

A COMMUNITY OF JUSTICE

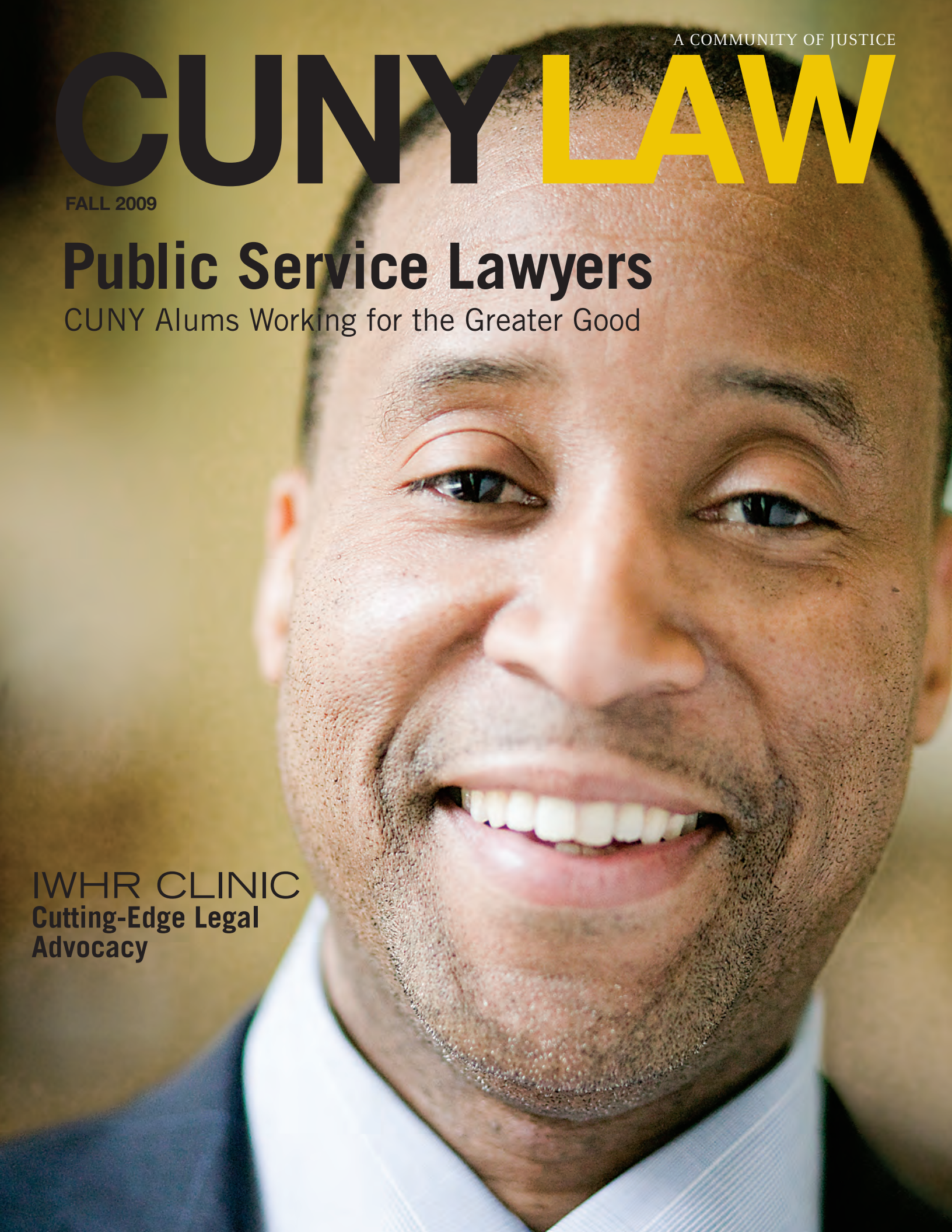
CUNY LAW

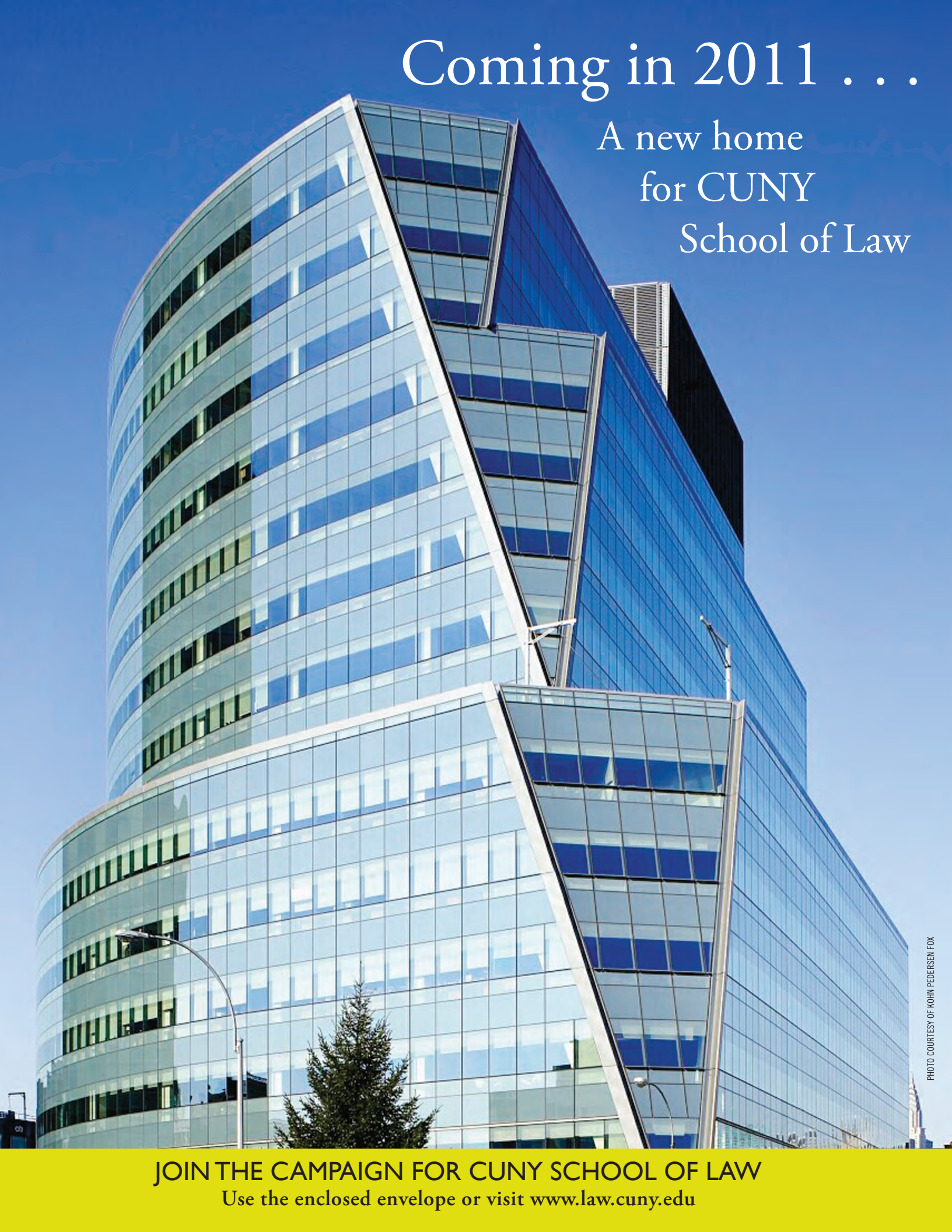
FALL 2009

Public Service Lawyers

CUNY Alums Working for the Greater Good

IWHR CLINIC
Cutting-Edge Legal
Advocacy





Coming in 2011 . . .

A new home
for CUNY
School of Law

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Dean Michelle J. Anderson

Letter from the Dean

Dear Friends,

As we went to press, we were able to share terrific news: CUNY is planning to purchase and renovate the bottom six floors of the building at 2 Court Square in Long Island City, New York, for the Law School. Ideally, we will be able to move to this outstanding new location in time for classes in the fall of 2011. The building is centrally located with easy access to subways, buses, and the Long Island Railroad. The space will provide us with almost 70,000 additional square feet of space and will greatly enhance our ability to carry out our public interest and access mission.

On the home front, we are excited to welcome a number of new faculty members to the Law School in this issue. Professor Doug Cox will greatly enhance our research support team in his new role as International Law Librarian. Astrid Gloade's vast experience in academic support made her the perfect person to direct our Professional Skills Center. Professor Ramzi Kassem brings a profound commitment to defending the rule of law and the rights of detainees to our Immigrant and Refugee Rights Clinic as its new Director. Finally, Nicole Smith will greatly enhance our outstanding criminal defense team in her new role as Instructor in our Criminal Defense Clinic.

This edition of the magazine showcases the vision of CUNY School of Law alums working in public service. CUNY Law graduates in the public sector use the government to

protect the vulnerable and to hold the state itself accountable to the people it serves.

Two class of '86 alums, Michael Braverman and Suzanne Sangree, found an unexpected connection in their work years later in Baltimore. His data supported her effort to file one of the first lawsuits to charge a major bank with "reverse redlining," targeting African-American families for risky subprime mortgages and causing numerous foreclosures.

Jim Miskiewicz ('88) was one of the first prosecutors to pursue the illicit distribution of the dangerous date rape drug GHB over the Internet. His efforts have also led to cleaner water and more accountability from corporations.

**CUNY Law graduates in the public sector
use the government to protect the
vulnerable and to hold the state itself
accountable to the people it serves.**

Connie Walsh ('99) finds hidden treasures and uncovered assets for Holocaust survivors. Nicole Bramstedt ('06) helps homeless families obtain shelter. Gregorio Mayers ('94) has oversight on education policy and school construction in New York City. EEOC Administrative Judge Monique Roberts ('99) guards against employment discrimination by the government and makes sure that the government is a "model employer." These are just a small sample of our outstanding public service alums.

