



NEW YORK WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

NOVEMBER 2025

This past month, our Judiciary Committee, co-chaired by **Olivia Sohmer** and **Olivia Lee**, conducted its review, evaluation and rating of candidates for judicial office in New York County. We appreciate the hard work of the committee chairs and members in conducting this time- and labor- intensive effort, which is critical to the integrity of the process of judicial selection in NYC. The committee released its ratings before early voting started on October 25, 2025. We congratulate the candidates who appeared before our committee, all of whom were rated "Approved" and all of whom are NYWBA members.



LISSETT COSTA FERREIRA

As you can see in the newsletter, we hosted several fun mixers, including the Reproductive Rights & Women's Health Committee Happy Hour; the Coming Out Day Mixer, co-sponsored by the Brooklyn Bar Association, the Brehons and Puerto Rican Bar Association; and a memorable members-only event in the atelier of Nanette Lepore, a fashion designer who hosted a group of us organized by **Hon. Crystal Villaseñor**.

We were proud to co-sponsor a program organized by **Jen Frankola** and **Hon. Kathleen Waterman-Marshall** on Protecting the Record from Start to Finish at Jury Trials: Perspectives from Appellate Counsel; and to host CLEs on the Child Parent Security Act, QDROs-presented by Board member **Hon. Laura Drager**, and Civility as a Litigation Strategy.

Given the urgency of immigration issues, NYWBA has been active in bringing these issues to the forefront. In October, we co-sponsored Metro on Tap: Evolving Changes in Membership Law, an event bringing together law students, alumni, attorneys and advocates to discuss evolving issues in immigration law. The proceeds went to support the NYC immigration Coalition, a non-profit organization doing vital work for NYC's immigrant

President's Message Continued on Page 2

NEW YORK WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION Rates Judicial Candidates for the Civil Court and Supreme Court in New York County

The New York Women's Bar Association announced the results of its review of the qualifications of candidates seeking positions as judges of the New York City Civil Court and the Supreme Court of the State of New York in New York County.

New York Civil Court, New York County

Onya Brinson*: Approved
Lisa Headley*: Approved
Terence McCormick*: Approved
Eric Wursthorn*: Approved

New York Supreme Court, New York County

Suzanne J. Adams*: Approved
James G. Clynes*: Approved
Deborah Kaplan*: Approved
Judy H. Kim*: Approved
Gowri Krishna: Not Rated – Did Not Appear
Jared Trujillo: Not Rated – Did Not Appear

[READ MORE](#)

**The person is a current or past member of the New York Women's Bar Association. Members are reviewed in the same manner and with the same criteria as non-members.*

President's Message from Page 1

communities. The Criminal Law Committee organized a successful CLE on Issues at the Intersection of Criminal Law & Immigration. We also joined the Brehons in co-hosting. Lunch & Learn on Know Your Rights: Navigating the Current Immigration Policies and Legal Landscape.

We also launched our annual membership drive, aiming to increase our membership, under the leadership of our dynamic Membership Committee co-chairs, **Melissa Glassman** and **Jehan Worthy**. This year, we have increased our outreach to law students and are planning innovative programs to continue engage them in our organization. In addition to planning committee meetings and programs to engage their members, our committee chairs have been connecting with their members to ensure their continued membership and participation in NYWBA. If you have not renewed your NYWBA membership, we hope you will do so as soon as possible, to continue to work with us and enjoy the many benefits of membership.

As Thanksgiving nears, we are mindful that many fellow New Yorkers are facing the prospect of losing critical assistance for food, childcare and utilities if the government shutdown continues. NYWBA is working with other organizations to help NYC's most vulnerable as they face these hardships, through service, food drives, and/or donations. Please stay posted for ways to contribute to help our neighbors.

We wish you all a peaceful season of thanksgiving and renewal.

Lissett Costa Ferreira



**TOP
TIPS FOR
GUARDIANS**

SPONSORED BY THE GUARDIANSHIP DIVERSITY INITIATIVE (GDI)
and the NYWBA

**A CLE Presentation by
Andre K. Cizmarik, Esq.**

**Special Counsel at Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris
Glovsky and Popeo, P.C.**

NYWBA
NEW YORK WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION

**Save the Date:
November 18th at 1 pm**

NOVEMBER 2025



Asian American
Bar Association
of New York

AABANY Military & Veterans
Affairs Committee Co-Sponsors:

