enhance a judge's overall skill in supervising the conduct of jury trials, regulating the conduct of parties in the adversarial process, making confident, law-based evidentiary rulings, and to expose judges to a myriad of evidentiary and trial relationship issues in an environment that



Hon. Kathie E. Davidson

accurately simulates how these issues present in a real courtroom.

The Judicial Institute has also fostered a "think-tank" atmosphere by developing educational programming which addresses current developments in the law, emerging trends, and cutting-edge legal issues. This programming approach allows the Judicial Institute to provide a forum where UCS judicial personnel may convene to identify and explore broader issues facing the legal system and partner with bar associations, other justice agencies, and the public to address societal issues impacting the citizenry of New York State. The Judicial Institute plans to expand its role as a think tank through greater emphasis on, and development of, its research and publishing capabilities.

May 5, 2023, marks the 20th Anniversary of the opening of the Judicial Institute. As the Institute closes in on this milestone and plans programming which will delve into some of the most significant legal developments over the last 20 years, I am reminded of New York State Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye's remarks during the October 2001 groundbreaking ceremony. Chief Judge Kaye stated, in part,

[T]he Judicial Institute will be a valuable resource to the court system, providing a venue for research and development regarding justice issues, as well as serving as a hub for judicial scholarship. It is the first center in the nation to be devoted exclusively to judicial training and research at

the state level and, as such, epitomizes the commitment to innovation and progress for which New York's courts have become known.

Although these words reflect what the Judicial Institute is, to a point, they do not (and cannot) detail how the Institute continues to evolve in the face of ordinary and extraordinary

challenges to execute its charge to provide educational and training programs for judges and justices, quasi-judicial personnel, and attorneys of the Unified Court System.

Let us look forward to the next 20 years. I would be remiss if I did not extend a special thank you to the Judicial Institute Team for work well done.



Membership in the Judicial Section

I invite you to join NYSBA and OUR Judicial Section. United as one body, we strive to promote, insure and deliver justice. We work hard to make membership in the Judicial Section valuable and rewarding. So please join the more than 300 judges at all levels of the state and federal judiciary who already enjoy the many privileges afforded by their affiliation with NYSBA and the Judicial Section.

NYSBA provides a wide array of programs and services to keep attorneys and judges well informed and connected. The Judicial Section addresses issues unique to the duties, responsibilities and welfare of the judiciary. Our Section also provides a forum for representatives of the Council of Judicial Associations to address issues important to the Judiciary including legislation and court procedure. Among the other benefits of membership in our Section are:

- six free On Demand credits annually
- free access to CasePrepPlus's entire library of advance sheets, as well as unlimited access to all archives
- a discount to attend the Judicial Section Annual Meeting luncheon
- a complimentary copy of the *Judicial Dispatch*, the only newsletter in New York State written by judges for judges
- unparalleled camaraderie among our State's guardians of the law

If you have any questions, please contact our Member Resource Center at (800) 582-2452.

Membership in the Judicial Section is only \$25.00. Section membership dues can be paid online at nysba.org/membership or by mail to NYSBA, Attention Member Resource Center, One Elk Street, Albany, NY 12207.

Join now!

ADVANCING EQUAL JUSTICE IN COURT SYSTEM

By: **Hon. Edwina Mendelson, Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Justice Initiatives**

It has been just over two years since our nation, amidst the hardships of a relentless international pandemic, watched in collective horror as the tragic killing of George Floyd was replayed on our televisions, our phones, and in our homes. In the national reckoning on issues of racism, bias, and intolerance that followed, inequality was spotlighted in all our public institutions – and in particular, our systems of justice.

Our court system is no exception to the pervasive influence of racial bias. After disturbing racist and sexist images were shared to social media by a court employee, Chief Judge Janet DiFiore commissioned former Obama Administration Cabinet member Jeh Johnson to conduct a thorough review on issues of racism in our courts. The ensuing report from Secretary Johnson and his team identified that racism and bias remain very present throughout and within the court system. This “Report from the Special Adviser on Equal Justice in the New York State Courts” is available on our court system’s website, and I strongly encourage all of you to read it thoroughly.¹

As judges and court leaders entrusted with the responsibility to guarantee fair and impartial justice, it may be difficult to imagine that racism and bias are prevalent in our justice system. The Report from the Special Adviser on Equal Justice noted that many within our courts “work hard to get it right and make it better.” Ultimately, however, the report’s findings detailed an under-resourced, overburdened court system, where a “dehumanizing and demeaning cattle call culture,” particularly in high volume courts such as Family Court and Housing Court, have created a “second-class system of justice for people of color in New York State.” To address these troubling conclusions, the report also set forth 13 distinct and practicable recommendations on how we all can and must do better to combat racism within the courts and promote a more fair and equitable justice system for all.

I have been appointed by the Chief Judge to lead our court system’s equal justice work implementing these recommendations. I consider this work to be the defining responsibility of my career, but it is not work that I can do alone. I lead an Implementation Committee comprised of other judicial leaders, court managers, court personnel, expert consultants, and justice system stakeholders, all dedicated to the successful ongoing implementation of

the 13 recommendations made in Secretary Johnson’s equal justice report. I have also met with court system leadership, bar associations, institutional and legal service providers, fraternal organizations, and other affinity groups and stakeholders to incorporate their feedback and develop workable strategies. I am tremendously proud of the implementation progress that we have made.

Our significant milestones include:

- A commitment by the Chief Judge to a zero-tolerance policy for racial bias and discrimination,
- Mandatory and comprehensive racial bias education for all judicial and non-judicial court employees,
- An updated social media policy with clear guidelines on what constitutes bias, discrimination, harassment, and other prohibited conduct,
- Targeted changes in our Human Resources job and promotional interview practices to effectuate a commitment to diversity and inclusion in our workforce, and
- Creation and display of a new juror orientation video educating jurors on the dangers of implicit bias and helping to ensure fair and neutral decision-making, as well as issuing updated jury instructions directly addressing bias in civil and criminal proceedings.

More information on our implementation efforts can be found in the Equal Justice in the New York State Courts: Year in Review report.²

Our equal justice endeavors would not be possible without the commitment of dedicated individuals working to effect change in their courthouses and local communities. Many of my fellow judges have been instrumental in forming local Equal Justice Committees, which are now active regionally in every judicial district and, in New York City, within specific courts. Some committees are staffed exclusively by court employees, while others welcome membership from outside organizations and partner agencies. All committees will engage meaningfully with impacted members of the community. These committees are empowered to convene to review existing procedures within their local courts, solicit input and provide feedback from judges, court staff and stakeholders, and generate creative local programs to advance the courts’ equal justice initiative



Hon. Edwina Mendelson

within their jurisdictions. I have been present at regular committee meetings and have heard a number of reports on impactful measures including hosting critical discussions with court staff, creating subcommittees to address particular issues of concern, piloting court officer customer service projects, visiting schools and other places within communities to share career opportunities in the courts, and developing panel discussions and educational opportunities on the dangers of implicit bias and the importance of promoting diversity, equity, and meaningful inclusion.