Finally, in this edition of the magazine, we also celebrate the work of Professor Rhonda Copelon. Rhonda has expressed her intention to retire from the CUNY Law faculty at the end of this semester. Rhonda was a founding faculty member at this institution, and her spirit is reflected in so many aspects of our beloved School. Her passion and intellect helped shape this School's core mission, as well as the field of international women's human rights. She built our globally recognized International Women's Human Rights Clinic, which has enabled our students to contribute to human rights both here and abroad, before and after graduation. Rhonda has said that her "26-year romance" with CUNY Law will never end, and that she will continue to support the School and its social justice mission as an Emerita faculty member.

Yours,

Michelle J. Anderson
Dean and Professor of Law



Charlene Quincey ('08) and Katy Sheehan ('07) launch a new virtual law firm.

Tradition and Technology Meet Online

Social consciousness and a desire to make legal services more affordable are what led CUNY alums Charlene Quincey and Katy Sheehan to launch Olea LLP, a virtual law firm. While they share a common vision, their lives are far apart, with Quincey living in Toronto, Canada, and Sheehan in Washington State.

"We knew we wanted to work together to make legal services accessible and affordable, and we knew that developing technology made that possible," said Sheehan. "Without a bricks-and-mortar office, we have very little overhead, and we pass these savings directly on to our clients," explained Quincey. "Moreover, working online keeps our carbon footprint small. We are almost entirely paperless, and since neither we nor our clients have to travel to an office, this translates to environmental and monetary savings."

Olea, the name of their firm, is the Latin root word for "olive family." Olive trees do not bear fruit during great conflict, and they require cultivation, attention, and care. Sheehan and Quincey said they chose Olea as their name because "people are the same way; they don't tend to flourish during times of great conflict. So, to us, the Olea metaphor helps us remember what it means to be a good lawyer: helping people prevent stressful legal situations and allowing them to move on and eventually prosper."

Although they provide time-honored services, including family law, contracts, wills and trusts, and small business setup, to Washington residents statewide, the two see the Web as a new frontier to further social justice. In their online description, they discuss how "Olea reinvents the practice of law by using Internet technologies to improve accessibility, affordability, and environmental impact." And, keeping true to their CUNY Law School values, they also note how "Olea offers not only traditional legal services but also aims to empower and educate by democratizing the law." Visit www.olealawyers.com.

Taking to the Airwaves

When President Barack Obama announced the nomination of Justice Sonia Sotomayor to the Supreme Court, media across the country turned to CUNY Law Professor Jenny Rivera for comment. In 1993, Rivera clerked for then District Judge Sotomayor, which gave her a close look at the Judge's adjudication style and approach.

During the confirmation proceedings, Rivera's analysis was featured in national venues such as *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, *National Public Radio*, *Democracy Now!*, *NBC Nightly News*, *CBS Evening News*, *Newsweek*, and *Latino USA*, among other major outlets.

Founder of CUNY's new Center on Latino and Latina Rights and Equality (CLORE), Rivera organized an expert review of Justice Sotomayor's judicial record for the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA). She served as the lead author, and the review was included as testimony in the Congressional Record.



Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor

This spring CLORE's speaker series featured topics, including diversity in the legal profession, human trafficking, discrimination based on color, health disparities in the Latino community, and Latino electoral political empowerment. CLORE also wrote in support of a petition for the FCC's review of hate speech against Latinos and signed on to an *amicus* brief on human trafficking advertisements in *Thomas Dart, Sheriff of Cook County v. Craigslist, Inc.*



PUBLIC SERVICE AND Social Justice

Public service legal practice touches the core of our motto, “Law in the Service of Human Needs.” CUNY Law alums engaged in public service see their work as a direct means of fostering social justice—and as a means of holding the government accountable and working for the people.

Whether it is through the U.S. Attorney’s Office, the EEOC, City Hall, the New York State Banking Department, Baltimore’s City Government, or New York’s Department of Homeless Services, CUNY Law alums are helping to balance the scales of justice. Individuals, families, and communities are affected positively by their work, as are the character and strength

of our government. • The state and city judges and elected officials who graduated from CUNY Law work every day to make a difference in the lives of those they serve. Our passionate change-makers working in government service use the law for the greater good. The pages that follow highlight just a sample of our dedicated alums in public service practice.

Advocating for the Power of the Law

MONIQUE ROBERTS

At the dinner table, the family of Monique Roberts not only laughed and shared news from their day, they also talked about race and politics. These conversations, along with class history lessons on *Brown v. Board of Education* and the civil rights movement, made an impression on Roberts.

“At home, my family talked about education, poverty, and how those and other issues affected women, black people, and immigrants,” she said. “And once I learned how law was so integral to ending segregation and thus the fabric of society, I saw its power to make a difference.”

Since graduating from CUNY Law in 1999, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Administrative Judge Roberts has also made a difference. As a first-generation daughter of Jamaica-born parents, Roberts said that she is aware of what it means to be from an immigrant family in America. “I wanted to find a way to advocate so that everyone, from all walks of life, has the same opportunity,” she said.

Her education, she added, stood her in good stead. Within a week of starting as a staff attorney at MFY Legal Services in 1999, Roberts found herself in court arguing on behalf of low-income people with mental health disabilities. “CUNY and the courses I took there prepared me well. Even though I had only just graduated, I was ready to be a lawyer.”

After almost two years at Legal Services, Roberts joined the EEOC as a trial attorney arguing employment discrimination cases. “At the EEOC, our mission is twofold. We seek appropriate monetary and injunctive relief for individuals, and we seek corporate change so that employers improve their workplace policies and practices,” she said. “We also help people who often don’t have a voice or who don’t have the financial resources to challenge their employer.”

The gravity of her responsibility affects Roberts. “When an individual files an EEOC complaint, it takes courage. It then becomes our responsibility to have the conviction to use the law to efficiently and effectively represent them.” One of the many cases on which Roberts worked as a trial attorney was a class action suit in which part-time workers at fast-food restaurants, 15- to 17-year-old young women, were being physically and verbally sexually harassed. “You want the opportunity in these cases to say, you are wrong! But you have to make a case, and we do,” said Roberts.

In a nod to her success, several months ago, Roberts was promoted to Administrative Judge. Her docket involves adjudicating claims of federal employees bringing discrimination charges against their agencies. “As an Administrative Judge, I don’t advocate for individuals anymore. Instead, I advocate for the power of the law to make the government a model employer so that no employee is subjected to discrimination.” ●●



Prosecuting Change as a Government Lawyer

JIM MISKIEWICZ

Only one month after graduating from CUNY Law, Jim Miskiewicz ('88) found himself working on an emergency *habeas* petition to stay an execution slated to occur within the next 24 hours. As a new clerk for a federal district court judge in the Eastern District in Arkansas, he knew he had to quickly step up and prepare exactly what the judge needed, and he did.

He credits CUNY Law with having given him the right legal skills for one of his first rites of passage as a lawyer. “CUNY taught me the skills to do the kind of research that the judge expected and needed,” he said. “The School was just incredible in preparing me to function as a lawyer.”

Fighting crime is where Miskiewicz has made his mark. “Some CUNY alums think that the best work is defending rather than prosecuting criminals. But being on this side of the fence is equally important and beneficial to society—and it’s



Jim Miskiewicz

especially important to do it responsibly and with fairness,” he added.

“In college I read about how the Kennedy Justice Department went after the Mafia (pre-RICO) and sent young lawyers down South to enforce civil rights and voting laws, poorly structured as they were until 1964 and 1965,” he said. “I can’t say when it happened, but well before I left CUNY Law, I was hooked on the romance and even heroism of a government using lawyers—bookish, if gutsy, men and women—to try to change what was wrong.”

After his clerkship in Little Rock, Miskiewicz seized the chance to follow in the footsteps of the “gutsy” government lawyers working to change the world. He made his way to Washington, D.C., to become a trial lawyer in the Department’s Environmental Crimes Section, investigating and prosecuting polluters throughout the country.

Among his victories, Miskiewicz counts the successful conviction of a corporation and its top managers, who conducted a 20-year conspiracy of illegal oil dumping that polluted the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. The nine-week trial yielded significant results. “The Coast Guard told us that since we closed our case,

“I can’t say when it happened, but well before I left CUNY Law, I was hooked on the romance and even heroism of a government using lawyers—bookish, if gutsy, men and women—to try to change what was wrong.”

the number of oil slicks being discharged in the middle of the night was cut by 50 percent,” he reported. “Being a prosecutor means enormous responsibility and the capacity to do enormous good, and that’s humbling,” he said.

In 1997, he came back to New York and joined the U.S. Attorney’s office in his native Brooklyn. Eventually he landed in Long Island and prosecuted one of the first cases in the nation involving the illegal distribution of the date rape drug GHB. “We went to trial and convicted these distributors. As a result, we seized millions of doses of GHB, which is commonly used to sexually assault women.” However, because Miskiewicz was one of the first prosecutors to use the statute outlawing GHB, he said there were legal issues that needed to be resolved.

“I thank CUNY because this was one of those cases where there were no road maps, and it required creativity, tenacity, and good legal and commonsense judgment, which I got from CUNY,” he said. “From jury charges to motions about the Act’s constitutionality to figuring out how to prove the elements, everything was done from scratch, and the School taught me how to be a good lawyer in a situation where there were no precedents, no prior applications,” he added. “Ultimately, though, it was very satisfying to do something that I think helped people.”

He points to his upbringing as his earliest inspiration for becoming a lawyer. “As a kid, I inherited from my parents a passion for arguing politics and the events of the day.” Today, after a promotion from Assistant U.S. Attorney to Senior Trial Counsel, Miskiewicz is Deputy Chief of the criminal division in Long Island. ●●



Nicole Bramstedt

Helping New York's Homeless

NICOLE BRAMSTEDT

Every week, families with children looking for shelter file through the doors of the office of PATH, Prevention Assistance and Temporary Housing. As an Agency Attorney for New York City's Department of Homeless Services, Nicole Bramstedt ('06) assists in determining whether or not an individual is eligible for temporary housing assistance. "When assessing each application for assistance, I feel a responsibility to the city and to each and every family," she said.

