

Queens BAR BULLETIN

Queens County Bar Association | qcba.org | 90-35 148th Street, Jamaica, NY 11435 | 718-291-4500

April 2021 | Volume 88, No. 7

LAW DAY, MAY 1, 1976 - an historic courthouse musical celebration of our Nation's 200th anniversary

By Leonard L. Finz



It was early April 1976, when the Honorable Moses M. Weinstein, the Queens Supreme Court Administrative Judge, asked that I drop by his chambers in the Jamaica courthouse. Since my chambers were but a few doors away, I reported to Judge Weinstein within minutes.

"Len," he started, "I have something of great importance to talk to you about." He then picked up a small side chair, placed it in front of his desk, and sat down. Being already seated, we now faced each other. I waited in anticipation for the message of "great importance".

He spoke. "In about three weeks on May 1, we'll be celebrating our traditional Law Day. As you know Len, those who speak deliver the usual and common message: Law Day stands for justice, rule of law, ... so on and so forth. And the audience, typically made up of lawyers who are in the courthouse for a calendar call, would usually be half-engaged, hoping the program would soon end so that they could get on with their business day without losing too much time."

I listened intently, wondering where Judge Weinstein was heading with this line of talk.

He continued as I started to look quizzically at him. "This year, 1976, is the 200th one of the birth of our nation." Hearing what he had just stated, I nodded politely,

still in the dark as to where he was going. I sat quietly awaiting his next comments.

"Len, I really want this Law Day to be something very special." Elevating his voice slightly, he continued. "It's got to be different. Two hundred years of the birth of our nation calls for a spectacular program." I nonchalantly shook my head in agreement. With his very unique and distinctive straight-forward Weinstein tone, he continued.

"I know that in your early years Len, you were in show business. I'm also aware that you wrote, directed, and produced shows for the GI's when you served in the army. In fact, I attended some of the spirited rallies you ran for JFK in Queens when he was running for president. I also remember the razzmatazz rally you put on for RFK in that large empty lot in Rochdale Village when he was campaigning for the U.S. Senate." I now suspected the direction of his comments. I could also sense the excitement in his delivery which was now fueling my own interest.

He continued. "Look Len, the point that I'm making is this. I want to hand this Law Day over to you. Come up with an appropriate program. Make it different. Capture the full spirit of the nation's creation and develop a theme that will be novel, memorable, entertaining,

and of course, historical. If you give your okay, the large courtroom on the second floor is yours for this purpose. Further," he added, "the whole crew of court officers will be at your disposal. So what do you say?" I looked directly at him, hesitated for an instant, and broke out into a broad and willing smile.

"Moe," I responded with a slight tilt in my voice, "how could I turn down your request?" With a slight wink and a nod, I facetiously added, "especially if it takes me back to my show biz days. Of course I'll do it," I enthusiastically sounded back.

"There's one caveat," Judge Weinstein added. "Whatever you do must not take you away from your regular judicial assignments. Oh, and another thing, the program you come up with cannot go beyond one hour. You understand?"

I answered without missing a beat. "As you say, I'll do it all on my own time." The discussion complete, we got up from our chairs, shook hands firmly, and returned gratifying smiles. As I exited Judge Weinstein's chambers, I was already beginning to roughly flesh out what the overall Law Day program should look like.

After having dinner at home with my beloved late wife

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The Docket

Being the official notice of the meetings and programs listed below, which, unless otherwise noted, will be held at the Bar Association Building, 90-35 148th Street, Jamaica, NY. Due to unforeseen events, please note that dates listed in this schedule are subject to change. More information and changes will be made available to members via written notice and brochures. Questions? Please call 718-291-4500.

CLE Seminar & Event listings

APRIL 2021

Friday, April 2	Good Friday - Office Closed
Thursday, April 8	CLE: Update on Discovery in NY
Thursday, April 15	CLE: Equitable Distribution Update - Pt 1
Wednesday, April 21	Academy of Law Mtg - 1:00 pm
Monday, April 19	Judiciary, Past Presidents & Golden Jubilarian Night
Thursday, April 22	CLE: Equitable Distribution Update - Pt 2

MAY 2021

Tuesday, May 4	CLE: Child-Parent Security Act - Family Law and LGBTQ+ Committees.
Thursday, May 6	CLE: Ethics Update - Pt 1
Thursday, May 13	CLE: Ethics Update - Pt 2
Monday, May 31	Memorial Day - Office Closed

JUNE 2021

Tuesday, June 1	Virtual Installation of Officers & Managers
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JULY 2021

Monday, July 5, 2021	Independence Day Observed - Office Closed
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SEPTEMBER 2021

Monday, September 6	Labor Day - Office Closed
Monday, September 13	Golf & Tennis Outing - Garden City Country Club

UPCOMING SEMINARS

- CPLR & Evidence Update
- Diversity & Inclusion Committee Events
- Guardianship Training
- Juvenile Justice Committee CLE
- Young Lawyers Committee Events

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New Members

Stephanie D. Delia
 Delecia Hall
 Gevorg Karapetyan
 Carl Kennedy



Notice

The 1,800 members of the Queens County Bar Association congratulate Judge Valerie Brathwaite Nelson on her selection as a finalist to fill the New York State Court of Appeals vacancy that arose when Associate Judge Leslie E. Stein retired. Judge Brathwaite Nelson has long been a member of our Bar Association and has participated in many seminars and meetings with our membership.

She first took to the Queens County Bench in 2003 and then moved to the Supreme Court in 2005 where she presided over hundreds of cases until she moved up to the Appellate Division in 2016. We are certain that she would make a fine addition to the Court of Appeals and we are all in her corner rooting for her!



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Editor's Note

The Seven State Solution for 2021

By Paul E. Kerson

In our last issue, our Past Queens Bar Bulletin Editor, Retired Justice Martin Ritholtz, asked me to share my plan for a long-lasting Mideast peace with our readers. I visited Justice Ritholtz in his retirement apartment in Jerusalem last December 2019. I thought up my plan after visiting him.

In my cover letter to Justice Ritholtz, I asked him to use his good offices to implement my plan. Following is the text of my email:

Dear Marty,

I prepared a Stip to stip out this entire matter despite the fact that the case has multiple index numbers. Please review it and get all the parties to sign off on it.

Then we can get the Office of Court Administration in the Sky to credit us for taking several more cases off the calendar.

Essentially, the plan is to greatly enlarge the pie, so the parties stop fighting over small pieces and divide a much larger pie thereby creating a win/win.

A case like this can only be settled by judicial personnel with Sutphin Boulevard courthouse experience. We've seen everything in thousands of shades of gray between and among litigants from 180 different countries.

Everybody else just sees black and white.