Our equal justice work is not yet done. Racial bias and discrimination take many forms and have many layers, and much of this work intersects with other reform efforts to combat bias and discrimination based on age, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, national origin, disability, marital status, or socioeconomic status. One such critical reform effort is the implementation of the recommendations made in the NYS Judicial Committee on Women in the Court’s 2020 Gender Survey, which described significant reports of gender-based bias, discrimination, and harassment. Our efforts to achieve equal justice can only be successful through the partnership of all those who engage with our court system. I encourage you, my dear colleagues, to join us and get involved with your

local Equal Justice Committee, provide feedback on your own experiences with bias and intolerance, and continue to have conversations with those in your courtrooms, in your communities, and in your personal circles of influence. I have deep faith and a strong belief that together we will continue to make great strides in ensuring our NYS courts are the bastions of justice our communities deserve.

Endnotes

- 1 The Equal Justice report is available at: <https://www.nycourts.gov/whatsnew/pdf/SpecialAdviserEqualJusticeReport.pdf>.
- 2 The Year in Review report is available at: <https://www.nycourts.gov/LegacyPDFS/publications/2021-Equal-Justice-Review.pdf>.



Judicial Seminar Week 2: Members of the judiciary describe reform initiatives of local Equal Justice Committees throughout the state. (Pictured L-R) Hon. Seth Peacock, Hon. Lourdes M. Ventura, Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones, Hon. Edwina Mendelson, Hon. Christel F. Garland, Hon. Matthew Raso, Hon. Patria Frías-Colón.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON JUDICIAL ETHICS AND PART 100

By: **Hon. E. Jeannette Ogden, Associate Justice of the Appellate Division, Fourth Department**



Hon. E. Jeannette Ogden



Hon. Robert Bogle



Hon. David Elliot



Hon. Vito M. DeStefano

On June 30, 2022, I had the honor of participating as a panelist with the Hon. Robert Bogle, Hon. David Elliot and Hon. Vito M. DeStefano, on behalf of the New York State Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics (ACJE), in the Ethics Plenary session for week one of the Judicial Seminars. Our presentation addressed how the rules governing judicial conduct, promulgated in 22 NYCRR Part 100, interrelate with case administration and management issues.

Attendees were informed that the Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics provides guidance concerning ethical rules under Part 100, including the reporting obligations of § 100.4(H)(2). The ACJE provides written opinions in response to inquiries from judges which, if followed, provides a statutory presumption of proper conduct and the statutory protection of Judiciary Law § 212(2)(1)(iv). Contact information for the ACJE was also provided, along with a few rules and opinions touching on administration and case management. E

The presentation focused on the requirements of full-time judges to report to the clerk

of the Court pursuant to 22 NYCRR § 100.4(H)(2) things such as compensation for extra-judicial activities, and gifts, bequests, favors or loans. Attendees were also advised to contact the UCS Ethics Commission for guidance on annual financial disclosures under Part 40.

The information conveyed by the ACJE panel was informative and the requirement of the Judicial Institute to interact with judges you did not know previously was equally important.



ACJE Panel during Week 2 of the Judicial Seminars (L-R): Hon. Margaret (Peggy) Walsh, Co-Chair; Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones; and Laura L. Smith, Esq., Chief Counsel.

ATTENTION: SELF-CARE DECLARED NO LONGER A LUXURY!

By: Hon. Linda K. Mejias-Glover, Judge of the Court of Claims

Let me start by confessing that I am not a trained professional in the area of wellness or self-care, but rather a human being with many of the same demands as you. I have read countless books and articles, watched zillions (not an exaggeration) of videos, and tried a multitude of suggestions. What I offer you is a summary of my years of self-study so that you may enjoy a similar peace and joy in your life as I do in mine.

One of my favorite shows of all time is Parks and Recreation which aired on NBC from 2009 to 2015. In my opinion, the most memorable of the recurring themes was "Treat Yo'self". Within the show's context, this phrase was used one day a year to encourage the purchase of luxury items, expensive dinners, and extravagant spa services. This self-care was special – a treat – once a year, but for us judges, self-care is a necessary component of our daily routine.

It is without question that self-care has been considered a luxury for most of us, especially given our hectic and demanding work and home schedules. We have been trained to put work and others first to the detriment of our personal care. Well, I'm here to drill into you that it is not a luxury but rather an absolute necessity for effectiveness, productivity, and fulfillment in every area of your life. Before we dive into how to incorporate self-care into our daily routines, let's understand what self-care is and is not. Many of us confuse self-care with self-indulgence, or even find it to be selfish to prioritize one's own needs. Say this out loud: "self-care is not selfish!" The World Health Organization defines self-care as: "the ability of individuals, families, and communities to promote health, prevent disease, maintain health, and to cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a healthcare provider."¹ The JBI Library of Systematic Reviews defined self-care as "the set of activities in which one engages throughout life on a daily basis"². "Self-care is anything that you do for yourself that feels nourishing," according to Marini Amsellem, PhD, a licensed psychologist based in Trumbull, Connecticut³.

At the most basic level, self-care activities assist in managing and coping with the stressors of everyday life. Self-care is the foundation upon which a productive, enjoyable, and manageable life is built. Quote me on that!

So, now that we have established a basic definition of self-care, let's understand why it is essential. We have heard through a multitude of outlets that wellness is important. In fact, the Judicial Institute recently launched a website dedicated to Judicial Wellness, and the NYSBA has a Judicial Wellness Committee. The question

is why, and the answers may not be as obvious as we think. We already established that self-care activities assist in managing stressors, and it is important to manage stressors because the effects of these stressors manifest themselves in a multitude of ways throughout every realm of our being, which in turn impacts how you cope and manage relationships, work, and your health. Simply put, you cannot give to others what you do not have for yourself.

Having now rudimentarily defined what it is and why it's important, let's figure out how, when, and where to incorporate self-care. During the pandemic it became absolutely crucial for us as judges to take the time to engage in self-care and prioritize wellness on a holistic basis. As we hopefully enter into the tail end of the pandemic, let's adopt some basic but essential self-care techniques.

I'm going to flip the script a little bit and give you some ideas on how to incorporate the mantra of "Treat Yo'self" into your everyday activities. First, take a moment to identify (in writing) what brings us peace, happiness, joy, and rest within the various categories, i.e., physical health, mental hygiene, intellectual wellness, and spiritual growth. Write down what makes you feel "nourished" within each of these categories. I want to emphasize that self-care activities should not feel forced or like another thing to add to your "to do" list, but rather these activities ought to bring you peace and re-fuel you. Next, list your stressors within the following categories: physical, environmental, emotional, financial, relationships, and work. And bear in mind that these lists can and probably should change and evolve over time. Start small and if you feel that something is not serving you, try something new.

Let's start with the most basic – physical health. Get a yearly physical. I thought this was a no-brainer, but in speaking with many colleagues, I have determined that it is not. Next, ensure proper daily hygiene, proper nutrition and daily exercise are also included in our physical self-care routines. In the articles to follow we will dive into various ways to take care of our physical needs and appearance.