3rd Annual
**PRE-HOLIDAY
MULTI-
ASSOCIATION
GATHERING**

Potluck Dinner and CLE Program on
Wellness Resources and Fireside Chat

NOVEMBER 11

New York City Bar Association

42 West 44th Street

New York, NY 10036

6pm to 8:30pm

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Estefania Palomino obtained her law degree from Universidad de Los Andes in Bogotá, Colombia. She then completed a program specializing in constitutional justice and judicial protection of fundamental rights at the Università di Pisa, obtained a Masters in International Law and the Settlement of Disputes at the University for Peace

(where she was the recipient of the Peace Builders Fellowship), obtained an L.L.M. in Global Health Law from Georgetown Law, and obtained a Masters in Management from Harvard University. Estefania is currently a Senior Manager at United Nations Global Impact where she advises technology companies and multinational businesses on fundraising, product sustainability, human rights, and responsible sourcing.

Previously, as Director at The Aspen Institute, Estefania contributed to the strategic growth of multiple global programs, including health innovation and sustainability initiatives. Her expertise includes translating ESG frameworks into actionable strategies for corporate social responsibility and climate risk mitigation. She is dedicated to empowering organizations to align their operations with sustainable and equitable growth.

Estefania is a Co-Chair of the NYWBA International Women's Rights Committee and the NYWBA Programs, Events and Arrangements Committee.

MEMBER NEWS



On October 7, 2025, the NYWBA Reproductive Rights & Women's Health Committee members enjoyed an evening of chatting, networking, and getting to know one another over drinks and snacks at Schwartz Sladkus Reich Greenberg Atlas LLP.



Congratulations to NYWBA member **Morgan Mouchette** on her recent publication in Forbes Magazine on "Cardi B's Divorce: Money Moves And Legal Lessons." Morgan is Vice Chair of the Matrimonial & Family Law Practice Group at Blank Rome LLP and serves as a member of the Board of Directors of the NYWBA.



She Loves Me

Blue Hill Troupe, Ltd.
Presents...

November 7~15, 2025

The Theater at St. Jean's
For the benefit of
Kings County Tennis League

The Blue Hill Troupe will be performing *She Loves Me*, the delightful musical by Bock & Harnick that tells the meet cute story of a couple who love each other in anonymous letters but are oil and water in the workplace. **Olivia Sohmer** is behind the scenes this time. (Hint: Read your program carefully!)

Performances from Nov. 7-15 at the Theatre at St Jean's (150 E. 76 St); tickets at <https://bht.org/events/she-loves-me/>

BHT is a 501c3, and all proceeds will benefit the Kings County Tennis League, which brings tennis to kids in Brooklyn public housing.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Meghan Buckwalter
Kennedy Campbell
Camille Chabot
Marlaina Cirone
Elena Cohen
Kimberly Dang
Elizabeth Doney
Rory Dulecki
Jennifer Giovannetti
Bonnie Gould
Hanna Graifman
Maya Grossman
Marianne Hughes
Zohra Khan
Olesya Lek
Concetta Livia
Christine Lombardino
Hannah Malin
Maria Mastro
Nicole Paniccia
Jill Pilgrim
Grace Romeu
Diana Schioppi
Mariana SuarezRebling
Suzanne Thau
Alexandra Vance
Melanie Voss

As of October 28, 2025

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.

Richard Adago	Elyssa Kates, Esq.
Olga Arandia, Esq.	Regina Kiperman, Esq.
Stephanie Bazell	Gary Klein, Esq.
Laurie Berke-Weiss, Esq.	Anne LaBarbera, Esq.
Ruth Bernstein, Esq.	Magnolia Levy, Esq.
Jennifer Branca, Esq.	Virginia LoPreto, Esq.
Jennifer Brown-DiBlasi, Esq.	Sara Mahoney
Elizabeth Bryson, Esq.	Kay Marmorek
Nancy Chemtob, Esq.	Julia Maxman
Debra Cohen, Esq.	Dawn McClary
Janet Cord, Esq.	Terence McCormick
Jessica Dahan, Esq.	Colleen Meenan
Rena Dawson, Esq.	Karen Milton, Esq.
Hon. Laura Drager	Sabrina Morrissey, Esq.
Melissa Ephron-Mandel, Esq.	Jacqueline Newman, Esq.
Myrna Felder, Esq.	Hon. Jeffrey Oing
Lissett Ferreira, Esq.	Tania Pagan, Esq.
Patricia Fersch, Esq.	Jill Pilgrim
Myra Freed, Esq.	Judith Poller, Esq.
Maria Galante, Esq.	Morghen Richardson, Esq.
Martha Gifford, Esq.	Nicole Riordan, Esq.
Hon. Judith Gische, Esq.	Vivian Rivera-Drohan
Amy Goldsmith, Esq.	Deborah Rosenthal, Esq.
Nancy Green, Esq.	Pamela Sloan, Esq.
Adria Hillman, Esq.	Jean Sweeney
Julie Hyman, Esq.	Libby Varghese
Sophie Jacobi-Parisi	Lisa Zeiderman, Esq.
Carolyn Kalos, Esq.	



