



**Women's Bar Association
of the State of New York**

**Invites you to a
Virtual Awards Ceremony
Saturday, March 20, 2021
5:00 PM**

Doris S. Hoffman Medal
Marjorie E. Karowe, Esq.

Joan L. Ellenbogen Founders Award
Hon. Linda Christopher

Marilyn R. Menge Award
Irene V. Villacci, Esq.
Margery Weinroth, Esq.

Hanna S. Cohn Pro Bono Award
Anna Marie Richmond, Esq.

Doris S. Hoffman Outstanding New Lawyer Award
Danielle N. Menendez, Esq.

Stephanie E. Kupferman Juvenile Justice Award
Hon. Karen A. Riley

Judith S. Kaye Access to Justice Award
Hon. Marguerite Grays

Doris S. Hoffman
Outstanding New Lawyer Award

Danielle N. Menendez



Danielle Menendez graduated from West Virginia University, in 2011, where she received her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Anthropology. In 2015, she obtained a Juris Doctor from New York Law School.

Ms. Menendez is currently the Principal Law Clerk for the Honorable Pamela L. Fisher in Kings County Supreme Court-Civil Term. Prior to joining the court system, Ms. Menendez worked as an Agency Attorney at the New York City Administration for Children's Services (NYC ACS), Family Court Legal Services. At the NYC ACS, Ms. Menendez represented the agency in child abuse and neglect cases.

Since graduating law school, Ms. Menendez has been active in several bar associations, particularly in the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York (WBASNY). Ms. Menendez currently serves as the 1st Vice President/President-elect for the Staten Island Women's Bar Association (SIWBA), a chapter of WBASNY. Ms. Menendez joined the SIWBA in 2016. She has held various positions on their Board of Directors including Corresponding Secretary and 2nd Vice President. Ms. Menendez has also served as the SIWBA Chapter Committee Representative on various WBASNY committees including Nominations Committee, Children's Rights Committee, Domestic Violence Committee, LGBTQ Committee and Human Trafficking Committee.

Ms. Menendez is also a member of the New York City Bar Association, Brooklyn Women's Bar Association, Columbian Lawyer's Bar Association and the New York State Academy of Trial Lawyers.

Ms. Menendez volunteers with various national organizations assisting with voter registration and providing informational services on voter's rights.

Hanna S. Cohn Pro Bono Award

Anna Marie Richmond



Anna Marie Richmond is a solo practitioner based in Buffalo, NY. She focuses her practice on protecting her clients' civil and constitutional rights, concentrating in litigation in federal court, the courts of New York State, and before administrative agencies.

Ms. Richmond represents clients who have suffered discrimination on the basis of race, age, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, gender expression and other forms of discrimination prohibited by New York and federal law.

She litigates cases involving employment discrimination, housing discrimination, LGBTQ issues, police misconduct, sexual harassment, access to public accommodations, discrimination in education, retaliation under the anti-discrimination laws, prisoner civil rights, and similar issues.

Ms. Richmond holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Rutgers College and Rutgers School of Communication and Information in New Brunswick, NJ, and a Juris doctor degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo. She is admitted to practice in New York State, before the federal courts in New York State, before the Second Circuit Court of Appeals and before the Supreme Court of the United States.

Ms. Richmond is a member of the Bar Association of Erie County, NY and of the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York. She is the immediate past Chair of the BAEC's Continuing Legal Education Committee, and is active on the Federal Practice Committee, the Human Rights Law Committee, the Labor and Employment Law Committee, and the Solo and Small Firms Committee. She is a volunteer with the *Pro Se* Assistance Program, a collaboration between the US District Court for the Western District of New York, the Volunteer Lawyers' Project and the SUNY Buffalo Law School, and also volunteers with VLP in other areas.

The US District Court for the Western District of New York recognized her service as appointed counsel on behalf of indigent plaintiffs with its annual *Pro Bono* award in 1999 and again in 2006. In 2009, she was recognized for her service as Chair of the BAEC's Federal Practice Committee by both the Bar Association and the District Court. She is the recipient of a 2019 award from the Volunteer Lawyers Project for her services to the *Pro Se* Assistance Program, and was honored with the 2020 Hanna S. Cohn *Pro Bono* Award from the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York, and the Bar Association of Erie County's Special Service Award in 2020.