Next, what I consider to be the most neglected – mental hygiene. I don't know about you, but I grew up in a religious, first-generation Latino household, where mental health was not discussed, and mental health disorders were considered the result of sinful, godless living. The stigma was, and continues to be, overwhelming. It appears that in more recent years there has been a shift in attitudes regarding mental hygiene and mindfulness, and countless clinical



Hon. Linda K. Mejias-Glover

studies have shown that engaging in a self-care routine can reduce or eliminate anxiety and depression, reduce stress, increase happiness, among other benefits. There are many resources available to assist with mental hygiene. For starters, consider checking out the Judicial Wellness page of the Judicial Institute or contacting the NYSBA Judicial Wellness Committee.

Intellectual wellness refers to the well-being of your mind, which is not the same as mental hygiene. According to Michael Ebinger, the director of Washington State University Spokane's University Center for Innovation who spoke about intellectual wellness for TEDx Talks, intellectual wellness is "the wellness of the mind". Caring for our intellectual well-being requires a desire to expand your knowledge and your skills which is achieved by engaging in mentally stimulating activities. Why is it important? Well, it makes you a more balanced, and well-rounded person. Here are a few examples of how we can give our minds a good workout: read for fun; learn a new language; do a crossword or sudoku puzzle; write in a journal; and/or keep updated on current affairs (unless you are like me, and the news just makes you more stressed). Interestingly, you can work on your physical **and** intellectual well-being by hiking or walking outdoors.

Last, but certainly not least, is spiritual wellness. "Spiritual wellness is defined as expanding a sense of purpose and meaning in life, includ-

GREETINGS FROM NYSBA PRESIDENT

Sherry Levin Wallach, Esq.

The theme for my presidential year is “Investing in the Future of Our Profession,” and the Judicial Section, which has the distinction of being NYSBA’s longest-running section, stands to play a key role in informing and executing that vision.

Nearly 100 years ago, NYSBA convened a meeting of judges in the state to obtain their views on forming and shaping this section. At the time, Justice AFH Seeger observed:

It is regrettable that so many of the Justices in the State are not acquainted with each other. I think the creation of this Section would tend to bring the Justices nearer together, where they may exchange ideas, experiences and so promote the work and the co-operation of the Bench and the Bar.

This sentiment still holds true today.

Your section, which started it all, set an example for how members of the legal community can work collaboratively to further our common goals. As President, I am following this model to advance issues of importance to this Association and our profession, at large, and accomplish our shared goals. Much of this work will be accomplished by the task forces that I established at the outset of my presidency, and I am happy to report that they are in full swing.

The Task Force on the U.S. Territories, for example, hit the ground running and was able to quickly produce a report and recommendation to support the efforts to overrule the Insular Cases, dismantle the Territories Doctrine, and advocate for equal rights for all U.S. citizens. These were approved by the NYSBA Executive Committee and then subsequently co-sponsored by NYSBA and the U.S. Virgin Island Bar Association at the American Bar Association House of Delegates’ annual meeting in August 2022, where they were all adopted.

At that same meeting, NYSBA was also successful in bringing the International Section’s Ukraine Resolution, which urges the United Nations to create a body to hear evidence of war crimes perpetrated by the Russian Federation against the people of Ukraine. This resolution, brought to the ABA House of Delegates in col-

laboration with the ABA’s International Section, was also adopted.

In addition, NYSBA co-sponsored the resolutions before the ABA to reaffirm its long-standing policy in opposition to non-lawyer ownership of law firms and organizations and the sanctity of Professional Rule of Ethics 5.4. This resolution was brought in collaboration with multiple other state bar associations.

And finally, our Task Force on Mass Shootings and Assault Rifles provided the basis for NYSBA’s co-sponsorship of the ABA resolution to close the “Charleston Loophole” and provide extended time for background checks for gun purchases in certain cases.

Every one of these efforts exemplified the importance of the work we are doing at NYSBA, its far-reaching implications and, most importantly, the impact we can have when we collaborate with our NYSBA colleagues and other bar associations and groups to advance our mutual goals and missions.

Again, our roadmap for engagement is established by the sections, task forces, and committees, which produce reports and recommendations that are adopted as official Bar policy. Subsequently, they become the legislative priorities of our organization. This is just one way that your participation ensures that important issues are elevated at the state and national levels and that access to justice – the goal that underpins all of our efforts – is preserved.

One such priority specific to New York is to increase the hourly rates paid to assigned legal counsel. This is long overdue and must be realized to end the mass exodus of practitioners across the state. The system cannot function without the attorneys who take court assignments to represent those who cannot afford to hire a lawyer themselves. I know the members of this section understand that well. By providing increased compensation rates for assigned counsel, New York can ensure the availability of legal counsel for those most in need, properly protecting their constitutional right to representation.

A recent court decision out of New York City raised the assigned counsel rates to \$158 per



Sherry Levin Wallach, Esq.

hour and applied this raise retroactively to February 2022. But it appears this decision is being interpreted to apply only to the assigned counsel attorneys on the panels in the five boroughs of New York City. We now must focus our effort to make the increased hourly compensation rate a reality for all assigned counsel attorneys across the state. There must be equity in compensation so all clients, regardless of where they live, can continue to receive quality representation.

These are just a few examples of the efforts we as an Association are making to invest in the future of our profession and to ensure equality and access to justice and adherence to the Rule of Law. One of the best things about being a NYSBA member and leader is to be at the forefront advocating for issues that will make for a better state and world.

I look forward to working with you over the coming year to continue to advance these priorities and to address other challenges and issues that will arise. Thank you for the opportunity and the honor to serve as your president; I will be sure to update you on our shared progress.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

ing one’s morals and ethics.”⁴ This does not necessarily involve defined or established religious but rather is a challenge to explore and clarify our personal values, consider the values of others, and search for meaning in your life. How you accomplish this is up to you.

At the end of the day, we are all just human beings impacted by our circumstances, environ-

ment, and relationships. It is up to each one of us to decide how we want to respond to them, and how we want to feel each day. Like my husband always says, “Don’t give to others what you borrow against yourself.”⁵

I challenge you to “Treat Yo’self” – everyday!

Endnotes

- <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/self-care-health-interventions>.
- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27819888/>.
- <https://www.everydayhealth.com/self-care/>.
- <https://www.northwestern.edu/wellness/8-dimensions/spiritual-wellness.html#:~:text=Spiritual%20wellness%20is%20defined%20as,may%20not%20involve%20religious%20activities>.
- I am sure he heard this somewhere, but I wasn’t able to find the source. So, Dorian R. Glover, Esq. – you get the credit.

FAREWELL MESSAGE FROM CHIEF JUDGE JANET DIFIORE



Chief Judge Janet DiFiore

On February 8, 2016, the day of my investiture as Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals and the State of New York, I shared my vision for the future of the New York State courts, a vision founded on the "Excellence Initiative," a top-to-bottom re-examination of court operations and processes focused on achieving operational excellence — speeding case management, eliminating backlog and delay, increasing productivity and improving court access and services — in order to support excellence in judicial decision-making.

Six and a half years later, I am pleased to report that we have made dramatic progress to achieve the goals and objectives of the Excellence Initiative. In the four years before the pandemic, we cut our case backlogs in half across the state and eliminated them entirely in many jurisdictions. At the same time, we steadily expanded access to justice for people of modest means and upgraded the quality of our services, most notably by integrating presumptive early ADR into our statewide civil and family case management systems.