Have You Renewed Your 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, our award-winning Mentoring Circles, networking events and Committee meetings, access to our Newsletters online, and other benefits.

Renew online using our secure online membership form at www.nywba.org/membership. You can also email Executive Director **Sarah Kuhns** (ed@nywba.org) to confirm your member status or request a paper membership form by email.

WOMEN WHO LEAD, WOMEN WHO SERVE: CITY HARVEST MOBILE MARKET PROJECT

On Saturday, September 27, 2025, NYWBA members **Honorable Crystal R. Villaseñor, Honorable Elizabeth Y. Shamahs, Melissa Glassman, Jennifer Frankola Crawford, Sara Mahoney, and Alejandro Colon-Cedeno** volunteered with the City Harvest Mobile Market in Washington Heights. The volunteers helped unload and distribute fresh fruits and vegetables and pantry staples to members of the community. It was a fun and meaningful opportunity for NYWBA members to contribute to and support City Harvest's important work. If you are interested in volunteering for City Harvest via the NYWBA, you may contact Melissa Glassman at Mfglassman@gmail.com for more information about upcoming projects.



NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY MIXER

***By Colleen Meenan & Claire Mooney,
LGBT+ Committee Chairs***

On October 9, 2025, NYWBA members enjoyed a fantastic evening with LGBT colleagues and allies at a mixer in honor of Coming Out Day co-sponsored with the Brooklyn Bar Association, the Puerto Rican Bar Association, and the Brehon Law Society of New York. Ginger's Bar, one of the only woman-owned LGBT bars in the country, hosted the event. Attendees included judges, partners of law firms, civil rights attorneys, and public interest lawyers, with many new connections made and friendships formed across practice areas and levels of practice. Speakers reflected on the importance of representation, courage, and supporting each other in living authentically. LGBT lawyers and allies are welcome at all NYWBA LGBT+ Committee events, and we hope you can join the next one!



NYWBA AT CARDOZO SCHOOL OF LAW WOMEN'S LAW INITIATIVE ("WLI") "MENTORSHIP IN MOTION" NETWORKING DINNER & PANEL

On October 21, 2025, **Melissa F. Glassman**, NYWBA Recording Secretary and Co-Chair of the Mentoring Circles and Membership Committees, was a panelist at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law's Women's Law Initiative "Mentorship in Motion" event.

Melissa was joined by co-panelists, Kim Lebron — Attorney at HSBC & Adjunct Professor at New York Law School — and Amanda Sivin, Corporate Associate at Akin Gump.

The panel discussed the power of networking in the legal profession — specifically the power of female networking. The panel also provided advice on how building authentic connections can open doors, foster mentorship, and shape meaningful careers in law.

During the conversation, Melissa, who was President of WLI while she was a student at Cardozo, shared insights on how professional organizations can play a transformative role in a lawyer's development — particularly the New York Women's Bar Association (NYWBA). As a member, Melissa has seen firsthand how the NYWBA provides a strong, supportive community that connects attorneys across practice areas and career stages. Melissa highlighted how the NYWBA, through its events, mentorship programs, and advocacy initiatives, empowers members to both grow professionally and contribute to the advancement of women in the legal field.

Melissa mentioned that networking isn't just about exchanging business cards — it's about cultivating and fostering relationships built on trust, shared purpose, and mutual support. The NYWBA embodies these values, offering countless opportunities for engagement, learning, and leadership which is why we are such a great resource for current law students and new lawyers.



PROTECTING THE RECORD FROM START TO FINISH AT JURY TRIALS: PERSPECTIVES FROM APPELLATE COUNSEL

On October 16, 2025, NYWBA members **Honorable Kathleen Waterman-Marshall** and **Jennifer Frankola-Crawford** moderated a CLE panel presentation about protecting the appellate record during jury trials. The event was co-sponsored by the NYWBA, the New York County Lawyers Association, The Columbian Lawyers Association of the First Department, the Brehon Law Society of New York, the Puerto Rican Bar Association of New York, and the Irish American Bar Association of New York. The panelists discussed important practice tips for preserving the record throughout all stages of a trial, including the pre-trial conference, voir dire, trial motions, trial objections, and post-trial motions. They also discussed the benefits of consulting appellate counsel throughout trial and during mediation and other ADR methods.



