



NEW YORK WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

MARCH 2022



Amanda B. Norejko

As we enter the month of March and the approaching second anniversary of when the pandemic hit New York and changed all of our lives, I'd like to take a moment to thank all of you for your continued participation in this Association through virtual meetings, CLEs, and your written contributions to this newsletter. It is difficult to adapt and carry on with our professional and personal lives in the midst of tragedy, uncertainty, fear, and change. However, that is what people have done throughout history and that is what we must do to make the most of the lifetime we are given.

With COVID restrictions gradually easing, the NYWBA has plans to start bringing us back together in person again. On March 3rd, our beloved Annual Judicial Reception returns to the Yale Club. I hope to see those who are fully vaccinated and who feel comfortable attending this cocktail reception. Please consider joining us for more events, including our April 26th Annual Meeting and Ethics CLE, in the months to come.

The NYWBA has re-launched our Mentoring Circles program. Mentoring groups may meet either virtually or in person according to the preferences of the participants. We hope to have a live networking event for this program in the near future.

March is Women's History Month. As women attorneys and judges, our members stand on the shoulders of the generations of women who came before them who fought for the right to vote, to an education, to own property, to practice law, to hold positions of leadership, and to make decisions about their own lives. Sadly, these rights continue to come under attack through legislation and through the lack of cultural change in workplaces and homes that disproportionately impacts women.

Women's History Month honors and celebrates the struggles and achievements of American women throughout the history of the United States. The NYWBA does the same, but we try to do it year-round. Through our Legacy Project, we are continuing to create short videos about the lives of some of the women who have shaped our Association as well as the legal profession itself.

At the NYWBA, we are directly connected to our past as well as conscious of our intentions for the future. Our past leaders have had the forethought to do their best to help us succeed. For the continued vitality of this newsletter itself, as well as the free CLE programs we offer to our members, we owe a debt of gratitude to the Hon. Florence Perlow

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The New York Women's Bar Association
*invites you to join us in honoring
our special guests*

***The Newly Elected, Newly Appointed,
and Re-Elected Judges of New York County***

at a **Cocktail Reception**

Thursday, March 3, 2022

6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

The Yale Club, 50 Vanderbilt Ave., NYC
(at 44th St., across from Grand Central's west entrance)

Cost: **\$100 Members** (paid in advance);
\$130 Non-Members (paid in advance);
\$135 for all, at the door (space permitting)

Note: **No charge for:**

- Judges of the New York Court of Appeals
- Judges of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit
- Justices of the Appellate Division, First Department
- Judges and Magistrates newly appointed in the Southern District of New York
- Judges and Justices who are *newly elected, newly appointed, or re-elected* in NY County

Sponsorship: Law firms, companies, and individuals are invited to make a donation to help support this event at the following sponsorship levels:

Platinum (\$1,000) Gold (\$750) Silver (\$500)

Sponsors will be acknowledged at the event, on our Website, and in the NYWBA Newsletter, and they will be entitled to free admissions (Platinum-3; Gold-2; and Silver-1) (Contributions of **\$100 or more** are welcome and will be recognized at the **"Friend"** level.)

(Send an email to JudgesReception@nywba.org for details on how to contribute at the Friend level.)

Info: For questions or information, call (212) 490-8202 or email JudgesReception@nywba.org.

RSVP: <https://www.nywba.org/events/nywba-judicial-reception-2022/1646348400/>

President's Message (Continued from Page 1)

Shientag. Her bequest to the NYWBA upon her death in 2009 at the age of 102 underwrites some of the costs for these important member benefits. Judge Shientag had an extremely successful career, receiving her law degree from NYU School of Law in 1931. She became a judge of the Domestic Relations court (predecessor to Family Court) in 1941. She served as NYWBA President from 1941 to 1942. She went on to become an Assistant US Attorney for the Southern District of New York, the first woman prosecutor in the Criminal Division. In 1954, she established a private practice in domestic relations and the representation of artists. In the same year, she was the first woman to successfully argue a First Amendment case before the US Supreme Court. For more stories about the women who have directly impacted the NYWBA and the practice of law as we know it, please check out <https://www.nywba.org/about/history/> and stay tuned for our video series through the Legacy Project led by NYWBA Board Members **Fran Hoffinger** and **Julie Hyman**.