"People in need of shelter are facing a myriad of issues, including unemployment, child welfare, domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental health issues," Bramstedt observed. "Their housing problem is often intertwined with a complex set of circumstances."

Although there are so many families in need, the city has finite resources. With more than 8,000 families with children in the shelter system, Bramstedt said, "we would be doing the public a disservice if we weren't thorough, efficient, and balanced in how we distribute government services."

Bramstedt said her CUNY Law School experience heightened her interest in working in government service. "There were a lot of classes that increased my awareness of the government's impact on a social justice agenda, including Law, Equality, and Due Process, Constitutional Structures, and Legislation."

Her belief in public service is grounded in her belief in the role of government. "The government helps to ensure that everyone has an opportunity, not just some." ●●

City Hall Decision Maker and Advisor

GREGORIO MAYERS

Whether it is from his desk in City Hall, a construction site, or at a community meeting, Gregorio Mayers ('94) is having a major impact. As a Senior Policy Advisor to New York City Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott, Mayers is part of a small team of government leaders who oversee the city's Department of Education and a broad range of community development issues. Mayers also oversees the development of a school construction budget that totals more than \$11 billion. Clearly, his decisions matter.

Valuing a community approach, Mayers doesn't make decisions in isolation. Instead, he brings together people throughout the city so that all their interests are represented. Creating consensus among community groups, elected officials, and business leaders requires adept navigation and a strong sense of accountability. Mayers possesses both.

"When people come to me, whether it is clergy, a business executive, or a legislator, I listen," he said. "Educating our youth and building communities is serious business. It's important to have a constructive dialogue, so that we can find the best solution and develop the best policy."

"For every decision, I look at the impact it will have on the community, how it will develop it, support it, and benefit it," he said. For instance, he notes that charter schools, for which he has responsibility, affect families throughout the city. "They are a key part of our education reform agenda. They spur academic excellence and strengthen communities."

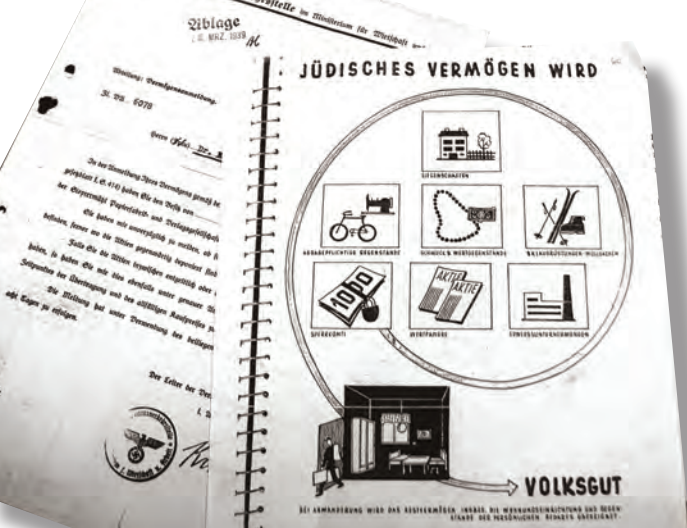
When overseeing and facilitating school construction, Mayers notes that it's important for all schools, whether they are charter or regular public schools, to have new libraries, pools, better labs, and better technology. "Building better-equipped facilities serves teachers, students, and communities. Everyone benefits," he said. "And the schools we are building will last and be there for future generations."

Recently, Mayers was instrumental in helping to build a city-wide coalition that supported the passage of the reauthorization of the School Governance Law, which gives the Mayor control over the city's school system. The law passed this summer.

Born and raised in Panama, Mayers said growing up he never imagined he would be working on education policy and community development issues. But as an advocate and tenured professor on leave from Medgar Evers College to work in the Mayor's Office, he recalls that "going to school in Central America was something dear to me. So, while I didn't plan on it, here I am on the policy side, ensuring that our education system works for everyone and that every community remains strong." ●●



Gregorio Mayers



Archival documents from the Nazi regime obtained by the Holocaust Claims Processing Office

Helping Holocaust Survivors: Unexpected Assets Recovered

CONNIE WALSH

Some legal victories are priceless. When one father fled Nazi Germany and took refuge in Belgium, he didn't have time to say goodbye to his children. While on the run, he was arrested and deported. He perished without ever seeing or speaking to his family again.

That man's daughter, now in her 80s, also lost her mother and brother in a concentration camp, an experience she survived. Something else survived too. Tucked away in a tiny archive in Europe was a letter with her father's signature. When she saw the letter, she was shocked to see his handwriting. It made a difference to her.

Finding hidden treasures, along with dormant bank accounts, unpaid proceeds of insurance policies, and valuable works of art, for Holocaust survivors and their families is all in a day's work for CUNY Law alum Connie Walsh ('99). As Deputy Director of the Holocaust Claims Processing Office for the New York State Banking Department, Walsh says that she's not just a lawyer, but a "forensic accountant, super-sleuth, lawyer, and diplomat" all rolled into one.

Her job, she said, also leads to some unexpected gifts. "The cases take years to piece together, and through the process I end up becoming part of people's families. Restitution for looted assets is important, but what we unearth for them—a family photograph, information about their grandmother's embroidery business, or even their husband's watch—becomes a connection to the past that is incalculable."

Walsh's interest in international human rights flourished when she went to Haiti after studying at the School for International Training. Haiti under a military regime was a far cry from the Minnesota farm where she grew up. "It was when I was in Haiti that I realized I needed more tools to create change," she said. "That's when I knew I wanted to become a lawyer."

At CUNY Law, she honed her skills through the International Women's Human Rights Clinic (IWHR) (see story on page 16). She went back to Haiti as a law student on a fact-finding mission and testified before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

While at the School, she also participated in a human rights mission to Rwanda. Her findings were summarized in the report *Witness Protection, Gender and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR)* and presented to the chief prosecutor of the ICTR and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. "CUNY was the perfect place for me. The School attracts a unique breed of nontraditional students committed to social justice. Without the support of my colleagues and the inspiration I drew from working with the clinic, I'm not sure I would have finished law school."

"... what we unearth for them—a family photograph, information about their grandmother's embroidery business, or even their husband's watch—becomes a connection to the past that is incalculable."

Walsh said that when she took the job at the Banking Department, she signed up for an 18-month position. "Now, I've been here eight years." From its inception in 1997, the office has responded to more than 13,000 inquiries and received claim forms from approximately 5,000 individuals from 45 states and 38 countries. The offers extended to claimants so far total more than \$143 million, in addition to the recovery of 36 works of art.

"The emotionally charged maze of restitution can be difficult for individuals to navigate," she said. "We are the only government agency in the world to offer Holocaust survivors and their heirs assistance with the vast array of multinational claims processes."

"This job has had a profound impact on me, which extends beyond the satisfaction I feel when a claimant of mine receives a monetary award. I feel fortunate to have stumbled upon the little office that could." ●●

From the Judiciary to Elected Office, CUNY Alums Make a Difference

ON THE BENCH WITH CUNY LAW'S "HONORABLES"

1986

NY CITY CIVIL COURT HOUSING JUDGE
CHERYL J. GONZALES

NY CITY CIVIL COURT JUDGE PAM B.
JACKMAN-BROWN

NASSAU COUNTY DISTRICT COURT
JUDGE SONDR K. PARDES

QUEENS COUNTY CIVIL COURT JUDGE
DICCIA T. PINEDA-KIRWAN

1987

BRONX COUNTY CRIMINAL COURT
JUDGE DORIS M. GONZALEZ

QUEENS FAMILY COURT JUDGE
MARGARET PARISI-MCGOWAN

CALIFORNIA SUPERIOR COURT FAMILY
LAW JUDGE AMY M. PELLMAN

1988

NY CITY FAMILY COURT
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE EDWINA G.
RICHARDSON-MENDELSON

1989

NY CITY CIVIL COURT JUDGE
SHARON AARONS

WESTCHESTER FAMILY COURT JUDGE
JANET C. MALONE

NY CITY CRIMINAL COURT JUDGE
TOKO SERITA

1990

KINGS COUNTY FAMILY COURT JUDGE
BRYANNE A. HAMILL

POUGHKEEPSIE CITY COURT JUDGE
KATHERINE A. MOLONEY

1991

QUEENS COUNTY SUPREME COURT
JUSTICE LAWRENCE V. CULLEN

NY COUNTY ACTING SUPREME COURT
JUSTICE SHLOMO S. HAGLER

BRONX CIVIL COURT JUDGE
NELIDA MALAVE GONZALEZ

NY CITY CRIMINAL COURT JUDGE
RITA M. MELLA

SUFFOLK COUNTY FAMILY COURT
JUDGE ANDREW G. TARANTINO

1992

KINGS COUNTY SUPREME COURT
JUSTICE RICHARD VELASQUEZ

1993

SYRACUSE CITY COURT JUDGE
VANESSA E. BOGAN

1996

NASSAU COUNTY DISTRICT COURT
JUDGE ROBERT H. SPERGEL

1998

NY CITY CIVIL COURT HOUSING JUDGE
VERNA SAUNDERS

NEW YORK STATE'S LEGISLATURE

ASSEMBLY MEMBER
DANIEL J. O'DONNELL ('87)

SENATE DEPUTY MAJORITY LEADER
JEFFREY D. KLEIN ('93)

ASSEMBLY MEMBER
JANELE HYER-SPENCER ('98)

CUNY LAW ALUM MAYORS

BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK, MAYOR
MATTHEW T. RYAN ('90)

VILLAGE OF LYNBROOK, LONG ISLAND,
MAYOR BRIAN F. CURRAN ('94)

CITY COUNCIL

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER
HELEN D. FOSTER ('92)

BOWIE, MARYLAND COUNCIL
MEMBER AND PRO TEM MAYOR
TODD M. TURNER ('94)

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER
LARRY B. SEABROOK ('00)

Through mailings, surveys, and phone calls, we try as hard as possible to keep up on all our alums, but we might have missed you! So please let us know where you are and what you are up to. E-mail Ansley Davenport in Alumni Relations with your information: Ansley.Davenport@mail.law.cuny.edu



Baltimore's Dynamic Duo

SUZANNE SANGREE AND MICHAEL BRAVERMAN

Suzanne Sangree and Michael Braverman's first meeting was in 1983, when they were among CUNY Law's first incoming class. Before they met, however, Sangree was in Nicaragua and Braverman in Baltimore.

