

# Brooklyn Women's Bar Association



*2021 Virtual Annual Dinner*  
*Monday, May 17, 2021*

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to our first-ever virtual Annual Dinner. Thank you to our members, friends, and sponsors for your continued commitment to the Brooklyn Women's Bar Association.

To say that the 2020-2021 year has been challenging is an understatement. We began the bar year amid a global pandemic and civil unrest. As I reflect upon the past year, and the hardships that ensued, I am grateful that we also had the opportunity to learn, adapt, and inspire. In 2020, we celebrated a milestone for women with the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment.

While we suffered a devastating loss with the passing of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, we are inspired by her service to others, and her everlasting impact on generations of women. The election of Kamala Harris, the first female Vice President, brought us new hope and possibilities, and will pave the way for more historical achievements by women in the future.

I am proud that the Brooklyn Women's Bar Association, at 103 years old, remains vigilant and committed to the legal profession and our community. I am thankful for all that our bar was able to accomplish. We hosted close to sixty programs, including all our traditional events, such as our Membership Party, Lunch with the Justices of the Appellate Division, and Judiciary Night. We participated in a voter's registration drive and delivered books to students in celebration of National Read Across America Day. We walked to support a cure for breast cancer and our Holiday Auction benefited domestic violence victims. Additionally, we promoted our bar theme "Paving the Way Through Mentorship," by way of our CLE programs, and events such as our Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month, and Women's History Month Celebrations. I am happy to report that this year marked the largest mentor-mentee matches in the history of our mentoring program.

Thank you to our members. You have been my inspiration and my strength throughout this journey. We could not have moved forward without you. While we have been physically separated, you remained dedicated to our mission. I recognize how difficult it was to stay engaged in bar activities this year, and I am very grateful for your support.

We end the bar year by honoring three exceptional women: Hon. Esther M. Morgenstern with the Beatrice M. Judge Recognition Award; Joy A. Thompson with the Sybil Hart Kooper Award; and Hon. Velmanette Montgomery with the Lifetime Achievement Award. We thank them for their leadership, and contributions to the Brooklyn community.

Continuing with our bar theme, we will also award two scholarships. It was important to me that we acknowledge the struggles of our young legal minds during this unprecedented time and further aid their goals to become community leaders. Thank you to our sponsors for funding the scholarships.

I want to thank our Board of Directors and Committees for all your hard work, and a successful year. Special thoughts of gratitude to Hon. Joanne Quiñones, Carrie Anne Cavallo, Hon. Nancy Bannon, and Hon. Genine Edwards for your unwavering support and encouragement. Thank you to Hon. Jane Tully for your understanding and support as I assumed this role.

I was honored to serve as President for the 2020-2021 bar year. I look forward to my continued service to the BWBA. I do miss seeing you all in person and look forward to meeting again soon.

Yours Truly,  
Natoya L. McGhie  
President, BWBA

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# *A Look Back: Before Virtual Dinners*



*Thanks for your support  
throughout the years*



# **BEATRICE M. JUDGE RECOGNITION AWARD**

The Beatrice M. Judge Recognition Award was established in 1983 for outstanding service to the women of the Bar, the community, and the law. It is named in honor of the first woman Justice of the Supreme Court, Kings County, Beatrice M. Judge.

Judge Beatrice Judge served as a Judge of the Civil Court of the City of New York before her elevation to the Supreme Court in 1967. Formerly a Democratic District Leader, she represented the Sunset Park area for many years. She was a member of the Brooklyn Bar Association, Brooklyn Club of the Business and Professional Women of America, American Bar Association, and was a life member of the Brooklyn Club of the Soroptimists International. She also served as Chair of the American Red Cross.

## **Hon. Esther Morgenstern RECIPIENT OF THE BEATRICE M. JUDGE RECOGNITION AWARD**



Hon. Esther "Micky" Morgenstern is the President of the Supreme Court Justices Association of the City of New York. She was elected to the New York State Supreme Court in 2005 and was re-elected in 2019. She presides over the Model Integrated Domestic Violence (IDV) Court in Kings County. In 2013, the IDV Court was awarded the Mentor Court Award by the US Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women, in recognition of its outstanding work, and implementation of its protocol statewide. Prior to her election to the Supreme Court, Justice Morgenstern was elected to the Civil Court in 1995 and presided in the Criminal and Family Courts as an Acting Supreme Court Justice where she was instrumental in developing the first Domestic Violence misdemeanor courts in the NYC Criminal Courts.

