

**New York State Permanent Commission on Access to Justice  
in partnership with Albany Law School**

**Law School Virtual Conference  
June 8, 2022 | 9:00 am – 12:30 pm via Zoom  
BIOS**

**Arastu, Nermeen**, Facilitator, Addressing the Emergent Civil Legal Needs of Immigrants in New York State

Nermeen is an Associate Professor of Law and the Co-Director of the Immigrant & Non-Citizen Rights Clinic at the CUNY School of Law. She and her students represent non-citizens through all aspects and postures of the immigration system with the express mission of representing those who are most marginalized within the immigration system.

Nermeen's writing, scholarship, and advocacy focus on racial and religious disparities in our nation's immigration adjudication and enforcement. Most recently her writing & scholarship have been published in the UCLA Law Review, the Harvard Human Rights Journal, The Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine, Newsweek, City Limits & Slate.

Prior to joining CUNY's faculty, Nermeen was a litigation associate at Simpson Thacher & Bartlett, LLP, and a staff attorney at the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF). At AALDEF, Nermeen led the Immigrant Rights Program and Post-9/11 Civil Liberties Project. Through the course of her pro bono work at Simpson Thacher and tenure at AALDEF, Nermeen managed an immigration docket which included deportation defense, suppression, asylum, citizenship and green card interviews, and various other immigration processes. Additionally, while at AALDEF, she oversaw monthly immigration clinics in conjunction with various community-based organizations, litigated matters relating to zoning and houses of worship, addressed anti-Muslim bias in the immigration system, and advocated against racial and religious profiling and law enforcement surveillance.

Nermeen has also worked at the Legal Assistance Centre of Namibia and in the Immigrant Women Program at Legal Momentum (formerly NOW Legal Defense) where she focused on policy relating to gender-based violence.

Nermeen is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania Law School and the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

**Azemi, Michaela K. Rossettie**, Facilitator, Reflections on the Pro Bono Scholars Program and Beyond - A Proposal for a Lawyers Justice Corps as an Alternative Pathway to New York Bar Admission

Michaela currently serves as the Director of Pro Bono Services and Externships at Cornell Law School. Formerly she was the Associate Director for Judicial Engagement and Professional Development. She previously worked as the Regional Pro Bono Coordinator for LawNY's private attorney involvement and law student internship programs. She was a Staff Attorney for LawNY from September 2013 to August 2016, handling Family Law and Disability Advocacy cases. Michaela received her B.A. in Sociology and Women's Studies from the University of Delaware in 2009, her J.D. from Case Western Reserve University Law School in 2012 and was admitted to practice in NY in 2013. In the summer of 2013, she volunteered as a Pro Bono Attorney for LawNY where she developed a model for LawNY's pro se divorce clinic and was honored to receive the NYSBA Empire State Counsel Award in the Fall

of 2013. Michaela has served on the President's Committee on Access to Justice for the NYSBA, the Pro Bono Coordinators Network of the NYSBA, New York State Chief Judge's Attorney Emeritus Advisory Council, and was formerly the President of both the Steuben County Bar Association and the Finger Lakes Women's Bar Association.

**Barnett Helaine M.,** Conference Welcome

Helaine M. Barnett has devoted her entire professional career to the provision of civil legal aid to the poor and in the pursuit of equal access to justice.

In January 2004, she was appointed President of the Legal Services Corporation (LSC), in Washington, DC, the first legal aid attorney and first woman to serve in that position, where she served for six years. Under her leadership, LSC issued the groundbreaking Justice Gap Report, which documented the unmet civil legal needs of low-income Americans.

Before joining LSC, she spent 37 years with The Legal Aid Society in New York City, where she became the Attorney-in-Charge of its multi-office Civil Division. Among her accomplishments, she created its Homeless Family Rights Project and mobilized its 9/11 disaster assistance response.

Upon returning to New York in 2010, she was appointed by the Chief Judge of New York State to chair a newly created statewide Task Force to Expand Access to Civil Legal Services, which has become the New York State Permanent Commission on Access to Justice, which she continues to chair. As a result of its work, New York has allocated annually \$100 million of state funding for civil legal services, more than any other state in the country.

She was appointed an Adjunct Professor at New York University School of Law where she taught a class on Access to the Civil Justice System. She founded Legal Hand, which began with neighborhood storefront centers staffed with community volunteers, who are not lawyers, who provide legal information, assistance, and referrals to try to prevent issues from turning into legal actions, which have now been expanded to virtual Legal Hand Call-In Centers.

She has held leadership positions in the American Bar Association, serving on its Board of Governors and its Executive Committee, the only legal services lawyer to have held these positions, and is a member of the ABA House of Delegates. She is a recipient of numerous awards, including the ABA Margaret Brent Women Lawyers of Achievement, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the New York Law Journal, the New York State Bar Association Gold Medal for Distinguished Service in the Law, and the ABA Fellows Outstanding Service Award, and has published several law review articles on access to justice.

She is a 1960 graduate of Barnard College and received her law degree from New York University School of Law in 1964.

**Bassett, Hon. Mary T.,** Keynote Dialogue

Mary T. Bassett, MD, MPH., was appointed Commissioner of Health on December 1, 2021. She previously served as Director of the François-Xavier Bagnoud (FXB) Center for Health and Human Rights at Harvard University and FXB Professor of the Practice of Health and Human Rights in the department of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Prior to that, she served as Commissioner of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Director for the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's African Health Initiative and Child Well-Being Prevention Program; and as Deputy Commissioner of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Early in her career, Dr. Bassett served on the medical faculty at the University of Zimbabwe and went on to serve as Associate Director of Health Equity at the Rockefeller

Foundation's Southern Africa Office. After returning to the United States, she served on the faculty of Columbia University, including as Associate Professor of Clinical Epidemiology in the Mailman School of Public Health.

