



HON. ROSE H. SCONIERS
 CHAIR

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION SUPREME COURT DECISION

On May 17, 1954, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the doctrine of “separate but equal” in American schools was no longer law, and that children of color would finally have access to the same schools as their white peers. The transition from segregated to integrated schools proved to be quite a challenge. It is hard to forget, for example, the image of U.S. Marshals guiding children to school in the midst of screaming mobs. With the Supreme Court decision, a new era of educational opportunity had truly begun.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Legal and Educational Defense Fund (LDF) was instrumental to the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. It was responsible for the strategic planning, alignment of cases, and the collaboration with social scientists that provided the foundation for the Brown decision. The LDF legal team led by Thurgood Marshall who became the first African-American justice on the United States Supreme Court, also included such notables as Constance Motley Baker, who became the first African-American woman to serve as a federal district court judge, and Robert Carter who also became a federal district court judge.

The ruling in the Brown case not only allowed for educational advancement but also marked a breakthrough in the struggle for basic human rights. It provided, for instance, the roadmap that eventually led to the dismantling of legalized discrimination in housing and employment.

Although there is still much work to be completed, we are reminded that together we can work to prevent what have become more subtle forms of discrimination. As the journey continues, let us each strive to be a catalyst for justice and fairness for future generations. ■

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“EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BECOMING A JUDGE SEMINAR” IN BUFFALO NEW YORK



PLANNING COMMITTEE: ELIZABETH FOX-SOLOMON, ESQ., KATHERINE BIFARO, ESQ., HON. ROSE H. SCONIERS, MARY KOHLBACHER, ESQ., ERICKA BENNETT, ESQ., LENORE FOOTE (NOT PICTURED)

The Commission continued its statewide initiative to host seminars on the path to becoming a judge in districts where there is a lack of diversity on the bench. On May 1, 2014, the Commission co-sponsored the seminar entitled “Everything You Need to Know About Becoming a Judge”, in Buffalo, NY. The seminar occurred at the Bar Association of Erie County and included over 50 attendees.

In collaboration with the local bar associations, a planning committee was formed to develop the half day program which provided continuing legal education credits for attendees. The co-sponsors included the Bar Association of Erie County, the Minority Bar Association of Western New York, and the Women’s Bar Association of the State of New York, Western New York Division.



ELECTION LAW OVERVIEW & RELATED ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS

MODERATOR: JOHN V. ELMORE, ESQ., (THIRD FROM LEFT).

HON. ROSE H. SCONIERS (SEATED) PANELISTS: JOHN POSTEL, ESQ. – NYS COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL CONDUCT (AT PODIUM), RALPH M. MOHR, ESQ., COMMISSIONER – ERIE COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS (LAST PERSON ON RIGHT)

The seminars included panel discussions on election law and ethics, securing the nomination in State Supreme Court, making the ballot in City, County and Family court, and the appointive process to the New York State Court of Claims, and federal bench. The panelists included Commissioners from the Board of Elections, the leaders of local political parties, bar leaders, and local state and federal jurists. Most impressive was that the leaders from three of the four political parties in the area were panelists thereby

providing great insight on achieving success in the nomination process.

Q & A REGARDING EVALUATION PROCESSES



MARK S. BOYLAN – INDEPENDENT JUDICIAL ELECTION QUALIFICATION COMMISSIONS, 8TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT CHAIR, HON. ROSE H. SCONIERS



STEPHANIE A. SAUNDERS, ESQ. – MRAWNY JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, WILLIAM J. KITA, ESQ. – CHAIRMAN, BAEC JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, JENNIFER R. SCHARF, ESQ. – WBASNY JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

The topics discussed ranged from the preparation needed to run for office including being visible in the community, attending civic meetings, and being involved with political events, to the importance of having the right temperament and organizational skills in your bid to being elected. The judges



SECURING THE NOMINATION IN SUPREME COURT

MODERATOR: LAURIE STYKA BLOOM, ESQ. (AT PODIUM)

HON. ROSE H. SCONIERS, PANELISTS: CHAIRMAN, RALPH C. LORIGO – CONSERVATIVE PARTY, CHAIRMAN, NICHOLAS A. LANGWORTHY – REPUBLICAN PARTY, CHAIRMAN, JEREMY J. ZELLNER – DEMOCRATIC PARTY, HON. MARK A. MONTOUR – NYS SUPREME COURT

on the panels discussed their own experiences and provided practical advice on running a campaign. There was consensus among the jurists that the effort required to become a judge was worth the reward of being a public servant in the administration of justice. As stated by one judge, “a successful campaign involves working hard, putting yourself in a place to be lucky and being a leader.”

The seminar closed with a reception which allowed for further networking by the potential judicial candidates. Joining the reception was a contingent of judges traveling from Latin America to study the judicial process in the United States.