Justice Morgenstern served as President of the Brooklyn Women's Bar Association in 1992. She also served as Vice President, Treasurer and Dinner Chair Committee, and is a former delegate to the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York (WBASNY). Justice Morgenstern currently serves as a co-chair of the Brooklyn Bar Association's Family Court Committee. She is a member of the Criminal and Matrimonial Committees and is a former Trustee. In 1995, Justice Morgenstern received the BWBA's Sybil Hart Kooper Award for her Outstanding Service to the association, and the BWBA's Award for her Exemplary Leadership and Achievements in the Law in 2003. Justice Morgenstern has also received the BBA Volunteer Lawyers Association Pro Bono Award, and the New York State Chapter of Supervised Visitation Network Award.

Justice Morgenstern was an adjunct Professor at Brooklyn College CUNY, where she taught courses on Children and the Law.

Justice Morgenstern is the proud mother of four children, two of whom are attorneys and is the very proud "kvelling" grandmother of 20 grandchildren.

## SYBIL HART KOOPER AWARD

The Sybil Hart Kooper Award, established in 1992, is given to an outstanding member of the BWBA who has made valuable and significant contributions to the BWBA. Justice Sybil Hart Kooper served on the Appellate Division, Second Department, from 1984 until her retirement in 1991. She was also a founding member and past president of the National Association of Women Judges and a member of the New York State Task Force on Women in the Courts.

### **Joy A. Thompson, Esq.** **RECIPIENT OF THE SYBIL HART KOOPER AWARD**



Joy Anastasia Thompson, President of the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York (WBASNY), has been an active member of WBASNY and its Brooklyn chapter since 2009. She joined the Brooklyn board in 2010, serving as Recording Secretary from 2010 to 2012, and then as a Vice President in 2016. In 2017, she became a statewide officer, serving as Corresponding Secretary, then as a Vice President, and as President-Elect. In 2012, Ms. Thompson received WBASNY's Doris S. Hoffman Outstanding New Lawyer Award. Ms. Thompson was recently named to City & State's 2021 Law Power 100 list of leading legal professionals in New York politics and government.

Ms. Thompson has chaired the Brooklyn Bar Association's Diversity Committee since its creation in 2019. She is a member of the Committee on Character and Fitness for the 2nd, 10th, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 13th Districts. She is a member of the Legislative Affairs Committee of the Women in Law Section of the New York State Bar Association. She has volunteered with the Brooklyn Legal Pipeline Initiative and New York Cares, and she is a former mentor with Big Brothers Big Sisters NYC. She is also an active member and chair of the Scholarship Committee of the Manhattan chapter of Soroptimist International.

Ms. Thompson works as an Assistant General Counsel with New York City's Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH). Prior to working with OATH, she served for nine years as the Deputy Commissioner of the Public Administrator - New York County – "a fiduciary of last resort," charged with administering the estates of Manhattan residents who died without a will and without heirs.

Ms. Thompson earned her J.D. in 2008 from William & Mary Law School in Williamsburg, Virginia, where she served as Co-Chair of the Institute of Bill of Rights Law (Student Division) and Symposium Editor of the *William & Mary Bill of Rights Journal*. Immediately following graduation, from 2008 through 2010, Ms. Thompson clerked for the Hon. Carol R. Edmead in the Civil Branch of New York County Supreme Court. Her life's pursuits ultimately led Ms. Thompson back to Brooklyn, where she currently resides. She is licensed to practice law in New York and New Jersey.

# LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to an individual who has created a positive and lasting legacy within the Brooklyn community at large and who has been devoted to the advancement of women. This award recognizes the entirety of the recipient's career.

## **Honorable Velmanette Montgomery** **RECIPIENT OF THE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**



Former Senator Velmanette Montgomery is recognized for her effective leadership and steadfast commitment to her constituents of North and Central Brooklyn. Senator Montgomery's career as a New York State Legislator includes tireless advocacy for youth, public education, criminal justice reform, environmental preservation, and civil rights.