Dr. Bassett received a B.A. in History and Science from Harvard University, an M.D. from Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons, and an M.P.H. from the University of Washington.

**Brescia, Raymond H.**, Facilitator, Law Schools – Legal Services Partnership Projects in the Covid Era: Confronting a Crisis Learning for the Future

Ray combines his experience as a public interest attorney in New York City with his scholarly interests to address economic and social inequality, the legal and policy implications of financial crises, how innovative legal and regulatory approaches can improve economic and community development efforts, and the need to expand access to justice for people of low and moderate income. He is the author of “The Future of Change: How Technology Shapes Social Revolutions” (Cornell University Press, 2020), which examines the intersection of technology and social movements, from the American Revolution to the present day. He is also the co-editor of two books: Crisis Lawyering: Effective Legal Advocacy in Emergency Situations” (New York University Press, 2021); and “How Cities Will Save the World: Urban Innovation in the Face of Population Flows, Climate Change, and Economic Inequality (Routledge 2016).

Before coming to Albany Law School, he was the Associate Director of the Urban Justice Center in New York, N.Y., where he coordinated legal representation for community-based institutions in areas such as housing, economic justice, workers' rights, civil rights, and environmental justice. He also served as an adjunct professor at New York Law School from 1997 through 2006. Prior to his work at the Urban Justice Center, he was a staff attorney at New Haven Legal Assistance and the Legal Aid Society of New York, where he was a recipient of a Skadden Fellowship after graduation from law school.

Professor Brescia also served as Law Clerk to the pathbreaking Civil Rights attorney-turned-federal judge, the Honorable Constance Baker Motley, Senior U.S. District Court Judge for the Southern District of New York. While a student Yale Law School, Professor Brescia was co-recipient of the Charles Albom Prize for Appellate Advocacy; was a student director of several clinics, including the Allard K. Lowenstein International Human Rights Law Clinic and the Homelessness Clinic; and was Visiting Lecturer in Yale College.

Professor Brescia earned his J.D. from Yale Law School and his B.A. from Fordham University.

**Connolly, Kim Diana**, Panelist, Rural Access to Justice | Providing Civil Legal Assistance in Rural Communities

Professor Kim Diana Connolly has focused her academic career on how best to educate future lawyers about access to justice and related issues, as well as how best to use laws and policies to protect the planet and its inhabitants. She serves as Vice Dean for Advocacy and Experiential Learning, and the Director of the Community Engagement Clinic and other clinics at the University at Buffalo School of Law - SUNY. Professor Connolly’s commitment to access to justice advocacy began before she attended law school, when she ran a non-profit working to bring social and environmental justice to those facing a lack of access to clean water and sanitary wastewater removal in North Carolina. She holds degrees from Georgetown University Law Center, George Washington University Law School, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**Crossman, David, Panelist, Preserving Housing, Assisting Tenants**

David is currently staff attorney with the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern NY. He joined LASNNY in 2017 as a Pro Bono Scholar and stayed as a housing attorney following graduation until moving to LASNNY's Medical Legal Partnership with St. Peter's Health Partners in 2021. At the end of June 2022, David will start a new position as housing justice staff attorney at The Justice Clinic at Albany Law School.

**Dias, Marika Panelist, Law Schools – Legal Services Partnership Projects in the Covid Era: Confronting a Crisis Learning for the Future**

Marika is a public interest attorney who has worked in civil legal services since 2001, focusing on providing legal services that support community organizing efforts and grassroots organizing groups. Marika is currently the director of the Urban Justice Center's Safety Net Project, which focuses on eviction defense and tenant rights, homelessness advocacy and organizing, and public benefits advocacy. Marika is also a member of the Steering Committee of the Right to Counsel NYC Coalition, and a trainer in the Housing Justice Leadership Institute. Previously, Marika was the Director of the Tenant Rights Coalition at Legal Services NYC and prior to that, the Managing Attorney at Make the Road New York.

**DiFiore, Hon. Janet, Conference Welcome**

Janet DiFiore was appointed by Governor Andrew Cuomo on December 1, 2015 as the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals and the State of New York, She was confirmed by the New York State Senate on January 21, 2016 and took office the same day.

Chief Judge DiFiore has devoted virtually her entire professional career to the fair administration of justice, including service as a prosecutor and as a judge.

From 2006 to 2016, as Westchester County District Attorney, Chief Judge DiFiore served as the chief law enforcement officer for a county with almost one million people and headed an office of over 230 employees, assigned to eight branch offices. In that position, she was in the forefront of establishing innovative education and prevention initiatives to reduce crime. Her many initiatives included leading the effort to create a Child Fatality Review Team in Westchester County; working to establish Westchester County's Multidisciplinary Team to investigate child abuse cases; and the creation of the Child Advocacy Center, to provide a child-friendly environment for young victims working with the District Attorney's office. She also led the effort to establish the Westchester Intelligence Center, to facilitate the use of databases to obtain evidence and uncover trends in criminal activity, and established a Violent Felony Screening Protocol, for enhanced early review of the evidence in cases involving violent crimes.

Chief Judge DiFiore served as a Judge in Westchester County Court from 1999 to 2002, presiding, by designation, over matters in Family Court, Surrogate's Court and Supreme Court. She served as a New York State Supreme Court Justice from 2003 to 2005. During that time, she was the Supervising Judge of the Criminal Courts for the Ninth Judicial District, leading the effort to reduce the criminal case backlog, to establish a Mental Health Court and a Sex Offender Court, and the implementation of Domestic Violence and Drug Treatment Courts. She also served as Access to Justice Coordinator for the Ninth Judicial District.