The first woman admitted to the New York State Bar was Stanleyetta Titus in 1893, after her graduation from NYU Law School. Its long history of admitting women was part of what attracted me to attend the same law school 105 years later when my entering class was approximately 50% women. The most recent entering class boasts 57% women and 41% students of color. This gives me great hope, but many of the setbacks women face come later in their careers where they are still not achieving parity in terms of leadership positions such as equity partnerships.

The America Bar Association's 2021 Profile of the Legal Profession found that women are much more dissatisfied with their law firms than men. Pay gaps and gender bias are driving factors, but they also cited day-to-day challenges women face much more than men. According to the survey, 82% of women have been mistaken for a lower-level employee. Not one male respondent to the survey noted the same experience. Firms are more likely to engage in (and report on) bias reduction efforts at the earliest stages of an attorney's relationship with the firm (i.e., recruitment, with associates), where the disparities between men and women are relatively small, but less likely to engage in similar efforts across the career lifespan when men's and women's trajectories diverge. We have come a long way, but we still have a long way to go.

We owe a lot to the women who paved the way for us, but I feel that we owe even more to those who are coming after us. We should all take the time to learn about the achievements of some exceptional women in a time when few were able to succeed in the legal profession, and we must also think about how we can transform the profession so that more women can find success in the future.

Thank you for your support of this community that works to raise women up, promote diversity in the profession, and improve the legal system to protect fairness and equality for all. With your participation, we can all rise together.

Amanda

In Iroquois society, leaders are encouraged to remember seven generations in the past and consider seven generations in the future when making decisions that affect the people."

- Wilma Mankiller, the first female Chief of the Cherokee Nation

NOTES ON MEMBERS

The NYWBA congratulates our Past President **Hon. Betty Weinberg Ellerin** on being recognized with a Lifetime Service Award by the NYU Alumni Association. The awards ceremony will take place on April 1.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Anna Aguilar	Keisha A. Parker
Ashley B. Akapo	Amanda Peterson
Molly Barth	Tonya J. Plank
Lisa Bentley	Shelly Ann Quilty-Lake
Janet L. Brown	Julie A. Rich
Kathryn Carroll	Sheila Ginsberg Riesel
Karen Charrington	Gianna C. Signorille
Neil Fenton	Steven M. Silpe
Taylor P. Fish	Pamela S. Silverblatt
Kelly Frawley	Siobhan Stewart
Taylor M. Friedman	Peter J. Strauss
Ira E. Garr	Claire von Roten
Angela G. Kim	Jessica L. Waldman
Julia K. Klein	Deirdre Wheatly-Liss
Isabel J. Malmazada	Sidnie Wilder
Laurie Maxis	Allen Wong
Pamela M. McDevitt	
Michael Moscarello	

as of Feb. 15, 2022

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

With their generous contributions, our sustaining members make it possible for us to accomplish so much more. We honor and thank them for their support.

Deborah S. Ball	Helene W. Hartig
Leslie F. Barbara	Pamela M. McDevitt
Peter Bienstock	Evridiki Poumpouridis
Sheila L. Birnbaum	Evan Schein
Stephanie R. Cooper	Irene A. Sullivan
Chad L. Edgar	Malcolm S. Taub
Diane Ferrone	

NYWBA MEMBERSHIP

The NYWBA fiscal year is June 1 to May 31. Be sure to renew your membership and enjoy all NYWBA benefits, including FREE NYWBA CLE PROGRAMS, networking events and Committee meetings, access to the "Members Only" sections of our website, access to our Newsletters online, and other benefits.