As the Chair of the New York State Senate Standing Committee on Children and Families, Senator Montgomery has been committed to helping young people achieve positive outcomes through reform of the State's juvenile justice, foster care, and adoptive care systems. Senator

Montgomery is the recipient of numerous awards. Most recently she received the Barbara M. Clark Kinship Champion Award in recognition of her longtime advocacy on the issue of kinship care.

In 2010, the New York State Bar Association honored Senator Montgomery with the Howard Levine Award for Excellence in Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare. The award recognized the Senator for Reforming the Juvenile Justice System and her Untiring Commitment to Children. Sponsored by the Committee on Children and the Law, the award recognizes individuals who have done outstanding work protecting and promoting the rights of New York's children.

Prior to elected office, Senator Montgomery worked as a teacher, adjunct professor, and day care director as well as the co-founder of the Day Care Forum of New York City. Senator Montgomery obtained a master's degree in Education from New York University and was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Law from St. Joseph's College in Brooklyn, and in 1983 was a Revson Fellow on the Future of the City of New York at Columbia University.

Former Senator Montgomery's bills signed into law include: Clean Bill of Adoptee Rights, Kinship Bill, Juvenile Delinquency Bill, Family Support Services, Raise the Age, Juvenile Court Fees Bill, Parental Notification Bill, Family Visitation Bill, Breastfeeding Bill, and Daycare Providers Protection Act.

# *Congratulations to our Honorees*



# SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

## Rochelle Ballantyne

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW



Rochelle Ballantyne is a proud Brooklyn native, hailing from Crown Heights. She is the oldest of four and daughter to Trinidadian parents. She attended Stanford University for undergraduate studies where she double majored in Political Science and African and African American Studies. After graduating she became a paralegal and gained extensive experience supporting attorneys in litigation practice areas such as IP law, government enforcement defense, and white-collar investigations.

Rochelle earned a master's in education policy at Teachers College, Columbia University, where her research focused on the school-to-prison pipeline and its impact on Black girls. From these experiences, she has been able to hone her leadership skills, learn how to communicate effectively, further her vast research and writing background, and master balancing various workstreams without sacrificing quality work content. After completing a two-year master's program in a year, Rochelle matriculated to NYU School of Law. At NYU Law, she is an AnBryce Scholar, Birnbaum Women's Leadership Fellow, and an active member of the Black Allied Law Students Association, Suspension Representation Project, and Ending the Prison Industrial Complex. Rochelle is interested in criminal justice reform and education equity.

## Christina Das

CITY UNIVERSITY NEW YORK SCHOOL OF LAW



Christina Das is a proud first-generation Indian American and Brooklynite. She is a 2020 Graduate of the City University School of Law. During law school, Christina was a managing board editor of the CUNY Law Review, a member of the Asian and Pacific Islander Law Students Association, and a South Asian Bar Association of New York Public Interest Law Fellow. Christina plans to pursue a career in civil rights litigation, continuing the work she was doing as a law clerk with Outten & Golden, LLP & the NAACP Legal Defense Fund working on employment discrimination and voting rights matters.

Christina aims to impact change on a local to global level. During law school, she was a Sorensen Center for International Peace and Justice Fellow working at Breakthrough, Inc., in New Delhi, India where she worked alongside activists and lawyers to advocate against gender-based violence for women and girls across all castes. During this past election cycle, Christina traveled with a group of young lawyers to Ohio to partake in non-partisan poll monitoring, and on a day to day basis she educates young people about civic activism in her role as President of the Brooklyn Young Democrats. When she is not organizing -- or yelling at folks to value the voices of young people -- you can find Christina trying out new recipes for biryani or parathas to share at a potluck.

# **Cavallo Law, PLLC**

*is pleased to congratulate tonight's Honorees*

## **Honorable Esther M. Morgenstern**

*Recipient of the Hon. Beatrice M. Judge Award*

## **Joy A. Thompson, Esq.**

*Recipient of the Hon. Sybil Hart Kooper Award*

## **Honorable Velmanette Montgomery**

*Recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award*

*AND*

*Congratulations to Natoya McGhie on her  
fabulous tenure as President*



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# *Congratulates*

The Brooklyn Women's Bar Association for being committed to achieving equality, diversity, fairness and opportunity for women lawyers and all women!

**We salute all the Honorees!**

You are inspiring, and we thank you for your many contributions to your community!