Associate, Schwartz Sladkus Reich Greenberg Atlas LLP Fertility Law, and Jarret Zafra, Esq., Founder and Executive Director of Brownstone Surrogacy.

The CPSA, which is found in Article 5-C of the Family Court Act, establishes detailed legal procedures and requirements for obtaining a judgment of parentage for children born through assisted reproduction and surrogacy.

Attendees asked insightful questions during the Q&A and networked with one another over wine and cheese after the CLE.



NYWBA IS ACCEPTING CANDIDATES FOR CO-CHAIR OF THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES

- Immigration
- Children's Rights
- Public Relations (press releases)

For more information about NYWBA committees, please visit: www.nywba.org/committees/committees-chairs/. We welcome applications from newer members wishing to gain leadership experience and be of service.

NYWBA REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS COMMITTEE HOSTS CHILD PARENT SECURITY ACT CLE

On October 22, 2025, the NYWBA Reproductive Rights Committee hosted a CLE entitled The Child Parent Security Act (CPSA) at (Almost) Five Years – Applications for LGBTQ+ Family Building in New York at Schwartz Sladkus Reich Greenberg Atlas LLP. Committee Co-Chair, **Alyssa Cannizzaro**, Esq. of Cohen Clair Lans Greifer & Simpson LLP, moderated the widely attended interdisciplinary panel, which featured professionals who interact with the CPSA daily. Panelists included David B. Collins, Esq. Principal Law Clerk to **Hon. Kathleen Waterman-Marshall**, Shain Filcher, Esq. Associate Counsel, New York State Unified Court System's Office for Justice Initiatives, **Rose Vacanti Gilroy**, Esq.,

**NYWBA IS ALSO SEEKING
TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO
REPRESENT OUR CHAPTER ON
THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES
OF THE WOMEN'S BAR
ASSOCIATION OF THE STATE
OF NEW YORK (WBASNY):**

- Fundraising
- Long Range Planning

Applicants for Chapter representative positions should be generally familiar with NYWBA and WBASNY.

The **WBASNY Fundraising Committee** is designed to assist both WBASNY and the Chapters in performing annual fundraising and in developing fundraising programs for long-term sustainability. This Committee will also be responsible for fundraising for special events and for the needs of WBASNY. An immediate focus of this Committee will be identifying and cultivating mission-related donors – corporations, grants, and individuals. An equal focus of this Committee will be gathering and sharing effective fundraising ideas and methodologies among the Chapters.

The **WBASNY Long Range Planning Committee** is charged with developing, planning, and assisting the Board of Directors in establishing a three-to-five-year strategic plan. Strategic planning on a long-term basis includes ongoing review and evaluation of the Association's current activities, with recommendations for change as needed. In addition to preparing written reports, the Committee assists in the implementation of the long-range plan and monitoring its success and needs via periodic reviews and evaluations.

To apply for any of the above positions, please submit a letter of interest and qualifications to president@nywba.org.

**NYWBA ELDER LAW & DISABILITIES
COMMITTEE LUNCH & LEARN:
GUARDIANSHIPS**

On September 16, 2025, the NYWBA's Elder Law & Disabilities Committee hosted a highly productive Lunch and Learn session with Special Counsel Diana Colón, Esq., from the Office of Justice Initiatives (OJI).

The discussion focused on a series of thoughtful Committee recommendations to enhance the efficiency, transparency, and accessibility of New York's guardianship system under the Office of Court Administration (OCA).

Ms. Colón engaged in a dynamic and solution-oriented exchange with our members, expressing a strong interest in practical ideas designed to improve outcomes for vulnerable individuals. Key topics included:

- Reducing delays in judicial decision-making
- Streamlining ex parte procedures to make them more consistent and efficient
- Implementing monthly compensation mechanisms for guardianship attorneys
- Promoting modernized administrative processes that better reflect the realities that families, fiduciaries, and practitioners face

Together, we explored how these proposals could align with OCA's ongoing modernization efforts and contribute to a more responsive and equitable Guardianship Part. This discussion marks an encouraging step forward in bridging the gap between Court Administration and practitioners who serve incapacitated persons. It reaffirmed our shared commitment to innovation and person-centered reform, ensuring that guardianship practices evolve to meet today's complex challenges with fairness and compassion.

