



Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission on Minorities

Spring 2010

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE...



Alix Mondesir

West Indian Born Attorney Named to Newly Established Post in Kings County Supreme Court

On August 13, 2009, attorney Alix Mondesir was officially appointed Court Attorney-Referee and named supervisor of a newly established Guardianship Compliance Unit in Kings County Supreme Court by the Honorable Presiding Justice Sylvia O. Hinds-Radix. The three attorney unit is a first of its kind in the State and is charged with establishing protocols to ensure compliance with statutory mandates in an effort to streamline the overall processing of guardianship cases. In addition, the unit reviews cases, confers with attorneys, court examiners, and guardians, and recommends dispositions to the various guardianship judges.

Attorney Mondesir is originally from Port-au-Prince, Haiti. A product of parochial and public schooling, he received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Fordham University in 1979 and a Juris Doctor degree from Brooklyn Law School in 1982. He served as an Assistant District Attorney in Queens County, where he worked in various investigative and trial divisions, before being promoted to the position of Deputy Bureau Chief, and is credited with having successfully prosecuted the first computer trespass case in New York State. A former certified Guardian for the Courts and trained dispute resolution mediator, he has served as an Arbitrator for the New York City Civil Court and its Small Claims division, and as an Administrative Law Judge and Acting Disciplinary Counsel for the N.Y.C. Taxi & Limousine Commission. For nearly ten years he served as Principal Law Clerk to a Justice of the Supreme Court, Kings County. He is a member of the Ecclesiastical Court of the Episcopal Church, Long Island Diocese and the Kings County Supreme Court's Anti-Discrimination Panel for the Office of Court Administration. His affiliations and committee work have included memberships on Bronx Community Board #12, the African-American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF), the Criminal Courts Committee of the Bar of the City of New York, the Brooklyn Bar Association, the Kings County Black History Month Committee, the Bronx Bar Association's Judiciary Committee, the Board of Directors of the Bronx County Black Bar Association, the subcommittee of the Indigent Defense Oversight Committee for the Appellate Division, 1st Department, and as a judge for the Charles W. Froessel Moot Court competition at New York Law School. Mr. Mondesir has been a guest speaker before civic organizations, churches, and various elementary and public high schools.

Reflecting on his new position, attorney Mondesir stated "I applaud the efforts of Presiding Justice Sylvia O. Hinds-Radix whose establishment of the Guardianship Compliance Unit constitutes a clear and unparalleled commitment by the courts to address and safeguard the needs of those most at risk—the afflicted—be they elderly, young, poor, or otherwise in need of assistance with their daily living activities. In light of her astonishingly refreshing, visionary, and innovative leadership, I am pleased and honored to have such a direct role in her administration."

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The Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission on Minorities welcomes the newest appointments to the Commission.

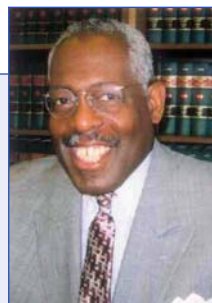
T. Andrew Brown

*Managing Partner of
Brown & Hutchinson*



Hon. Langston McKinney

*Syracuse City Court
Fifth Judicial District*



Hon. George B. Daniels

*United States District Court Judge
Southern District of New York*



Hon. Stephen T. Miller

*Rochester City Court
Seventh Judicial District*



Hon. Kathie Davidson

*Supervising Family Court Judge
Ninth Judicial District*



Hon. Robert E. Torres

*Supreme Court Justice
Twelfth Judicial District*



Nadine C. Johnson, Esq.

*Court Attorney
Criminal Court, Kings County*



Marilyn Vializ

*Chief Court Reporter, Citywide
Criminal Court of the City of New York*



Major Eric Long

*Supreme Court
Kings County*



Adrienne Williams, Esq.