Please call me so we can get this stip finalized before the next Note of Issue "drop dead" date comes up on the calendar.

I really enjoyed our time together. Perhaps we can spend some more time together finalizing this stip.

Yours,
Paul Kerson

The Plan for a Seven State Solution in 2021 - The Northeast Corridor is a similarly sized region. The States of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia are linked together by daily multiple Amtrak trains. Boston, New York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington are all on the same high speed train line, the Acela.

Israel Railways goes from Nahariya in the north to Be'er Sheva in the south to Jerusalem in the east, but connects to no other state.

Egyptian Railways connects Cairo, Luxor, Aswan, Alexandria, Suez and Port Said.

Port Said is only 148 miles (238 kilometres) from Be'er Sheva.

We know from long experience in North America that real estate values go through the ceiling when a

railroad gets built.

Why not connect Port Said with Be'er Sheva by rail and sell land near all those new railroad stations at favorable prices to carefully vetted Palestinians and Gazans who wish to have a remarkable opportunity to own newly valuable regional land.

These sales should be made to individual people, not governments, parties, factions or companies. There must be restrictions in the deeds and/or leases that no such land can be owned, leased, resold, or rented to anyone with a criminal history or criminal record for any violent acts.

The best candidates would be young married people just out of universities with young children who have no history of resentment and a future to protect.

The distance between Amman and Jerusalem is only 102 miles (124 kilometres). Why not try the same approach there?

And after a few years of fabulous success, won't people in Beirut (only 65 miles or 104 kilometres from Nahariya) and Damascus (only 109 miles or 176 kilometres from Amman) want the railroad extended to their cities?

Damascus to Amman rail service is now limited to two trains per day – not enough. Syria is at war today. They may be the last to join. But the establishment of a regional railroad may hasten the day when peace returns to Syria.

When Gaza, the West Bank, Syria and Lebanon see what a success this is, their citizens will want the railroad extended to them too. Their current recalcitrant governments must ultimately bend to their citizens' will. Full participation in this proposed railroad will make functioning statehood possible for these currently failed states.

This is "outside the box" thinking. Professional diplomats have been pushing a "two state solution" for so long that they cannot see a better way out of the regional hostility of today.

Railroads bring people together, create peace and prosperity and raise land values wherever they go. The issue of who is permitted to live where is much less intense when a railroad is moving people around all the time for commercial, educational and family purposes.

Railroads also cause far less pollution of the environment than automobiles and airplanes.

The key idea is this: These seven countries – Israel, Gaza, the West Bank, Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon are part of a Metropolitan Region like the Northeast Corridor. The distances between them are very short. These countries are not continental expanses.

They all need the Mideast Metropolitan Railroad

(MMRR) to knit them together. The Governments of Israel, Egypt and Jordan have functioning countries and a cold peace. These three should start as co-owners of the MMRR.

The MMRR Board of Directors must operate by consensus, so no government can overrule any other.

Security can be managed by Railroad Police checking every passenger and package.

Once success is seen, and Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and Gaza seek to join the MMRR as co-owners, Israel, Egypt and Jordan should welcome them in the name of regional economic development and security.

And we must add to our religious philosophy to make this happen. After we say "Next year in Jerusalem" at the end of the Passover Seder, we must add:

"3000 years later, the descendants of Pharaoh and the descendants of Moses planned a Railroad linking themselves and the entire region together in commerce and trade as free peoples, and let us say, with feeling:

Next year we travel together in peace and prosperity in the entire region on the Mideast Metropolitan Railroad."

If you say there is too much prior war and hostility to build a railroad, remember that the War between the States of Virginia and Maryland in 1861-1865 claimed 620,000 lives, and the Washington Metro linking Virginia and Maryland to the regional Acela (formerly Metroliner) high speed trains got built within three generations, in 1976.

Nowhere near 620,000 lives have been lost to date in Israel-Palestine wars to date – 92,000, less than one-sixth of the bloodshed between and among Maryland, Virginia and surrounding states has been shed so far.

If we start on the MMRR today, by raising the funds and starting the first line from Be'er Sheva to Port Said, perhaps there will be no more lives lost in the Mideast.

As we sold and continue to sell State of Israel Bonds in every synagogue in the world, so we can sell MMRR Bonds in every mosque, church and synagogue in the world.

Because the State of Israel and its neighbors are historically important to Jews, Christians and Muslims world-wide, we all have a spiritual stake in the success of the MMRR. I suspect that the MMRR will be flush with funds even before the first track is installed.

There is no reason that the Mideast with full railroad service cannot be just as successful as Amtrak's Northeast Corridor – home to all the Ivy League universities, numerous City and State Universities,

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Clifford M. Welden, President

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Via Zoom

Sponsored by:



PROGRAM

Introductions: Program Chair – Michael D. Abneri, Esq.

Recognition: Judiciary & Past Presidents



Presentations and Awards:

Golden Jubilarians – Commemorating our Members that have been admitted 50 years, 2020 & 2021.

Immediate Past President Scroll – Recognition to Hon. Hilary Gingold (2018) and Marie-Eleana First (2019) on their invaluable service holding the highest office in our bar association.

Academy of Law Award – Joseph F. DeFelice (2020) and Richard M. Gutierrez (2021), for their contributions in our seminars and programs.

Court Appreciation Award – John A. Coltelli

Remarks of Guest Speakers:

Hon. Marguerite Grays
Administrative Judge, Supreme Court,
Queens County Civil Term

Hon. Joseph A. Zayas
Administrative Judge, Supreme Court,
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April Letter To QCBA Membership

By Clifford M. Welden



In recent years we have seen the growth of “awareness months” and while some are well-known many others are not. I looked into this recently and found on the ‘National Day Calendar’ that the month of April has 37 entries including National Fresh Celery Month, National Welding Month and National Safe Digging Month. There are some designations that are perhaps more important to our members such as National Autism Awareness Month and Stress Awareness Month. Most of us can relate to the Stress level that we have encountered during this past year as the pandemic has wreaked havoc with our law practices. April has also been designated a “National Month of Hope” and that is appropriate as we have seen that vaccinations have steadily increased. I note that despite this progress that virtually every day this month we have seen that OCA has notified us that jurors reporting to court have had covid as well as employees based in the Supreme, Family and Criminal courts and that is why we asked the Chief Judge to delay the return to the courts until later this summer when, with the increase in vaccinations, we should be able to return to some semblance of normalcy by summer’s end and just in time for our September Golf Outing and our Annual Dinner later in October.