While far from home, both received a letter from their parents. That's not so unusual, except that each letter included a copy of a *New York Times* article touting the opening of a new law school with "nontraditional assumptions" and an innovative curriculum teaching "law in the service of human needs." Inspired, both returned to New York.

Fast-forward from graduation in 1986 to the 2000s and the two meet again. This time it isn't in Queens, but Baltimore. Braverman joined Baltimore's Department of Housing and Community Development right after graduation.

As a housing attorney, he prosecuted landlords who neglected properties and vacant buildings. "Neglected, abandoned buildings bring down real estate values and are a draw for garbage and drugs," he said. "But there was so much bureaucracy and so little information that it was difficult for community activists and the city to monitor repair and cleanup, let alone take action."

In response, Braverman initiated a community prosecution model in the late 1980s, forming a new partnership between the city and advocates. "We began to meet directly with communities to litigate those cases that were important to them," he explained.

Braverman left Housing to work as a Baltimore City prosecutor, starting a program called the Community Anti-Drug Assistance Project. Years later, he returned once again to the Housing Department. This time he had a new mission: focus on management and go high tech. "In order to get outcomes, Baltimore needed new business systems that would create more transparency, accountability, and efficiency."

Braverman and his team reengineered housing inspections and launched a sophisticated computer program to manage the boarding and cleanup of vacant properties. The new management structure, business systems, and technology paid off. Cleaning and boarding of each abandoned building plummeted from an average of 245 days to an incredible 13 days. At the same time, inspectors shifted from a reactive to a proactive approach. As a result, the number of properties cleaned and secured went from 15,000 in FY 2005 to more than 42,000 in FY 2008. "It made a huge difference in neighborhoods," said Braverman, who was recently named Baltimore Housing's Deputy Commissioner for Permits and Code Enforcement.

Braverman's efforts also made a huge difference to Suzanne Sangree. In fact, Sangree credits his data as the linchpin to the city's case against Wells Fargo for "reverse redlining," or predatory lending. The data not only tracks what buildings need repairs, but what it costs to clean and board up each vacancy. These costs, combined with the associated costs of foreclosed and abandoned properties, such as increased police and firefighter resources, lost taxes, and loss of property values, helped Sangree make the case.

Unlike Braverman, however, Sangree didn't go straight

to Baltimore. Instead, after graduation, she worked as a Fellow for the ACLU's Reproductive Freedom Project. From there, she became a prosecutor fighting AIDS discrimination for the New York City Commission on Human Rights. In 1994, she went to Baltimore to teach at the University of Maryland School of Law.

Since 2007, she has been leading the charge against Wells Fargo. Days before Sangree officially started her new job as a Baltimore Chief Solicitor, she went to her new office to sift through the files. That was a Thursday. While there, she was asked to review a letter from Relman & Dane, PLLC, a social justice law firm, suggesting that the city make a case against discriminatory lending practices.

Even though that letter was several months old, Sangree recognized that something had to be done. That Thursday, she called John Relman and asked if the offer was still on. He said yes, and by Monday, she and City Solicitor George Nilson had begun

to outline how the city could sue under the Fair Housing Act.

"Because African-American neighborhoods were deprived of credit for generations through redlining, they were starved for financing to buy a home or get a roof repaired," she said. "Wells Fargo targeted them for highly profitable subprime mortgages, even though many qualified for prime," she noted. "People lacked experience evaluating loan offers and were vulnerable to abuse."

"It is the database from Braverman's office that makes it possible to prove damages and determine the economic impact foreclosures are having on the city," she said. "We're suing for injunctive relief and damages and hope to support Baltimore Mayor Sheila Dixon's 10-year plan to end homelessness and help people who have lost their homes in foreclosure." The case survived a motion to dismiss, and Sangree and the Relman team are now conducting discovery. ●●

CUNY Law On the Move!

In an anticipated move, CUNY Law School will relocate to the first six floors of a 14-story environmentally green building at 2 Court Square in Long Island City. "The CUNY Law community has been committed to finding a more suitable location for the School for more than a decade," said Dean Michelle J. Anderson. "We need better commuter options and more space," she explained.

Two Court Square's proximity to seven subway lines, seven bus lines, the LIRR, and Manhattan creates new accessibility for current and prospective students. In addition, the School will gain nearly 70,000 square feet, which will enable it to create larger classrooms, an auditorium, and a moot courtroom.

"The easy commute to 2 Court Square creates more opportunities for our students to connect with the legal community and internships throughout the five boroughs," said Anderson. "Moreover," she added, "the additional space will be devoted to the core academic and social justice agenda of the Law School—enhancing the faculty's ability to deliver an excellent program and students' ability to learn the theory and practice of public interest lawyering."

Because the building was designed as an educational facility, it is replete with classrooms, smart technology, and study areas and will require minimal renovation. "This puts us on a faster track for moving in," said Anderson. "We hope to move in time for the fall 2011 class session."

The added space and greater accessibility also give the school an opportunity to develop a part-time program. "An evening program would appeal particularly to older students, working parents, and those from working-class backgrounds," Anderson said. "The move allows us to further a key aspect of our mission, which is to make an excellent legal education



Two Court Square, Long Island City, NY, designed by Kohn Pedersen Fox

accessible to everyone, including those from underrepresented communities. The move will enhance CUNY Law's efforts to diversify the profession."

With the new site, CUNY Law will become one of the greenest law schools in the country. Designed by Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF), experienced higher education architects, the building at 2 Court Square is LEED Gold certified, which means that its construction had a reduced environmental impact, and its design increases occupants' health and well-being. CUNY will fully own and operate the six floors as a condominium for CUNY Law School's exclusive use. Anderson concluded, "we are thrilled to be able to offer our students, faculty, and staff such an exceptional space in which to pursue our mission." ●●

Professor Ramzi Kassem and students working on Guantánamo and Bagram cases: Left to right: Ramzi Kassem, Talia Peleg, Michele Lampach, Suzanne Adely, Shirley Lin, Martin Brown, Mona Patel



QUESTION AND ANSWER

Ramzi Kassem

New Director of CUNY Law's Immigrant and Refugee Rights Clinic

Ramzi Kassem, a passionate fighter for due process and the rule of law, brings his talent to CUNY Law's Immigrant and Refugee Rights Clinic as its new director. With a J.D. from Columbia University and a French law degree from the Sorbonne, Professor Kassem began his work litigating domestic wrongful convictions, then shifted to wrongful imprisonment with an international dimension, working on cases with his students first as an Adjunct Professor at Fordham Law School and then as a Lecturer at Yale Law School.

WHAT INSPIRES YOU TO WORK IN SOCIAL JUSTICE?

Dealing with people directly and helping to the extent possible can be tremendously motivating. I looked for public interest opportunities during my undergrad years and through law school at Columbia, working on death penalty cases in Louisiana, at a local NGO in Haiti, and at the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR).

I ended up taking an extra year and going to France for a French law degree through the Sorbonne. I thought in doing international work it would be useful to have a grounding in the civil legal system as well as the common law system.

After the Sorbonne, I came back here and decided to focus on domestic issues I cared about, gaining litigation experience working on the cases of people who had been wrongfully convicted. My colleagues and I exposed police and crime lab practices that led to wrongful convictions, and we pressed for systemic reforms and reparations for our clients.

Back in law school, I had worked with the ACLU and CCR on domestic post-9/11 detentions. I had been tracking national security issues, even when I was in France, and I decided to find a way to get involved in the Guantánamo Bay cases.

WHAT DRAWS YOU TO THE GUANTÁNAMO CASES?

Three reasons compel me to work on these cases. I am committed to the rule of law because of my legal training and because of my values as a human being and an American citizen. Our government wants places like Guantánamo and Bagram to operate outside the rule of law. That made me want to get involved. Also, because of my background representing unjustly imprisoned Americans, I saw some clear parallels to the experience of men at Guantánamo—except they didn't even get a trial. The final dimension is more personal: All the people imprisoned at Guantánamo and places like it resemble me in some respects. They are invariably Muslim, and often Arab, men. In many cases, their identity, combined with loose associations and the fact that they traveled, made these men

suspect in the U.S. government's view. I was born and grew up overseas, and I find that picture appalling.

I began working on Guantánamo cases in 2005 when I was teaching in Fordham's Law Clinic. I've been to the base about 20 times and plan to go back again soon to meet with clients and for hearings before a military commission. Among other matters, my students in the Immigrant and Refugee Rights Clinic will work on the cases of Ahmed Al-Darbi, who is imprisoned at Guantánamo and facing trial by military commission, and Amin Al-Bakri, who is imprisoned at Bagram Air Force Base, a U.S. military detention center in Afghanistan.

WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO CUNY SCHOOL OF LAW?

Clinical legal work affords me the freedom to choose cases that I feel are important and meaningful. We not only contribute to the client's defense, but also contribute to the education of our students and to our own ongoing education. That is the unique role that clinics can play. We try to creatively apply and shape law on a daily basis to give our clients the best possible representation, oftentimes better representation than they would otherwise have access to.