The Elder Law & Disabilities Committee extends its gratitude to Ms. Colón for her collaboration and to all participants who contributed to this meaningful dialogue. We look forward to continuing this partnership and exploring future opportunities for collaboration to strengthen New York's guardianship system.

MENTORING CIRCLES

NYWBA Mentoring Committee co-chairs **Melissa Glassman** and **Melissa Ephron-Mandel**, in collaboration with WBASNY Mentorship Committee co-chairs **Hon. Andrea Krugman** and **Val Manzo**, have collaborated to create six mentoring circles. Most circles meet virtually, once per month, at varying times to accommodate member schedules. Each circle welcomes a wide variety of discussion topics including issues of substantive law, questions about cases, career advice, and general life coaching. In these circles, each member shares what it means to "lawyer" with a variety of practitioners at different levels of experience and across multiple practice areas. All lawyers and students who are members of NYWBA or any other WBASNY chapter are welcome and encouraged to join a circle. Please send an email inquiry to Mentoring@nywba.org with your name, address, and cell phone number and we will reach out to place you in a circle matching your availability.

IRREVOCABLE MEDICAID ASSET PROTECTION TRUST & THE RESIDENCE

By Lissett Ferreira, Esq. & Lillian Mosley, Esq.

In New York, to qualify for Medicaid long-term care coverage (care in a nursing home, assisted living facility, or in your home), under current law, an individual must have "countable" assets of less than \$32,387 (2025 level). In determining Medicaid eligibility of a married individual, generally, Medicaid will count the assets of *both* spouses.

A spouse can execute a "spousal refusal" so that Medicaid will not consider that spouse's assets and income in determining the other spouse's Medicaid eligibility. However, Medicaid can pursue the spouse that signs the spousal refusal to ask or require them to contribute a portion of their assets and income to the care of the ill spouse that needs Medicaid long-term care.

Generally, a Medicaid applicant's equity in a primary residence is also not counted, up to the sum of \$1,080,000.00 (2025 level). If the second spouse is living in the primary residence, there is no equity limit imposed by Medicaid. However, under certain circumstances, Medicaid can place a lien on the primary residence to recover for the sums that Medicaid has paid out in benefits to the spouse receiving said benefits. In addition, on the death of the second spouse, generally, Medicaid places a lien on the primary residence for Medicaid to be paid back for the sums it has paid in benefits to the spouse receiving care.

In sum, if an individual or their spouse requires long-term care, then their primary residence could be (i) considered an available resource for purposes of Medicaid eligibility and (ii) subject to a claim after the death of the applicant or their spouse for Medicaid to be repaid for long-term care it paid out to you/your spouse.

One planning strategy is to transfer a primary residence (*i.e.*, home, cooperative, or condominium) into a Medicaid Asset Protection Trust (MAPT). Transferring a primary residence into a MAPT means that, after the passage of the applicable look-back period, the primary residence would not be counted as an asset that could render an individual or his/her spouse ineligible for Medicaid. A MAPT can provide asset management, asset protection, and ongoing financial decision making.

Currently, nursing home Medicaid in New York has a 60-month look-back period. Generally, this means that when an applicant applies for Medicaid nursing home coverage, Medicaid will "look back" at the financial transactions in the preceding 60 months to see whether the applicant or their spouse made any "uncompensated transfers" or gifts for purposes of qualifying for Medicaid. Uncompensated transfers include transfers to a MAPT. If an applicant for nursing home Medicaid or their spouse made uncompensated transfers during the look-back period, Medicaid imposes a transfer penalty, *i.e.*, a period during which the applicant is ineligible to receive Medicaid.

In New York, community Medicaid has not had a look-back or penalty period. Under a new law the implementation of which is currently held in abeyance, community Medicaid in New York will have a 30-month look-back period and impose a transfer penalty for uncompensated transfers made during that period.

Transferring a primary residence into an Irrevocable MAPT has several advantages from the perspective of Medicaid eligibility and asset protection. For example:

Medicaid Eligibility. Once 60 months have expired from the date assets are placed into the Irrevocable MAPT (or such shorter period under the transfer penalty rule), then the trust assets would not be considered an available resource for purposes of nursing home Medicaid eligibility.

Right to Reside in Primary Residence. The MAPT can provide that the applicant and their spouse have the right to continue to reside in the primary residence during their lifetimes.