The search for the replacement of our Executive Director is nearing an end. The committee has met with the 4 finalists in extensive interviews over the past week. We will be presenting the Board with our selection for the next director this coming week. The finalists all have led interesting lives that have prepared them for service to our organization. All have worked with non-profits in supervisory positions for long periods of time and have experience doing budgets, meeting payrolls and dealing with the public. I would like to thank past president David Adler for taking the lead in this effort and also past president David Cohen, Zenith Taylor, Adam Orlow, Kristen Dubowski-Barba and Arthur Terranova for the time that they have spent over the past months. Assisting and guiding us was Elizabeth Derrico who has a decades long history of working with the ABA, the State Bar and many local bar associations with personnel issues and local association management. Without her knowledge of our association and her history with the QCBA and Arthur we would never have gotten the quality of applicants that we did. Arthur has been our captain for the better part of 40 years and has guided us through many issues serving as our historian, our ambassador and our caretaker and, in stepping down, he will be our own Executive Director Emeritus.

Vetting judicial candidates prior to their selection by the political parties was a task that was performed by the Second Department Judicial Screening Committee. That committee was disbanded, and it became apparent that here in Queens there was no one to assess the qualifications of judicial candidates. That meant no one to screen applicant’s intellectual ability, his/her knowledge of the law including the specific body of law applicable to the court in which the position is sought and their knowledge of other areas of the law (which is necessary because judges are often asked to sit in courts to which

they were not originally elected or appointed). In addition, these committees screen for appropriate demeanor and judicial temperament, industriousness including a proven willingness to work hard, the ability to discern facts, understand legal arguments and make prompt, direct and correct determinations of legal issues. The commission looked at the absence of bias, commitment to equal justice, integrity, candor, absence of outside of political influence, a commitment to public service and courtroom experience. When this screening commission was suddenly discontinued with absolutely no independent screening body remaining, then-president Maria-Eleana First and the Board of Managers realized that there was a need that was being abandoned. Since the QCBA is the oldest, largest and most diverse of any other bar association here in Queens she created a committee to fill the void and explore continuing screening within our own county. Two members of our Board of Managers, Zenith Taylor and retired Supreme Court Judge Jeffery Lebowitz, actually sat on the disbanded Second Department commission with Judge Lebowitz serving as its onetime chair so they were able to bring their experience to the effort. Joining them on the committee was our current Judiciary Committee Chair and past president Les Nizin, myself (who sat on our Judiciary Committee over ten years) and Maria-Eleana First. The Committee drafted rules that the new proposed screening commission would follow, it spoke with the party leaders and members of the affinity bar associations and then redrafted the rules that would allow all Queens based affinity bar associations to participate. The intent was to include all members of the Queens legal community. The considerable paperwork involved would be undertaken by our bar association with a request that the affinity bars help to defray the expense involved. In total there were close to 18 different groups that were invited and there has been a solid response received. I am sorry to report that several of the affinity bars have not responded to our invitations to commit to this screening commission so I must assume that that they are not interested. We are in the process of reviewing and finalizing this Commission, speaking to party leaders and should begin our interviews of individuals seeking positions in the judiciary sometime this summer in time for those seeking Supreme Court Judgeships in the fall election with the results sent to the political parties prior to their nominating conventions. The screening of judicial candidates by an independent commission is well-established in Manhattan where only those rated “Most Highly Qualified” are considered for nomination at the party’s judicial convention. Likewise, similar screening panels have been established in Brooklyn, the Bronx and Staten Island. The Queens Bar Association together with its committed Queens-based affinity bar associations will begin this process and fill the void left by the State leaders.

We are holding several important virtual events that should be added to your April calendar. This month brings us the Equitable Distribution Law Update presented by the Family Law Committee to be held on consecutive Thursdays, April 15 and 22. Josh Katz and

Deborah Garibaldi, the Committee co-chairs have put together a detailed 3 credit CLE that is free to QCBA members in good standing thanks to the sponsorship of Heidi Muckler CPA Valuations and Consulting Services and East Coast Appraisal. David Gross and Mark Plaine are presenters and each have an extensive background in this field of law. East Coast Appraisal and the Queens Daily Eagle have both been very good to our bar association over the past year and are sponsors of this year’s Past President’s and Golden Jubilarian Night on April 19th along with the law firm of Abrams, Fensterman, Fensterman, Eisman, Formato, Ferrara, Wolf and Carone, LLP. At this event we will honor those of our members who have been with the QCBA for 50 years, we recognize our immediate past president’s Hilary Gingold and Marie-Eleana First and we present the annual Academy of Law Award to members who have made significant contributions to our CLE seminars and programs over the years. This year’s award will go to past president Joseph DeFelice and past president Richard Gutierrez. Last year we were in the initial weeks of Covid and the event was cancelled so this year we will recognize those honorees for 2020 and 2021. We are happy to have Administrative Judges Grays and Zayas who will say a few words to us as well as the Current President of the New York State Bar Association Scott Karson and the incoming president elect T. Andrew Brown. Mr. Brown is a civil litigator based in Rochester with a considerable public sector experience serving as a corporate counsel, advisor to Fortune 500 companies and is the current Chair of the NYSBA Trial Lawyers Section in addition to being an extensive author and contributor. Scott Karson is recognized as one of the 100 most powerful lawyers in New York and is a neighbor of ours. A past president of the Suffolk County Bar Association where he began life as an assistant district attorney. He then went on to be the law secretary to Judge Bracken of the 2nd Department before focusing his practice on appellate practice in Melville with Lamb and Barnowsky, LLP. Michael Abneri put together a wonderful blueprint for the evening and is the program chair and host. Moving into May on the 4th the Family Law Committee and our LGBTQ+ committee will co-host an informational seminar on New York’s Child-Parent Security Act that deals with the legalization of Gestational Surrogacy. Joining Michael Goldman and Josh Katz will be Judge Karina Alomar from our own Supreme Court as well as Carol Bass from Moses and Singer, Melissa Brisman the founder of Reproductive Possibilities LLP, Amy Blumenfeld who has authored a text on Gestational Surrogacy. That event is sponsored by Reproductive Possibilities, TOVA QDRO & Retirement valuation Consultants, LLC and Moses & Singer. They will tell us about contracts that call for a parent to retain frozen embryos post-divorce and the effective waivers of parent rights and support obligations. Finally, the annual Ethics update will be presented over two nights on May 6th and 13th.

As I head into the home stretch of my term, I am

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DHS Resumes the Old Public Charge Rules - Suspends the use of Form I-944!

Really positive news for both Immigrant Sponsor and intending Immigrants themselves. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced the withdrawal of the affidavit of support proposed rule, consistent with DHS's commitment to reduce barriers within the legal immigration system that placed increased burdens on American families wishing to sponsor individuals immigrating to the U.S.