CUNY Law students are unique in that regard. They often come from full careers with attendant expertise and judgment. Moreover, they have the energy, dedication, and time to focus on a case in a way that seasoned practitioners, and even legal NGOs, don't. It's a dynamic process, with the students building off one another's thinking and ideas.

On a macro scale, CUNY Law is the only institution I know that is wholly committed to public interest law and to preparing students for that practice through clinical education, which is the culmination of our three-year curriculum here. Staff, faculty, and students are all wholeheartedly dedicated to public interest law and to producing public interest legal talent. What is, unfortunately, all too often only an afterthought at other institutions is front and center here at CUNY Law. ●●



Rhonda Copelon

On the Cutting Edge: CUNY Law's International Women's Human Rights Clinic

By Katie Gallagher, CUNY Law 2000

In November, dozens of alums of CUNY School of Law's pioneering International Women's Human Rights Clinic (IWHR) reconnected at a reunion in New York City. Hailing from four continents, they came to celebrate IWHR's 17 years of cutting-edge human rights advocacy and the worldwide impact it has made. But most poignant was the opportunity for clinic participants and allies to share their experiences and to take the measure of how IWHR has generated a corps of dynamic lawyers who have brought new vision to their work in many fields, including human rights.

IWHR was cofounded by Professors Rhonda Copelon and Celina Romany in 1992 and has been led by Copelon for the last 15 years. Copelon was well suited for the task: While an attorney at the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), she was immersed in early feminist legal work, and she was one of the two lead counsel who opened U.S. courts to international human rights claims in the historic *Filartiga v. Pena-Irala* case.

IWHR was one of the first human rights clinics at a U.S.-based law school and the first human rights clinic to work with partners to provide support to the global, feminist, women's human rights movement. Copelon was a founding faculty member of CUNY Law, and "Rhonda's spirit and intention are reflected in so many aspects of our beloved School," said CUNY Law School Dean Michelle J. Anderson. "Her passion and intellect helped shape the School's core mission, as well as the field of international women's human rights."

Now, 26 years later, after what Copelon describes as "a fabulous and privileged journey in education and advocacy working with amazing students, as well as partners and clients here and abroad," she will step down from the directorship of IWHR. She credits her fellow teachers with bringing breadth and depth to IWHR's work. Professor Andy Fields is, according to Copelon, a "brilliant litigator and devoted teacher who guides students—sometimes painfully at first—to research and groundbreaking discoveries." Cathy Albisa, "a deeply insightful force in the field," who co-taught IWHR in the late 1990s, pioneered its economic rights work, and founded the National Economic and Social Rights Initiative, is co-teaching part-time. The Law School is searching for a new director for the IWHR Clinic to carry on its pioneering work.

The impact of IWHR, Copelon, and her colleagues (who over the years have included Celina Romany, Vahida Nainar, Jennie Green, and Barbara Bedont, in addition to Andy Fields and Cathy Albisa) goes beyond the clinic's work product. Currently, Fields supervises interns engaged in groundbreak-

ing litigation representing immigrant domestic workers subjected to forced labor and sexual slavery perpetrated by diplomats and family members. These cases have enabled students to serve clients, work with skilled co-counsel on federal litigation, and argue in federal court. Cathy Albisa supervised IWHR interns who were drafting IWHR's first Supreme Court *amicus* brief and a petition to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights challenging U.S. welfare cutbacks and Medicaid cuts. Albisa is now supervising a project on gender and poverty in public housing for a presentation to the U.N. special rapporteur on housing.

SPOTLIGHT: IWHR ALUMS

Pam Spees ('98), international human rights expert practicing in Louisiana and New York, recalled, "IWHR brought me into contact with an amazing and inspiring array of activists, advocates, and academics from all over the world who were involved in groundbreaking work on the global level geared at breathing more life and meaning into the international legal frameworks with a gender perspective."

Chyrel R. Allicock ('01), who worked on the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal, now works for the Ministry of Legal Affairs for Trinidad and Tobago. She describes IWHR being "as enriching and exhilarating as it was draining," but emphasizes that Copelon "kept encouraging me and pushing me to really think concepts through to a workable solution and then

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"IWHR began at a time when women's rights were ignored as human rights, a time that was reminiscent in many ways of the 1970s in the U.S., when women were excluded from equal citizenship, and domestic violence was women's just dessert. It was the cadre of activists, visionaries, and countless courageous women here and abroad who began long, deep, intersectional, and gender-inclusive feminist revolutions that exposed the androcentrism of human rights law. They have won recognition of, and begun redress for, violations of international law committed against women and on the basis of gender. It is important to remember that, while legal scholars and practitioners have helped to build the theoretical, legal foundations, the fundamental impetus came from women's creative, urgent, and culturally rooted demand for equality and human rights."

— RHONDA COPELON

CLOSE-UP: IWHR

During every generation at IWHR, there have been projects and cases to inspire students and teach them that taking on difficult issues makes an important difference for client communities. The clinic emphasizes that the mastery of human rights fundamentals and gender perspectives, cultural sensitivity, and a good dose of humility are musts for legal advocates who tackle oppression in the U.S. and elsewhere. In many places around the world, the rule of law is weak and the problems, especially for women and other gender "transgressors," are many-layered.

From the outset, IWHR's work has addressed access to justice, with particular attention to the intersections of race, gender, and class in such areas as violence against women and reproductive, sexual, and economic justice. Copelon has instilled in IWHR interns the critical importance of social change lawyering—of using law to advance the goals of social movements and activists, of thinking originally, and of having the courage to challenge authority and settled ways. Strategic, persuasive advocacy, as well as authentic collaborations with

clients, activists, and co-counsel in diverse and multi-cultural settings have been hallmarks of IWHR. Copelon also emphasizes the difference between the negative character of domestic rights under prevailing interpretations of the U.S. Constitution and the holistic, positive, and ever-evolving frame of universal human rights.

IWHR's students have worked on a range of issues, including Alien Tort Statute cases in U.S. courts on behalf of Bosnian refugees, Algerian feminists, and journalists persecuted by armed Islamist groups. Today, former IWHR interns can be found in many settings, including U.S.-based poverty law offices; immigrants', prisoners', women's, workers', and sexual rights projects; progressive foundations and community service groups; international NGOs working on international justice, women's, LGBTQ, and disability rights; and in staff positions at international tribunals and U.N. and humanitarian missions. In all of these places, the lawyering skills and perspectives of justice acquired during students' time in IWHR are serving not only the individual CUNY graduates but the communities in which they work.

INTERNATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

>> Copelon cofounded the **Women's Caucus for Gender Justice** and served, along with IWHR, as its legal secretariat, preparing documents with international partners for the negotiations of the Rome Statute, the treaty that created the International Criminal Court (ICC). In that role, Copelon contributed to the successful codification of gender crimes and provisions throughout the ICC's process. Pam Spees ('98), who worked on the negotiations as an intern, became the program director for the caucus and continued to work with IWHR interns, including Katie Gallagher ('00).

>> IWHR's *amicus* briefs in the **International Criminal Tribunals** (for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia) resulted in the recognition in international law of rape as a crime of genocide and as torture. IWHR played a key role in establishing the relationship between torture and gender violence through various initiatives, including a 1994 communication regarding sexual violence against Haitian women and a shadow report to the Committee Against Torture highlighting the sexualized violence at Abu Ghraib, an aspect of torture that has not yet been fully recognized in the United States.

>> In 1994, Copelon published a highly influential article, "Recognizing the Egregious in the Everyday: Domestic Violence as Torture." From 2005 to 2007, interns assisted in the **Committee Against Torture's** drafting of "General Comment 2," which recognized a broad range of gender crimes, including domestic violence, as within the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. In 2008, the Special Rapporteur on Torture, Manfred Nowak, highlighted similar issues in a major report on torture and gender.

>> Collaborating with colleagues abroad, interns have also drafted and lobbied "**Shadow Reports**" to U.N. treaty committees, one of which resulted in recognition of women's rights to reproductive healthcare. As "law clerks" to the judges of the International Women's Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery ("comfort women"), IWHR interns drafted the 300+ page judgment and assisted proceedings in Tokyo and The Hague. These interns are currently assisting the Burmese Women's League and the Nobel Women's Initiative on preparations for a tribunal to be held in New York in March 2010 to call attention to the violations of women and democratic rights in Burma.

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expected me to aid in the implementation of the process to arrive at the solution." Lara Rabiee ('06), Research and Policy Officer at the Victorian Law Reform Commission in Melbourne, Australia, remembers that "IWHR, under Rhonda's leadership, exemplified what a third-year clinic should be—a chance for students to see that, as future lawyers, they can be imaginative and creative in their work and able to initiate projects with a positive social impact."

Lisa Davis ('08) works with Women's Link in Colombia and with MADRE in New York City to advance women's

"Rhonda's impact is lasting, and that includes her impact on training a new generation of committed feminist progressive lawyers."

**—LEADING FEMINIST SCHOLAR AND ACTIVIST
CHARLOTTE BUNCH**

human rights domestically and in the United Nations; Susan Timmons ('06) runs the pro bono program at the American Immigration Lawyers Association; Tina Minkowitz ('01), founder of the Center for the Human Rights of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry, was a leader in the international process that created the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; Rebecca Brown ('07) coordinates the gender program at the International Center on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; Ruth Cusick ('08) is working with the Dignity in Schools Project on behalf of mentally disabled youth; Katie Gallagher ('00), a staff attorney at CCR, is part of the legal team representing Iraqi victims tortured by private contractors at Abu Ghraib. Ann Cammett ('00) is a professor at the University of Nevada. Taking stock of the clinic's impact on aspiring lawyers, CUNY Law Professor Sue Byrant notes, "Rhonda and IWHR inspire students to devote themselves to social justice, to work from a multicultural and community-centered perspective, and to believe in their capacity to push the boundaries of law." ●●

"Rhonda is creative, determined, and impassioned—she doesn't understand the word 'impossible.'"