Prior to being elected as a Judge, Chief Judge DiFiore served as an Assistant District Attorney and Chief of the Narcotics Bureau in Westchester County; Deputy Village Counsel for the Village of Bronxville; and worked in private practice.

In 2014, Chief Judge DiFiore served as a member of the Governor's Commission on Youth, Safety and Justice, created to recommend reforms to the laws governing the prosecution of young offenders. In 2011, Governor Andrew Cuomo appointed her to serve as the first Chair of the New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics. Chief Judge DiFiore has also served as

the Co-Chair of the New York State Justice Task Force, created in 2009 by then-Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman, to examine the causes of wrongful convictions. Then-Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye appointed her, in 1999, to serve on the Commission on Drugs and the Courts, and, in 2004, Judge Kaye appointed her to serve on the Commission on the Future of Indigent Defense Services. Chief Judge DiFiore also has served as the Co-Chair of the Westchester County Reentry Task Force and as a member of the Advisory Board of the Holocaust and Human Rights Education Center. And, in 2011-12, she served as President of the District Attorneys Association of the State of New York.

Chief Judge DiFiore received her J.D. from St. John's University School of Law in 1981 and her B.A. from C.W. Post College, Long Island University in 1977.

### **Diller, Matthew, Closing Session**

Matthew Diller is dean of Fordham Law School and the Paul Fuller Professor of Law. He is one of the nation's leading voices on access to justice issues and a prominent scholar of social welfare law and policy.

Dean Diller has lectured and written extensively on the legal dimensions of social welfare policy, including public assistance, Social Security, and disability programs, and on disability law and policy. His articles have appeared in the *The Yale Law Journal*, *UCLA Law Review*, *NYU Law Review*, *Fordham Law Review*, *Texas Law Review*, and *Michigan Law Review*, among other publications, and he is widely cited as an expert by the media, including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Bloomberg*, and *National Law Journal*. He has taught a range of law school classes, including Civil Procedure, Administrative Law, Social Welfare Law, and Public Interest Law.

In addition to his work as an administrator and scholar, Dean Diller is a member of the New York State Permanent Commission on Access to Justice and is chair of the commission's Committee on Law School Involvement. He also serves on the board of The Legal Aid Society of New York and is co-chair of the Council on the Profession at the New York City Bar Association, where he has served as a vice president and member of the executive committee. In addition, Dean Diller is a member of the Judicial Institute on Professionalism in the Law and a fellow of the American Bar Foundation. He has also served on the boards of Legal Services NYC, where he was vice chair, the National Center for Law and Economic Justice, and Volunteers of Legal Service.

Dean Diller received an A.B. and a J.D., both magna cum laude, from Harvard University, where he was an editor of the *Harvard Law Review*. After clerking for the Honorable Walter R. Mansfield of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, Dean Diller worked as a staff attorney in the civil appeals and law reform unit of The Legal Aid Society from 1986 to 1993. Dean Diller began his teaching career at Fordham Law in 1993 and was named the Cooper Family Professor of Law and co-director of the Louis Stein Center for Law and Ethics. From 2003 to 2008, he served as the associate dean for academic affairs. Prior to being appointed dean of Fordham Law in 2015, he served as dean at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law from 2009 to 2015.

### **Dunlap, Veronica N., Panelist, Law Schools – Legal Services Partnership Projects in the Covid Era: Confronting a Crisis Learning for the Future**

Veronica is the New York Program Director at Pro Bono Net where she spearheads LawHelpNY and related technology initiatives that empower New Yorkers in need to resolve their legal problems and strengthen the work of advocates serving them. In addition, she is a volunteer

attorney with NYCLA on a project aimed at restoring the civil rights of people with criminal convictions.

Prior to joining PBN, Veronica served as the Director of Strategic Initiatives at the National Network for Safe Communities at John Jay College where she designed and implemented projects that aimed to reduce bias in policing, and managed communications and digital strategies.

Before law school, Veronica performed on stages around the world as a classically trained dancer. She is a proud graduate of both George Washington University, where she received a B.A. in International Affairs and Fordham University School of Law where she received her Juris Doctor & M.B.A. in Finance.

Veronica received the 2016 Heroine of Excellence Award for her work in social justice advocacy and is a 2017 Council of Urban Professionals Fellow. Further, Veronica received the 2019 New York County Lawyer's Association Pro Bono Honors Award for her dedication to public service and the 2020 Outstanding Woman Lawyer in Public Service Award from the National Bar Association.

**Fisher, Hon. Fern A.**, Panelist, Law Schools – Legal Services Partnership Projects in the Covid Era: Confronting a Crisis Learning for the Future

Judge Fisher is the Special Assistant for Social Justice Initiatives to the Dean of the Maurice A. Deane School of Law. Until July of 2017, she was Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for New York City Courts and served as the Director of the New York State Courts Access to Justice Program. Judge Fisher's career started in the Civil Court as a Legal Services attorney practicing in Manhattan Housing Court. She served as Deputy Director of Harlem Legal Services, Inc. and as an Assistant Attorney General of the New York State Department of Law. For four years, she provided pro bono legal services to Harlem-based community organizations as a project director of the National Conference of Black Lawyers. In 1989, she was appointed Judge of the Housing Part of the Civil Court, and later, in 1990, was elected to the Civil Court where she served as Deputy Supervising Judge. Judge Fisher was elected in 1993 to the Supreme Court of the State of New York. After serving in both the City and the Matrimonial Parts of Supreme Court, in December 1996 she was appointed Administrative Judge of the Civil Court where she served until March 2009 when she was appointed to her current position. Judge Fisher received her B.A. summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa in 1975 from Howard University and received her J.D. in 1978 from Harvard Law School.