Save paper & mailing costs and expedite your renewal by using our secure online membership form at <http://membership.nywba.org>. You can also email Executive Director Karen Lu (ED@nywba.org) to confirm your member status or request a paper membership form by email.

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

Criminal Law Committee meeting on March 21 at 6:15 p.m. RSVP CrimLawChairs@nywba.org.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee meeting by Zoom on March 8 at 6:00 p.m.. RSVP DiversityChairs@nywba.org.

Elder Law Committee meetings by Zoom: "**Lunch & Learn**" will be held the second Tuesday of every month from 1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. The first meeting is **March 8**. RSVP elderlawchairs@nywba.org.

Litigation Committee presents a *Persuasive Speaking Workshop* by Zoom, featuring Speaking Coach **Marion Claire** on **March 24** at 7:00 p.m. RSVP: Litigationchairs@nywba.org.

Programs & Events Committee meeting will be held on March 8 at 6:00 p.m. This meeting will be in person and not by Zoom. For further info and RSVP contact events@nywba.org.

NOTICE TO MEMBERS – ANNUAL MEETING & ELECTIONS

The NYWBA Annual Membership Meeting will be held on **April 26, 2022**, when the President & Treasurer will present reports on the state of the NYWBA and its finances, and the Association will hold elections. (See to the right for the **NYWBA Nominations Committee Report**, which includes a list of all open positions, terms of office and nominees, as well as a list of those continuing in office.)

Article XIV, Section 1 of the By-Laws provides that only members who are in good standing and whose membership dues were received by **January 31st** may vote at the Annual Meeting.

Article XVII, Section 10 of the By-Laws provides that any fifty members eligible to vote at the Annual Meeting may, by a writing delivered to the Corresponding Secretary not less than *forty days* prior to the Annual Meeting, propose candidates for NYWBA offices or directorships to be voted on at the Annual Meeting. Such petition must be *received* by no later than **March 11, 2022** and must be addressed to Corresponding Secretary Morgan Mouchette, c/o New York Women's Bar Association, P. O. Box 1207, New York, New York 10150.

NYWBA FOUNDATION

THE NEW YORK WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION, INC. IS THE
CHARITABLE ARM OF THE NEW YORK WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION

The NYWBA created the New York Women's Bar Association Foundation, Inc. (NYWBAF) in 1995. Its goals are: (1) to eliminate gender bias and other forms of discrimination from the legal system and legal profession, (2) to promote the social and economic equality, safety and well-being of women and children, and (3) to address the unmet legal needs of women and children. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit charitable organization which supports and funds charitable and philanthropic programs to aid women and children throughout Manhattan and beyond.

Fellowships funded by the NYWBAF provide law students with the opportunity to gain valuable training, experience, and professional connections while assisting in the important work of organizations that provide free legal services. To support fellowships like this, you can donate to the Foundation by contacting info@nywbaf.org or visiting <https://nywbaf.org>.

NYWBA NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

The **NYWBA Committee on Nominations** has nominated the following candidates to serve for the positions and terms stated below. Elections will be held during the NYWBA Annual Meeting on **April 26, 2022**, with all new terms commencing as of June 1, 2022.

OFFICERS (2022-2023)

President:	Magnolia D. Levy
Vice Presidents:	Jocelyn L. Jacobson Melissa Ephron-Mandel Sabrina E. Morrissey
Treasurer:	Lissett Ferreira
Recording Secretary:	Vivian Rivera Drohan
Corresponding Secretary:	Morgan Fraser Mouchette
Immediate Past President:	Amanda B. Norejko

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Directors to be Installed – Class of 2022-2025 (Seven)

2021-24 & 2020-23 Classes (Filling three vacancies for unexpired terms)