*Court Attorney-Referee
Central Islip, Suffolk County*



RECEPTION HONORING JUSTICE FERN FISHER

On September 29th, 2009, the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission on Minorities hosted a reception honoring the accomplishments of Justice Fern Fisher. Justice Fisher was recently appointed to the post of Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for the Courts in New York City and also serves as Director of the New York State Courts Access to Justice Program, whose mission is to ensure access to justice in civil and criminal matters for New Yorkers of all incomes, backgrounds and special needs. The reception occurred in the Rotunda of 60 Centre Street in New York County. The reception was well attended as those whose lives had been touched by Justice Fisher and who admired her accomplishments came to show their support.

Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman presented Justice Fisher with the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission on Minorities Award For Distinction In Service for her years of public service and leadership. The chair of the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission on Minorities, Justice Rose H. Sconiers, New York Supreme Court Justice in the 8th Judicial District, reflected how Justice Fisher's career had instilled respect, public trust and confidence in the Courts. Justice Fisher fondly recalled her career highlights and thanked those who had inspired her to access the law as a vehicle for positive change. By the end of the program, everyone was inspired that they too could make a positive difference in the lives of others and that it is the little steps that lead to a career of public good.



Hon. Fern Fisher and her son, Sean and daughter, Ashley



Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman, Hon. Fern Fisher,
Hon. Rose H. Sconiers



Hon. Fern Fisher



Hon. Sheila Abdus-Salaam, Hon. Michael Coccoma, Hon. Pam B. Jackman-Brown,
Hon. Jonathan Lippman, Hon. Fern Fisher, Hon. Rose H. Sconiers



Joyce Y. Hartsfield, Esq., Hon. Yvonne Lewis, Chief Clerk William H. Etheridge, Hon. Troy K. Webber, Hon. Eduardo Padro, Rene Myatt, Esq., Karlene Dennis, Esq. (seated)
Hon. Ariel E. Belen, Hon. Fern Fisher, Hon. Rose H. Sconiers, Hon. Doris Ling-Cohan

Tribune Society Anniversary Dinner Dance

An enjoyable time was had by all who attended and helped to celebrate The Tribune Society, Inc., Forty-First Anniversary Dinner Dance, held at the Marina Del Rey, Bronx, New York on Thursday night, November 5, 2009. Guests dined on a delicious meal, danced to the mellifluous tunes of the Warren Daniels Band and socialized with all levels of the court and political communities.

The President's Outstanding Member Award was presented by the Tribune Society President Ernest L. Owens to Senior Court Analyst Kerney K. Christian, State Judicial Institute, Westchester County. Senator Malcolm A. Smith, President, New York State Senate was presented with the Distinguished Service Award by Chief Justice Jonathan Lippman. The Alphonso B. Deal Award was presented to the Presiding Justice Appellate Division, First Department, Honorable Luis Gonzales by the Honorable Carmen Beauchamp Ciprick, Senior Associate Justice Court of Appeals.



Senior Court Analyst Kerney K. Christian,
Tribune Society President Ernest L. Owens

below left: Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman,
Tribune Society President Ernest L. Owens, Hon.
Carmen Beauchamp Ciprick

below right: Tribune Society President Ernest L.
Owens, Senator Malcolm A. Smith, Chief Judge
Jonathan Lippman



THE CERVANTES SOCIETY ANNUAL AWARD CEREMONY



Hon. Fern Fisher, Major Luz Bryan



Major Luz Bryan, Award recipient Christian Velez, Hon. Luis Gonzalez



Award recipient Hon. Fern Fisher receives flowers



Senior Court Clerk Ada Milan, Senior Court Clerk Grace Machuca



An overview of the ceremony



Chief Clerk Tracy Pardo, Joanne Quinones, Esq., President of the Brooklyn's Woman's Bar Association

ON NOVEMBER 17, 2009, THE CERVANTES SOCIETY held their 14th Annual Award Ceremony. The event occurred at the New York County Supreme Court Rotunda at 60 Centre Street, New York City. The keynote speaker was the Honorable Luis Gonzalez, Presiding Justice Appellate Division, First Department.