**Flagg, Marco**, Keynote Dialogue

Marco Flagg works to develop community-centered outreach strategies and policy solutions at the Center for Law and Justice (CFLJ). He grew up in Albany, NY and spent over a decade in Beijing and Shenzhen, China - where he worked with international NGOs, produced documentaries, taught ESL classes, and studied Mandarin Chinese.

His years abroad amongst a diverse international community gave him a chance to develop rich communications skills that span languages, culture, and media. He is excited to work with Dr. Green and his colleagues at CFLJ to develop social justice campaigns that directly impact the lives of community members and destroy racist systems of oppression.

**Gundlach, Jennifer A.**, Panelist, Reflections on the Pro Bono Scholars Program and Beyond - A Proposal for a Lawyers Justice Corps as an Alternative Pathway to New York Bar Admission

Jennifer is the Emily and Stephen Mendel Distinguished Professor of Law and Clinical Professor of Law at the Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University. In the past, she has also served as the Vice-Dean, as well as Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and for Experiential Education. Professor Gundlach was a civil litigator in Washington, D.C. for several years before she began teaching full-time. Professor Gundlach currently teaches Civil Procedure, Pre-Trial Litigation, Disability Law, and the Pro Bono Scholars Seminar. She also directs the School's Pro Se Legal Assistance Program in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York in Central Islip. Her research and scholarship interests draw on social science and educational theory to inform and improve law school teaching, curricular reform, and access to justice.

### **Gupta, Hon. Vanita**, Conference Introduction and Call to Action

Vanita Gupta is the 19<sup>th</sup> United States Associate Attorney General and serves as the third-ranking official at the Department of Justice. Associate Attorney General Gupta supervises multiple litigating divisions within the Department of Justice, including the Civil Division, Civil Rights Division, Antitrust Division, Tax Division, and Environmental and Natural Resources Division. She also oversees the grantmaking components of the Department, including the Office of Justice Programs, the Office on Violence Against Women, and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services; and supervises the Office of Information Policy, the Community Relations Service, the Executive Office for United States Trustees, and the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission.

Associate Attorney General Gupta previously served as the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the nation's oldest and largest coalition of non-partisan civil rights organizations in the United States.

Before serving in that capacity, from October 15, 2014, to January 20, 2017, Associate Attorney General Gupta served as Acting Assistant Attorney General and Head of the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division. Appointed by President Barack Obama as the chief civil rights prosecutor for the United States, Associate Attorney General Gupta advanced a wide range of civil rights enforcement matters.

Prior to her tenure leading the Civil Rights Division, Associate Attorney General Gupta served as Deputy Legal Director and the Director of the Center for Justice at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). In addition to managing litigation, Associate Attorney General Gupta created and led the ACLU's Smart Justice Campaign aimed at promoting bipartisan justice reform while keeping communities safe. She began her legal career as an attorney at the NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund.

Associate Attorney General Gupta graduated *magna cum laude* from Yale University and received her law degree from New York University School of Law, where later she taught a civil rights litigation clinic for several years.

### **Green, Dr. Alice**, Keynote Dialogue

Dr. Alice Green founded the Center for Law and Justice, a civil rights organization, in 1985. She has a doctorate in criminal justice and three master's degrees – education, social work, and criminology. The Center provides community education on civil and criminal justice, legal guidance and advocacy, crisis intervention, and community planning and organizing around criminal justice, civil rights, and civil liberties issues of particular concern to poor communities and those of color.

In 1985, Governor Cuomo appointed Dr. Green to membership on the Citizens Policy and Complaint Review Council of the New York State Commission of Corrections. A year later, with Senate approval, he appointed her to the position of Deputy Commissioner of the New York State Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives. She was put in charge of strategic planning, policy, and information. After leaving state service, she became Legislative Director for the New York Civil Liberties Union where she had served as Director of their Albany Office in 1982.

Alice Green, an adjunct professor at the University at Albany, has also taught at Russell Sage and Siena College. She began her career as a secondary school teacher and social worker. For many years, she directed Trinity Institution, a youth and family services center in Albany's South End. While there, she also did community organizing and founded the South End Scene, one of the longest published Black newspapers in Albany.

Dr. Green writes and lectures on racism and criminal justice and often does commentary and analysis for several newspapers and television and radio programs. With Dr. Frankie Bailey, she co-authored the book, *Law Never Here, A Social History of African American Responses to Issues of Crime and Justice*, ( 1999 Greenwood Press) and *Wicked Albany*(2009) and *Wicked Danville*(2011 History Press), two books about Prohibition.

In 1997 she founded and is now President of the Paden Institute and Retreat for Writers of Color located in the Adirondack town of Essex, New York. There, writers are provided technical assistance and a free environment for writing.

Alice Green is a member of the board of directors of the of the New York State Defenders Association, the Vice President of Senior Hope, an alcohol and drug counseling program and member of the Advisory Board of the Capital District Chapter of the NYCLU. She is a founder of the African American Cultural Center of the Capital Region. For over 20 years she worked as a prison volunteer.

In recognition for her work, Dr. Green has received numerous awards from several local and state organizations including the NAACP, Rockefeller College, National Organization for Women, New York State Bar Association, the University at Albany, the New York Defenders Association, the New York Civil Liberties Union, Social Justice Center, Citizen Action . Social Justice Center and the Albany Rotary Club. She and actor Danny Glover were co- recipients of the John Brown Freedom of Justice Award, and she received the Community Service Award from St. Rose College and most recently, the Literary Legend Award from the Albany Public Library Foundation.