—NANCY STEARNS, COPELON'S FORMER CCR COLLEAGUE WHO ESTABLISHED THE MONELL DOCTRINE IN THE U.S. SUPREME COURT



Doug Cox

New International Law Librarian

It was Doug Cox's first brush wrangling with forces beyond his control that ignited his commitment to defending the legal rights of others. During his first year as an attorney in London working for Allen & Overly, he unexpectedly received orders from the U.S. Army to report for duty in Oklahoma. Cox thought that after his four-year Army stint in the late 1990s, he had finished his required service. However, the military's "Stop-Loss" policy of extending service contracts required Cox to return to the Army. "It was a powerful lesson in what it feels like to be a client with a legal problem who feels fear and uncertainty."

Although he rushed to his firm's library to research how he might challenge his orders, he ultimately chose to serve since his former Army mates had to do so as well. Six months later, Cox was out of uniform again and back to practicing law. He then became part of his firm's pro bono practice group and began traveling to Guantánamo to meet with detainees who had filed *habeas corpus* petitions.

"Some of the clients were just boys at the time, and we had to convince them that we weren't interrogators and were there to help them. We encouraged them to take a chance on our legal system, but they were understandably skeptical," he said. "Now, four years later, the boys have become men, and they still haven't had a proper hearing. Clearly, their skepticism was justified."

Today Cox maintains his commitment to the rights of Guantánamo detainees. He visited Guantánamo in April, serving the same clients as a volunteer attorney.

What Cox learned there led to a strong interest in the rights of prisoners. Although he earned his J.D. from the University of Texas, it was the Master of Library Science (MLS) program at Queens College that offered him the next chance to work in this arena. As a law library intern at Rikers Island, he helped inmates with legal research and explained the legal issues raised by their cases. "When people try to do their own legal research it's hard, but it's courageous, and they are really trying to help themselves," he said. "Working in a busy jail law library is like doing legal triage in an emergency room."

It was also at Rikers that he learned about CUNY School of Law. "Other interns were CUNY Law students who talked about the unique nature of the School," he explained. "In New York City, where there are so many unmet legal needs, the mission of this School is crucial." After graduating with his MLS from Queens College, Cox came on board in June as the School's new International Law Librarian.

The School's mission and the variety of the work in the law library appeal to Cox. "In the morning, you can be researching adoption law and, in the afternoon, you can be finding the penal code for Argentina," he said. He also stresses the power of research: "A lot of CUNY students go on to represent people with less political and financial power than the institutions they may be up against; good legal research and legal writing can help to level the playing field. That's important for students to understand." ●●



From Barbados to the Bronx to CUNY Law's Criminal Defense Clinic

When she was growing up, Nicole Smith remembers that she always had something to say. Sensing her passion, her mother said, "You really need to become a lawyer." Her family hails from Barbados, and Smith is the first one born here. "Education is a strong ethic in my family. I'm used to working hard and pushing hard for things I believe in," she said. "I knew I had to channel my energy into helping people."

Racial injustice and systemic discrimination drive Smith's commitment to effect change. "I've always seen how communities of color and low-income communities have not had the legal representation and the support that they need and deserve," she said. For five years, Smith had the opportunity to channel her legal acumen and resolve in the courtroom. As a staff attorney at the Bronx Defenders, she argued on behalf of a range of clients where much was at stake. The Bronx Defenders really called to her, she said, "because their model of holistic advocacy addresses the social, civil, family, and immigration consequences that clients face because of a criminal case."

Smith's intellectual curiosity is devoted as much to finding a legal solution as it is to dissecting the social complexities surrounding a case. "The criminal justice system is the end point when everything else has failed. Many of our most challenging social problems, such as poverty, lack of quality education, and untreated mental health and substance abuse issues, can lead people directly into the criminal justice system," she explained. "It's important to see a client as a whole person with their criminal case as just one piece of the picture."

This kind of perspective and experience is what Smith plans to bring as an Instructor/Supervising Attorney to CUNY Law's Criminal Defense Clinic. "My approach will not only be to teach students the law, but to help them think about and understand the personal and larger social challenges that bring many clients into the system," she said. "I also want students to get a sense of how important it is for clients to walk away feeling like they had an advocate that really listened to their concerns and fought hard for them."

Smith first felt the pull to work in the criminal justice system when she was an undergraduate, before she obtained a law degree at Georgetown. As an Institute for International Public Policy Fellow, she studied at the University of Natal in South Africa. Since her work began only about five years after apart-

heid "officially" ended, fear and mistrust of the government and the criminal justice system were quite pronounced.

"There was a new democracy in the works, and it was there that I got my first introduction to the criminal justice system," she remembered. "I saw a lot of optimism because there were all of these newfound constitutional rights and protections, but I also saw how the long-standing effects of racism and poverty kept people marginalized."

"My approach will not only be to teach students the law, but to help them think about and understand the personal and larger social challenges that bring many clients into the system."

She recognizes the dialectic: "It was difficult for people to believe that the criminal justice system, which had recently been a major source of repression, could actually protect them or treat them fairly," she said. "It made me think about the history of oppression in the U.S., and how communities of color often experience a similar distrust of the system," she reflected. "Seeing these parallels really intrigued me and still informs my approach to criminal justice advocacy today." ●●



On Becoming a Lawyer

STUDENTS FIND SUPPORT AT CUNY LAW



David Nadvorney and Astrid Gloade

This fall, one of the largest incoming classes stepped through CUNY Law's front doors and into the classroom. From the moment Orientation began, they began to learn what it means to think like a lawyer.

Confronted by a range of hypothetical cases, their pre-law seminars started them on the path to engaging with knowledge and language in a new way. Fact patterns, precedents, case law, *en banc*, *pro se*—students started to become acquainted with a new vocabulary and with formal legal constructs.

To fully support students' new intellectual venture, CUNY Law possesses one of the oldest and most uniquely integrated academic support programs among law schools in the nation. Through its Irene Diamond Professional Skills Center, the School takes pedagogy to another level.

Sitting right alongside students in their first year, and continuing into their second, are David Nadvorney, Director of the Academic Support Program, and Irene Diamond Professional Skills Center Director Astrid Gloade. They are both former lawyers, and their days at CUNY Law are devoted to helping students become successful graduates. "I don't know of any other law school that welcomes instructors from their academic support centers into their classrooms," said Nadvorney, who has run the Center since 1991. "It's a collaborative effort on pedagogy."

Through one-on-one and group work, Nadvorney and Gloade assist students on a full range of academic skills, including working with the components of legal reasoning, reading and briefing cases, outlining courses, and performing extensive exam practice. "This participatory approach makes us partners in their learning," Nadvorney explained.

To further support students, in 2003, the School launched its Summer Law Institute, which is led by Nadvorney. The three-week, full-time intensive course tackles academics, study skills, and the culture of CUNY Law School.

ASTRID GLOADE JOINS SKILLS CENTER

Encounters with law enforcement and others in which she was singled out for "being out of place" made Astrid Gloade "keenly aware of how the law can be used as a vehicle for change and for social justice."

It was her human rights externship in Kenya for Columbia Law School and her study in Nigeria for her University of Pennsylvania undergraduate work, however, that cemented her commitment to using the law to promote individual rights and integrity in government representatives.

Gloade's interests were fostered as an associate at Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen, and Hamilton, where she "worked on an array of issues ranging from political asylum to fair housing to employment discrimination," she said. After Cleary, Gloade joined the enforcement division of the New York City Conflict of Interest Board. "It was concern about agents of the government wielding so much power that drew me to the law. That same concern drew me to helping New York City public servants understand their ethical obligations and enforcing the law when they ignored those obligations. I wanted to help keep public service and the government honest."

At the same time Gloade successfully lawyered for public interest causes, she also pursued her commitment to enhancing educational opportunities for students. Her family moved from Antigua to New York, she said, to increase her educational opportunities. She feels an obligation to do the same for students and has made an impact on many through mentoring and tutoring throughout her career.

Gloade, a former adjunct professor at Brooklyn Law School and former Director of Academic Support Programs for Hofstra Law School, now brings her talent to CUNY Law as Director of the Irene Diamond Professional Skills Center.

"The skills that we inculcate will become a foundation on which students will build throughout their careers," she said. "It is like we are helping them to become fluent in a new language, so they can translate their passion into the power of the law." ●●



Alumni News

1986

JANE CAMERON is an adjunct professor at SUNY Buffalo School of Law. She teaches NY State administrative law and "The State as Environmental Advocate." She remains an Assistant AG in the Environmental Protection Bureau of the Office of the NY State AG.

1988

JONATHAN T.K. COHEN is now an approved mediator and arbitrator with the American Arbitration Association (www.adr.org). Areas of conflict resolution include commercial real estate, construction, banking, creditor-debtor, foreclosure, and business partnership disputes. Since 2006, he has been appointed to serve as a mediator for about 30 business litigations pending in the Superior Court of NJ.

BARBARA WILKANOWSKI has opened a law firm in Queens County, after 20 years as a supervising assistant DA in the Queens County DA's Office. The firm concentrates on criminal defense work with some traffic law, administrative law, environmental law, and construction law. Reach her at 917-886-0643 or barbnreno@aol.com.

THE HON. EDWINA RICHARDSON-MENDELSON was appointed administrative judge of the NY City Family Court in May. She was appointed to the NY City Family Court in 2003, and has been the supervising judge of Queens Family Court since 2008.

1991

MELISSA COOK was legally married in Connecticut on February 13, 2009, to her partner of more than eight years, Amanda Wetherbee Smith, M.D. Prior to that, they celebrated their marriage with family and friends on October 21, 2006. On May 6, 2009, they were blessed with a beautiful baby girl, Morgan Wetherbee

Cook. She is currently working as a senior court attorney for Housing Court Judge Lydia C. Lai in the Bronx.

