



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Chief Judge Names New Co-Chair to Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission**

**NEW YORK**—Chief Judge Janet DiFiore today designated Hon. Richard Rivera as co-chair of the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission, which works to promote equal participation and equal justice for employees and litigants of color, advising court leaders on enhancing racial and ethnic fairness, diversity and meaningful inclusion in the courts and the justice system. Judge Rivera is filling the vacancy left by Hon. Shirley Troutman who, having served as the Commission’s co-chair since February 2018, was recently elevated to New York’s Court of Appeals.

“Judge Rivera is a trailblazer who is widely recognized for his demonstrated commitment to the fair administration of justice and the eradication of systemic inequality. I have every confidence that, together with his Commission co-chair, Hon. Troy K. Webber, he will provide outstanding leadership in advancing the Commission’s work and mission, including its efforts as an integral partner in implementing the recommendations in Secretary Johnson’s Equal Justice Report,” said Chief Judge DiFiore.

Judge Rivera was elected to Albany County Family Court in November 2014, becoming the first Latino elected to the bench in the Third Judicial District, which encompasses Albany, Columbia, Greene, Rensselaer, Schoharie, Sullivan and Ulster counties. He was selected to preside over the Court's newly created Domestic Violence Part in 2017 and has also presided over the Court's Youth Part since its creation, following the implementation of New York's Raise the Age legislation, in 2018. He was designated an Acting Supreme Court Justice in 2019 and named the Third Judicial District's first Supervising Judge for Domestic Violence Courts and Mentor Courts. Earlier this year, he was named the District's Supervising Family Court Judge, marking another milestone as the first person of color to hold that position.

Prior to his ascension to the bench, Judge Rivera worked as a support magistrate in Albany County Family Court. Before joining the Court System, he served in a variety of legal capacities, including as an Attorney for the Children in Albany and Rensselaer counties, an Assistant Conflict Defender representing litigants in family and criminal courts, and an Assistant County Attorney. He began his legal career as an associate counsel for the Law Office of Gaspar M. Castillo, handling criminal matters, traffic violations and appeals. He is a graduate of Colgate University and Albany Law School.

Among his affiliations, Judge Rivera is a member of the Capital District Black and Hispanic Bar Association, the Hispanic National Bar Association, the Latino Judges Association, the Judicial Friends and the New York State Family Court Judges Association. Judge Rivera serves on the Board of Advisors of the National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts.

In tribute to outgoing Co-Chair Shirley Troutman, Chief Judge DiFiore added, "We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Judge Troutman for her energetic leadership of the Commission over the past four years and her many contributions to help further its critical mission."

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