The proposed rule would have changed the evidentiary requirements for U.S. citizens, U.S. nationals, and lawful permanent residents wishing to sponsor an individual immigrating to the U.S. by completing an affidavit of support under Section 213A of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) on behalf of the intending immigrant. BUT, now, the principals will remain the same for evidentiary proof.

Moreover, USCIS stopped applying the Public Charge Final Rule to all pending applications and petitions on March 9, 2021. USCIS removed content related to the vacated 2019 Public Charge Final Rule from the affected USCIS forms and has posted updated versions of affected forms.

Therefore, USCIS is no longer applying the August 2019 Public Charge Final Rule. As a consequence,

among other changes, USCIS will apply the public charge inadmissibility statute consistent with 1999 DHS (former INS) Guidance. In other words, USCIS is not considering an applicant's receipt of Medicaid (except for long-term institutionalization at the government's expense), public housing, or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits as part of the public charge inadmissibility determination.

In addition, USCIS will no longer apply the separate, but related, "public benefits condition" to applications or petitions for extension of nonimmigrant stay and change of nonimmigrant status.

Applicants and petitioners should not provide information or evidence related solely to the Public Charge Final Rule. That means that applicants for adjustment of status should not submit Form I-944, Declaration of Self Sufficiency, or any evidence or documentation required by Form I-944 when they file their Form I-485. Applicants and petitioners for extension of nonimmigrant stay and change of nonimmigrant status should not provide information related to the receipt of public benefits on Form I-129 (Part 6), Form I-129CW (Part 6), Form I-539 (Part 5), and Form I-539A (Part 3).

If an applicant or petitioner already provided infor-

mation related solely to the Public Charge Final Rule, and USCIS adjudicates the application or petition on or after March 9, 2021, USCIS will not consider any information that relates solely to the Public Charge Final Rule, including, for example, information provided on Form I-944, evidence or documentation submitted with Form I-944, or information on the receipt of public benefits on Form I-129 (Part 6), Form I-129CW (Part 6), Form I-539 (Part 5), and Form I-539A (Part 3). Any other information received will be evaluated consistent with the statute, regulations, and policies in effect at the time of adjudication.

If you received a Request for Evidence (RFE) or Notice of Intent to Deny (NOID) requesting information that is solely required under the Public Charge Final Rule, including but not limited to, Form I-944, and your response is due on or after March 9, 2021, you do not need to provide that information. However, you do need to respond to the aspects of the RFE or NOID that otherwise pertain to the eligibility for the immigration benefit sought.

DEV B. VISWANATH, ESQ.

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Proving the Family Tree: Navigating a Kinship Proceeding in Surrogate's Court

When a decedent dies without a will and leaves only remote heirs behind, a kinship proceeding is born. The client, as a prospective heir, is now tasked with proving the family tree before estate assets can be distributed. As the practitioner, the goal is to establish that the client is entitled to inherit and eliminate the possibility that any unknown heirs exist. A kinship proceeding provides a unique opportunity for the attorney to assume the role of detective, genealogist, and litigator.

In many cases, the surviving relative does not learn about the decedent's death until contacted by a third party, such as an heir search company or the public administrator. The steps required to prepare for a successful kinship hearing should not be taken lightly, even if there is no dispute among the surviving heirs. The practitioner should manage the client's expectations while explaining the items needed to adequately prepare for a kinship hearing.

Kinship proceedings often manifest when the public administrator is appointed to act as the fiduciary due to an absence of family members with standing to administer the estate. The practitioner should use this precious time to gather as much information as possible to draft a complete family tree and gather supporting documentation.

The fiduciary's accounting, once filed, will demonstrate the assets collected and expenses paid and it will also list potential "alleged heirs". Objections to the designation of the clients as "alleged heirs" must be filed. Once filed, the court sets a date for a preliminary conference to set dates for discovery to be exchanged and a date for the kinship hearing. The kinship hearing date is crucial because all proof must be submitted within one year of that date.

The kinship hearing is a trial of the family tree where all parties will have the chance to question the evidence presented. As the fiduciary of the estate, the public administrator has an interest in having the court's determination of the true heirs and a full discharge on the approval of the accounting. In addition, a court always appoints a guardian ad litem in kinship proceedings on behalf of potential "unknown heirs." Her role is to perform due diligence to determine whether any unknown heirs exist and are entitled to share in the inheritance.

The hearing is held in the Surrogate's Court of the decedent's domicile and before a court attorney referee. Kinship hearings are tried by the court only; juries are not available for this purpose. The burden of proof for the claimant is the fair preponderance of the evidence. Thus, it is not enough to show that the client is related

to the decedent, the practitioner must also prove that there is no one closer in lineage to the decedent that may cut off the client's right to the inheritance. In New York, the legal right to the assets of the estate is governed by § 4-1.1 of the Estates Powers and Trusts Law (EPTL).

The investigation phase can unearth family information that may be helpful to the case. The best way to start the investigation is to conduct interviews with the client, friends, co-workers and neighbors of the decedent to develop a corroborated family tree. Since the family tree is at the heart of the evidence presented, the importance of developing the family tree through exhaustive investigation cannot be stressed enough.

Once established, the family tree will act as a roadmap to determine what documents and testimony are necessary to prove the tree at the hearing. Documentary proof for each individual on the tree is required, which may include a birth certificate, marriage record, death certificate, obituary, and census records. When a document is preserved by the State of New York, such as a certified copy of a birth or death certificate, it is considered self-authenticating under CPLR § 4540 and

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Proving the Family Tree

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may be admitted into evidence as an exception to the hearsay rule.

Because the United States is a country of immigrants, in many cases, records will need to be retrieved from overseas. The client may consider retaining a reputable genealogist to obtain hard-to-get documents the average layperson cannot procure. In New York, foreign documents will also require authentication pursuant to CPLR § 4542.

In addition to the documentary evidence, testimony is also required. Ideally, only two witnesses should be prepared to testify. The first witness should be a person who has known the decedent but is not an interested party (that is, he does not benefit financially from the proceeding). The disinterested witness's primary purpose is to testify regarding whether the decedent had a spouse or issue, and to connect the decedent the larger family tree. In New York, an interested party cannot testify with respect to any communication with the decedent pursuant to the Dead Man's Statute, and a kinship hearing is no exception. Therefore, the interested heirs are not allowed to testify about the decedent in any way.

The second witness may be the claimant, who can testify to the remainder of the family tree and pedigree information already personally known to him, other than the decedent.

The family tree chart is offered for identification purposes prior to the testimony of the witnesses. It acts as a guide and checklist to make certain that each individual on the family tree is accounted for through the witnesses' testimony. The court attorney referee may review each document, subject to an objection, and then admit it into evidence.