**Honorable Esther M. Morgenstern**

**Joy A. Thompson, Esq.**

**&**

**Honorable Velmanette Montgomery**



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# *Congratulations*

*Friedman LLP proudly salutes the  
Honorable Esther M. Morgenstern,  
recipient of the  
Beatrice M. Judge Recognition Award  
at the 2021 annual  
Brooklyn Women's Bar Association dinner.*

*We extend our congratulations to all of this year's  
honorees on their noteworthy achievements.*

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**A sincere thank you to**

***President Natoya L. McGhie, Esq.***  
**for her dedication and leadership throughout the  
pandemic**

**and a hearty congratulations  
to tonight's honorees**

***Honorable Esther M. Morgenstern***

**Hon. Beatrice M. Judge Award**

***Joy A. Thompson, Esq.***

**Hon. Sybil Hart Kooper Award**

***Honorable Velmanette Montgomery***

**Lifetime Achievement Award**

**RAQUEL MIRANDA**  
**BWBA Delegate 2020-2021**

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**Extends Our Warmest Congratulations**

To

**This Evening's Honorees**

*Honorable Esther M. Morgenstern*

Hon. Beatrice M. Judge Recognition Award

*Joy A. Thompson, Esq.*

Hon. Sybil Hart Kooper Award

*Honorable Velmanette Montgomery*

Lifetime Achievement Award

&

**BWBA Scholarship Recipients**

*Rochelle Ballantyne & Christina Das*

**ADM is Proud to Support the BWBA's Mission to  
Promote and Advance Women in the Legal Profession.**



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**Proudly salutes the Brooklyn Women's Bar Association  
And offers warmest congratulations to  
Hon. Esther M. Morgenstern and Joy Thompson, Esq.**

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# SSRGA

## CONGRATULATES THE HONOREES

HONORABLE ESTHER M. MORGENSTERN

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on their ANNUAL DINNER  
and CONGRATULATIONS TO HONOREES

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# Congratulations to the 2021 Dinner Honorees

## **Beatrice M. Judge Recognition Award**

Hon. Esther M. Morgenstern

## **Sybil Hart Kooper Award**

Joy A. Thompson, Esq.

## **Lifetime Achievement Award**

Hon. Velmanette Montgomery

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# STROOCK

We salute Hon. Esther M. Morgenstern for her unstinting efforts as President of the Supreme Court Justices' Association of the City of New York and her fellow honorees Joy A. Thompson, Esq. and Hon. Velmanette Montgomery on their well-deserved recognition.

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WE CONGRATULATE TONIGHT'S HONOREES:

**The Honorable Esther M. Morgenstern**

*Justice of the Supreme Court, Kings County*

**Joy A. Thompson**

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

**Velmanette Montgomery**

*Senator, New York State Senate, Ret.*

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*Congratulations to Natoya McGhie for  
her many accomplishments as President.*

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Beatrice M. Judge Recognition Award

Hon. Esther M. Morgenstern

Sybil Hart Kooper Award

Joy A. Thompson, Esq.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Hon. Velmanette Montgomery



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# Congratulations to the Honorees and the Brooklyn Women's Bar Association



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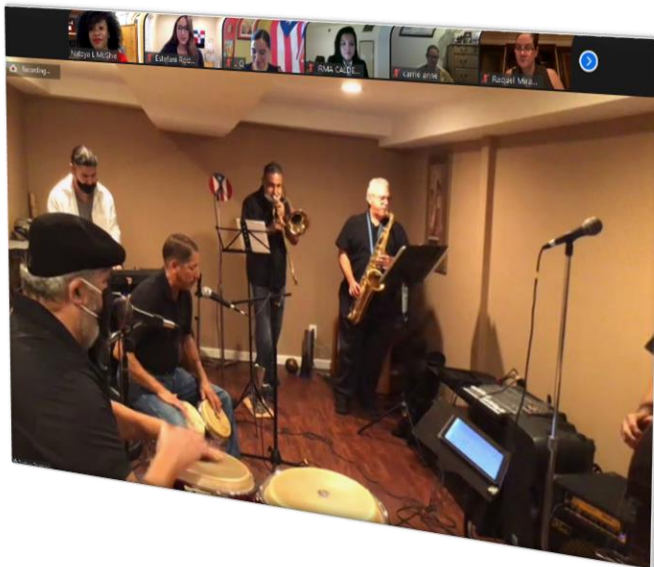
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The Brooklyn Women's Bar Association would like to express our sincere appreciation for your continued support. We look forward to the many things we will accomplish together in the future!