Jennifer P. Brown	Meaghan E. Carey
Yasmin Dwedar	Hon. Judith J. Gische
Amy B. Goldsmith	Virginia A. LoPreto
Antonia J. Martinez	Ernestine J. Mings
Olivia Sohmer	Judith E. White

Directors Continuing in Office – 2021-24 & 2020-23 Classes

Leona Beane	Dawn M. Card
Tara Diamond	Hon. Laura E. Drager
Fran R. Hoffinger	Julie Hyman
Alexandra Campbell King	Kay Marmorek
Nidhi Shetye	S. Yan Sin
Crystal Villaseñor	

New Members of NYWBA ADVISORY COUNCIL

Hon. Sherry Klein Heitler and Past President Yacine Barry-Wun

NYWBA DELEGATES TO SERVE ON WBASNY BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2022-23)

Elizabeth A. Bryson	Dawn M. Card
Hon. Betty Weinberg Ellerin	Melissa Ephron-Mandel
Julie Hyman	Jocelyn L. Jacobson
Virginia A. LoPreto	Marjorie A. Martin
Sabrina E. Morrissey	Amanda B. Norejko
Hon. Jacqueline W. Silbermann	Lissett Costa Ferreira (Alt.)

NYWBA COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS (Class of 2022-24)

Yacine Barry-Wun	Myra L. Freed
Hon. Kelly O'Neill Levy	Hon. Lisa A. Sokoloff

Continuing in Office (Class of 2021-23)

Jennifer P. Brown, Elizabeth A. Bryson,
Hon. Laura E. Drager, Virginia A. LoPreto

NYWBA wishes to acknowledge the generous gift from

**FOUNDER AND PAST PRESIDENT
HON. FLORENCE PERLOW SHIENTAG (1908-2009)**

Her financial bequest has helped to underwrite the cost of this Newsletter and many of our CLE programs.

ANIMAL RIGHTS AND MATRIMONIAL LAW COMMITTEES CO-SPONSOR "WHO GETS THE DOG? PET CUSTODY BATTLES ARE OFFICIALLY HERE"

By Lydia S. Antoncic, Co-Chair, Animal Rights Committee

Pretty much everyone was in the doghouse the evening of December 16, 2021, but not in a bad way. Over 60 attendees were present to hear a distinguished panel discuss the new pet custody law that became effective on October 25, 2021. The provision amended Domestic Relations Law §236 and now requires a court to consider "the best interests of a companion animal" prior to awarding "possession" of that animal in a divorce action.

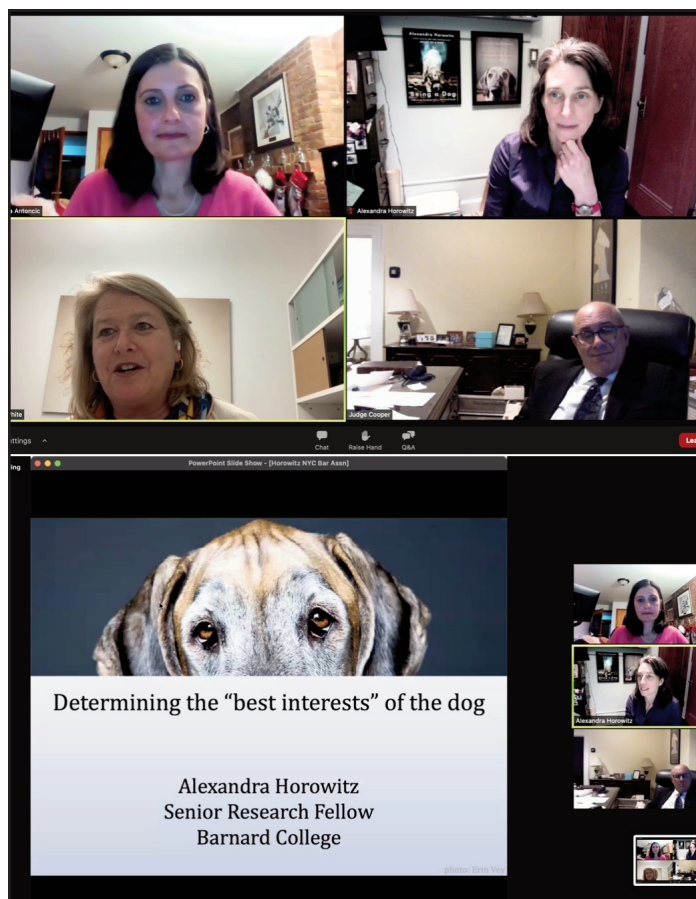
And if you are scratching your head trying to figure how one would demonstrate the "best interests" of a companion animal in a courtroom, you would not be alone. Luckily, the audience was able to draw from the perspectives of a jurist, a practitioner and an animal behaviorist to help answer this question.