### **Hayat, Norrinda Brown, Facilitator, Preserving Housing, Assisting Tenants**

Professor Hayat is the Director of the Housing and Tenant Solidarity Clinic at Rutgers Law School on the Newark Campus. Professor Hayat also teaches courses in Property Law, Critical Race Theory and Landlord Tenant Law. Her scholarship focuses on the intersection of race, gender and access to housing and law and has been placed or is forthcoming in the *California Law Review*, the *Brooklyn Law Review*, the *NYU Journal of Law and Social Change*, the *Michigan Journal of Race and Law*, and the *Clinical Law Review* among others. She is a recognized expert on housing law issues and has written op-eds and been interviewed for various news outlets, including the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Shelterforce* and the *New Jersey Star-Ledger*. Prior to law teaching, Professor Hayat spent almost a decade in government practice at the United States Department of Justice in the Civil Rights Division as a trial attorney advocating on behalf of victims of housing discrimination. She is engaged in professional service on various committees, including being co-chair elect of the Executive Committee of the Clinical Section of the American Association of Law Schools (AALS), which is the largest section in the

AALS. Professor Hayat was awarded the Junior Faculty of the Year award by the Society of American Law Teachers (SALT) in 2021. Professor Hayat earned her B.A. from Dartmouth College and her J.D. from University of Virginia School of Law.

**Herrera, Luz E.**, Panelist, Law Schools – Legal Services Partnership Projects in the Covid Era: Confronting a Crisis Learning for the Future

Luz E. Herrera is a Professor of Law and Associate Dean for Experiential Education at Texas A&M School of Law. Dean Herrera promotes entrepreneurial efforts to address the access to civil justice gap.

Before entering academia, Prof. Herrera ran her own practice and founded Community Lawyers, Inc., a non-profit organization that encourages access to affordable legal services and develops innovative opportunities for legal professionals in underserved communities. These experiences have influenced her scholarship that promotes legal “low bono” service delivery models and post-graduate support programs for lawyers starting their own law firms. Dean Herrera currently serves as a special advisor for the American Bar Association’s Commission on Hispanic Legal Rights and Responsibilities.

Prior to her current position, Dean Herrera was the Assistant Dean for Clinical Education, Experiential Learning and Public Service at UCLA School of Law. She has also taught as a visiting a visiting clinical professor at the University of California, Irvine School of Law, an assistant professor at Thomas Jefferson School of Law, a visiting professor at Chapman University School of Law and a Senior Clinical Fellow at Harvard Law School. In her various academic positions, Dean Herrera encouraged innovation and promoted access to justice through experiential learning.

Dean Herrera is a graduate of Stanford University and Harvard Law School.

**Jeng, Mindy**, Panelist, Reflections on the Pro Bono Scholars Program and Beyond - A Proposal for a Lawyers Justice Corps as an Alternative Pathway to New York Bar Admission

Mindy is Administrative Counsel for the Office of Court Administration (OCA), the administrative arm of the New York Unified Court System (UCS). Working as part of OCA’s Executive Office, Ms. Jeng provides advice and counsel on varied legal issues affecting the administration and operation of the courts. Ms. Jeng began her career as a litigation associate at Simpson Thacher and Bartlett. She then worked as a law clerk and special projects counsel for Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman. She has functioned as Executive Director of the Pro Bono Scholars Program for the New York State Courts since 2016 and represents UCS, judges, and other court officials in litigation in the federal and state courts. Ms. Jeng received an A.B. degree from Princeton University and her J.D. degree from Stanford Law School.

**Kaufman, Eileen**, Panelist, Reflections on the Pro Bono Scholars Program and Beyond - A Proposal for a Lawyers Justice Corps as an Alternative Pathway to New York Bar Admission

Eileen Kaufman is Professor of Law at Touro Law Center. She graduated with highest honors from Skidmore College and received her J.D. and LL.M. from New York University School of Law. Before joining the faculty at Touro, Professor Kaufman served as managing attorney at Westchester Legal Services where her work included major class actions and law reform relating to government benefit programs.

Professor Kaufman was Touro's Vice Dean from 1996-2000, the founder of Touro Law's summer program in India and the co-director of Touro Law's summer program in Israel. She teaches Torts,

Constitutional Law, Evidence, Sex-Based Discrimination, and Civil Liberties in an Age of Terrorism. Among her professional activities, Professor Kaufman served as the co-President of the Society of American Law Teachers, the Reporter for the New York Pattern Jury Instructions Committee, the chairperson of the Bar Admission and Lawyer Performance Committee of the American Association of Law Schools, the co-chair of the Committee on Legal Education and Admission to the Bar of the New York State Bar Association, a member of the Committee on Legal Education and Admission to the Bar of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York and the New York State Judicial Institute on Professionalism in the Law. She currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Tibet Justice Center.

**Maligno, Thomas**, Facilitator, Ensuring Delivery of Civil Legal Services in the Covid Era – Blueprints for Emergency Preparedness and Crisis Management

Tom is the Director of Pro Bono and Public Interest at Touro College Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center and Executive Director of its William Randolph Hearst Public Advocacy Center (PAC), which was created by Touro Law in 2007 to bring together non-profit legal advocacy agencies to provide services to the community while providing opportunities for students to participate in pro bono work and gain hands-on legal training. Housed within the law school, the Center provides furnished offices to the advocacy groups. He oversees the Public Advocacy Center and works with its agencies and Touro Law students.