Starts Clock Running for Medicaid Look-back Period. The transfer of a primary residence to a MAPT will start the running of the 60-month look-back period for purposes of nursing home Medicaid. That means that, after 60 months, under current law, the transfer of a primary residence will fall outside of the look-back period, and therefore not subject the applicant or their spouse to a penalty period, for nursing home Medicaid.

Transferring a primary residence into a MAPT does have risks and or disadvantages. Most notably:

MAPT Assets Cannot Be Used for Benefit of Grantor or Spouse: The assets in a MAPT cannot be used to benefit a Medicaid applicant or their spouse, even if they have used up all their other assets. In that case, the MAPT may have to be revoked, on consent of all beneficiaries, and the primary residence returned to the applicant. The Trust can provide to either restrict or distribute to the applicant **income** generated from the Trust assets. Furthermore, the Trust can provide for the Trustee to distribute income **and** principal to an applicant's family or friends, such as their child(ren), which can benefit them if needed in an emergency.

Medicaid Look-Back and Transfer Penalty: If an individual or their spouse transfers their primary residence into a MAPT and requires nursing home Medicaid within 60 months of the transfer, they will be subject to a transfer penalty, *i.e.*, a period in which they will not be eligible for Medicaid nursing home care.

In sum, the potential benefits of transferring a primary residence to a MAPT are substantial:

- Avoid the residence being considered available by Medicaid for purposes of Medicaid eligibility.
- Commence the Medicaid look-back period for uncompensated transfers (currently 60 months for institutional Medicaid).
- Save on capital gains taxes after the death of the homeowner.
- Avoid estate proceeding and save legal and court filing fees.
- Protect residence against Medicaid lien.
- Maintain ability to maximize \$250,000 (\$500,000 for married filing jointly) exclusion on the gain from sale of the residence if the residence is sold in the trust.

Maintain eligibility for real estate veteran's exemption, STAR, or senior citizens real estate tax reduction.

Lissett Ferreira is President of the NYWBA and a highly experienced elder and disabilities law practitioner with a focus on guardianships, estate planning, trusts and estates, and Medicaid and special needs planning. Ms. Ferreira is a Partner at Meenan & Associates, LLC. **Lillian Mosley** of Counsel to Meenan & Associates LLC is a distinguished attorney who occupies several esteemed positions, including Co-Chair of the New York Women's Bar Association Elder Law Committee, President-Elect of the Puerto Rican Bar Association, Vice-President of the Nassau County Women's Bar Association and Nassau County Women's Bar Foundation, and she is a candidate for the Long Beach City Council.

LEARNING ABOUT THE OBBBA

By *Sabrina E. Morrissey*

The Elder Law and Disabilities Committee hosted Deidre R. Wheatley-Liss, Esq. and Maria F. Galante, Esq. for a one-hour CLE on October 29, 2025. The topic was the One Big Beautiful Bill Act ("OBBBA"), passed by the 119th Congress and signed into law by President Donald Trump on July 4th.

Deidre and Maria spoke at length about the tax provisions of the OBBBA and, specifically, how these provisions will impact estate planning beginning in 2025 and over the next few years. The lifetime exemption is now \$15 million per individual and \$30 million per married couple and is supposed to remain "permanent." The exemption is indexed for inflation annually.

Deidre and Maria also explained how the OBBA's increase in the State and Local Tax Deduction (SALT) to \$40,000 may be a good tool to significantly reduce taxes, if multiple non-grantor trusts are created in states where tax rates are high.

They also noted that the standard income tax deduction has increased to \$50,750 and suggested that taxpayers consider "bunching" donations to surpass the standard deduction in any one tax year.