This is second seminar on the path to becoming a judge outside of New York City, the first occurring earlier this year, on January 17, 2014 in Rochester, New York. The Commission plans to host additional seminars in Albany, Syracuse, and White Plains, NY throughout the year. ■



MAKING THE BALLOT IN CITY, COUNTY AND FAMILY COURTS

MODERATOR: ERIKA N. BENNETT, ESQ. – MBAWNY PRESIDENT (AT PODIUM)

HON. ROSE H. SCONIERS, PANELISTS: HON. SHEILA A. DITULLIO – ERIE COUNTY COURT, HON. CRAIG D. HANNAH – BUFFALO CITY COURT, HON. BETTY CALVO-TORRES – BUFFALO CITY COURT, HON. FRANK CARUSO- NYS SUPREME COURT



APPOINTMENT PROCESS FOR NYS COURT OF CLAIMS AND FOR FEDERAL MAGISTRATE JUDGES AND DISTRICT COURT JUDGES

MODERATOR: ELIZABETH B. HARNED, ESQ. – WBASNY PRESIDENT (AT PODIUM)

HON. ROSE H. SCONIERS, PANELISTS: WILLIAM M. SKRETNY – CHIEF JUDGE, U.S. DISTRICT COURT, W.D.N.Y, HON. LESLIE G. FOSCHIO – MAGISTRATE JUDGE, US DISTRICT COURT, W.D.N.Y, HON. MICHAEL E. HUDSON- NYS COURT OF CLAIMS

TRENEEKA CUSACK, ESQ.,
STEPHANIE SAUNDERS, ESQ.,
HON. STEPHEN T. MILLER,
LENORA FOOTE-BEAVERS, ESQ.,
HON. ROSE H. SCONIERS

DAVID R. HAYES SR., ESQ.,
HON. CRAIG D. HANNAH,
HON. STEPHEN T. MILLER



Meeting with Administrative Judge Alan Scheinkman of the Ninth Judicial District

The Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission believes that dialogue and the exchange of ideas is crucial to increasing diversity in the court system. On April 25, 2014, the Commission met with Judge Alan Scheinkman, the Administrative Judge for the Ninth Judicial District. Administrative Judges are responsible for the supervision and management of the courts in his or her District. The meeting convened at the Richard J. Daronco Westchester County Courthouse in White Plains, New York.

The discussion was informative and productive. The Commission is encouraged by Judge Scheinkman's awareness of diversity and his stated goal of being committed to a diverse workforce. The Commission plans to meet with other Administrative Judges throughout the state in the upcoming months.

JOYCE Y. HARTSFIELD, HON. ROSE H. SCONIERS, HON. ALAN D. SCHEINKMAN,
KARLENE DENNIS, ESQ. AND HON. KATHIE DAVIDSON.



HON. ROSE H. SCONIERS AND
HON. ALAN D. SCHEINKMAN



Forum on Becoming a Judge Targeted for Asian Americans

On April 29, 2014, the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission, New York County Lawyers' Association (NYCLA), Asian American Bar Association, Filipino American Lawyers Association and the Asian American Judges Association of New York sponsored a forum entitled "How to Become a Judge - from an Asian American Perspective" at NYCLA, to address the lack of New York State judges of Asian descent.

Although Asian Pacific Americans have been in New York State since the 1830s, and represent 8.6% of New York State's population, and 14.3% of New York City's popula-



PANELISTS: HON. LILLIAN WAN, FAMILY COURT JUDGE; HON. GILBERT HONG, CRIMINAL COURT JUDGE; HON. JOHN LANSDON, SUPERVISING JUDGE, HOUSING COURT, QUEENS.



MODERATOR: HON. DORIS LING-COHAN, ASSOCIATE JUSTICE OF APPELLATE TERM, 1ST DEPT. AND COMMISSIONER OF FRANKLIN H. WILLIAMS JUDICIAL COMMISSION

tion, according to the New York State Unified Court System statistics (as of February 13, 2014), 22 of the 1250 state court judges are of Asian descent –representing only 1.8% of the judges statewide. A number of state courts do not have nor has ever had, a judge of Asian descent, including the Court of Appeals and the Courts of Claims. It is the desire that the forum will increase the number of Asian Americans being informed about the process to serve as jurists and eventually reflect the diversity of the New York State.

OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION

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Commission Spotlight



T. Andrew Brown, Esq., Commission member of the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission, was elected vice-president of the 7th Judicial District as a member of the Executive Committee for the New York State Bar Association. His term begins on June 1, 2014.

Mr. Brown is a partner at the law firm of Brown & Hutchinson LLP and also serves as Corporation Counsel for the City of Rochester.