In addition to working with the PAC, Tom has developed a wide range of public interest career opportunities for Touro Law students and graduates and has been a highly visible supporter of pro bono activities at the law school. He is the advisor for the Public Interest Law Organization of Touro (PILOT) and works with the organization in securing summer fellowships. Beyond helping students to fulfill their pro bono requirements, Tom has been instrumental in helping students develop an understanding of the value of pro bono work. Student fellows defend the victims of domestic violence, guard the legal interests of children, and work with advocacy groups on a broad spectrum of poverty and civil rights issues. At Touro Law, Tom uses the same creative energy for which he is known and applies it to the provision of pro bono work by students and PAC agencies. He serves as a role model for students and those in the community and is a strong advocate for public interest and pro bono work. He instills these values in our students and in everyone he meets.

During his more than 40-year career in public interest law, Tom has received numerous state, local and national awards for his efforts in pro bono and public interest work. He has been part of the organized pro bono movement since 1978 when he helped create the Pro Bono Project on Long Island and his leadership was integral in creating a nationally recognized volunteer effort. His ability to bring together the private bar, public interest community, government, and legal services contributed to the success of the project. In 1989, Mr. Maligno left the Pro Bono Project to become the Executive Director of Nassau Suffolk Law Services, one of the largest legal services programs in the country. During his tenure, the organization was often acknowledged for its creative ways of assisting clients. Tom has a nationwide reputation for promoting pro bono representation and is a consultant for the American Bar Association, helping to organize pro bono efforts in numerous communities across the United States. He is also the leader of the organized pro bono effort of both local bar associations; the Nassau County Bar Association and the Suffolk County Bar Association.

Most recently, Tom has been a leader in Touro Law Center's disaster response for both Hurricane Sandy and the COVID pandemic. He helped create our disaster response hotline for Hurricane Sandy which was the predecessor to Touro Law's nationally recognized Disaster Law Clinic. In response to his efforts, he was asked by FEMA to become a senior attorney advisor to assist them in reforming the disaster response system. Tom has also been an integral part of building a network of immigration advocates for Long Island and has been a leader in building that coalition to better serve this growing population.

**McGovern, Kelly**, Panelist, Rural Access to Justice | Providing Civil Legal Assistance in Rural

## Communities

Kelly is the Director of Pro Bono Affairs at Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc.® (LawNY), where she manages pro bono initiatives and opportunities, internship programs, and volunteer engagement across LawNY's fourteen counties. Kelly and her pro bono team recruit, support, and supervise volunteers who have a variety of skill levels, from college students to retiring attorneys. She works closely with pro bono attorneys, legal services providers, and academic institutions on pro bono matters.

Kelly graduated from Hobart and William Smith Colleges in 2003 with a Political Science degree. She received her JD from Syracuse University School of Law with a Concentration in Global Law and Policy in 2006 and was admitted to practice in New York State in 2007.

Kelly was previously a LawNY staff attorney, and she handled primarily public benefits and eviction prevention cases. She represented clients at unemployment insurance benefits and other administrative hearings for 13 years and continues to supervise LawNY staff members who practice in this substantive legal area. She has also convened LawNY work groups focused on employment law, regional pro bono work, and assisting limited English proficient clients.

Kelly serves on the New York State Bar Association's Committee on Legal Aid, the 6th and 8th Judicial Districts' Pro Bono Committees, the Rural Justice Initiative Working Group, and the New York State Chief Judge's Attorney Emeritus Program Advisory Council. She is also the co-chair of the statewide Pro Bono Coordinators' Network meeting and is on the Steering Committee for the New York State Bar Association's 2022 Partnership Conference.

### **Niebel, William J.**, Facilitator, Preserving Housing, Assisting Tenants

Bill Niebel is an Adjunct Professor of Law and Director of the Tenants Advocacy Practicum at Cornell Law School and a Staff Attorney at Legal Services of Central New York, where he has practiced since 2015. Mr. Niebel graduated from the University of South Dakota Law School in 2005. After law school, he was admitted to the Iowa bar and began focusing on landlord-tenant law as a Staff Attorney at Iowa Legal Aid. In 2009, he prevailed in the Iowa Supreme Court, in the landmark case of *War Eagle v. Plummer*, 775 N.W.2d 714 (2009). That decision invalidated the Iowa statute that allowed certified mail notice of an eviction hearing, as a violation of due process. Mr. Niebel moved to New York and worked at the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York for three years, in Albany and Saratoga Springs, defending many evictions in city and justice courts. He also served as Associate General Counsel in the Watchtower (Jehovah's Witnesses) Legal Department for three years, working in its Civil Rights and Litigation groups. Mr. Niebel is currently admitted to practice in New York, and the U.S. District Court, Northern District of New York.

### **Ouellette, Alicia**, Conference Welcome

Alicia Ouellette is the 18th President and Dean of Albany Law School.

As a leader in legal education, Dean Ouellette has championed the value of law schools as drivers of change in communities, society, and the lives of students and graduates. As President and Dean, she has presided over Albany Law School's execution of a new strategic plan, fulfillment of an institutional affiliation with the University at Albany, expansion into online graduate programs, and completed a record-setting fundraising campaign, *We Rise Together: The Campaign for Albany Law School*.

Prior to her appointment as President and Dean, she served as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Intellectual Life and a Professor of Law. Before joining the law school in 2001, Dean

Ouellette was an Assistant Solicitor General in the New York State Attorney General's Office and a law clerk to the Honorable Howard A. Levine at the New York Court of Appeals.

As a scholar, Dean Ouellette focuses on health law, disability rights, family law, children's rights, and human reproduction. Her book, *BIOETHICS AND DISABILITY: TOWARD A DISABILITY CONSCIOUS BIOETHICS*, was published in 2011 by Cambridge University Press. She has authored numerous articles published in academic journals such as the *American Journal of Law and Medicine*, *American Journal of Bioethics*, *Nevada Law Journal*, *Hastings Law Journal*, *Indiana Law Journal*, and *Oregon Law Review*.