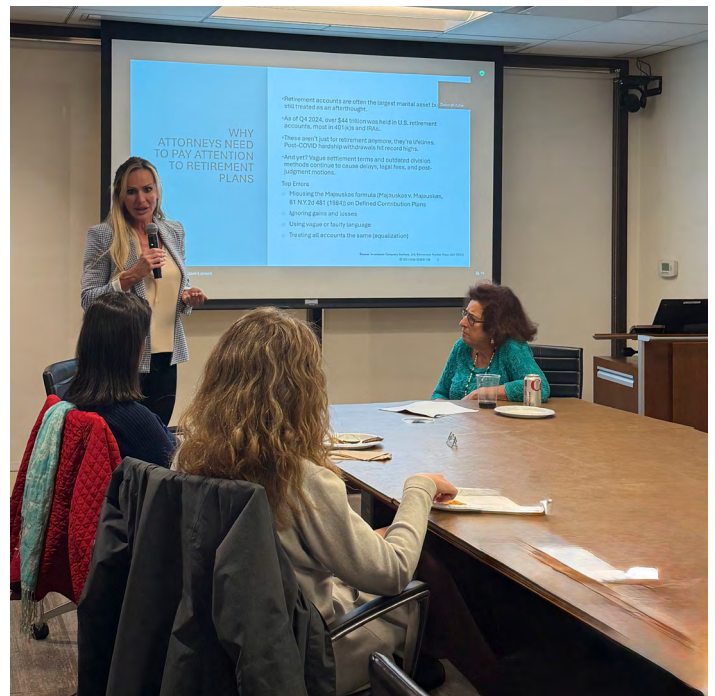
Deidre and Maria further explained that the OBBA addresses real property in several ways which can impact the taxation of trusts. The Act introduces significant changes affecting real estate transactions by modifying depreciation rules, business income deductions, and other tax provisions, by changing how gain or loss is calculated for real property transactions, and by creating new considerations for property held in trust structures.

This was an interesting, educational presentation and one that really needs a part 2! Thank you to Deidre and Maria for speaking to our members!

Sabrina E. Morrissey is a member of Morrissey LLP. She focuses her solo practice on trusts and estates law, guardianships and small corporation matters. Sabrina has served in numerous roles within the New York Women's Bar Association, as President, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, and a member of the Board of Directors. She has been the Co-Chair of the NYWBA Elder Law and Disabilities Committee and Co-Chair of the WBASNY Elder Law and Trusts & Estates Committee.

QDROS AND RETIREMENT ASSET DIVISION CLE

On October 23, 2025, NYWBA's Matrimonial and Family Law and Trusts and Estates Committees held a hybrid CLE program entitled QDROS and Retirement Asset Division. Featured speakers Judge (Ret.) **Laura Drager** and Denisa Tova-Liebman, MBA, CFP, CDFA, CQS educated participants on the various types of retirement plans and emphasized the importance of spotting the issues between different categories of these plans when preparing the case or drafting settlement agreements and advising clients.



Your Opinion Matters!

NYWBA is seeking monthly opinions on legal matters. Please send your op-ed piece to opinions@nywba.org.

THE CHILD PARENT SECURITY ACT (CPSA) AT (ALMOST) FIVE YEARS

APPLICATIONS FOR LGBTQ+ FAMILY BUILDING IN NEW YORK

By Rose Vacanti Gilroy

The Child Parent Security Act (CPSA), which is found in Article 5-C of the Family Court Act and went into effect in 2021, legalized compensated gestational surrogacy in New York and streamlined the path to legal parentage for intended parents building families through assisted reproduction and surrogacy. Thanks to the CPSA's enactment nearly five years ago, LGBTQ+ New Yorkers have the tools necessary to create legally secure family units.

Under the CPSA, intended parents using assisted reproduction or surrogacy can jointly file a petition for an order and judgment of parentage in either Supreme Court, Family Court, or Surrogate's Court. An order of parentage establishes that the intended parents are the subject child's legal parents, and where applicable, that neither the gamete donor(s) nor the surrogate is a legal parent to the child. Importantly, an order and judgment of parentage is obtained on the basis of intent and is not reliant on marriage or a genetic connection. An order and judgment of parentage takes effect immediately upon birth and can be obtained pre-birth.

Prior to the CPSA's enactment, many LGBTQ+ intended parents had to undergo a second-parent adoption to establish parentage rights. An order and judgment of parentage, just like an order of adoption, is an adjudication subject to the Full Faith and Credit Clause and enables intended parents to establish parentage in a more streamlined and less-invasive manner.

At the end of 2024, Governor Kathy Hochul signed a clean-up bill that enacted important updates to the CPSA. Many courts issue parentage orders on the papers, and the clean-up bill reaffirmed that the statute does not require a hearing or testimony in conjunction with a petition for an order and judgment of parentage. The clean-up bill also broadened the scope of where a petition for an order and judgment of parentage may be filed to include the county where the child is intended to be born. Each court differs in approach to parentage matters, and this update gives practitioners and intended parents alike more leeway when choosing where to file. The clean-up bill also clarifies that only one party to a surrogacy agreement must be a lawful permanent resident of the State of New York who has resided in the state for at least six months prior to execution of the agreement. In conjunction with the clean-up bill, the Office of Court Administration also issued updated court forms for surrogacy and assisted reproduction parentage petitions.