Stephanie Kupferman Juvenile Justice Award

Hon. Karen A. Riley



Karen Riley has been the Chief Attorney/Executive Director of the Children's Rights Society in Orange County, New York since 2007. The agency represents approximately 4,000 children per year in cases of Abuse, Neglect, Custody, Guardianship, Juvenile Delinquency, Adoption and Persons in Need of Supervision matters.

Previously, Ms. Riley was a Supervising Assistant District Attorney in Rockland County, New York from 1996 to 2006, where she prosecuted cases involving Special Victims. She has been an Adjunct Professor at Dominican College in New York and an Instructor at the Rockland County Police Academy, as well as a certified trainer for the New York Forensic Best Interviewing Practices for children who have been sexually abused. Ms. Riley has been a presenter on issues of Juvenile Justice, Domestic Violence and Education Law.

In 2006, Ms. Riley was appointed as an interim County Court Judge by the Governor of New York State. She was previously an Associate Justice in the Villages of Airmont and Hillburn, New York, and is currently a Justice in the Village of Montebello in Rockland County

In 2011, she was recognized as the "Public Interest Attorney of the Year" by the Women's Bar Association of Orange and Sullivan Counties. She is currently a member of the Child Welfare Court Improvement Project and the Unified Court System's Child Fatality Advisory Committee. She was previously a member of the Board of Directors of the Orange County Bar Association

Karen Riley is a graduate of Cornell University and Pace University Law School, *cum laude*, where she was a member of the Law Review.

Marilyn R. Menge Award

Irene V. Villacci



Irene V. Villacci, JD, CELA* graduated from Molloy College in 1986. She received her law degree from Hofstra University of Law in 1989 and was admitted as an attorney in New York State in 1990. Since that time, her practice has concentrated in the areas of elder law, estate planning, probate and estates administration, wills, trusts and estates, guardianships, advance directives and powers of attorney, and chronic care Medicaid. A member of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys since 1994, Ms. Villacci has been Certified as an Elder Law Attorney by the National Elder Law Foundation since 2001.* The law office of Irene V. Villacci, Es. was established in February 2007 in Rockville Centre, NY. She has been a CLE presenter for the Practising Law Institute, Women's Bar Association of the State of New York, the Bar Association of Nassau County, the Nassau County Women's Bar Association, and the National Business Institute. Irene Villacci is certified to be a court-appointed Court Evaluator, Guardian ad Litem, Counsel to Guardians, and Referee in Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

Ms. Villacci was admitted to the United States Supreme Court in 2006 and was proud to be the movant before U.S. Supreme Court in 2010 for the admission of WBASNY members. She is a past Chairperson of the Nassau-Suffolk Law Services Advisory Council, and has been a member of the Advisory Council since 2000. Currently, she also serves as a member of the Lawyers' Committee of the Long Island Alzheimer's Association and served on the Executive Committee of the *Light The Night Walk* for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Long Island chapter. Since 2013, she has been continually named one of New York's *Super Lawyers*.

Irene V. Villacci is a member of the New York State Bar Association's Elder Law Section, and currently serves as the Co-Chair of its Mediation Committee. She is also a member of NYSBA's Trusts and Estates Section, and of the Elder Law Committee, Surrogate's Court Committee, and Real Property Committee of the Nassau County Bar Association. She is the former Secretary to the Executive Committee of the General Practice Section of the New York State Bar Association.

She is a Past President of the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York and is a Past President of the Nassau County Women's Bar Association. Ms. Villacci has served on the Board of the Girl Scouts of Nassau County since 2015, and the Board of Sacred Heart Academy since 2017.

Irene V. Villacci has received many honors for her work with the community and the bar association. In 2006, she received the Virginia C. Duncombe Award from the Nassau County Women's Bar Association for her service to them and the community. In March 2010, at the recommendation of Nassau County Legislator Francis X. Becker, Jr., she was honored by the Nassau County Legislature as a "Woman of Distinction/Trailblazer of the New Millennium". In 2010, she was bestowed the honor of "Distinguished Alumna" by the Board of Trustees of Molloy College, her *alma mater*. In 2016, she was honored as one of Long Island's "Outstanding Women in Law" by Hon. A. Gail Prudenti and the Center for Children, Families, and the Law of Hofstra Law School, at their Inaugural ceremony.

