



## NEWS ADVISORY

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New York State  
Unified Court System

Hon. Lawrence K. Marks  
Chief Administrative Judge

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Date: October 27, 2020

### **Virtual Pro Bono Awards Ceremony to Honor Attorneys for Volunteer Efforts on Behalf of New Yorkers in Need**

**WHAT:** In recognition of National Pro Bono Celebration Week, the New York State Court System's Office for Justice Initiatives, New York State Bar Association and New York County Lawyers Association will present a virtual awards ceremony honoring attorneys for their pro bono service. Special recognition will be given to Legal Information for Families Today's (LIFT) Family Legal Connection Program for its videoconferencing and document-sharing platform that enables Family Court litigants without legal representation to meet remotely with pro bono attorneys. During the Covid-19 pandemic, this virtual pro bono platform is a critical tool in expanding pro bono resources to assist Family Court litigants statewide. A list of this year's honorees is attached.

**WHEN:** **Thursday, October 29, 2020**  
**6:30 p.m.**

**WHERE:** **Virtual on Zoom**  
[https://www.nycla.org/NYCLA/Events/Event\\_Display.aspx?EventKey=PB102920](https://www.nycla.org/NYCLA/Events/Event_Display.aspx?EventKey=PB102920)

**WHO:** Speakers include **Hon. Edwina G. Mendelson**, Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Justice Initiatives; **Scott M. Karson**, President, New York State Bar Association; and **Anthe Maria Bova**, General Counsel & Director of Pro Bono Programs, New York County Lawyers' Association.

The New York State Unified Court System's Office for Justice Initiatives ([www.DCAJ-OJI@nycourts.gov](mailto:www.DCAJ-OJI@nycourts.gov)) strives to ensure meaningful access to justice for all New Yorkers in civil, criminal and family courts regardless of income, background or special needs.

The New York State Bar Association (<http://www.nysba.org/>) with 77,000 members, is the largest voluntary state bar association in the nation. The Association's programs and activities have served the public and improved the justice system since its founding in 1876.

The New York County Lawyers Association ([www.nycla.org](http://www.nycla.org)), founded in 1908, was one of the first major bar associations in the nation to admit members without regard to race, ethnicity,

religion or gender. Since its inception, it has pioneered some of the most far-reaching and tangible reforms in American jurisprudence.

**New York State Court System Honorees:**

Taiwo A. Adebiyi  
Stuart C. Adler  
Anthony Bongiorno  
Shanna Deen  
Robert Dietz  
William Gilinsky  
Thomas Gowan  
Earl Murrell  
Kris Saylor  
Shmuel Vasser  
Theodore Vassilakis  
Andrea Wesbecher

**New York State Bar Association Honorees:**

Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT) Family Legal Connection Program

Thadeus J. Dziekonski, Jr.  
Victorine Froehlich  
Sophia Hepheastou  
Alyson Luftig  
Nancy A. Spiegel  
Mahbubar Talukdar  
Jonathan Zich

**New York County Lawyers' Association Honorees:**

Frank Agostino  
Hyatt M. Howard  
Patricia S. Kim  
James Leonard  
Charles McEvily  
Laura E. Miller  
Tara Norris

Additional attorneys, law students and other volunteers will receive certificates for their distinguished pro bono service.

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