And notwithstanding the unprecedented difficulties and challenges caused by the pandemic over the past two and a half years, our judges and court staff demonstrated great resilience and ingenuity, taking advantage of the opportunities presented by the public health crisis to

innovate and improve court operations, parlaying the virtual court model that was created to ensure safe, effective access to our services into a robust and efficient hybrid model of in-person and virtual court operations that has positioned us to not only return to, but actually exceed, our pre-pandemic efficiency, productivity and access. 2021 gave us an early preview of the enhanced productivity made possible by these improvements when we were able to commence more than 2,000 jury trials and resolve almost 1.8 million cases statewide, despite having to scale back our return to in-person operations as the virus surged last Fall.

Nor have we allowed the relentless daily pressures of the pandemic to distract us from faithfully pursuing our broader values and objectives as the judicial branch of government, including the historic equal justice reforms that we are implementing to foster equity and inclusion and eliminate systemic bias in the courts and the justice system.

Six and a half years after launching the Excellence Initiative we have made great strides to improve the performance of our court system while creating a new culture in which judges and professional staff are laser-focused on proactively managing their dockets in order to ensure the just and efficient resolution of all matters coming before our courts.

Our systemwide commitment to operational and decisional excellence has become our organizational way of life and the engine driving our agenda as an accountable branch of government dedicated to meeting our constitutional responsibilities to the public we serve. It all goes back to what I said in my first State of Our Judiciary Address in the Bronx County Hall of Justice on February 22, 2017: "Those of us who are privileged to serve as judges and nonjudicial employees are but stewards of something that is far larger than any collection of individuals, something which belongs to all New Yorkers."

What an incredible privilege and amazing experience it has been to watch our court family rise to the challenge of the Excellence Initiative, working hard each and every day to deliver fair, efficient and accessible justice services to the litigants, lawyers, jurors and members of the public whose hard-earned tax dollars support everything we do in the Unified Court System.

I am deeply grateful to our exceptional Chief Administrative Judge, Lawrence Marks, and the terrific leadership team of Deputy Chief Administrative Judges, Administrative Judges, Super-

vising Judges, District Executives, Chief Clerks and other court managers who have led the way for us, articulating a consistent vision and a clear set of values while providing front-line judges and staff with the resources, training and support needed to achieve operational and decisional excellence on a daily basis.

Every day we see fresh evidence of how the enhanced skills, energy and commitment of our judges and court staff are contributing to innovation and improved performance. In the last several weeks, I have been privileged to publicly highlight several examples, including:

- The New York City Gun Case Initiative in which specially designated teams of judges prioritizing the efficient management and resolution of serious felony gun possession cases have been able to slash the backlog of pending cases that had built up during the pandemic;
- The nationally innovative virtual jury selection pilot which is providing us with an exciting preview of how remote technology is set to transform the future of court operations, including contributing to the convenience and efficiency of jury service;
- The continued expansion of problem-solving courts, such as the “Emerging Adult Justice Part,” and other Domestic Violence, Mental Health, Drug Treatment, Opioid Intervention, Human Trafficking and Veteran’s Courts that are fostering improved justice outcomes for these unique litigant populations in communities across the state;
- Our Equal Justice Committees comprised of judges and court staff who are implementing equal justice reforms in courthouses in every judicial district, including New York City, in order to foster equity, in-

clusion and cultural change from the bottom up; and

- The new Pandemic Practices Working Group, operating under the auspices of our Commission to Reimagine the Future of New York’s Courts, which is holding public hearings and studying how we can best leverage the innovations of the pandemic to permanently improve the delivery of justice to all New Yorkers.

After six and a half years of sustained growth and positive change, we have every reason to feel confident and excited about the future of the New York State courts. Thanks to our new culture of operational and decisional excellence, together with the new skills and tools we have acquired during the pandemic, we are poised to make good on our promise — our core obligation — of providing fair, timely and affordable justice to all New Yorkers.

I am deeply grateful to the talented, dedicated judges across the state, including our town and village justices, who have worked hard under the banner of the Excellence Initiative to lift our court system to a new and higher level of performance, and to the many stakeholders and organized bar partners, including the State Bar’s Judicial Section, for steadfastly supporting a strong, vibrant and well-functioning court system for the benefit of all New Yorkers.

The New York Bar Foundation

The New York Bar Foundation plays an important role in ensuring access to justice in New York State. Your generous support makes it possible for the New York Bar Foundation to provide support to legal services organizations, nonprofits, bar associations and other charitable initiatives, and offers the bench and the bar an opportunity invest in their own community.

Please join the efforts of the many law firms, individuals and corporations that have generously contributed to The New York Bar Foundation by making a gift online at www.tnybf.org/donation

For further information, please contact Foundation Executive, Deborah A. Auspemyer, at **(518) 487-5650** or at dauspemyer@tnybf.org.

SECTION AND MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS AT WORK



Members of the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission at the Commission's annual Symposium on Race. This year's symposium, entitled "The Lemmon Freedom Case: Illuminating Modern Systemic Racism's Roots in Slavery and Legally Codified Racial Discrimination" was held on June 16, 2022 at the Judicial Institute.



Hon. Verna Saunders and Hon. Mary Ann Brigantti at the Fall 2021 Conference of the Association of Justices of the Supreme Court of the State of New York (AJSCSNY) held at The Sagamore.



Members of the New York State Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics: Hon. E. Jeannette Ogden, Hon. Vito DeStefano and Hon. David Elliot, presenting at Week 1 of the 2022 Summer Judicial Seminars.



Members of NAWJ-NY at the Sisters in Law Spring retreat – "I Dissent" – held May 1–3, 2022 at the Chautauqua Lake Harbor Hotel.



2021 President of the AJSCSNY Hon. Carmen R. Velasquez and Evelyn Haller (mother of Hon. Deborah Karalunas) drawing raffle basket tickets at the 2021 Fall Conference of the AJSCSNY at The Sagamore.



Speakers address judicial attendees on the topic of Alternative Dispute Resolution at Week 2 of the Judicial Seminars: (L-R) Jeremy Zeliger, Esq., Yvonne R. Marin, Esq., Hon. Walter Rivera, Hon. Adam Silvera, Hon. Denise Sher, Hon. Gretchen Walsh.

SECTION AND MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS AT WORK



Members of the National Association of Women Judges – NY Chapter (NAWJ-NY) at Week 3 of the Judicial Seminars (L-R): Hon. Llinét Rosado, Hon. LaTia Martin, Hon. E. Jeannette Ogden, Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones, Hon. Marguerite Grays.



Members of the Latino Judges Association at Week 1 of the Judicial Seminars.



Members of the Latino Judges Association at Week 2 of the Judicial Seminars.



Members of the Latino Judges Association at Week 3 of the Judicial Seminars.



Members of the Asian American Judges Association at Week 3 of the Judicial Seminars.



Members of the Judicial Friends Association at Week 3 of the Judicial Seminars.