**The National Elder Law Foundation is not affiliated with any government authority. Certification is not a requirement for the practice of law in New York State and does not necessarily indicate greater competence than other attorneys experienced in this field of law.*

Marilyn R. Menge Award

Margery Weinroth



I am delighted to receive the Marilyn R. Menge award with my friend Irene Villacci and send my profound thanks to the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York for this honor.

I graduated from Hofstra University School of Law and have been practicing law on Long Island for over thirty years, concentrating on real estate transactions, estate planning and administration and commercial matters. I am a member of the Suffolk County Women's Bar Association since 1995, currently serving as Director.

Since joining the SCWBA, I have been a Director and Recording Secretary and have chaired and served on many of the SCWBA's ongoing committees. It was my pleasure to co-chair the SCWBA Networking Luncheon Committee for over ten years which gave me an opportunity to work with the exceptional women I have grown to know and consider friends.

I was a Mentor for the SCWBA in WBASNY's mentoring program and for Suffolk County Teen Entrepreneurship Conferences, helping to pass along knowledge gained as a practicing attorney to both women entering our profession and those who may be looking for a future in law .

My strong belief in "paying it forward" has led me to serve as a member of the Advisory Board of the Massapequa Schools Partnership for Career Development and to volunteer as a lecturer on "law as a career" in local schools. One of my favorite activities was co-chairing the SCWBA's participation in the Read Across America program to benefit local Head Start facilities, especially the privilege of reading to all those terrific young faces.

Additionally, I regularly lecture on my legal concentrations to senior groups and in library and continuing education programs. I look forward to the day I can once again have this face-to-face contact with my community.

My greatest achievements, however, will always be my two wonderful daughters and three beautiful granddaughters. I treasure the relationships I have established through my association with the SCWBA and hope to continue to serve as we strive to advance the position of women in the legal community.

Judith S. Kaye Access to Justice Award

Hon. Marguerite Grays



Justice Marguerite A. Grays is a Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York. In November 2000, Justice Grays was elected Judge of the New York City Civil Court, Queens County. She served in that capacity until her election in November 2002 to the New York State Supreme Court, Queens County, where she presently sits. In 2005, Justice Grays was selected as one of the first two Justices to preside over the Queens County Commercial Division, which was established in the Fall of that year. Justice Grays is the Presiding Justice of the Queens County Commercial Division. In 2015, she was appointed as the Deputy Administrative Judge for Civil Matters, Eleventh Judicial District. In 2020, she was appointed as the Administrative Judge for Civil Matters, Eleventh Judicial District.

Prior to her ascension to the bench, Justice Grays worked as a Staff Attorney at Queens Legal Services, Corp. Thereafter, she worked as a Staff Attorney at 1115 Pre-Paid Legal Services. In 1987, her legal career path lead to the Unified Court System where she held the positions of Law Assistant for New York City Civil Court Judge Albert J. Grant and, thereafter, Principal Law Clerk for New York State Supreme Court Justices Joscelyn E. Smith and Frederick D. R. Sampson.

Justice Grays is Chairperson of the Judicial Committee on Women in the Courts of the Queens Supreme Court, Civil Term; a member of the Statewide Foreclosure Working Group; Chairperson of the Board of Trustees for the Law Library of Queens County, 11th Judicial District - Supreme Court; a member of the Board of Directors for the Judges and Lawyers Breast Cancer Alert; a committee member of the Judicial Hearing Officer Selection Advisory Committee for the Second Department; Chairperson, Board of Trustees, Queens County Women's Bar Association; a member of the Scholarship Committee for the Queens County Bar Association; and a member of the Queens College Paralegal Advisory Board. She has also held the positions of past President of the New York Chapter of the National Association of Women Judges; past President and Board of Director of the Association of Black Women Attorneys; past Chairperson of the Women In the Law Committee for the Queens County Bar Association; former co-chairperson of the Nominations Committee of the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York; and former member of the New York State Lawyer's Assistance Trust Judge Advisory Panel Justice Grays was also the first African-American President of the Queens County Women's Bar Association.