First up was the **Honorable Matthew Cooper**, who talked about the evolution of the law as it pertains to companion animals. Traditionally, animals were considered property under the law, similar to a chair or other personal property, but that has been evolving. In certain contexts, courts have recognized that an animal has value beyond its "market value" (for animals who are specially trained, generally zip for the rest), as well as interests and desires of their own that warrant consideration. Justice Cooper decided the key case of *Travis v Murray*, 42 Misc.3d 447 977 N.Y.S.2d 621 (N.Y. Sup. Ct. 2013) that includes a thoughtful discussion of the "best interests for all concerned" standard that he applied in that case before enactment of this new law, and has now been replaced with the "best interest of the companion animal" standard in a divorce context.

Judy White talked about her experience in the area, which included litigating "custody" of a dog and even crafting a supervised access schedule for the pup to address safety concerns! Ms. White discussed the possibility of using prenuptial agreements to address issues pertaining to companion animals but cautioned that enforceability may be an issue. Given that this law is so new, and yet to be applied, Ms. White raised many interesting and thought-provoking questions for practitioners to consider.

Alexandra Horowitz, Ph.D., a Senior Research Fellow and Adjunct Associate Professor at Barnard College, runs their Dog Cognition Lab. Dr. Horowitz gave a wonderful presentation on dog cognition and detailed things to look for when assessing an animal's "best interests." Particularly guiding was the Five Domains Model that looks at nutrition, physical environment, health, behavioral interactions and mental state as a good starting point. However, Dr. Horowitz noted that this would have to be tailored to the individual animal. For example, a Border Collie is a working dog and would require much more stimulation than other breeds.

During the interactive and quite fun panel discussion, all three speakers fielded questions from attendees and the moderator. Justice Cooper was asked if he would ever allow an animal in the courtroom to which he responded with a resounding yes. There was a lot of agreement that having someone like Dr. Horowitz observe the subject animal and then testify in a contentious pet custody battle would, of course, be ideal, but cost and judicial economy might make that challenging. However, Justice Cooper presciently reminded us that there once was a time when the idea of conducting forensic evaluations in child custody actions would have been balked at, given it was presumed that the mother would be awarded custody of a child, so, you never know.



Animal rights law is an exciting and rapidly developing field. While at first glance challenging for practitioners to apply, it is important to recognize that this law will directly impact the actual animals at issue in divorce proceedings, and the implications of this legislation are far more wide reaching for animals. Recognizing that companion animals are sentient, with preferences and wishes of their own, even if only in a divorce context, will likely have reverberations in other areas of the law. Science tells us that virtually all animals are sentient with personal desires and interests. It would only be logical and natural for the law to begin to evolve to consider and protect the well-being of all animals. Some of you may know that the court of appeals recently agreed to hear the habeas corpus case involving Happy the Elephant. If not, please check out the December 2021 issue of the NYWBA's newsletter for an article written by one of our committee members Mariann Sullivan about the case. Our committee plans to have a program about Happy's case early next year so please be on the lookout for that as well. To those of you interested in getting more involved, please join our committee by sending an email to animallaw@nywba.org.