The Cervantes Society honored Justice Fern Fisher, Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for the Courts in New York City and Joanne Quinones, President, Brooklyn Woman's Bar Association for their outstanding accomplishments. The Louis Gonzalez Youth Award was awarded to Christian Velez of Brooklyn Technical High School. Christian Velez is a participant of the Cervantes mentoring program and those who worked with him spoke very highly of him. The Gilberto Ramirez Scholarship Award was given to Tiffani Ada Milan of St. John's University. Ms. Milan's mother, Ada Milan, who is a senior court clerk at 320 Jay Street accepted the award on her behalf.

THE BRONX CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH

In celebration of the rich legacy of African Americans, on February 18, 2010, the Bronx County Black History Month Committee presented the 7th annual program, entitled, “We Are All In This Together” which paid tribute to those who exemplified the spirit of commitment and dedication. Ms. Diedra Thomas, an assistant principal in Bronx County received the Community Service Award for her efforts to improve the lives of children in the community. The keynote speaker was Dean Meminger of NY1. He invigorated the attendees with an uplifting message. There was also an abundance of talent, commencing with Lt. Walter Holmes, who gave a resounding rendition of the Negro National Anthem to a host of community dancers and singing groups. We look forward to next year’s program.



From left to right - Jacqueline Oates, Diedra Thomas, Steven B. Clark, Dean Meminger, Victor Bryant, Esq., Hon. Efrain Alvarado, Leah Richardson

Justice Nicholas Figueroa Retires



Hon. Nicholas Figueroa and Hon. Eduardo Padro

On November 18, 2009, after nearly thirty years of judicial service, Honorable Nicholas Figueroa retired as a Justice of the Supreme Court. Honorable Eduardo Padro presented a special recognition award to Justice Figueroa from the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission on Minorities. In 1987, former Chief Judge Sol Wachtler commissioned an in-depth study of minority participation within the judiciary and the non-judicial workforce. Justice Figueroa was a member of the original Commission that conducted the study and examined perceptions of racial bias in the courts. The special recognition award acknowledged Justice Figueroa’s dedication and leadership with the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission on Minorities.

The Legacy of the Greensboro Sit-ins

The Office of Court Administration's "Lunch and Learn Program" celebrated Black History Month with a panel discussion commemorating the 50th

Anniversary of the Greensboro lunch counter sit-ins. The panel included the Honorable Lewis L. Douglass, Shannon Taylor, Esq., Elissa Krauss, and Bob Reiser. The Greensboro sit-ins were a driving force in the civil rights movement. Four African American students from North Carolina A&T College; Ezell A. Blair Jr. (kna Jibreel Khazan) David Leinail Richmond, Joseph Alfred McNeil, and Franklin Eugene McCain, protested the segregated counters at the Woolworth store in Greensboro, North Carolina.

This inspired thousands of other students to take part in peaceful protest by sitting at segregated counters all over the country. Most recently, the four men (Mr. Richmond posthumously) were honored by the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in recognition of their contribution to the civil rights movement.

Each of the panel members reflected on their involvement in the civil rights movement and how it impacted their lives.



From right to left: Barbara Zahler-Gringer, Shannon Taylor, Andrea Hoyte, Hon. Lewis L. Douglass, Elissa Krauss and Bob Reiser.

MBBA AND NYCLA CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH



In honor of Black History Month, the New York County Lawyers' Association (NYCLA) and Metropolitan Black Bar Association (MBBA) presented the eighth annual Ida B. Wells-Barnett Justice Award to Jacqueline A. Berrien, associate director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., on February 24, 2010.

(left to right) Dakota D. Ramseur, MBBA president; Hon. Pam Jackman Brown, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Program Chair; Jacqueline A. Berrien, associate director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund; Hon. Yvonne Lewis, Supreme Court, Second Judicial District; and James B. Kobak Jr., NYCLA president elect.

UPCOMING EVENT

On June 16, 2010, the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission on Minorities will host a Conference entitled: Race, Law and the Courts: Framing the Discussion for a Post Racial America.

Promotions & Recognitions

Major Ostacio Negrón was promoted on November 12, 2009 from Captain in Bronx Supreme Court, Criminal Division to Major in Bronx Supreme Court, Criminal Division.

We congratulate you.



Spring 2010

OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION
Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission on Minorities
25 Beaver Street, Room 861
New York, New York 10004

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