# Thank You for a Banner Year!

While we were virtual, we managed to continue all our traditional events, including our Annual Membership Party, Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration, Lunch with the Justices of the Appellate Division, and Holiday Auction and Celebration.



Our signature monthly “**Lunch with a Judge**” series provided our members with the unique opportunity to engage with Brooklyn jurists.



### THANK YOU TO:

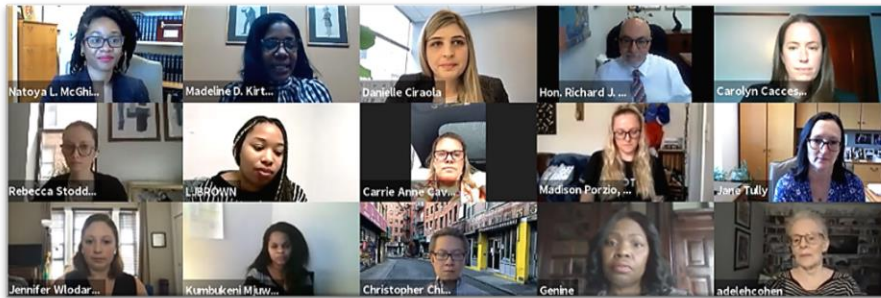
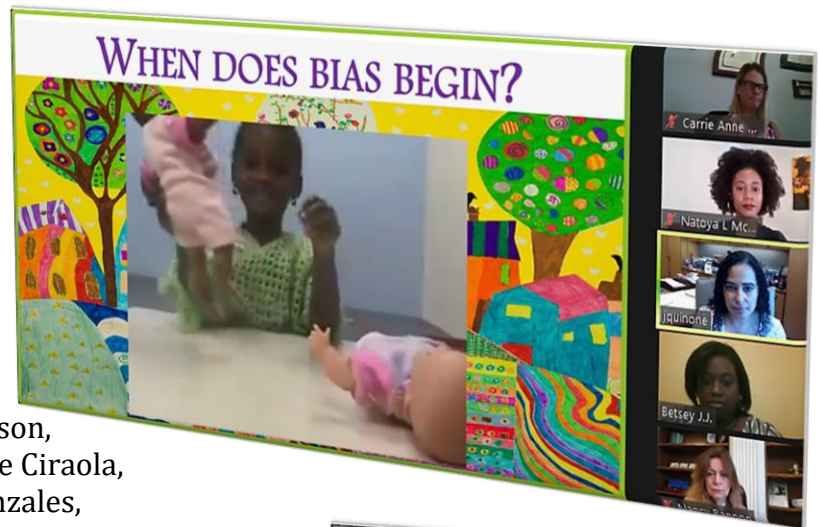
Hon. Ellen Spodek, Hon. Heela Capell,  
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Hon. Jane Tully, Hon. Ben Darvil,  
Hon. Harriet Thompson, Hon. Patria Frias-  
Colón, Hon. Lillian Wan, Hon. Craig Walker,  
and Hon. Cenceria Edwards (in order of  
appearance).



We appreciate our members who shared their expertise and knowledge at our CLE programs.

**THANK YOU TO:**

Hon. Joanne Quiñones, Betsey Jean-Jacques, Fern Finkel, Andrea Bonina, Michael Ross, Hon. Esther Morgenstern, Leah Scondotto, Nyasa Hickey, Tracy Lawson, Madeline Kirton, Carolyn Caccese, Danielle Ciraoia, Hon. Richard Montelione, Hon. Cheryl Gonzales, Jeffrey Saltiel (in order of appearance).



We were honored to welcome Attorney General Letitia James to “EqualiTEA with the Presidents,” to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment. Attorney General James also participated in our panel discussion, “Power of the Vote 2020. Know Your Worth!”



We partnered with the New York City Board of Elections and the Dominican Bar Association to register voters.



We participated in our Annual Read Across America Day by delivering Dr. Seuss books and goodies to students at PS 274.



We found new ways to engage our members with "Spin the Wheel" and 90's Trivia.



## **THANK YOU TO OUR SUSTAINING MEMBERS**

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