The **Animal Rights Committee** is chaired by **Lydia Antoncic** and **Jennifer Brown-DiBlasi**. The **Matrimonial and Family Law Committee** is chaired by **Nina Gross**, **Olivia Lee** and **Ashley Mullin**.

Student Loans: What Lawyers Need to Know

By *Claire B. Mooney and the Students and New Lawyers Committee*

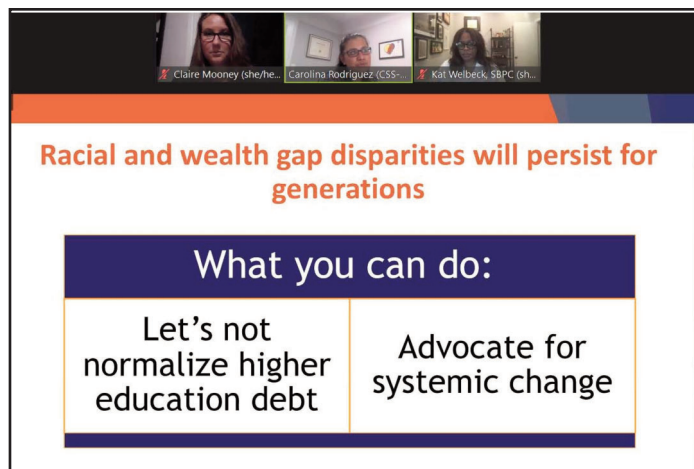
We have a \$1.7 trillion education debt crisis and two-thirds of this debt is women's. How did this happen, and what do lawyers like us need to know?

On February 3, 2022, the **NYWBA Students & New Lawyers Committee** hosted a CLE about student loan law and the racial wealth gap. The speakers for this CLE were **Carolina Rodriguez**, the director of the Education Debt Consumer Assistance Program (EDCAP), and **Kat Welbeck**, the Director of Advocacy & Civil Rights Counsel at the Student Borrower Protection Center (SBPC). Carolina and Kat helped answer key questions about the education debt system, how it disproportionately impacts Latina and Black women borrowers, and provided solutions for the disproportionate impacts of education debt. As it turns out, there is a lot we can do to support each other and work towards gender and racial justice for generations to come.

Inequity in education debt – faced by many NYWBA members and our clients – results in part from laws which have decreased investment in access to higher education and education costs ballooning by over 1000% in the past few decades. As many of us know, these policies become personal because parents at all income levels may be made to feel that they are denying their children access to quality education unless they agree to help shoulder hundreds of thousands of dollars in loans. The highest burdens statistically fall on women, particularly Latina and Black women. This is due in part to the wage gap. Being paid less at work means having to take out higher loans in the first place. Additionally, children from families who cannot afford to contribute as much to their education or everyday living expenses have to take out more in loans. This causes repayment to take longer and at times increases balances due to accumulated interest. Even income-based repayment plans chip away at a family budget, adding multi-generational barriers to accessing opportunities – including access to the legal profession.

Education debt is a uniquely complex and persistent form of consumer debt. Unlike business or auto loans, liability for certain student loans lasts a lifetime, and there is often no fresh start easily available in bankruptcy. Servicers often fail to disclose affordable repayment options, instead steering borrowers further away from relief. Though political administrations can add additional repayment plan options, these may be too expensive simply because they are too complicated for families to navigate or not available due to servicer misconduct. Legislators and regulators also allow predatory lending and debt collection to proliferate and target communities of color. As a result, the promise of access to education for anyone who works hard and seeks it is, quite simply, a promise that has repeatedly been broken.

We as parents, employers, borrowers, and lawyers can take steps to challenge the legal system that created this disparity to ensure that new products and policies will lighten these burdens and elevate access to education and professions, particularly for Latina and Black women.