.... AND PLAY



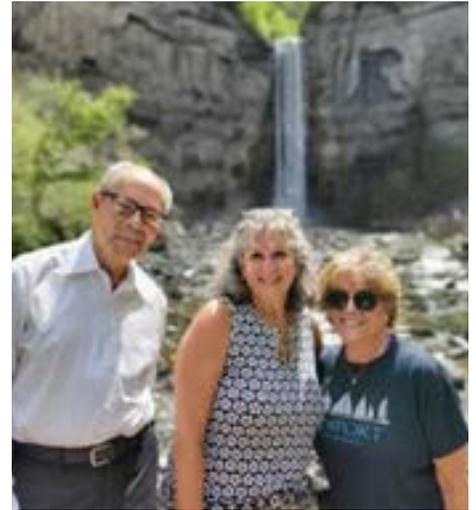
NAWJ-NY Board members, family and friends proudly sport their NAWJ-NY "Sisters-in-Law" fusion pullovers.

Top half: Hon. Marcia Hirsch, President-Elect; Hon. Shirley Troutman, President; Hon. Llinét Rosado, Vice President- First Dept.; Michele McCullough, Secretary to Hon. Shirley Troutman; Hon. E. Jeannette Ogden, Vice President – Fourth Dept. and Hon. Delores S. Brathwaite, Member-at-Large.

Lower half: Sara Walsh, Mother of Hon. Margaret (Peggy) Walsh, Member-at-Large; Hon. Christina Ryba, Member-at-Large; Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones, Vice President – Second Dept.; Hon. Lisa M. Fisher, Vice President –Third Dept., Hon. E. Jeannette Ogden, Vice President –Fourth Dept., and Hon. Debra L. Givens, Member-at-Large; Hon. Carmen R. Velasquez, Member-at-Large.



Members of the Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics and guests convene for their traditional annual dinner on the night before their June meeting.



Hon. Peter Sherwood (ret.), Hon. Deborah Karalunas and Hon. Barbara Kapnick at Taughannock Fall State Park in Ithaca, NY during the NYSBA Commercial Federal Litigation Section Spring Meeting.



Members of the Latino Judges Association and the Court of Claims Judges Association enjoy an outing to Yankee Stadium on July 14, 2022.



Hon. Salliann Scarpulla at the AJSCSNY 2021 Fall Conference at The Sagamore.

Members of the Judiciary at Week 1 of the Judicial Seminars (L-R): Hon. Eileen Daly-Sapraicone, Hon. Carmen St. George, Hon. E. Jeannette Ogden, Hon. Debra James, Hon. Betty Calvo-Torres, Hon. Zainab Chaudhry.



UPCOMING PROGRAMS/EVENTS OF INTEREST

Pandemic Practices Working Group Virtual Listening Sessions

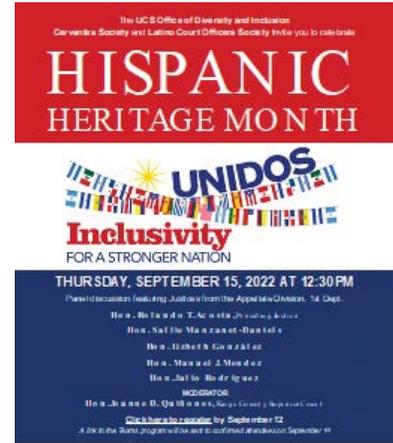
The Pandemic Practices Working Group is conducting Virtual Listening Sessions (VLS) with leaders of the Council of Judicial Associations in an effort to collect testimony from a diverse group of stakeholders to include in their final report to the Chief Judge. The sessions will be held on August 30, September 20 and September 28. Please review the chart below for the dates, times and groupings of upcoming VLS Judicial Association sessions.

Each VLS session will take place via a separate Microsoft Teams link which will be emailed to Association presidents according to the judicial association groupings below.

Date/Time	Grouping	Confirmed Participation
Tuesday, August 30, 2022 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.	Downstate Virtual Listening Session	Wilderness Castillo-Dobson – Reporter Hon. Craig J. Doran Hon. Alicea Elloras-Ally
Tuesday, September 20, 2022 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.	Outside NYC Virtual Listening Session	Wilderness Castillo-Dobson – Reporter Hon. Craig J. Doran
Wednesday, September 28, 2022 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.	Affinity Groups Virtual Listening Session	Wilderness Castillo-Dobson - Reporter Hon. Craig J. Doran

Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration featuring Justices from the Appellate Division, First Department

The UCS Office of Diversity and Inclusion, the Cervantes Society and the Latino Court Officers Society invite you to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month on Thursday, September 15, 2022 at 12:30 p.m. The virtual panel discussion will feature Justices from the Appellate Division, First Department: Presiding Justice Hon. Rolando T. Acosta and Associate Justices Hon. Sallie Manzanet-Daniels, Hon. Lizbeth González, Hon. Manuel J. Mendez, and Hon. Julio Rodriguez. Judicial Section Presiding Member Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones will serve as moderator.



Association Conferences

Association of Justices of the Supreme Court of the State of New York
September 11–14, 2022 – The Sagamore, Lake George, NY

County Court Judges Association
September 19–21, 2022 – Gideon Putnam Resort & Spa, Saratoga Springs, NY

Court of Claims Judges Associations
October 11–13, 2022 – The Otesaga Resort Hotel, Cooperstown, NY

THE TERRIFIC TWELVE: THE COURT OF CLAIMS CLASS OF 2022

In late May 2022, New York State's first female Governor, Hon. Kathy Hochul, opened doors for countless other "firsts" with the appointment of a "historic" class of 12 to the New York Court of Claims. The new Court of Claims judges appeared before the Senate Judiciary Committee on June 1, 2022 and were confirmed shortly after midnight on June 3, 2022. Dubbed "The Terrific Twelve" by Hon. Richard Sise, Presiding Justice of the Court of Claims, this diverse group includes three first-generation Americans, the first little person, the first Muslim, and the first openly gay male appointed to the Court in its 100-plus-year history. The new "Claimers," who hail from counties across the State, are: Hon. Anthony Brindisi (Oneida); Hon. Betty Calvo-Torres (Erie); Hon. Zainab Chaudhry (Albany); Hon. Maureen Heitner (Kings); Hon. Sarika Kapoor (Nassau); Hon. Timothy Lewis (Westchester); Hon. Stephen T. Miller (Monroe); Hon. Anar Patel (Westchester); Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones (Kings); Hon. Stephanie Saunders (Erie); Hon. Michael Siragusa (Erie); and Hon. Javier E. Vargas (New York).



(L-R) Hon. Javier E. Vargas, Hon. Maureen Heitner, Hon. Zainab Chaudhry, Hon. Betty Calvo-Torres, Hon. Sarika Kapoor, Hon. Stephen T. Miller, New York State Governor Hon. Kathy Hochul, Hon. Anar Patel, Hon. Timothy Lewis, Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones, Hon. Anthony Brindisi, Hon. Michael Siragusa and Hon. Stephanie Saunders.