1992

JEANNE CAMERON WASHBURN (formerly Muniz) and her partner adopted their second child from China this year, Tess Hua Mei, who is 3-years-old. She reports they had a wonderful time exploring China and creating a new family. She has been practicing law for the past 13 years with the Domenici Law Firm in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She is also a law instructor for the University of Phoenix.



Jeanne Cameron Washburn and family tour China

1994

MICHAEL J. MEEHAN noted that eight members of the CUNY Law Class of 1994 had a mini class reunion at the home of **DENIS CLARKE** on May 25, 2009.

JOEL HIRSHFIELD recently opened his own practice in White Plains, NY, specializing in personal injury and medical

malpractice, predominantly on the plaintiff's side, with a percentage of defense work representing clients regarding insurance coverage issues.



First row, left to right: Katya Plotnik, Bernadette Crowley-Gina, Alan Strauss, Cathy Fitzgerald (former CUNY Law instructor). Second row, left to right: Larry Sharpe, Denis Clarke, Nahum Kianovsky, Michael Meehan

KARL RUPPERT has been appointed court counsel and judicial hearing officer (magistrate) for the 11th Judicial District Court of Louisiana, continuing his work with the Louisiana judiciary he started in 2005. He has been quoted frequently about the recent opening of the new Yankee Stadium, as his ancestors built the old stadium and owned the team from 1915 to 1945. He maintains ties to NYC with family and friends as well as continuing his work as counsel to the Kew Gardens Hills Community Foundation and board member of the Yorkville-Kleindeutschland Historical Society. Karl can be reached at jacob@jacobrupper.com.

THE HON. TODD M. TURNER is seeking reelection to a third term to the City Council in Bowie, MD, outside Washington, D.C., in the November 2009 elections. Council Member Turner was first elected in 2005 and, upon reelection in 2007, was selected by his colleagues to serve as Mayor Pro Tem, the first African-American to hold the position in

the city's history. Todd, his wife, **ANITA GAUHAR TURNER** ('04), and their two daughters, Rachel and Maya, have lived in Bowie since 2002. For information, visit www.turnerforcouncil.org.

1996

BRUCE BIGGINS and **CHRISTINE CHOI** ('96) continue their practice and partnership in International Falls, MN. Practice is limited to criminal defense and an occasional pro bono case. They report that they spend much time working, playing, and relaxing at their "office annex," a cabin a few feet from the Canadian border on the Rainy River.

1997

KEVIN MAHONEY and **STEVE SHERLOCK** ('97) enjoyed the Great American Weekend in Goshen, NY with their children.



Kevin Mahoney and Steve Sherlock vacation in Goshen, NY

1999

REBECCA LINDHURST has a case featured in the May-June 2009 issue of *Clearing-house Review*. The casenote is titled "D.C. Circuit Says that Enhanced-Voucher Tenants have Right to Remain and Landlord's Benign Motive Does Not Justify Source of Income Discrimination."

2002

CHRYLL D. CREWS has completed her Master of Science degree in bioethics at Albany Medical College in Albany, NY.

2003

ODELLA WOODSON joined the Advocacy Center of Queens County (ACQC) as a staff attorney. She and **MIKA DASHMAN** ('05), **DANA NORTHCRAFT** ('04), **DAN ROBLES** ('03), and **ED CAMPANELLI** ('03) monitored voting in the presidential election. She decided not to get married after learning that "her intended did not have 60 cows and disclosing that she was not a virgin." A better reason to celebrate, she said, "is the discovery that she, **MICHELLE ANDREWS** ('05), and **MIKA DASHMAN** "share the same birthday and plan to have a great joint party."

AZALIA VOLPE (Lopez) was married on August 22, 2009. She is also excited to announce that she is expecting a baby in December. She reports that what she will have is anyone's guess as long as it is happy and healthy. She is currently completing her EMBA at Wagner College.

SANDY JENSEN and **NADYA ROSEN** ('04) welcomed their son, Alexander Sky, on November 17, 2008. Sandy and son are home together in Brooklyn, and Nadya is back at work as a staff attorney in the Family Law/DV Unit of South Brooklyn Legal Services. Nadya is pleased to be working with fellow CUNY alum **SHIRA GALINSKY** ('05).

2004

BEN MASTAITIS began work as an Assistant DA at the Albany County DA's Office in May. This is his second stint as an ADA, after having worked at the Queens County DA's office from April 2005 until December of 2007. **KATE MASTAITIS (DOYLE)** ('04) still works for the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern NY, and her office is in Saratoga Springs. In July, they welcomed the birth of their second daughter, Greta.

2005

DEBBIE EGEL received the Legal Professional Award for Senior Attorney at the CARON Greater NY Community Service Awards Breakfast in May.

MALVIKA GUPTA and **SEBASTIAN RICCARDI** ('05) were married on December 20, 2008. Malvika is working with the U.S. Department of Labor's Employee Benefits Security Administration. Sebastian is working with the Legal Aid Society in Brooklyn.



Sebastian Riccardi and Malvika Gupta celebrate at their wedding reception

2006

MATTHEW RUDERMAN began work in April as an assistant counsel in the NY City Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP's) Bureau of Legal Affairs, Regulatory, and Compliance Division. He provides legal counsel to DEP's bureaus concerning a wide variety of environmental, health and safety, regulatory, and compliance matters.

RICHARD CELESTIN is currently the Director of Advocacy and Development at the DOME Project, an alternative to incarceration for youth between the ages of 13 and 19. He also recently created Richard Anthony Celestin Consulting Group, LLC, which focuses on providing youth empowerment opportunities to middle school students.

MICHAEL DAVIDOV, a trusts and estate and elder law attorney, was recently quoted in *The New York Times* for his representation of a Mega Millions lottery winner. He can be reached at md@davidovlaw.com

MARITZA HERNANDEZ gave birth to a baby girl, Madison Layla Cahill, in December 2008. She has recently changed her name to Maritza Cahill. ●●

Faculty Notes

MICHELLE J. ANDERSON presented “Legal Education Reform, Diversity, and Access to Justice” at the Rutgers University Law School Symposium “A Legal Education Prospectus: Law Schools and Emerging Frontiers” in April. The article will be published in the *Rutgers Law Review*. Anderson was quoted in *USA Today*, *Newsday*, and *Alternet* on sexual assault cases and their impact on rape victims. In August, *The New York Law Journal* published Anderson’s letter to the editor on how the decline in funding for legal services affects underserved communities. Anderson served on an ABA site evaluation team at Akron Law School in March.



Maria Arias

MARIA ARIAS and **BERYL BLAUSTONE** co-facilitated “Using Adult Theory and Collaborative Approaches in Developing Clinical Law Student Leadership in Setting Forth Learning Agendas, Initiating Legal Problem-Solving, and Conducting Self-Assessment in Evaluation” at the AALS Clinical Conference in May. Arias was elected to the Executive Committee of the AALS Section on Clinical Legal Education.

SAMEER ASHAR gave several presentations, including “Collaboration, Accountability, and Clinic Design” at the Georgetown Summer Institute on Clinical Teaching in Washington, D.C., and “Worker Authorization and Racial Subordination” at the AALS Mid-Year Meeting, Workshop on Work Law. He also presented “Immigration Enforcement as Social Control”

and was a reviewer for “Negotiating Justice: Progressive Lawyering, Low-Income Clients, and the Quest for Social Change,” on an Author Meets Reader panel at the Law and Society Conference in Denver. Ashar presented on “Immigration Enforcement as Racial Subordination” at the Left Forum and at Yale Law School’s “Frontiers in Social Justice Lawyering: Critical Race Revisited.”

WENDY BACH facilitated a working group of new clinicians at the pre-conference session at the AALS Clinical Conference in May.

PAULA BERG’S black and white photographs were included in three exhibitions in Manhattan in the spring and summer of 2009.

MARY LU BILEK was appointed to serve on the ABA’s Section on Legal Education Special Committee on the Professional Education Continuum, which will examine the Carnegie Foundation’s Report on Legal Education and the CLEA Best Practices in Legal Education Report. Bilek presented “Developing Professionalism from Day One: Bringing the Client into the Classroom” at the Gonzaga Institute for Law Teaching and Learning in June. She was a plenary speaker at the Association of the Bar of the City of New York’s Diversity Pipeline Conference in May. In February, Bilek chaired an ABA site evaluation team at Phoenix School of Law.

BERYL BLAUSTONE presented at the International Journal of Clinical Legal Education Conference in Australia in July. Beryl and **MARIA ARIAS** co-facilitated a panel, “Using Adult Theory and Collaborative Approaches in Developing Clinical Law Student Leadership in Setting Forth Learning Agendas, Initiating Legal Problem-Solving, and Conducting Self-Assessment in Evaluation,” at the AALS Clinical Conference in May.

Blaustone was appointed by the Cabinet Office of the Government of Japan to host a research delegation on the protections afforded by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. She was also consulted on how to use mediation as a tool in disability discrimination cases. The research is sought by Japan in an effort to construct an appropriate policy for its country.



Beryl Blaustone

CAITLIN BORGMANN’S letter to the editor on lack of access to abortion for U.S. servicewomen stationed in combat zones was published in August in *The New York Times*. In July, her op-ed on abortion parental notification laws was published in *Jurist*.

REBECCA BRATSPIES has been appointed to a three-year term on the ABA Standing Committee on the Environment. She was also appointed to the 2010 Program Committee for the American Society of International Law. Rebecca’s article, “Human Rights and Arctic Resources,” was published in the *Southwestern Journal of International Law*.

She presented “Transnational Regulatory Trust” and “Creating Demand: How Globalized Markets Threaten Coral Reefs” at the Law and Society Conference in Denver. Rebecca also presented a paper on regulatory trust at Washington and Lee and one on food security at Drake. Her essays on overfishing appeared in *GRIST* and *The Atlantic Online*.