First, we can avoid normalizing expensive education costs by speaking out about the reality of living with debt and by amplifying the voices of other borrowers whose stories differ from our own.

As employers, we can challenge assumptions that educational exclusivity equates to competency by focusing on other accomplishments like working while going to school, and provide them the tools or referrals needed to address their own situation.

As lawyers, we should convey our awareness to clients who seek help with financial issues that legal and financial systems in this country reflect broken promises of access to opportunities.

We can also make real change by telling our stories and voicing our concerns to legislators and regulators. For example, as a result of comments from lawyers and other borrowers on the Public Service Loan Forgiveness system, the Education Department has expanded access to eligibility for this relief. We should continue to comment both privately and publicly about the problems of predatory lending, unjust debt collection practices, and servicer misconduct. We have the power to make a difference in the gender and racial wealth gaps by assessing whether proposed solutions will equalize access to affordable education and loans which are clear, fair, and manageable – and speaking out when they do not.

For more information about student loan policies we can critique or support, visit the Student Borrower Protection Center protectborrowers.org.

For more information and one-on-one help managing student loans as a borrower, visit EDCAP at edcapny.org.

The NYWBA Students and New Lawyers committee will be hosting additional events related to education debt. Contact committee chairs at SNLchairs@nywba.org.

Mental Health Issues, MHL Article 81 and Article 9 ***By Sabrina E. Morrissey***

We had 28 participants in our continuing legal education program on January 27th, which was a very informative presentation by **Carolyn Reinach Wolf, Esq.**, Executive Partner at Abrams Fensterman, LLP and Director of the firm's Mental Health Law practice. Carolyn is a member of our **NYWBA Elder Law and Disabilities Committee** and has years of experience with Mental Hygiene and guardianship cases.

She explained to the group the differences in Axis 1 and Axis 2 psychiatric disorders, voluntary and involuntary hospital admissions, and treatment options – either over objection when a person does not want to take medication, or when supervised through an Assisted Outpatient Treatment plan in the community.

Carolyn discussed how Article 9 issues of diagnoses, medication and hospitalization may spill over to Article 81 guardianship hearings and remain a part of a case, once a guardian is appointed. She talked about the costs of having a private guardian and the family dynamics that present themselves in Article 9 settings and Article 81 cases.

Questions were submitted to Carolyn about incapacity determinations made by staff in nursing homes, the costs of guardianship cases, and the idea of having a combined Mental Hygiene law and guardianship combined part with in the Court system.

Thank you to Carolyn, our Judges, our new members, and everyone else who made this such a well-attended and thought-provoking program.

NYWBA – Cycle for Survival

We are proud to announce that this year the NYWBA is coming together as a team to beat rare cancers. We will be participating in the Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospital and Equinox Cycle for Survival event on May 21, 2022.

We are so excited that you have decided to join us in raising money to beat rare cancers. As you know, 100% of Every Dollar Goes to Beat Rare Cancers.

The event will take place on May 21st between 1-5pm at the Wollman Rink in Central Park. All Participants must be vaccinated and provide proof of vaccination on site.

This is a four-hour cycling event during which team members will sign up for 30-minute time slots. There is no training necessary. This is a high energy, fun event. There will be speakers, music and cycling instructors to keep our energy and spirits up.

We look forward to joining together and raising money for a great cause that, unfortunately, touches so many of our lives.