Justice Grays is the recipient of the 2018 Distinguished Alumni on the Bench Award from the Maurice A. Deane School of Law - Hofstra University, the 2018 Judge of the Year Award from the Asian American Congress, the 2016 Jurist of the Year Award from the Metropolitan Black Bar Association. Justice Grays has also been recognized by the Rochdale Village Community Center Committee for her years of distinguished service to the community and the Queens College Continuing Education Program-Paralegal Studies for her outstanding service.

Hon. Marguerite A. Grays received her undergraduate degree from John Jay College of Criminal Justice. She received her Juris Doctorate from Hofstra University School of Law.

Joan L. Ellenbogen Founders Award

Hon. Linda Christopher



The Hon. Linda Christopher is an Associate Justice of the Appellate Division Second Department. As a Supreme Court Justice in the Westchester Matrimonial Part from 2011 to 2016, she was also the Supervising Judge of Matrimonial matters in the Ninth Judicial District from 2014 to 2016. Justice Christopher sat in Rockland Supreme Court from 2016 to 2017. She presided over the Rockland County Integrated Domestic Violence Court from its opening in 2006 to 2011 and was a Family Court Judge in Rockland County from 2005 to 2011. Justice Christopher was a Justice Court Judge in Grandview, New York and Acting Justice Court Judge in the Village of Upper Nyack from 2002 to 2004.

Justice Christopher is a member of the Matrimonial Practice Advisory and Rules Committee, the Family Violence Task Force Committee, as well as the Statewide Committee of Attorneys for Children. She is a past President of the Rockland County Bar Association, the Rockland County Women's Bar Association and the Rockland County Legal Aid Society. Justice Christopher has lectured extensively to various bar associations, civic organizations and at judicial trainings on topics including matrimonial law, sexual harassment, domestic violence, the Integrated Domestic Violence Court and appellate practice. She lectured at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law/Yeshiva University, Intensive Trial Advocacy Training.

Justice Christopher received the Sterns Award from the Rockland County Bar Association in 2005 which is presented to a member who has made significant contributions to both the Bar Association and the people of Rockland County. She also received the Belle Meyer Zeck Award in 2005 from the Rockland Women's County Bar Association in recognition of her wisdom, ethics, creativity and pursuit of excellence in the law, and promoting and advancing the status of women in society.

Justice Christopher has been a volunteer member of the Rockland County YMCA, a board member from 1998 to present, as well as past President; a board member and current President of Lifeline (providing free medical care to uninsured members of the community); and a NAACP Silver Life member.

Justice Christopher served as Law Clerk to Hon. Orelle Weeks, Presiding Judge, Denver Family Court, in 1980. She began her career as an Associate Attorney to Jerome Trachtenberg, in 1981 in Nyack, New York. In 1986 she opened the Law Offices of Linda Christopher. She continued in private practice until December 2004. She served as the Attorney to the Village of Nyack from 1987 to 1994 and was named one of the Top 10 Matrimonial Attorneys in Southern New York, 2003.

Justice Christopher received her Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Colorado in 1976 and her Juris Doctor from Antioch School of Law in 1980.

Doris S. Hoffman Medal

Marjorie E. Karowe



Marge Karowe, WBASNY's second President, took a non-traditional path to law. Born in Rochester, New York, she attended Smith College, graduating in 1951 with a B.A in Theater Arts. For the next few years she worked in various off-Broadway and experimental theaters before marrying, moving to Schenectady, NY, and spending the next two decades raising six children.

In 1971, twenty years after graduating from Smith she entered Albany Law School as a freshman, one of only 30 women in the class. She was a member of the Albany Law Review and Justinian Honor Society, graduating *cum laude* in 1974. She is a founding mother of two bar associations: the Capital District Bar Association - one of the initial Chapters of WBASNY - and the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York itself. Over the following decades Marge has been appointed to many prestigious committees by such New York authorities as two Chief Judges, the Governor, and the Commissioner of Education.