SUE BRYANT taught in the Georgetown University Law Center's Summer Institute and, with **CARMEN HUERTAS** at the AALS Clinical Conference, co-presented "Backward Design, Forward Justice: Teaching Students to Develop Professional Identity and Purpose as Lawyers for Social Justice." Bryant was also appointed chair of the Planning Committee for the 2010 AALS Clinical Conference.

She presented to the faculty at the University of Denver School of Law on "Developing a Faculty Learning Community through Rounds on Teaching." She also served on an ABA site evaluation team.

ANGELA BURTON coached the defense team of the 7th Grade Thurgood Marshall Junior Mock Trial Competition with Kerry Toner, 3L. The team advanced to the second round of competition this past May.

JANET CALVO presented her paper, "Non-Citizens in the American Health Care System: A Violation of International Human Rights?" at the Law and Society Conference in Denver. She also chaired a session, "Sexual Minorities, Women, and the Criminal Justice System."

Calvo co-facilitated "When is the Personal, Professional?" with Professor Vanessa Merton from Pace University, and Calvo's letter on immigration reform was published in *The New York Times* in April.

PAMELA EDWARDS organized "Workshop for Prospective Faculty of Color," which took place in June at BMCC with contributions by **RAQUEL GABRIEL**, **ANGELA BURTON**, and **JENNY RIVERA**.

Edwards' work and contribution to the success of the 2009 AALS Annual Meeting Workshop, "Progress—The Academy, Profession, Race and Gender: Empirical Findings, Research Issues, Potential Projects, and Funding Opportunities," were recognized in April by the AALS president and Executive Committee.

Edwards was a participant in a roundtable discussion, "CTR and Law School Curriculum," at the Critical Race Theory 20: Honoring Our Past, Charting Our Future Conference, held at the

University of Iowa College of Law.

ANDY FIELDS represented CUNY Law in teachers' working groups throughout the three-day AALS Clinical Conference in May.

RAQUEL GABRIEL, Chairperson of the American Association of Law Libraries' Diversity Committee, coordinated the 2009 Diversity Symposium for its 102nd Annual Meeting and Conference "Rethinking Diversity: Defining Ourselves for the 21st Century." Gabriel will write a new column for *Law Library Journal*, which will focus on how diversity intersects with law librarianship and the broader field of legal education in a multicultural society.

JULIE GOLDSCHIED co-presented "Making Simulations Real: Using Simulations to Teach Doctrine, Skills, and Professionalism Across the Curriculum" with **JENNY RIVERA** at the Summer Conference of the Institute for Law Teaching and Learning in June. She was a panelist at the Georgetown Law Center's Conference celebrating the 15th anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act in April. She also presented "Domestic Violence, The Athlete and Institutional Responsibility" at the Diversity and Sports: the History, the Challenges, and the Future Conference at Widener University School of Law in March.

Goldschied published "Reconsidering Domestic Violence Services and Advocacy," a book review of Goodman & Epstein's *Listening to Battered Women: A Survivor-Centered Approach to Advocacy, Mental Health, and Justice* in the *Pace Law Review*.

BABE HOWELL and Lynn Capuano conducted a workshop on using stories to develop intrapersonal awareness in clinic students at the AALS Clinical Conference in May.

Howell presented her paper, "Broken Lives from Broken Windows: The Hidden Costs of Aggressive Misdemeanor Policing," at the panel "From Page to Practice" at NYU School of Law

in March. Howell also organized and facilitated "Youth in the Criminal Justice System" at a conference cosponsored by Hofstra School of Education and Hofstra Law School in February.

CARMEN HUERTAS and **SUE BRYANT** co-facilitated "Backward Design, Forward Justice: Teaching Students to Develop Professional Identity and Purpose as Lawyers for Social Justice" with Ann Shalleck and Muneer Ahmad from American University Washington College of Law.

RAMZI KASSEM was the lead attorney with his students in *Al-Bakri v. Obama*, one of the cases that won *habeas* rights for detainees at the Bagram Air Force Base in Afghanistan.

JEFF KIRCHMEIER'S article, "The Undiscovered Country: Execution Competency and Death Comprehension," was accepted for publication by the *Kentucky Law Journal* in April.

JULIE KRISHNASWAMI was appointed to the American Association of Law Libraries' (AALL) Diversity Committee in March. She published her second review on the AALL Spectrum and her review of David Bollier's book, *Viral Spiral: A History of Our Movement*, is available at the AALL Web site.



Donna Lee

DONNA LEE co-facilitated "Crossing the Rubicon: Attorney-Client Collaboration and the Dynamics of Initiating Litigation" with Aderson Francois from Howard University School of Law. Lee was a panelist on "Thinking Outside the Box: New Challenges and New Approaches to

Domestic Violence" at St. John's School of Law. The symposia will be published in the *St. John's Ronald H. Brown Journal of Legal Commentary*. Lee conducted "Next Steps: Intimate Partner Violence Against Asian American Women" at the Critical Race Theory 20: Honoring Our Past, Charting Our Future Conference, held at the University of Iowa College of Law.

STEVE LOFFREDO'S article, "Gideon Meets Goldberg: The Case for a Qualified Right to Counsel in Welfare Hearings," was published in the *Touro Law Review*.

SHIRLEY LUNG was promoted to Professor of Law in February. Lung's article, "The Problem Method: No Simple Solution," was published in the *Willamette Law Review*.

ANDREA MCARDLE presented her paper, "Supervising Upper-Division Student Writing: How Should It Be Done, and Who Should Do It?" at the biennial conference of the Association of Legal Writing Directors at the University of Missouri–Kansas City Law School in July. At the same conference, she also presented "Is It Time for Legal Writing Directors to Step Aside?"

McArdle also presented her paper "Power, Responsibility, and the Ideology of the Consumer" at the Law and Society Annual Conference in Denver. She was also the chair/discussant for "Constitutional Adjudication and Political Rights: Does the U.S. Supreme Court Get It Right?" and the chair for "Women's Human Rights in Comparative Perspective" at the same conference.

At the Applied Legal Storytelling Conference at Lewis and Clark Law School in July, she presented a paper "Heroic Narratives of Law Reform: The Court as Narrator and Protagonist."

McArdle's essay, "Writing Across the Curriculum: Professional Communication and the Writing That Supports It," was published in Volume 15 of the *Journal of the Legal Writing Institute*.

JENNY RIVERA See "News Briefs" on page 3.

RUTHANN ROBSON presented "Unsettled: On Sexualities, Empires, and Apologies,"

a media/reading for the Ubuntu Project, at the University of Cape Town Faculty of Law and at the Queer/Empire Workshop, McGill University College of Law.

Robson also participated in a public conversation on Judicial Review and Queer rights with Justice Michael Kirby Justice of the High Court of Australia, to be published in the *Suffolk Law Review*.

Robson's recent publications include "A Servant of One's Own: Virginia Woolf and the Continuing Class Struggles of Feminism," 23 *Berkeley Journal of Gender, Law and Justice* (2008) (essay-review); "Unsettling Sexual Citizenship," 58 *McGill Law Journal* (2008) (essay-review; co-authored); "A Couple of Questions Concerning Class Mobility," 36 *Harvard Law Review* (2009); "Review, Eloquence, and Reason: Creating a First Amendment Culture," 19:3 *Law and Politics Book Review* (2009); and "Like Girls," 11 *Junctures: The Journal for Thematic Dialogues* (2008).

She also authored lessons for the Center for Computer-Assisted Legal Instruction, one on *Marbury v. Madison*, and one on the constitutional law doctrine of "state action." Robson was recently quoted in *Shewired.com's* "Gay Marriage Equals the End of Queer Life," and continues to blog at the Constitutional Law Professors Blog.

RICK ROSSEIN was a speaker at the Fourth Annual John Howard Lecture on Law and Justice at SUNY Purchase in September. Rossein was quoted in "High Court Says Unions Must Arbitrate ADEA Claims" in *Law360*.

RICHARD STORROW'S article "Therapeutic Reproduction and Human Dignity" was published in *Law & Literature* in July. Storrow presented "I Didn't Even Know Her Name: The Erasure of Egg Donors in Stem Cell Science" at the annual meeting of the Southeastern Association of Law Schools. He presented "The Maternal-Fetal Conflict in Infertility Medicine" at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Law, Culture, and the Humanities in April. He also addressed "LGBT

Pathways to Parenthood" at Cardozo Law School in March. Storrow presented "Infertility, Privacy, and Bioethics" at the *William & Mary Journal of Women and the Law* Symposium in February.

SARAH VALENTINE'S article "Traditional Advocacy for the Nontraditional Youth: Rethinking Best Interest for the Queer Child" was published in the *Michigan State Law Review*.

Valentine was a panelist at the *Columbia Journal of Gender and the Law's* Symposium, "Gender on the Frontiers: Confronting Intersectionalities," where she presented "Calling Them Out: Preliminary Thoughts on Ensuring That Attorneys Provide Effective Representation for Queer Youth" in April. Her publication *Queer Kids: A Comprehensive Annotated Legal Bibliography on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Youth* was selected for inclusion in the *University of La Verne Law Review's Selective Bibliographic Index of Juvenile Law Publications* (2007-2008), and is now available on Westlaw/Lexis and in hard copy.

LILLIANA YANEZ represented CUNY Law in teachers' working groups throughout the three-day AALS Clinical Conference in May.

DEBBIE ZALESNE and **DAVID NADVORNEY** continue to work on their book, *Teaching to Every Student: Integrating Skills and Theory into the Contracts Class*, which will be published by Carolina Academic Press. Their article "Deborah Zalesne & David Nadvorney, Teaching Issue Spotting Explicitly" will be published in *The Law Teacher*.

Zalesne and Nadvorney presented "Making Academics Explicit and Accessible: A Skills-Based Approach to Teaching" at the 16th International Conference on Learning in Barcelona in July. Zalesne participated in "Techniques and Strategies for Discussing the Role of Gender in the First-Year Contracts Class" for the "Teaching Gender Inequality in Law Schools Roundtable" at the Law and Society Conference in Denver. ●●

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