She has presented to distinguished audiences around the globe, including at the Yale School of Medicine and the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland.

In September 2020, Dean Ouellette was appointed to New York Governor's COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution and Implementation Task Force.

Dean Ouellette has served in leadership positions for numerous professional and community organizations, including as chair of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) Section for Deans, secretary and a board member for the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (CICU), secretary and a board member for the Burdett Birthing Center in Troy, N.Y., and a board member for the University at Albany's Institute for Health and Human Rights.

An alumna of Hamilton College, Dean Ouellette graduated *magna cum laude* in 1994 from Albany Law School, where she was editor-in-chief of the *Albany Law Review*.

**Paul, Alison**, Facilitator, Rural Access to Justice | Providing Civil Legal Assistance in Rural Communities

Alison serves as Montana Legal Services Association's Executive Director, a position she has held since January of 2011. She is responsible for the overall management and operations of MLSA. Ms. Paul graduated from the University of Kansas School of Law, then spent 7 years in private practice in Chicago. Ms. Paul began her career with MLSA as a staff attorney in 1999, becoming MLSA's Deputy Director in 2003. In 2005, the National Legal Aid and Defender Association awarded MLSA's Executive Director Alison Paul the Innovations in Technology Award, and in 2012, Ms. Paul was one of only six legal aid program directors invited to participate in the first White House Forum on civil Legal Aid. Ms. Paul currently serves on the Board of Directors of the National Legal Aid and Defender Association, and the Montana Nonprofit Association. Ms. Paul also serves on the Montana Supreme Court Access to Justice Commission.

**Pritzker, Hon. Stan L.**, Facilitator, Rural Access to Justice | Providing Civil Legal Assistance in Rural Communities

Justice Stan L. Pritzker was appointed to Third Department on May 29, 2017. He graduated *magna cum laude* from the State University of New York Buffalo with a bachelor's degree and received a master's degree in social work. Thereafter, he attended the evening program at St. John's School of Law. For nearly 20 years, Justice Pritzker was engaged in private practice. In 2004, he was elected to the County Court of Washington County where he presided in County, Family, Surrogate's, and Drug Court. In 2007, he was designated as an Acting Supreme Court Justice. He was then elected as a Supreme Court Justice for the Fourth Judicial District in 2013. Justice Pritzker has served on a variety of committees during his professional career. From 2007-2014, he was a member of the Family Court Rules Advisory Committee. He also chaired the Washington County Bar Association Public Defender Committee and has been appointed as

a member to the Unified Court System's Second Special Commission on Fiduciary Appointments. From 2015-2017, he served as president to the Washington County Bar Association. In addition to his committee work, Justice Pritzker received certification from the Advanced Science & Technology Adjudication Resource Center (ASTAR) in 2013. He was recognized from 2011 through 2020 by Southern Adirondack BOCES for providing internships for local high school students. Presently, Justice Pritzker is the Third Department representative for Attorney for Child Advisory Committee. He is also a participant and member of Board of Directors for the National Courts and Science Institute and was a co-chair of the NYS Bar Association Task Force on Rural Justice.

**Rogerson, Sarah F.**, Moderator, Law Schools' Response to Community Needs

Professor Rogerson directs the Albany Law School Immigration Law Clinic, an experiential course through which students represent immigrant victims of crime including child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, and sexual assault. Her students also regularly participate in related legislative advocacy and community outreach initiatives. Professor Rogerson worked as a public interest attorney in Newark, New Jersey and has represented immigrant adults and children in cases involving torture, domestic violence, and human trafficking at a human rights non-profit in Dallas, Texas. Her scholarship is focused on the intersections between domestic violence, family law, race, gender, international law and immigration law and policy.

Professor Rogerson has her LL.M. from Southern Methodist University, her J.D. and M.A. from Seton Hall University, and B.A. from Hillsdale College.

**Sanin, Rebecca** ,Facilitator, Ensuring Delivery of Civil Legal Services in the Covid Era – Blueprints for Emergency Preparedness and Crisis Management

Rebecca is an energized and forward-thinking executive, passionate about transformational planning and a thoughtful and equitable approach to regional human service provision, which . A lifelong Long Islander, Rebecca has been an advocate and public servant dedicated to bolstering opportunities for Long Islanders, as well as an enthusiastic leader dedicated to solving local issues and driving progress throughout Long Island and New York State.

In her first five years as President/CEO of the Health and Welfare Council of Long Island., Rebecca refocused attention on the critical needs of families and children across Long Island, bolstering the services HWCLI provides to support them. As she develops new relationships and nurtures existing ones, Rebecca emphasizes HWCLI's regional capacity building that impacts underserved communities in the region. Using her background in government and strong community ties, Rebecca has engaged valuable stakeholders and policy makers into the broader dialogue addressing equity across Long Island. She is a strong advocate for systems change and believes that Long Island, as America's first suburb can lead on effectively eradicating suburban poverty.

Rebecca has proven to be a steadfast and unwavering leader, spearheading local human service coordination responses to the pandemic, the federal shutdown, natural disasters, and other crises. She led the region's 2020 Census count to ensure that Long Island receives the much-needed federal dollars and representation it deserves. With more than two decades of experience, Rebecca has built her solid reputation in public service and remains deeply engaged in policy, strategic planning, and cross-sector coalition building to meet the needs of families and nonprofit businesses.

While serving as an Assistant Deputy County Executive for Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone for five years, she oversaw the multi-faceted constituent service response to Superstorm Sandy and helped lead the performance management team that worked to modernize county government and create an environment of continuous improvement. Rebecca also chaired the

Task Force to Prevent Family Violence and took the lead on managing improved policies and practices for Suffolk County employees on sexual harassment, discrimination, and workplace violence.