(1st row, L-R) Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones, Hon. Anar Patel, Presiding Justice of the Court of Claims Hon. Richard Sise, Hon. Sarika Kapoor, Hon. Stephanie Saunders, Hon. Betty Calvo-Torres.
(2nd row, L-R) Hon. Stephen T. Miller, Hon. Anthony Brindisi, Hon. Zainab Chaudhry, Hon. Timothy Lewis, Hon. Michael Siragusa, Hon. Maureen Heitner, Hon. Javier E. Vargas.
(3rd row, L-R) Hon. Denise A. Hartman, Hon. Catherine Leahy-Scott, Hon. David Weinstein, Hon. Frank Milano, Hon. Christopher McCarthy.

MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS

Congratulations to the following members of the judiciary:



Congratulations to Hon. Richard Rivera who was appointed Co-Chair of the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission on February 22, 2022.

Congratulations to **Hon. Faviola Soto**, who was presented with the **Hon. Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick Lifetime Achievement Award** at the 2022 Awards Gala of the Latino Judges Association held on May 19, 2022 at Chelsea Piers.



Hon. Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick and Hon. Faviola Soto at the 2022 Awards Gala of the Latino Judges Association.



LJA Gala Co-Chairs Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones (left) and Hon. Sallie Manzanet-Daniels (right) with the family of the late Hon. Ruben A. Martino, who was posthumously awarded the Hon. John Carro Award for Judicial Excellence at the 2022 Awards Gala of the Latino Judges Association.



Members of the Appellate Division and Appellate Term of the First Department at the 2022 Awards Gala of the Latino Judges Association (L-R): Hon. Manuel Mendez, Hon. Ellen Gesmer, Hon. Sallie Manzanet-Daniels, Hon. Julio Rodriguez III, Hon. Mary Ann Brigantti.



Members of the Appellate Division, Second Department at the 2022 Awards Gala of the Latino Judges Association (L-R): Hon. Betsy Barros, Presiding justice Hon. Hector D. LaSalle, Hon. Reinaldo Rivera, Hon. Joseph Zayas, Cathy Zayas and Hon. Paul Wooten.

MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Congratulations to **Hon. Edwina Mendelson, Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Justice Initiatives**, who was presented with the **Jurist of the Year Award** at the 38th Anniversary Awards Gala of the Metropolitan Black Bar Association held on May 20, 2022 at Chelsea Piers.



Members of the Judicial Friends Association at the MBBA 38th Anniversary Awards Gala (L-R): Hon. Edwina Mendelson, Hon. Debra James, Hon. Hon. Dakota Ramseur, Hon. Robert Reed, Hon. Verna Saunders.



Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Hon. Edwina Mendelson being presented with the Jurist of the Year Award by Anta Cisse-Green, Esq., Immediate Past President of the Metropolitan Black Bar Association (MBBA) at the Association's 38th Anniversary Awards Gala.



Hon. Lillian Wan, Associate Justice of the Appellate Division, Second Dept., with Hon. Edwina Mendelson, DCAJ for Justice Initiatives, at the MBBA 38th Anniversary Awards Gala.



(L-R): Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones, Hon. Lizbeth Gonzalez, Hon. Enedina Pilar Sanchez, and Hon. Lourdes Ventura at the 2022 Network of Bar Leaders Dinner.

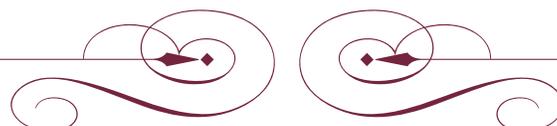
Congratulations to **Hon. Lizbeth Gonzalez**, who was honored with the **President's Award** at the Network of Bar Leaders Dinner held on May 24, 2022 at the Vista Sky Lounge in Long Island City.

Congratulations to **Hon. La Tia W. Martin**, who received the inaugural **Ruth Bader Ginsburg Memorial Award** at the 2022 convention of the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York (WBASNY).

Congratulations to **Hon. Andrea Phoenix**, who was presented with the 2022 **Judith S. Kaye Access to Justice Award** at the annual WBASNY convention.

Congratulations to **Hon. Theresa Whelan**, recipient of the 2022 **Marilyn R. Menge Award**, presented at the annual WBASNY convention in June 2022.

Congratulations to **Hon. Rosalyn Richter and Hon. Michelle Weston**, recipients of the New York Law Journal's Lifetime Achievement Award. The honorees will be recognized at the New York Legal Awards ceremony, which will be held on October 6, 2022 at the Marriott Marquis in New York City.



APPOINTMENTS

New York State Court of Appeals

Congratulations to the most recent appointments to the Court of Appeals:

Hon. Madeline Singas, who previously served as a District Attorney in Queens County, as the Chief of the Nassau County District Attorney's Special Victims Bureau, as the Chief Assistant District Attorney of Nassau County, and as the elected District Attorney of Nassau County.

Hon. Anthony Cannataro, who previously served in the New York Supreme Court (First Judicial District), the New York City Civil Court (Third District), as a assistant corporation counsel for the New York City Law Department, and as a principal law clerk for the Hon. Lottie E. Wilkins and the Hon. Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick.

Hon. Shirley Troutman, who served as a Justice of the New York State Supreme Court from 2010 to 2016, and on the Appellate Division, Fourth Judicial Department from 2016 to 2021. She is the second ever Black female Justice to serve on this Court.

An official ceremony was held on **April 5, 2022**, where Governor Hochul and Chief Judge Janet DiFiore presided over the investiture of these three new justices to the New York State Court of Appeals.



Image Retrieved from Mike Groll, Office of the Governor

Official Ceremony of the Investiture at the Court of Appeals, April 2022.

Appellate Division, Second Department

On **May 27 2022**, Governor Hochul appointed four jurists to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, Second Department. In appointing these exceptional jurists, the Governor remarked, "I am confident these judges will continue their impressive public service and uphold the sanctity of the law."

Congratulations to **Hon. Lillian Wan**, who previously served as a Justice of the Kings County Supreme Court, a Judge for the New York State Court of Claims, and as a New York City Family Court Judge.

Congratulations to **Hon. Helen Voutsinas**, who previously served as a Nassau County Appellate Term Judge (Ninth and Tenth Districts), as a Nassau County District Court Justice, and as a Nassau County Justice.

Congratulations to **Hon. Janice A. Taylor**, who served as a Supreme Court Justice in Queens County and as a Judge for the Civil Court of the City of New York.

Congratulations to **Hon. Barry Warhit**, who served as a Westchester County Supreme Court Justice and as an Acting Justice for the Village of Tarrytown.

Appellate Division, Third Department

On **January 3, 2022**, Governor Hochul appointed three jurists to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, Third Department. Presiding over the Third Department is no small feat, as it covers twenty-eight counties in Upstate New York. Governor Hochul praised these jurists by stating: "New Yorkers deserve the best and the brightest upholding their justice system, and I have no doubt that these three appointees will serve with honor and distinction."

Congratulations to **Hon. Lisa Fisher**, who served as a Justice of the Supreme Court in the Third Judicial District since she was elected in 2015.

Congratulations to **Hon. Andrew G. Ceresia**, who served since 2017 as a Justice in the Third Judicial District of the Rensselaer County Su-

preme Court and was also an Acting Justice in the Third Judicial District of the New York State Supreme Court.