Once all documents are submitted, the respective parties rest their cases and await the report and determination of the court attorney referee and guardian ad litem. If the kinship hearing is successful, the Surrogate will issue a decision and order outlining the distribution to the client, as a lawful heir.

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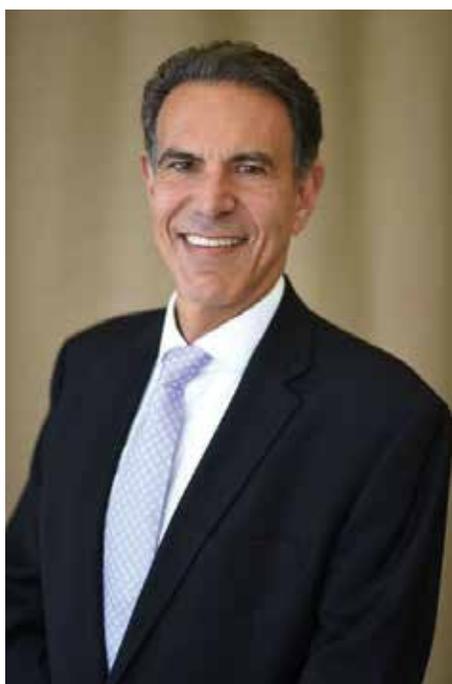


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LAW DAY, MAY 1, 1976

- an historic courthouse musical celebration of our Nation's 200th anniversary

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Pearl, I removed a yellow pad from my briefcase, and jotted down some ideas at random. Since the theme of Law Day was the celebration of our nation's 200th birthday, I visualized a human interest narration that would cover the history of our nation from 1776 to 1976. The program had to be dramatic, unique, riveting, and above all, historic.

First and foremost, I would have to create a script that would focus upon the high points of our nation's development. And in keeping with Judge Weinstein's entreaty, it would have to be "special" and "spectacular." Given a clear goal, multiple ideas started to float around in my head. Writing an historical script which I would narrate, was the relatively easy phase. The bigger challenge was that there would be many moving parts circulating within this monumental project...

To begin with, I envisioned: a Flag and Rifle Team to carry the colors down the aisle of the courtroom; a fife and drum corps to capture the "Spirit of '76"; children from a local elementary school to lead the audience in the "Pledge of Allegiance"; a small orchestra; a choir; technicians to set up microphones and loudspeakers in the courtroom; loudspeakers to be installed in the second floor lobby since all courtroom seats would be occupied; hundreds of folding chairs to be set up auditorium-style in the lobby; a notice to be sent from the QCBA to its membership announcing the event; printed signs on tripods to be placed throughout the courthouse inviting all to attend; a speaker to recite segments of the "Declaration of Independence"; a speaker to highlight sections of Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address"; a speaker to dramatize portions of Reverend Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech; written instructions and a script for the court officers who would direct and control people-traffic in the courthouse; a notice to all Queens Justices to attend in their robes and who would be seated in the jury box; arrangements with a private bus company to provide transportation for the director and youngsters of the Parochial School Fife and Drum Corps traveling to Jamaica from the Rockaways; the same regarding transportation for the local elementary teachers and school children; and much more.

A huge concern was that with so many divergent participants, there would be no opportunity for a rehearsal other than the reliance upon a script with instructions that would be distributed on Law Day and which they would see for the first time. Ambitious? Without saying! Possible? With great hope and much luck, since my chamber's permanent staff, consisted of a law secretary (now called a law clerk), a steno, and a court officer who in those days was assigned permanently to a sitting Justice. They were primed, in essence, to carry out the role of assistant directors in helping to execute the contents of the script and its many cues.

Within one week, following my mission, I contacted and spoke personally to a Monsignor; an elementary school principal; a U.S. Army Commanding Officer; a college dean; a choir director; a sound technician; a sign painter; a Deputy Chief of the NYPD to assign and supervise police officers for perimeter traffic control around the courthouse; an orchestra leader; a folding chair rental owner; a cadre of court officers; a tape recording specialist; a video operator; ... and more.

Finally, Law Day, May 1, 1976 arrived. Every seat in the large second floor courtroom was occupied. Hordes of standees even formed a horseshoe in the rear filtering down the sides of the courtroom. Hundreds gathered and were seated in the lobby outside and could

hear the program through the installed loudspeakers. They could also view the many participants who were stationed in the lobby and lined up by the court officers as called for in the script.

At 9:30am sharp, the clerk of the court sounded a full-throated "Hear Yea, Hear Yea." He concluded his announcement with his introduction of, "The Honorable Leonard L. Finz, Justice, presiding."

Speaking loudly into the mic, I started the program with a brief greeting, and then called upon the Color Guard that consisted of a U.S. Army officer who gave commands to two uniformed American flag carriers and two riflemen. They entered the courtroom on cue and marched briskly in military style down the center of the aisle and up to the Bench as the entire audience stood up. The next entry included 15 elementary school children who walked quickly down the aisle, coming to a halt as they reached the Color Guard. They were adorable as the young girls and boys in the entourage were all dressed in white shirts and ties. The 8 and 9 year old youngsters then led the assemblage in the "Pledge of Allegiance" as all faced the American flags of the Color Guard. The small orchestra and York College Choir were already in place as I announced the singing of our National Anthem. Hearing hundreds of voices coming from the audience, backed by the beautifully-sounding choir, was simply amazing and most inspirational. The loud and spirited phrases of Francis Scott Key's anthem had to fill everyone in attendance with great pride and sheer patriotism.

Next, I introduced the "Spirit of '76" as the 8, 9, and 10 year old Parochial School youngsters of the Fife and Drum Corps dressed in their sparkling and colorful uniforms. They entered the courtroom, marched to the Bench and returned to the rear with their shrilled fife instrument sounds and loud rhythmic drums. The applause following their performance was thunderous and the obvious smiles of the audience, said it all.

The historic narrative then began. I spoke in a passionate and dramatic style of Britain's tyranny and the colonist's struggle for independence which was adopted as a result of the courage, beliefs, and sacrifices that led up to the celebratory and incredible day that would forever be enshrined as Independence Day, July 4, 1776. And in honor of that momentous event, I called upon Charles Iovale, Esq. the then distinguished President of the Queen County Bar Association to deliver short segments of the "Declaration of Independence." As he spoke with deep emotion, the orchestra was backed up by the York College Choir as they softly hummed and sang "America The Beautiful" in the background. Mr. Iovale concluded with a timber-raised voice, as the choir slowly upped its volume accordingly. One could almost bask in the adulation and chills of the audience as he ended dramatically with "...And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor". Extremely loud applause followed.