As a distinguished Stein Scholar, Rebecca earned a Juris Doctor from Fordham University and holds a Master's in Developmental Psychology from Teachers College, Columbia University where she was named a fellow at the National Center for Children and Families. Rebecca is the recipient of numerous awards and honors and is recognized as a top 100 influential leader in the Long Island region.

Rebecca has continued building on the foundation of her own education, while helping others succeed-and has served as an adjunct professor at local Long Island colleges and on public health, nonprofit and utility advisory boards where she has mentored the next generation and build internship opportunities and connections to help mold the next generation of leaders through first-hand experiences.

**Seidman, Jennifer**, Panelist, Preserving Housing, Assisting Tenants

Jen is a rising third-year student at Cornell Law School. As a volunteer with the Tenants Legal Hotline and a legal intern with the Tenants Advocacy Practicum, she has provided legal advice to tenants in Ithaca and has represented tenants in cases against former landlords to retrieve wrongfully withheld security deposits. In her position as the Tenants Rights Committee for Cornell's chapter of the National Lawyer's Guild, Jennifer has been a part of creating a Tenants Rights Guide and the Ithaca Eviction Court Monitoring Program.

**2022 Pro Bono Scholars**, Panelists, Reflections on the Pro Bono Scholars Program and Beyond - A Proposal for a Lawyers Justice Corps as an Alternative Pathway to New York Bar Admission

**Emily Harwell**, Cornell Law School '22

**Sandile Magagula**, Cornell Law School '22

**Marisa Pagan-Figueroa**, Cornell Law School '22

**Rachel Skene**, Cornell Law School '22

**Nicole Wong**, Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University '22

**Wagner, Kristen**, Facilitator, Addressing the Emergent Civil Legal Needs of Immigrants in New York State

Kristen is a graduate of Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University and Smith College. In law school, Kristen participated in the Immigration Justice Clinic, was Co-President of the Public Interest Law Scholarship Organization, and Managing Editor of the Pace International Law Review.

Kristen has worked in a variety of settings that have allowed her to pursue a diverse career in immigration law, including the New York State Bar Association, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley, and the Regional Immigration Assistance Center for Region 3 in New York. Across her various roles, Kristen's passion for serving indigent immigrant New Yorkers has never wavered.

When she's not connecting individuals with the immigration resources they and their families need, she is coordinating legal services and private attorneys to deliver Pro Bono legal services to New York's immigrant communities.

**Whitlow, John**, Panelist, Law Schools – Legal Services Partnership Projects in the Covid Era: Confronting a Crisis Learning for the Future

John is an Associate Professor at the CUNY School of Law, where he co-directs the Community and Economic Development Clinic (CEDC), supervising the CEDC's Anti-Displacement Practice Area. Prior to joining CUNY's faculty, John was an Assistant Professor at the University of New Mexico School of Law, where he co-founded and co-directed the school's Economic Justice Clinic and taught constitutional law, and a Visiting Clinical Instructor in NYU Law School's Law, Organizing, and Social Change Clinic. Before entering academia, John was a Supervising Attorney at Make the Road New York, where he oversaw the organization's housing and public benefits legal services and worked on a range of law and policy reform initiatives, and a Staff Attorney at the Urban Justice Center's Community Development Project (now TakeRoot Justice), where he represented tenant associations, grassroots non-profits, and worker-owned cooperatives. John began his legal career as a Staff Attorney in the Eviction Prevention Unit of Bedford-Stuyvesant Community Legal Services.

John's research interests – racial capitalism, law and political economy, law and organizing, gentrification/displacement, housing justice – have been shaped by his experience as a community lawyer in New York City and Albuquerque, New Mexico, and by his upbringing in Baltimore, Maryland. John's writing has appeared in popular and academic forums, including The New York Times, the Albuquerque Journal, Counterpunch, the Law and Political Economy Blog, the Fordham Urban Law Journal, the South Atlantic Quarterly, and the CUNY Law Review. John was the Inaugural Visiting Faculty Fellow at Yale Law School's Law and Political Economy Project and a Faculty Fellow at the CUNY Graduate Center's Center for Place, Culture, and Politics; and he holds a visiting appointment at Pompeu Fabra University's Public and Social Policy Center. John currently serves on the board of directors of the Action Lab, an organization devoted to supporting grassroots, national, and international movements for transformative social change. He previously served on the boards of Communities Resist, Queens Legal Services, and the Bushwick Housing Independence Project, and was a tenant representative on New York City's Housing Court Advisory Council.

John holds a B.A. and a certificate in comparative international economic development from Johns Hopkins University, an M.A. from the New School for Social Research, and a J.D. from the CUNY School of Law.

**Williams-Isom, Hon. Anne**, Moderator, Keynote Dialogue

Anne Williams-Isom was appointed Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services in December 2021 by then Mayor-elect Eric Adams and assumed office on January 1, 2022.

Deputy Mayor Williams-Isom has more than twenty-five years of leadership and management experience in large, complex organizations, where she has served children, families, and underserved communities. She has been an educator, a nonprofit executive, a government agency leader, and a practicing attorney.

Most recently, she served as the James R. Dumpson Chair in Child Welfare Studies at Fordham University's Graduate School of Social Service and as the Chief Executive Officer for the Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ). Before leading HCZ, she served for thirteen years at the NYC Administration for Children's Services, where she held leadership roles including Deputy Commissioner for Community and Government Affairs.

Deputy Mayor Williams-Isom holds a bachelor's degree in political science and psychology from Fordham University, and a J.D. from Columbia Law School and a Doctorate in Ministry from the

New York Theological School. She is a native New Yorker and lives in Harlem with her husband of thirty years, Phil, along with her three children and ninety-one-year-old mother.