During this time Marge also taught at such institutions as Albany Law School, Union College and the Cornell School of Industrial and Labor Relations and led many public workshops on sexual harassment laws and enforcement. She remained a highly engaged member of her community, being involved in shaping and electing a more responsive public school board, supporting programs for mentoring middle school girls and lifelong learning programs for Union College, while serving on the Boards of the Schenectady Free Health Clinic, the Siena College and Saratoga Opera Cubs.

While Marge has received several awards for both her legal and community work, her most treasured are those bestowed by WBASNY: the Marilyn Menge Award, the Founder's Award, and now the Doris S. Hoffman Medal. She is forever grateful to WBASNY for giving her the opportunity to organize women lawyers into a statewide group (under her term WBASNY grew from 5 to 15 Chapters stretching from Long Island to Buffalo), for being the catalyst for the first searching examination into the disparate treatment of women in every aspect of our court system (Task Force on Women and the Courts, *Fordham Law Journal* 1986, updated so ably in 2020 under the Chairmanship of the Hon. Betty Weinberg Ellerin) and for mobilizing a stunning group of women who have become role models, mentors, inspirations and, best of all, lifelong friends.

Marge's current passion, in light of the destructive effect that Covid is having particularly on the lives of women, is to seize the opportunities made available by technology to reframe the way in which law is practiced, administered, and consumed. We can and must change the models so that women's lives no longer have to be a daily struggle between self-fulfillment and self sacrifice. Who better to do that than a bright, articulate, thinking, imaginative group of WBASNY lawyers ?

Forty and Faithful to the Mission



This month, WBASNY and our Sponsor Raquel Miranda salute United States Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg (March 15, 1933 – September 18, 2020) for her tireless fight for equal rights for all people and WBASNY's enduring mission to promote the advancement of the status of women in society and of women in the legal profession and to promote the fair and equal administration of justice.



WBASNY and Carrie Anne Cavallo, Esq., of Cavallo Law, PLLC, which specializes in matrimonial law and family law litigation (www.cavallolawpllc.com), salute WBASNY's Second President and 2020 Doris S. Hoffman Medal recipient **Marge Karowe** for her exceptional leadership and service to women lawyers in New York State.



WBASNY's Officers (2020-2021) salute all recipients of the Joan L. Ellenbogen Founders Award, named for one of WBASNY's founding mothers and its first-ever president (1981-1982). In the enduring spirit of Ms. Ellenbogen, [these distinguished women](#) exemplify the essence of justice, demonstrating a harmony with the founding principles of WBASNY.



WBASNY and Marea Wachsman, Esq., one of the founding partners of **Schreier & Wachsman, LLP**, a firm with over 57 years of experience in private practice and specializes in personal injury litigation, medical malpractice and commercial litigation (see www.medmalawyer.com), salute **Irene V. Villacci (Nassau)** and **Margery Weinroth (Suffolk)**, winners of the **2020 Marilyn R. Menge Award**, for their valuable and significant contributions to WBASNY and their service to their home chapters.



WBASNY and the **Staten Island chapter, SIWBA** salute **Danielle N. Menendez**, 2020 winner of the **Doris S. Hoffman Outstanding New Lawyer Award**, for her outstanding achievements within the legal profession and her outstanding contributions to WBASNY and the Richmond County community.



WBASNY and the **Western New York (Buffalo) Chapter (WNY)** salute **Anna M. Richmond**, winner of the **2020 Hanna S. Cohn Pro Bono Award**, for her outstanding contributions to the provision of pro bono legal services, above and beyond her employment responsibilities.



WBASNY and **Dawn Cardi, Esq.**, founding partner of [Cardi & Edgar LLP](#), salute the **Hon. Karen A. Riley (Orange-Sullivan)**, winner of the **2020 Stephanie Kupferman Juvenile Justice Award**, for Judge Riley's outstanding service and achievements in legal matters which directly involve juveniles.



WBASNY and **Sandra Rivera, Esq.**, principal of [Rivera Law, PLLC](#), salute the **Hon. Marguerite Grays (Queens)**, winner of the **2020 Judith S. Kaye Access to Justice Award**, for Judge Grays' commitment and dedication to ensuring that equal access to justice is carried out through service, goodwill and professionalism.



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