My narration immediately picked up and briefly covered the turn of the 19th century with years that led to the shameful shadow of slavery and the disastrous Civil War that followed. Within seconds, I described the battle of Gettysburg and the immortal Lincoln address. And to deliver key segments, I called upon one of the most prominent names in Queens County-The Honorable Frank D. O'Connor, a former D.A., a former President of the New York City Council, a former candidate for New York State Governor, a Queens Su-

preme Court Justice, and later, an Associate Justice of the Appellate Division, Second Department. Coincidentally, he had delivered the "Gettysburg Address" at the New York Philharmonic previously. His recitation of portions of the "Gettysburg Address," especially with the York College Choir background, was enormously moving. And when Judge O'Connor finished with "... that we here highly resolve these dead shall not have died in vain; that the nation, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth", the choir music swelled with each powerful closing word. The audience was overwhelmingly electrified.

Continuing with the narration, I briefly covered the post Civil War period, World War 1, the Great Depression, and the civil rights struggle. It was then that I introduced Justice Kenneth Brown, the first Queens County African American Supreme Court Justice, who delivered thrill-impacted phrases of the Reverend Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech. Words are inadequate to describe the courtroom atmosphere as the York College Choir emotionally and softly sang an old Negro spiritual in the background, reaching a high dramatic crescendo as Judge Brown finished with..."And when this happens, and when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: Free at last. Free at last. Thank God All mighty, we are free at last". It was spell-binding! And the assemblage responded euphorically!

Seconds later, I narrated brief national events that led up to 1976, and then called upon the Honorable Moses M. Weinstein, who delivered brief and compelling remarks addressed to the special occasion we were memorializing.

We then concluded the Law Day program as the whole audience rose from its seats and joined the orchestra and choir with a moving rendition of "God Bless America." The program lasted exactly one hour having begun at 9:30am sharp and concluding at 10:30am. It should be noted that the entire Law Day program was produced at no cost since every participant and provider volunteered time and effort to the patriotic event.

It should also be noted that Law Day, May 1, 1976, was the first and last time that the Jamaica courthouse had ever experienced such a program either on any Law Day, or on any other day. It indeed was an historic courthouse musical celebration honoring and commemorating our nation's 200th anniversary. As an aside, the filming of the event that took place over a half century ago has since been lost, but fortunately, the audio tape that recorded the program is still one I have in my possession and one that I will forever treasure.

The Editors Note

The above article is most appropriate since Law Day 2021 will soon be upon us. What follows are remarkable facts that I have obtained about its author...

The Honorable Leonard L. Finz has been a member of the Queens County Bar Association for almost three quarters of a century. Born in 1924, he is vigorous to this day. A decorated World War II hero, he was draft-

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LAW DAY, MAY 1, 1976

- an historic courthouse musical celebration
of our Nation's 200th anniversary

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ed into the U.S. Army at age 18 in 1943. He was a gifted music graduate of the High School of Music and Art in upper Manhattan, where he would have to travel 4 hours a day from where he lived in Brooklyn. He had no college credit when he entered the army but within two years he was accepted as a candidate in the Officers Candidate School (OCS) in the Field Artillery branch located at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma. After graduating its vigorous and challenging course, he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the Field Artillery, and then shipped to the Pacific war zone in Leyte, Philippines. When he survived the war against Japan that finally ended in 1945, it is reported that he was the only GI out of 16 million Americans who served in uniform during WWII ever to be assigned to the Judge Advocate General Division (JAG) with only a high school education, at which time he was named "Defense Counsel", having defended more than 50 imprisoned soldiers at U.S. Army Court Martial trials for which he was promoted to 1st Lieutenant when only at age 20. Due to his remarkable achievements, he was decorated with the coveted Army Commendation Medal at a formal flag and rifle ceremony by order of the Secretary of the Army that was held at the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. Two years ago, and based upon his outstanding military service, he was inducted into the U.S. Army Artillery OCS "Hall of Fame." His military biography has also been enshrined in the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

Surviving the war after almost four years of active duty, he used the GI Bill to obtain his BA at NYU, receiving his LLB from the NYU School of Law where he served as president of the Pre-Bar Association. Involved in Queens County politics, he was elected the youngest New York City Civil Court Judge at the time, and later elected a Queens Supreme Court Justice.

He founded the Brandeis Association, and gave it its name. He is to this day, the "Lifetime Honorary Chairman of the Board." Amongst many honors conferred as a Judge and professor of law, he is peer reviewed by Martindale-Hubbell as "One of America's Preeminent Lawyers."

Described in a past Queens Bar Bulletin as a "Living Legend," we are proud to have Judge Finz still as an active member of the Bar and as a revered member of the Queens County Bar Association throughout these many years. Judge Finz will soon reach 97 years of age, and it is our fervent hope that he will continue to be with us for many more years to come.

Paul E. Kerson, Esq.
Editor of the Queens Bar Bulletin

The Seven State Solution for 2021

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

The United Nations, the Pentagon, the New York Stock Exchange, the Federal Government, The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Boston Globe, and more mosques, churches and synagogues that trace their origins to the Mideast than there actually are in the Mideast so far.

After I wrote the above solution, I went to the Western Wall men's section with my grandson, son-in-law, and son-in-law's father. An on-duty Rabbi gave us a blessing: We should return with our grandson's grandchildren.

I hope he is right, and that we live long enough to return on the high speed MMRR with two more generations of our descendants. I placed a note to the Almighty in a crack in the wall. It said only "Mideast Metropolitan Railroad".

And so now it is up to Him to answer my prayer. I suspect He will act in His own time, not my time.

But a sooner MMRR preventing yet more bloodshed and promoting peace and prosperity among nations and peoples is up to us.

Do not underestimate the soft power of the Mideast in the world-wide imagination. If peace and prosperity can reign in the entire fractious Mideast, then there is hope for the whole world to do the same.

The synagogues, churches and mosques that trace their origin to the Mideast have all been rebuilt all over the Northeast Corridor. We can return the favor by encouraging the rebuilding of our Amtrak Acela Railroad in the place that gave us our religious roots.

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The Commission on Judicial Nomination Releases Its List of Seven Nominees for the Court of Appeals' Coming Vacancy Created by Judge Leslie E. Stein's Retirement

Under New York's Constitution, the Commission on Judicial Nomination is charged with evaluating, and then recommending to the Governor, candidates to fill vacancies on the State's highest court, the Court of Appeals of the State of New York. The Commission vigorously seeks out, carefully evaluates and then nominates to the Governor well-qualified candidates from the extraordinary, diverse community of lawyers who have been admitted to practice in New York State for at least 10 years.