Congratulations to **Hon. Eddie McShan**, who served as an Associate Justice in the First Judicial Department of the Appellate Term of the New York State Supreme Court and as a Justice in the Twelfth Judicial District of the New York State Supreme Court.

Appellate Term

Congratulations to **Hon. Marsha D. Michael** who was appointed to the Appellate Term for the First and Twelfth Judicial Districts in February 2022.

Congratulations to **Hon. Cheree A. Buggs** who was appointed to the Appellate Term for the Second, Eleventh, and Thirteenth Judicial Districts in January 2022.

APPOINTMENTS

Court of Claims

On **May 22, 2022**, Governor Hochul made **12** appointments to the **New York State Court of Claims**. Governor Hochul stated: “The diversity of perspective and long tenure of expertise each appointee will bring with them to the bench should leave no doubt in the mind of every New Yorker that they have an expert, fair, and impartial voice in our state’s judiciary.”

Congratulations to **Hon. Anthony Brindisi**; **Hon. Betty Calvo-Torres**; **Hon. Zainab Chaudhry**; **Hon. Maureen Heitner**; **Hon. Sarika Kapoor**; **Hon. Timothy Lewis (Westchester)**; **Hon. Stephen T. Miller**; **Hon. Anar Patel**; **Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones**; **Hon. Stephanie Saunders**; **Hon. Michael Siragusa**; and **Hon. Javier E. Vargas**.

Administrative and Supervising Judge Appointments

Congratulations to the following individuals who were appointed by the Office of Court Administration to serve as Administrative or Supervising Judges:

Congratulations to **Hon. Tamiko Amaker** who was appointed **Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Management Support** in January 2022.

Congratulations to **Hon. Toko Serita** who was appointed **Statewide Coordinating Judge for Problem Solving Courts** in January 2022.

Congratulations to **Hon. Patria Frias-Colón** who was appointed **Supervising Judge of the Civil Court of Queens County**, effective January 3, 2022.

Congratulations to **Hon. Donna-Marie E. Golia** who was appointed **Administrative Judge for Criminal Matters, Supreme Court, Queens County** on August 18, 2022.

Buffalo City Court

Congratulations to **Hon. JaHarr Pridgen** who was appointed **Chief Judge of Buffalo City Court** in June 2022. Judge Pridgen is the first woman to serve as Chief Judge of Buffalo City Court. She began her service with City Court in 2015, serving as the youngest City Court judge.



Induction ceremony of Hon. Zainab Chaudhry (front row, fourth from left) as a Judge of the New York State Court of Claims.



Hon. JaHarr Pridgen, Chief Judge, Buffalo City Court.

IN MEMORIAM



Hon. Paul G. Feinman – March 31, 2021

At the much too young age of 61, acute myeloid leukemia took from us our leader, our colleague, our confidant and our friend, Judge Paul G. Feinman.

To know Judge Feinman, was to love him. Cliché, but true. Paul was sincere, thoughtful, humble, witty, kind, energetic and, of course, brilliant. He also was a dedicated mentor to all who were fortunate enough to cross his path.

Judge Feinman was born and raised on Long Island, earned an undergraduate degree in French Literature from Columbia University and obtained a law degree from the University of Minnesota. He also studied in France at the Université de Paris VII (Jussieu), the Université de Paris II (Assas) and the Université de Lyon III.

Paul began his legal career as a public defender with the Legal Aid Society. He then served as law clerk to Justice Angela Mazzairelli, first on the trial bench and then at the Appellate Division, First Department. In 1996, Feinman was elected to New York City Civil Court. He served on that court until 2004 when he was made an acting Supreme Court Justice. Three years later, in 2007, Judge Feinman was elected to the Supreme Court. In 2012, Feinman was elevated to the Appellate Division, First Department, where he served with distinction and honor. On June 21, 2017, Paul was confirmed as the newest Associate Judge of the New York Court of Appeals. His nomination was historic, as he was the first openly gay judge to serve on that court.

Judge Feinman loved the law and he was devoted to his profession. He freely shared his wisdom, energy, strength and passion both on and off the bench. He was active in the New York State Bar Association, serving as the Presiding Member of its Judicial Section in 2012–2013, and as a member of its House of Delegates in 2013–14. Feinman also served as chair of the New York State Justice Task Force, president of the International Association of LGBT Judges, president of LEGal, and president of the Association of Supreme Court Justices of the State of New York. Ever soft-spoken, Paul nonetheless was a master of persuasion and consensus building, skills he used wisely as a jurist and in the many leadership roles he held during his lifetime.

Judge Feinman called his nomination to the Court of Appeals “a tremendous honor.” At his investiture, Paul talked about the importance of the leaders in the LGBT community and judges who “forged the path” for him to New York’s highest court. “Without them, this day would not have been possible. And from this I understand that I have an obligation to those who come after me. In the words of Hillel, ‘If I am not for myself who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, who am I? And if not now, when?’”

On his passing, Chief Judge Janet DiFiore said Judge Feinman was “a tireless and resolute champion of LGBTQ rights, a trailblazing pioneer for LGBTQ lawyers and judges and an incredibly dedicated mentor who inspired countless judges, attorneys and law students. He served with excellence at every level of our judiciary, and his broad experience, knowledge and wisdom earned him the respect and warm personal regard of his judicial colleagues. He was a meticulous, disciplined and humble jurist who weighed the legal interests at stake in each case with great integrity in order to arrive at the correct and just result. His scholarly, well-written opinions reflect a deep knowledge of the law balanced with a generous humanity and commitment to justice.”

When times get tough, may we all be reminded of Paul’s strength and endurance through adversity, his warm smile, and his zest for all that is good.

Judge Feinman is survived by his husband, Robert Ostergaard.

IN MEMORIAM



Hon. Frank Torres – August 12, 2021

Hon. Frank A. Torres, a pioneer and trailblazer, died on August 12, 2021 at the age of 93. Justice Torres was a graduate of Stuyvesant High School, City College, and St. John's University Law School, where he attended classes at night while working during the day as an investigator and interviewer for the city's welfare department. Prior to becoming a judge, Torres served as an assistant district attorney in the Bronx, as a member of the New York State Assembly, and as Director of Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity in the New York office of the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. Justice Torres was appointed to the Family County bench in 1980 and elected to the Supreme Court in 1987, where he served until 2001.

The son of a Family Court jurist (Hon. Felipe Torres) and the father of a federal judge (Hon. Analisa Torres), Justice Torres was recognized as a leader in the advancement of civil, social and economic justice. T. Andrew Brown, the immediate past president of the New York State Bar Association, commented, "Perhaps more than anyone, [Justice Torres] understood that our system of justice works best when it truly represents the people it serves. At the heart of his legal career and jurisprudence was his deep commitment to justice for the common man." In delivering Torres' eulogy, now retired Justice Eduardo Padro, remarked, "Justice Torres had an indefatigable belief in our responsibility to take care of those in need and those with less than."

