



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



As always, I wish you continued good health and strength.

The year 2020 will be remembered as one of the most challenging years in our lifetime. It was also a year that provided us with an opportunity to learn, adapt, and inspire. I remain inspired by the strength and resilience of our bar and I am proud to serve as President throughout this time.

We entered 2021 with new hope and possibilities. Kamala Harris became the first female, and first African American and South Asian American vice president, paving the path for more historical achievements of women in the future.

In 2020, we managed to continue all of our traditional events, and concluded the year with two virtual holiday celebrations. To begin the new year, we conducted two CLE programs in January, and continued our monthly "Lunch with a Judge" series. We also celebrated the judiciary's service to the Brooklyn community at our Annual Judiciary Night, and partnered with the Staten Island Women's Bar Association for Heart Health Month.

February marks Black History Month, a time to commemorate and reflect on remarkable Black trailblazers who have left enduring legacies. We look forward to seeing you at our Black History Month program on February 22, 2021. In March, we welcome you to join us for our Women's History Month events.

Please mark your calendars for our Virtual Annual Dinner in May 2021. While we will all miss seeing each other in-person, we look forward to honoring our outstanding members and supporters this bar year.

Yours Truly
Natoya L. McGhie, BWBA President

JANUARY CLE PROGRAMS

By Natoya McGhie & Turquoise Haskin

We kicked off the new year with two CLE programs. On **January 11, 2021**, the Young Lawyers and Mentorship Committees presented: "Courtroom Basics 101." Our speakers, Hon. Richard Montelione, Madeline Kirton, and Carolyn Caccese discussed courtroom etiquette, pointers on conducting your first trial, and litigation challenges in the age of COVID-19. The program was moderated by Danielle Ciraola, and provided attendees with 1.5 CLE credits in professional practice.



On **January 20, 2021**, Hon. Cheryl Gonzales, Supervising Judge of the Kings County Housing Court, and Jeffrey Saltiel, of Wenig Saltiel LLP, presented a comprehensive CLE on Landlord-Tenant practice. Saltiel discussed the Housing Stability Tenant Protection Act of 2019 ("HSPTA"), which marked significant changes to landlord-tenant law. Notably, rent regulations no longer expire, luxury deregulation was eliminated, and rental

increases for rent-stabilized apartment vacancies were repealed. Judge Gonzales provided a detailed overview of the Governor's Executive Orders, Administrative Orders, and Civil Court of the City of New York directives that were issued throughout the pandemic. Judge Gonzales and Saltiel also addressed amendments made to the Real Property Law.



HOLIDAY CHEER AT VIRTUAL CELEBRATIONS

By Turquoise Haskin



We kicked off the month of December with two holiday celebrations. On **December 3, 2020**, the Brooklyn, Bronx, Queens, Staten Island & New York Chapters of WBASNY hosted a virtual holiday trivia event to spread seasonal cheer. A festive mood was set with nostalgic tunes, and the sharing of holiday stories upon attendees' names being selected by a digital "Wheel of Fortune." Gift cards were awarded for the "best holiday attire," and to the top performers of the online trivia contest. Participants enjoyed the holiday

performances of Queens Chapter President, Soma Syed's adorable young relatives, and a magical card trick that left everyone in awe!



On **December 14, 2020**, we gathered to raise money for victims of domestic violence. This year's Holiday Celebration and Auction benefited Safe Homes Project's Domestic Violence program. Beginning on December 1, 2020, members bid on a wide selection of items, such as Apple air pods and gift cards, which were donated by local businesses and BWBA board members. The highest bidders



were announced during the celebration. Thanks to the bids, donations, and sponsorships, we raised over \$3,000 for the charity. Safe Homes expressed gratitude for the generous donations, which will assist the non-profit with providing counseling, safety planning, and shelter for domestic violence survivors and their children.

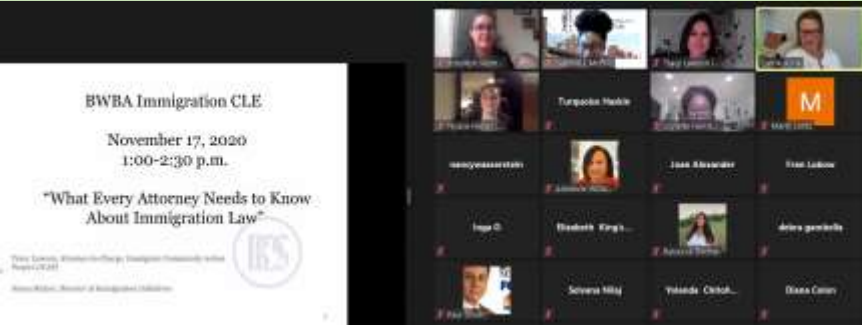
NOVEMBER PROGRAMS: Financial Strategies for Women & Immigration CLE

By Turquoise Haskin

On November 11, 2020, Ameriprise financial advisor, Jacquelyn Calandriello discussed the income gap and shared financial strategies to combat gender inequalities. To address the income gap, she stressed the importance of negotiating a higher salary, maximizing workplace benefits, and investing wisely to optimize savings. Since women on average live five years longer than men, Calandriello explained the importance of saving, having a balanced investment portfolio, and purchasing life and disability insurance as protection. She also noted that couples should communicate regarding their finances. To conclude the presentation, the advisor discussed the importance of estate planning, including having a power of attorney, beneficiary designations, and a last will to prepare for unexpected life events.