In connection with the coming vacancy on the Court created by Associate Judge Leslie E. Stein's retirement, effective June 4, 2021, the Commission today released its Report to the Governor. The Report contains the names of seven candidates who in the Commission's collective judgment are well qualified, by virtue of their character, temperament, professional aptitude, experience, qualifications and fitness for office, to fulfill the duties of that high office.

The Commission's Report follows months of outreach efforts that were conducted through public announcements, individual solicitations of applications and a virtual informative meeting held remotely over Zoom by the Commission. These efforts resulted in the receipt of 45 applications. The applicant pool was diverse. Of the 45 candidates, 26 (57%) were female and 14 (31%) were of diverse backgrounds. The Commission interviewed 17 candidates, of whom 13 (76%) were female and 5 (29%) were ethnic minorities.

Judge E. Leo Milonas, Chair of the Commission, stated: "The extraordinary quality of our applicants is noteworthy. The number of exceptional and diverse candidates reflects the unparalleled depth of the legal profession in New York."

The Commission's seven nominees (in alphabetical order) to the Governor are:

- Hon. Ellen Nachtigall Biben, Administrative Judge, Criminal Matters, First Judicial District, Judge of the Court of Claims and acting Supreme Court Justice;
- Kathy Hirata Chin, Esq., attorney in private practice (Crowell & Mooring);
- Caitlin J. Halligan, Esq., attorney in private practice (Selendy & Gay PLLC);
- Hon. Valerie Braithwaite Nelson, Associate Justice, Appellate Division, Second Department;
- Hon. Erin M. Peradotto, Associate Justice, Appellate Division, Fourth Department;
- Hon. Madeline Singas, Nassau County District Attorney; and,
- Hon. Shirley Troutman, Associate Justice, Appellate Division, Fourth Department.

By law, the Governor is required to make his appointment from among this list no sooner than April 23, 2021 nor later than May 8, 2021. The State Senate then, within 30 days after receipt of the Governor's choice, must confirm or reject the appointment.

Although the Commission on Judicial Nomination has now completed its role with respect to the Judge Stein vacancy, the Commission still must furnish another slate of candidates to fill the vacancy left on the Court of Appeals by the recent resignation of Judge Paul G. Feinman. The Commission must deliver its list to the Governor no later than July 21, 2021. The Commission is mindful of the extraordinary circumstances presented by Judge Feinman's unexpected retirement and the need to swiftly fill the resulting vacancy on the Court of Appeals. The Commission will promptly discharge its Constitutional and statutory responsibilities and nominate and recommend to the Governor three to seven well-qualified candidates.

The next scheduled vacancy on the Court of Appeals will occur on January 1, 2022, due to Associate Judge Eugene M. Fahey's mandatory retirement by reason of age.

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April Letter To QCBA Membership

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continued to be amazed by the overwhelming amount of work that our Board, the Academy of Law, our chairs and our office staff of Arthur, Sasha Khan and Janice Ruiz have done during this lockdown. We have transitioned to the virtual world quickly and effortlessly and have presented the same number of programs as in prior years. We got our membership information sessions on the use of virtual platforms within days of the court shut down through the help of LEXITAS Court Reporting. With that training our virtual committee meetings continued and have been attended by more people than would have attended in person. Our committee participation expanded. While nothing replaces face to face contact it is clear that we have learned much during the pandemic that we will use and continue to carry forward into our 145th year and beyond. Thank you to all of our members for devotion to our great association. April is truly a month of hope.

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Allen E. Kaye

Immigration Questions



Joseph DeFelice

What if I Told You Immigration Detention Was Unnecessary?

It is time to phase out immigration detention. Detention is inhumane and needlessly punitive. It seriously impedes a noncitizen's ability to access legal representation and to be afforded due process in immigration proceedings. Detention is extremely costly and serves only the private prison companies and municipalities benefiting massively from the subjugation of those in custody.

The surveillance-oriented "alternatives to detention" the government has invested in for years do not provide a meaningful way to end detention. These "ATDs," as they are known, rely on harsh systems like painful and intrusive ankle monitors, and include either extremely limited or no legal or social services. Such ATDs are premised on the idea that unless immigrants feel threatened and tracked, they will fail to appear for their immigration proceedings. This could not be further from the truth. As a recent report by Ingrid Eagly, demonstrates, a large majority—83% of immigrants—do indeed show up for their court hearings. Having legal representation makes it all but certain that an immigrant will appear for court hearings—a staggering 96% of immigrants with attorneys appear for all immigration court hearings. The report underlines that immigrants with attorneys are more likely to apply for and receive immigration relief. Providing people with legal counsel is one important way to ensure that they appear for, and are able to participate meaningfully in, their immigration proceedings.

Supporting migrants navigating the U.S. immigration system need not involve incarceration or surveillance. In late 2020, the American Immigration Council (the Council) and Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) conducted a survey of nearly 250 organizations that provide community support services to immigrants. This survey showed that there is already critical expertise and capacity nationwide to provide a broad range of necessary services to those in the immigration process. With additional funding, this capacity could be expanded. A factsheet published by the American Immigration Council in late February includes a detailed analysis of the survey findings, and provides a snapshot of the extent of support that community-based organizations provide to migrants in the immigration process.

The hundreds of organizations that responded to the survey provide legal, medical, mental health, social, transportation, housing, educational, repatriation, and other services that can and should replace immigration detention altogether. These organizations are by no means the only organizations providing such services—but they provide a helpful snapshot of the breadth of support currently available to migrants navigating the immigration system.

More than two thirds of responding organizations indicated a strong interest in expanding capacity to meet the increased demands due to COVID-19 and to

expected changes in policy under the Biden administration; many organizations cited funding constraints as a reason they have not expanded. Robust governmental funding of such organizations would allow them to expand their own capacity, and would help them strengthen their ability to coordinate effectively with other organizations. Many organizations do not offer every service, so strong coordination and referral mechanisms will be important.

The infrastructure needed to move away from immigration detention and surveillance to supportive services is already in place. Instead of pumping millions of taxpayer dollars into the private prison companies and municipalities that today realize large profits from the needless suffering of people in detention, the government could spend far less money to expand the services of trusted and established organizations who already have the know-how and experience to support individuals in navigating the immigration system. Unlike the companies and municipalities that push for detention as a way to reap profit, these organizations prioritize the health and safety of those in their care and adhere to America's values as a welcoming nation while doing so.

AILA, the American Immigration Council, and the Immigration Justice Campaign will continue to push for a reduction and phase out of detention in the U.S. You can view a collection of resources, advocacy, and analyses on this critical issue on AILA's website. It is time for the government to consider a new approach in supporting migrants working their way through the labyrinthine U.S. immigration system. Detaining thousands of migrants in punitive and costly immigration jails is not the answer. As the survey and fact sheet show, there is already a solution in place.