Justice Torres was particularly well-known as a champion for greater Hispanic representation in the legal profession and on the bench. In crediting his mentor with his becoming a judge, Padro, one of Torres' former law clerks, stated, "When I came in, I was an outsider, a rock thrower. I did not envision myself as a player until I had the opportunity to work with him and gained a newfound respect for the bench ... [Justice Torres made it so] that the Puerto Rican community, the Latino community, that people of color had the right to aspire – that those who never considered the law had a right to aspire to a career in it, and those that were in the law had a right to aspire to the judiciary." Hon. Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick, retired Justice of the Court of Appeals, similarly praised Justice Torres for his efforts in increasing judicial diversity. She said, "[Justice Torres] had a vision that expanded far beyond the courts, inspiring young people to enter the legal profession and working in our community generally for the betterment of all ... He was a driving force in establishing what is now known as the Latino Judges Association bringing together Latino judges and promoting our advancement within the judicial system while at the same time creating a pipeline for our Latino students ..."

A founder of what was formerly known as the Association of Judges of Hispanic Heritage, Justice Torres is the namesake of one of the Association's prestigious awards. The description of The Honorable Frank A. Torres Award for Commitment to Diversity reads "This award is named in honor of Judge Frank Torres, a founding member ... who, throughout his career as an attorney, mentor, teacher, legislator and jurist, advanced the cause of civil rights and promoted a more demographically representative society."

Justice Torres was also the founder of the Ponce de Leon Federal Savings Bank in New York, known as one of the first banking institutions established to serve the city's Latino population.

Justice Torres is survived by his children, including United States District Court Judge Hon. Analisa Torres.

IN MEMORIAM



Hon. Eileen Bransten – April 26, 2022

Eileen Bransten, a former Supreme Court Commercial Division justice in Manhattan known for her ability to cut through complex issues facing New York's business and finance communities, died on April 26, 2022, at the age of 79. With her passing, New York State, the Commercial Division, NYSBA, the Association of Justices of the Supreme Court of the State of New York and the legal community at large lost a kind, passionate, selfless dear friend and dedicated champion of the law. In battles to improve the courts, the welfare of the judiciary and, most importantly, the people the courts serve, Eileen stood tall, proud and firm, never shying in fear of personal reprisals.

Bransten, the daughter of two writers, was the first in her family to become a lawyer and the first to become a judge. After graduating with a bachelor's degree from Hunter College of the City University of New York, Eileen earned a law degree from Fordham Law School in 1979. Bransten began her legal career as an assistant district attorney in Queens. From 1984 through 1992, Eileen was engaged in the solo practice of law. She left private practice in 1994 to serve as a principal court attorney to the Hon. Jacqueline W. Silberman. In 1994 Bransten was elected to the Civil Court of the City of New York. In recognition of her intellect, passion and dedication, Eileen was made an Acting Supreme Court Justice

in 1996. Four short years later, in 2000, Bransten was elected to the Supreme Court.

"Eileen was a law lover," said Hon. Saliann Scarpulla of the Appellate Division, First Department. "She was never afraid to dig deep into an issue as a judge." Justice Bransten was instrumental in the success of the Manhattan Commercial Division, considered one of the world's central business litigation forums, known for handling highly complex cases from New York's robust banking and business sectors. Eileen "emphasized the importance of justice, compassion, ethics, professionalism, efficiency, practicality and most importantly never [lost] sight of common sense," said Justice Jennifer Schecter, one of Justice Bransten's former law clerks. Justice Scarpulla, another of Eileen's former law clerks, proudly added: "in a field traditionally dominated by male lawyers, Justice Bransten held her own. She was firm, not easily intimidated, and that served her well."

Justice Bransten also was a wonderful mentor who cared deeply and passionately for her colleagues and law clerks. Justices Scarpulla and Schecter credit Eileen for their judicial successes. Schecter said "Justice Bransten was the best mentor. She constantly pushed everyone who had the privilege of working for her to reach our potential and make a difference. "Lots of people enjoy aspects of being a lawyer," said Scarpulla, "but she did so much more than that, for the practice of law, for so many [legal] organizations she participated with, and for her law clerks. She championed us in a way that many people never do."

Eileen's largesse extended beyond the courtroom. Justice Bransten was active in the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, the New York County Lawyer's Association and the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York. She also served as Presiding Member of the New York State Bar Association's Judicial Section, President of the Association of Justices of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, and as an Officer in the Judges and Lawyers Breast Cancer Alert ("JALBCA"). In the larger community, Eileen was a long-time volunteer at the Blessed Sacrament Soup Kitchen.

Eileen's mischievous nature, passion and kindness are sorely missed.

IN MEMORIAM

Hon. Gloria Cohen Aronin – June 25, 2022

A lifelong Brooklynite, Judge Gloria Cohen Aronin passed away on June 25, 2022, at the age of 93 in her home. She attended Brooklyn College and Brooklyn Law School, where she was one of five women in the graduating class. Her distinguished legal career spanned more than 60 years. She served as a judge of the Civil Court, Court of Claims, Supreme Court and Appellate Term, all in Kings County. She was a Past President of the Brooklyn Women's Bar Association and the Supreme Court Justices' Association. She is predeceased by her beloved husband, Judge Irving S. Aronin, and is survived by her children and grandchildren.



Hon. Edward Borelli – July 12, 2022

Judge Edward P. Borelli died peacefully on July 12, 2022 at the age of 70. He is survived by the love of his life and teenage sweetheart, Cheryl Lynn Borelli, and his beloved children, grandchildren and other extended family. Judge Borelli graduated from Manhattan Prep in 1969, a member of one of the last classes to graduate from the Prep. He received his BA from Manhattan College (1973) and his Juris Doctor Degree from New York Law School (1976). He was admitted to practice in New York, the District of Columbia and the Supreme Court of the United States. His first employment as a lawyer was as an Aide with the Education and Training Office of the New York State Office of Court Administration, where he rose through the ranks to

ultimately serve as Acting Deputy Director of Human Resources for Education and Training for the New York State Unified Court System.

Judge Borelli served for several decades in various counsel positions and as a voting member on the New York State Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics (ACJE) and was Chair of the statewide Judicial Campaign Ethics subcommittee of the ACJE. In a statement to its members, ACJE Chief Counsel Laura L. Smith, Esq. and Co-Chairs Hon. Margaret (Peggy) Walsh and Hon. Lillian Wan wrote, "[Judge Borelli's] depth and breadth of experience made him, in essence, the Committee's living 'institutional memory.' Indeed, few have cared more passionately about ethics or devoted more time and energy to educating the judiciary about these issues. He was integral to every aspect of the Committee's work for the past 22 years."

Judge Borelli's dream of becoming a judge came true in January of 2000 when he was appointed to his first judgeship as a Yonkers City Judge. He also served by appointment as a trial Judicial Hearing Officer and Special Referee in Supreme Court, Westchester County, Supreme Court and Family Court, Orange County, and Family Court, Putnam County. Judge Borelli retired from the court system in 2017 after 41 years of service and joined the law firm of McCarthy, Fingar, LLP where he practiced until his death.

Judge Borelli was an inspiration to all who had the honor to know him and he will be greatly missed.



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JAN. 18 - JAN. 24, 2023

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