So far, only a handful of published decisions cite to the CPSA. However, last month in the Matter of Baby D.K.N., the Court issued an order and judgment of parentage to three intended parents and the Honorable Caroline P. Cohen of the Supreme Court, Kings County, wrote a corresponding decision. The joint petitioners are three individuals who reside together as a family unit who underwent assisted reproduction together. Two petitioners contributed gametes to the embryo, and the

third petitioner gestated the child. In the corresponding written decision, the Court found that all three petitioners met the definition of an intended parent under the CPSA and that "The Article does not specify the gender or maximum number of intended parents." Notably, one petitioner is married to an individual who did not intend to be a parent of the child, and the Court took no position as to that individual's parentage despite finding that the marital presumption did attach.

Matter of Baby D.K.N. demonstrates that nearly five years after its enactment, the CPSA continues to expand the possibilities for recognition of LGBTQ+ families in New York, enabling the establishment of legally secure modern families.

Rose Vacanti Gilroy is an Associate in Schwartz Sladkus Reich Greenberg Atlas LLP's Fertility Law and Matrimonial and Family Law practices. In addition to maintaining a burgeoning matrimonial practice, Rose has gained recognition in the rapidly evolving field of fertility law. Rose is a member of the Assisted Reproductive Technologies CLE Planning Committee for the American Bar Association Family Law Section, the NYWBA Reproductive Rights Committee, the New York State Bar Association Surrogacy Subcommittee, and the LGBT Bar Association of New York.

*Please support the NYWBA Foundation
by joining us for a private tour of:*

"Blacklisted: An American Story"

November 1, 2025 at 11:15 a.m.

*Tour departs promptly
at 11:30 a.m.*

Cost:

\$55 plus PayPal fee (no checks)

**Price includes museum admission
and guided tour.**

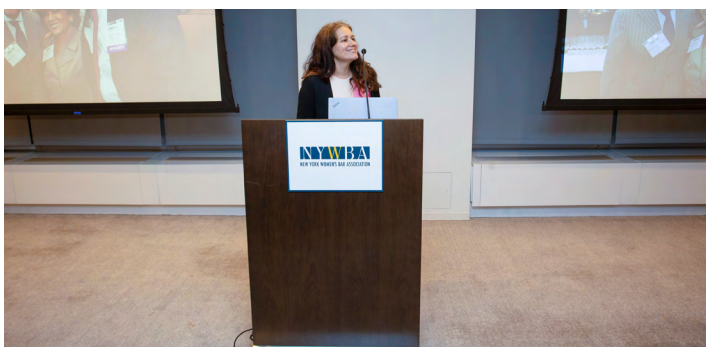
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2025 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RECEPTION RECAP

Here are moments captured at our Annual Membership Reception on September 29, 2025. The NYWBA is grateful for the hard work of our members and their commitment to the Association. We gathered as colleagues and friends, old and new, to reaffirm our mission to advance the status of women and ensure the fair dispensation of justice. We also thank all those who donated feminine hygiene products or drugstore gift cards to benefit the work of Her Village, Inc., an organization that provides access to free period supplies to NYC women and girls and hosts free bi-monthly period education workshops. We are also grateful to Blank Rome for hosting this special event. Our work continues to be relevant and pivotal to the service of the Bar and the larger community. The NYWBA's mission remains as valuable as it has been at any other time.



NEW YORK WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION
NOVEMBER 2025



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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

Please submit articles, announcements, upcoming event programming, photos, committee news, member news, and ads to newsletter@nywba.org. Submissions must be in Word format or print-ready pdf. All submissions should be proofed and cite-checked, and accompanied by any necessary authorization for reprint. NYWBA retains the usual editorial discretion to omit or edit all contributions. Send an email to newsletter@nywba.org if you have questions or are interested in taking on a writing assignment or joining the editorial team of the Newsletter Committee. Submissions received by the 10th of the month will have the best chance of publication in the following month's Newsletter. Newsletter Committee Co-Chairs **Olivia Sohrmer**, **Isiris Isaac**, and **Sara Mahoney** look forward to hearing from you!

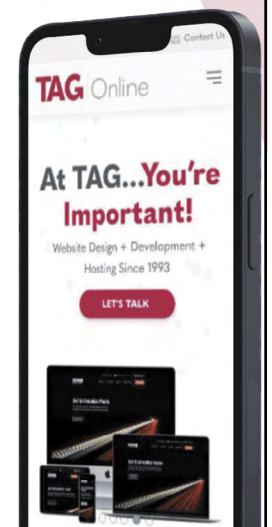
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