Designation of Venezuela for TPS and Implementation of DED Venezuela

The Department of Homeland Security published a Federal Register notice (FRN) announcing the designation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 18 months, effective March 9, 2021, through Sept. 9, 2022.

The FRN details the eligibility criteria Venezuelan nationals (and individuals without nationality who last habitually resided in Venezuela) must meet and describes procedures necessary to submit an initial TPS application and apply for an Employment Authorization Document (EAD).

Additionally, the FRN provides information about Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) for covered Venezuelan nationals (and individuals without nationality who last habitually resided in Venezuela) and how to apply for DED-related EADs.

More Information

USCIS is planning outreach opportunities regarding the new designation of Venezuela for TPS to pro-

vide information and answer questions from the public.

For the most current information related to USCIS humanitarian issues, please visit uscis.gov/humanitarian.

For more information on USCIS and its programs, visit uscis.gov or follow on Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

USCIS Implements Decision Vacating Public Charge Final Rule

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services stopped applying the Public Charge Final Rule to all pending applications and petitions on March 9, 2021. They have posted new versions of affected forms. You must file the 3/10/21 edition of these forms for any future applications.

USCIS has posted new versions, edition date 3/10/21, of the following forms:

I-864, I-864A, I-864EZ, I-864W

I-539, I-539A

I-129CW, I-129CWR

I-129

I-485, I-485A, I-485J

I-912

Starting April 19, 2021, USCIS will only accept the 03/10/21 edition. Until then, you can use the previous edition still available online.

Background

On Nov. 2, 2020, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois vacated the Inadmissibility on Public Charge Grounds final rule nationwide. The government appealed that decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, which stayed the vacatur decision. On March 9, 2021, the government dismissed the Seventh Circuit appeal and the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois' order vacating the Public Charge Final Rule went into effect.

In light of the decision vacating the Public Charge Final Rule, USCIS immediately stopped applying the Public Charge Final Rule to all pending applications and petitions that would have been subject to that rule.

Current Status

USCIS is applying the 1999 Interim Field Guidance to the adjudication of any application for adjustment of status that was pending or received on or after March 9, 2021. The 1999 guidance was in place before the Public Charge Final Rule was implemented. In addition, USCIS will no longer apply the separate, but related, "public benefits condition" to applications and petitions for extension of nonimmigrant stay and change of nonimmigrant status.

For more information on Requests for Evidence or Notices of Intent to Deny related to the Public Charge Final Rule, see our public charge webpage.

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Immigration Questions

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For more information on USCIS and its programs, please visit uscis.gov or follow us on Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook and LinkedIn.

Public Engagement Division
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Upcoming Engagements

To view a list of upcoming local and national engagements, please visit uscis.gov/outreach.
Information

For more information on USCIS and its programs, please visit uscis.gov.

are potential barriers to the naturalization process. This action is consistent with the framework of the Executive Order on Restoring Faith in Our Legal Immigration Systems, which directs a comprehensive review of the naturalization process to eliminate barriers and make the process more accessible to all eligible individuals.

Applicants who filed their naturalization applications on or after Dec. 1, 2020, but before March 1, 2021, with an initial examination (interview) before April 19, 2021, will have the choice to either take the 2008 civics test or the 2020 civics test. We will notify applicants who are affected by the change. If the initial interview is scheduled on or after April 19, 2021, appli-

cants will take the 2008 civics test.

Additional information and study materials are available on the Citizenship Resource Center page.

For more information on USCIS and its programs, visit uscis.gov or follow on Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook and LinkedIn.

Public Engagement Division
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

BY ALLEN E. KAYE AND JOSEPH DEFELICE

Allen E. Kaye and Joseph DeFelice are Co-Chairs on the Immigration and Naturalization Committee on the Queens County Bar Association.

USCIS Announces Plans to Revert to the 2008 Version of the Naturalization Civics Test

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced it is reverting to the 2008 version of the naturalization civics test.

On Dec. 1, 2020, It implemented a revised naturalization civics test (2020 civics test) as part of a decennial test review and update process. On March 1, 2021, USCIS will revert to the 2008 version of the civics test.

We determined the 2020 civics test development process, content, testing procedures, and implementation schedule may inadvertently cre-

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Please check the appropriate box below:

- I wish to join the Queens County Bar Association.
- I wish to update my Membership Information and/or Committee listing (reverse side).

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First Name _____
 Last Name _____
 Business Address _____

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 Home Address _____

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 Home phone () _____
 Cell phone () _____
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 Email Address _____
 Website _____
 Contact via: _____ Email _____ Mail _____
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 Date of Birth _____
 College _____
 Graduation Year _____ Degree _____
 Law School _____
 Graduation Year _____ Degree _____
 Date of Admission to the NYS Bar _____
 Judicial Department _____

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

- Sustaining Membership \$ 350.00
Member who voluntarily provides additional funds to further support the Association (Includes coupons for three free CLE credits to be used for any CLE program in the coming year)
- Combined Sustaining Membership \$ 625.00
(Includes coupons of 12.0 CLE Credits for any live Continuing Legal Education Programs)
- Attorney Admitted more than 10 years \$ 300.00
- Attorney Admitted 5-9 years \$ 225.00
- Attorney Admitted less than 5 years \$ 135.00
- Admitted less than 1 year Free
- Law Student* Free
*(*Current Law School student OR recent graduate awaiting admission. Please include a copy of your school's official OR unofficial school transcripts.)*

GOVERNMENT SERVICE MEMBERSHIP: *Members who are in Government Service (Judges, Court Attorneys, Law Secretaries, Legal Aid Society, Queens Legal Services, District Attorneys, Queens Law Associates, Corporation Counsel, etc.) are eligible for a 30% dues reduction. Please inform us of which Government Service gives you this eligibility.*

- Government Sustaining Membership \$ 245.00
- Government Attorney 10+ years \$ 210.00
- Government Attorney 5-9 years \$ 157.00
- Government Attorney less than 5 years \$ 94.00

18B ASSIGNED COUNSEL PLAN MEMBERSHIP: *Eligible for a 20% dues reduction. Please inform us of which 18B Assigned Counsel Plan gives you this eligibility (Family or Criminal).*

- 18B Sustaining Membership \$ 280.00
- 18B Attorney 10+ years \$ 240.00
- 18B Attorney 5-9 years \$ 180.00
- 18B Attorney less than 5 years \$ 108.00

Discounts are also available for members of other local (Queens) bar associations who have never belonged to the Queens County Bar Association.

Membership dues can be made in one payment or by installments.

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 Exp. Date _____ CSC/CVV# _____
 Signature _____
 Date of Application _____

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