



# **NEWS RELEASE**

**New York State  
Unified Court System**

**Hon. Joseph A. Zayas  
Chief Administrative Judge**

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## **Chief Administrative Judge Zayas Names Special Counsel for Appointments and UCS Advisory Groups**

**NEW YORK**—Chief Administrative Judge Joseph A. Zayas and First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Norman St. George today named Desirée Kim as Special Counsel for Appointments and Unified Court System (UCS) Advisory Groups. Ms. Kim succeeds Jordan Dressler, who was recently appointed by Judge Zayas to the New York City Civil Court’s Housing Part in Queens County.

As Special Counsel, Ms. Kim will oversee and coordinate the many administrative functions related to the appointments of judges and judicial hearing officers, as well as appointments to the various commissions and task forces established under the umbrella of the New York State Courts. In this capacity, she will act as a liaison to the Governor’s Office, New York City Mayor’s Office, and New York State Board of Elections regarding judicial vacancies and appointments; monitor and certify judicial vacancies to ensure statutory compliance; assure timely, proper distribution of judicial assignments; manage the appointments of approximately 55 commissions and task forces; and act as a liaison to the numerous UCS commissions on behalf of the judicial leadership, attending meetings to communicate the leadership’s priorities and policies, in addition to her other responsibilities.

“Desirée Kim is tailor-made for this pivotal assignment. For over two decades, she served as Executive Director and Counsel for the New York City Mayor’s Advisory Committee on the Judiciary, where she demonstrated exceptional leadership and judgment, playing an integral part in promoting a highly qualified and diverse bench in New York City’s courts. She brings vast expertise and experience to the critically important role of Special Counsel for Appointments and UCS Advisory Groups. I look forward to working with her,” said Chief Administrative Judge Zayas.

“Ms. Kim is a talented lawyer with extensive knowledge of the court system’s administrative operations and the judicial appointment process. She is a proven leader and innovator whose insight, experience, and hard work will serve her ably in this key

position. I welcome her to her new role and look eagerly ahead to her guidance and support as Special Counsel," said First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge St. George.

"I am honored and thrilled to be returning to the court system with a wonderful opportunity to work with OCA's dynamic leadership team. As Special Counsel for Appointments and UCS Advisory Groups, I will be able to use my wealth of experience to oversee the critical work involved in addressing judicial appointments, and to continue my relationships with court leaders, committee and task force members, and stakeholders. I subscribe to the notion that collaboration is among the key components to effect successful change and could not be more excited to explore new ideas to further support the delivery of justice in New York State courts," said Ms. Kim.

Prior to her appointment as Special Counsel, Ms. Kim had been serving as Director of Career and Professional Development for the Office of Career Services at the Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University. Previously, from 2002 to 2022, she was the Executive Director and Counsel to the New York City Office of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on the Judiciary, serving three mayoral administrations as an adviser on judicial appointments and reappointments to the New York City Criminal Court and Family Court. From 1999 to 2002, she was employed by the UCS, where she helped launch the statewide Office of the Special Inspector General for Bias Matters—which was charged with conducting confidential investigations based on employment-related claims of discrimination and bias against judges and non-judicial personnel—serving first as Deputy Special Inspector General and later as Special Inspector General. Before that, she worked for the New York City Department of Investigation, initially as an examining attorney and then as Deputy Inspector General, investigating and referring for prosecution cases of fraud and corruption against New York City employees and individuals engaged in business with the City. She began her legal career as an Assistant Corporation Counsel at the New York City Law Department, litigating and trying cases in the federal and state courts, representing the City, its agencies, and officials in civil rights actions and Article 78 proceedings.

Ms. Kim is a graduate of Barnard College at Columbia University and Brooklyn Law School. She has been honored by the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association with its Best Lawyers Under 40 award and is a two-time recipient of Brooklyn Law School's Asian American Law Students Association's Distinguished Alumnus Award, among other accolades.

In tribute to outgoing Special Counsel Jordan Dressler, Judges Zayas and St. George added, "We are thankful to Judge Dressler for his skillful leadership and effective collaboration as Special Counsel and are pleased that New Yorkers will continue to benefit from his sound judgment, legal acumen, and integrity in his new capacity on New York City's Housing Court bench."

Ms. Kim's appointment is effective September 5, 2024.

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