Follow this link to sign up for our team: <https://bit.ly/NYWBACycle2022>
Team Name: **New York Women's Bar Association (NYWBA)**
Team password is **NYWBA2022**

Once you have joined our team, please use the following link to sign up for a timeslot to ride at the event: <https://bit.ly/NYWBACycleSignUp>

Thank you for joining the NYWBA Cycle for Survival Team,

Crystal R. Villaseñor & Melissa F. Glassman

Meet the Committee Chairs **Matrimonial & Family Law Committee**



Nina S. Gross joined Dobrish Michasels Gross LLP in 1998 after she had worked at the Juvenile Rights Division of the Legal Aid Society, representing children in various family situations. She is a graduate of Barnard College and the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law. Her private practice has been exclusively in the area of matrimonial and family law, dealing with complex custody matters and divorces with significant financial issues. She has served on the Family Law Committee, Matrimonial Law Committee and the Council on Children of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York. She is a member of the New York State Women's Bar Association, the American Association of Family and Conciliation Courts and the Family Law Section of the New York State Bar Association. She is also a Fellow of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, sits on the Board of Managers of its New York Chapter and has been elected to be listed in Best Lawyers in America and Best Lawyers in New York.

Ms. Gross has written for the Family Law Review and has lectured for the Family Law Section of the New York State Bar Association, the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts, the Practising Law Institute and the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers.



Olivia S. Lee is a partner at Lee Anav Chung White Kim Ruger & Richter LLP and has been a member of the firm's matrimonial and family law practice since 2013. Olivia represents individuals in a wide range of issues, including custody, child and spousal support, equitable distribution, geographic relocation, and negotiation of prenuptial, postnuptial and separation agreements.

Olivia has served as a co-chair of the New York Women's Bar Association's Matrimonial and Family Law Committee since 2019. She is also dedicated to public service by participating in the Matrimonial Project for the New York Women's Bar Association and the Kings County Matrimonial Pro Bono Project, in addition to privately volunteering at several family-oriented organizations throughout New York City.



Since March 2021, **Ashley Mullin** has served as Associate Court Attorney to the Honorable Gigi N. Parris, in New York County Family Court and, since February 2022, in Bronx County Family Court. Prior to this position, Ashley served as Court Attorney to the Honorable Emily M. Olshansky in New York County Family Court from February 2015 until March 2021. Ashley began her legal career representing foster care agencies in various proceedings in New York City Family Courts and subsequently worked for the Administration for Children's Services as a Family Court Legal Services Attorney in Kings County Family Court from 2011 until 2015. In this capacity, Ashley started her career as a staff attorney and was promoted to a supervisory level where, among other obligations, she oversaw a team of attorneys. Ashley received her Juris Doctor from New York Law School in 2009. During her time at New York Law School, Ashley studied abroad in Dublin, Ireland in where she interned for the Taoiseach (Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland) and drafted various Family Law and European Union Law memoranda. Ashley received her Bachelor of Arts Degree from Hunter College in 2005, where she majored in Political Science and minored in Urban Studies. In addition to serving as co-chair on the NYWBA Matrimonial and Family Law Committee, she also serves as co-chair to the legislative sub-committee with the New York City Bar Children and the Law Committee.

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Crystal Villaseñor

Judith E. White

Executive Director

Karen Lu

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NEW YORK WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION

A Founding Chapter of THE WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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NYWBA Membership Information

We thank our current members for their continued support and involvement, and we look forward to welcoming new and renewing members. Take advantage of our many membership benefits: join committees, network, participate in mentoring circles, attend our signature events, and get CLE credits at our innovative and compelling programs at a significantly reduced cost. It's easy to join or renew - go to www.nywba.org/Membership to access our secure online membership form.

Current members should send updated address and contact information to ED@nywba.org. This will help us keep you informed about our programs, events, and other benefits of membership.

Newsletter and Advertising Information

Submissions must be sent to the Newsletter Committee (Chairs **Jennifer Branca**, **Katelyn M. Brack**, **Elizabeth Friedrich** & **Olivia Sohmer**) by the 10th of the month for publication in the following month's Newsletter. Please submit articles, announcements, upcoming event programming, photos, committee news, member news, and ads to newsletternywba@gmail.com. Submissions should be proofed and cite-checked, and NYWBA retains the usual editorial discretion to omit or edit all contributions. Send an email to newsletternywba@gmail.com if you have questions or are interested in joining the Newsletter Committee.

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