On November 17, 2020, Brooklyn Defender Services attorneys Tracy Lawson and Nyasa Hickey presented a comprehensive CLE on immigration law. Lawson and Hickey provided an overview of immigration statutes as well as the federal enforcement agencies and their structures. The speakers discussed the various types of visas, as well as the deportation and removal process. Lawson and Hickey also shared resources for lawyers and clients, who are seeking the latest immigration law updates.



“Lunch with a Judge” Series welcomed Judges in Criminal, Family, Surrogate’s & Civil Courts

On **November 16, 2020**, Hon. Jane Tully shared her path to becoming a lawyer, her career in the New York County District Attorney’s Office, and appointment to the bench through the help of mentors. Justice Tully discussed her assignments in Criminal Court, where she presided over the Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking Intervention Parts, and her elevation to Supreme Court, Criminal Term.



On **December 10, 2020**, we welcomed Hon. Ben Darvil, Jr., who presides over abuse and neglect proceedings in Family Court. Judge Darvil discussed the challenges of adjudicating cases during the pandemic. The Judge also shared the impact that mentors had in his career and encouraged young lawyers to participate in alumni activities.



On **January 14, 2021**, Surrogate Harriet Thompson shared her insights presiding over estate matters in Surrogate’s Court. Surrogate Thompson explained that she uniquely serves the Brooklyn community by determining the transference of wealth at death. The Judge discussed the Court’s operations during the pandemic and outlined the roles of several legal departments.



On **February 10, 2021**, we welcomed Hon. Patria Frias-Colón, who made history in 2018, as the first Dominican-born judge to be elected in Brooklyn. The Judge stressed the importance of community involvement and striking a work/life balance. She also shared her commitment to mentoring interns and the impact that mentors had on her professional journey.



ANNUAL JUDICIARY NIGHT

On **January 28, 2021**, we held our Annual Judiciary Night to recognize the newly elected, appointed, re-elected, and re-appointed Judges and Justices in Kings County. President, Natoya L. McGhie thanked the judiciary for their commitment and service to the citizens of Brooklyn, and for supporting BWBA during this difficult time. Annual Judiciary Night co-chair, the Hon. Sylvia Hinds-Radix introduced the Hon. William Mastro, Acting Justice of the Appellate Division, Second Department. We also welcomed the Hon. Margo Brodie, Chief Judge of United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York.

Co-Chair, the Hon. Lillian Wan welcomed the Hon. Matthew D'Emic, Administrative Judge for Criminal Matter and the Hon. Lawrence Knipel, Administrative Judge for Civil Matter, who introduced the newly elected and re-elected Justices of their respective Courts. We also welcomed the Hon. Michael Yavinsky, the Outgoing Supervising Judge of the Criminal Court, and the Hon. Keisha Espinal, the Incoming Supervising Judge of the Criminal Court. Remarks were made by the Hon. Amanda White, Supervising Judge of the Family Court; and the Hon. Carolyn Walker-Diallo, Supervising Judge of the Civil Court. The Hon. Cheryl Gonzales, Supervising Judge of Housing Court, recognized the newly appointed Judges in Housing Court. Remarks were also made by the Kings County Surrogates, the Hon. Harriet Thompson, and the Hon. Margarita López Torres.

FEBRUARY IS HEART HEALTH MONTH

On this year's National Wear Red Day, **February 5, 2021**, we hosted a joint program with the Staten Island Women's Bar Association to raise awareness about the importance of heart health.



Yulandie Latham, the executive director of Allpro NYC Health Service, discussed the connection between poor mental health, and heart disease risk factors. In particular, Latham noted that biological and chemical factors in the brain can trigger mental health issues that can lead to heart disease. Latham also outlined tips on fortifying the heart and mind with healthy living.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS



Victoria Serigano is an associate at Schwartz Sladkus Reich Greenberg Atlas LLP, where she practices commercial and real estate litigation. She is an experienced litigator whose practice focuses on representing clients in a wide array of real estate disputes for commercial properties, residential cooperatives and condominiums. She earned her undergraduate degree from SUNY Binghamton University and her law degree from the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law. Ms. Serigano is admitted to practice in the State of New York, and the United States District Courts for the Southern and Eastern Districts.



Betsey Jean-Jacques serves as the Principal Law Clerk to the Hon. Francois Rivera in the Civil Term of Kings County Supreme Court. Prior, she served as an Associate Attorney with Mental Hygiene Legal Service, Second Department. Ms. Jean-Jacques is an active member of WBASNY, and previously served as Co-Chair of WBASNY's Diversity and Membership Committees. In June 2020, she was installed as Treasurer of BWBA and serves as a member on several committees. Ms. Jean-Jacques obtained a Juris Doctor and Master of Social Work from Syracuse University College of Law, and a Bachelor of Arts from Fordham University.

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