

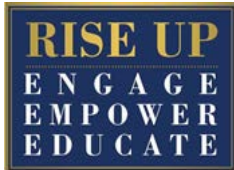
# 2020 WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT LEADERSHIP & LAW CONFERENCE

*Rise Up & Be Counted:  
Celebrating Our Past  
& Empowering  
Our Future*

Nevertheless, She  
Persisted. She Runs Like A  
Girl. That's A Man's Job. Over  
Sensitive. You Want Kids Someday.  
Girls Can't Do That. You're Wearing That.  
Calm Down. Feminist. You Have To  
Work Twice As Hard. Emotional. Ask.  
Can I Touch Your Hair. Smile. More.  
Reproductive Rights. Equal Pay. Leader.  
You'd Be Prettier If You Wore Makeup.  
Breastfeeding In Public. Paid Leave.  
A Woman's Place Is In The House.  
Resist. Revolution. Struggle. Real.  
Working Mom. You're Neglecting  
You're Formula Feeding. That's  
For The Baby. Stay At Home Mom.  
She's Hormonal. Menopausal. Afraid.  
Sweet. Not Tough Enough. Too Small.  
Slut. Shame. Frigid. Silence. History.  
She Was Warned. Develop Voice. Mean.  
She Was Given An Explanation. I Am Not Going To Fat.  
Be Silent. No Female Partners. She Does Not No  
Belong In The Board Room. Bitter. ?  
Failure Is Not An Option. Judge.  
Leader. Failure. Success.  
Not Pretty Enough. Grace. Friend  
Determination. Resourceful. Zealous.  
CEO. Entrepreneur. Diplomatic. Journey  
Unapologetically Herself. Comfortable In Her  
Skin. The Future Is Female. You Are Perfect.  
May We Raise Strong Women. We Rise Today.  
Let's Get In Formation. Stop Labelling Women. Yes.  
Empowered Women, Empower Women. Strength.  
Dignity. Inhale Confidence, Exhale Doubt. Adapt.  
Don't Apologize For It. Beware For I am Fearless and  
Therefore Powerful. Never Look Back. A Woman Is Like a Tea Bag – You Can't Tell  
How Strong She Is Until You Put Her In Hot Water. Be A Woman Worth Pursuing. I'm Tough As Nails  
Feminism Is Self-Determination. Every Woman Has The Right To Become Herself. Spread The Light.  
Be The Heroine Of Your Life. This Girl Can. Women Like You Drown Oceans. Be Ambitious Always.  
Don't Let Anyone Dull Your Spark. Use Your Voice To Change The World. Education First. Bold.  
A Successful Woman Is One Who Can Build A Firm Foundation With The Bricks Others Have  
Thrown At Her. Loving Yourself Will Set You Free. She Wasn't Looking For A  
Looking For A Sword. Make Yourself A Priority. Leadership Is An Opportunity  
To Serve. Creativity. Smart. Passionate. Determined. Be A Mentor. We Rise by Lifting Others. Educator.  
Hardships Often Prepare Ordinary People For An Extraordinary Destiny. Dream It.  
Imagination. Focus. Listen. Work. Respect. Value. Experience. Think.

Decide  
Rare. Priceless.  
Sexy. Brave. Dynamic  
Purpose. Latina.  
Explorer. Wise  
Courage, Fierce  
Take Charge  
Therefore Powerful. Never Look Back. A Woman Is Like a Tea Bag – You Can't Tell  
How Strong She Is Until You Put Her In Hot Water. Be A Woman Worth Pursuing. I'm Tough As Nails  
Feminism Is Self-Determination. Every Woman Has The Right To Become Herself. Spread The Light.  
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Don't Let Anyone Dull Your Spark. Use Your Voice To Change The World. Education First. Bold.  
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Thrown At Her. Loving Yourself Will Set You Free. She Wasn't Looking For A  
Looking For A Sword. Make Yourself A Priority. Leadership Is An Opportunity  
To Serve. Creativity. Smart. Passionate. Determined. Be A Mentor. We Rise by Lifting Others. Educator.  
Hardships Often Prepare Ordinary People For An Extraordinary Destiny. Dream It.  
Imagination. Focus. Listen. Work. Respect. Value. Experience. Think.

When Women Support Each Other, Incredible  
Things Happen. I've Seen The Bottom, Now I'm Ready  
For The Top. Innovate. Savy. Curious. Kind. Inspirational.  
Do What Is Right, Not What Is Easy. Some Women Fear The  
Fire, Others Become It. There Is No Force More Powerful Than A  
Woman Determined To Rise. Power To Create, Nurture, Transform.



Session 1 - June 25, 2020 at 6:00 pm  
Session 2 - July 2, 2020 at 6:00 pm



# OFFICERS & BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Raquel Vallejo, Esq., Trustee at Large  
Danielle Karczewski, Esq., Trustee at Large (5 Yrs +)  
Perla Medina, Trustee at Large (YLC)  
Nathania Reyes, YLC Chair  
Julia A. López, Esq., Immediate Past President

# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

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## **SESSION 1 – JUNE 25, 2020 at 6:00 P.M.**

### **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

Melinda Colón Cox, Esq., President, Hispanic Bar Association of New Jersey (HBA-NJ)  
*Partner, Parker Ibrahim & Berg LLP*

### **WELCOME REMARKS**

Jacqueline S. Peña, Esq., Membership Secretary, HBA-NJ  
*Associate, Cozen O'Connor, P.C.*

Carlos Bollar, Esq., National Finance Director, Hispanic National Bar Association  
*Partner, Archer & Greiner P.C.*

### **PREPAREDNESS REMARKS**

(Introduction: Rachel A. Gonzalez, Esq., Trustee, HBA-NJ, *Partner, Day Pitney LLP*)

Assemblywoman Annette Quijano, *Legislative District 20, Deputy Majority Leader*

### **NATIONAL WOMEN'S LAW CENTER – TIME'S UP**

(Introduction: Jacqueline S. Peña, Esq., Membership Secretary, HBA-NJ, *Associate, Cozen O'Connor, P.C.*)

Jennifer Mondino, Esq., *Senior Counsel,*  
*TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund & Legal Network for Gender Equity, National Women's Law Center*

### **LIFTING OUR VOICES – IMPORTANCE OF 2020 ELECTIONS, 2020 CENSUS & GENDER EQUITY**

(Introduction: Arianna Mouré, Esq., Trustee, HBA-NJ, *Associate, Chiesa Shahanian & Giantomasi PC*)

Yael Bromberg, Esq., *Chief Counsel for Voting Rights, The Andrew Goodman Foundation*  
Henal Patel, Esq., *Director of the Democracy & Justice Program, New Jersey Institute for Social Justice*  
Sara Peña, *Director of New Jersey Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development,*  
*New Jersey Department of State*  
Senator Nellie Pou, *New Jersey Legislative District 35, Legislative Latino Caucus Chair*  
Assemblywoman Annette Quijano, *Legislative District 20, Deputy Majority Leader*  
**Moderator:** Milagros Camacho, Esq., *Partner, Camacho Gardner & Associates*

### **CLOSING REMARKS**

Rachel A. Gonzalez, Esq., Trustee, HBA-NJ  
*Partner, Day Pitney LLP*

### **RAFFLES & VENDOR PRESENTATIONS**

Joseph L. Linares, Esq., HNBA Liaison, HBA-NJ  
*Associate, Walsh Pizzi O'Reilly Falanga LLP*

Kathy I. Oviedo, Esq., Acting Treasurer, HBA-NJ  
*Associate, Reed Smith LLP*

### **NETWORKING**

# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

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## **SESSION 2 – JULY 2, 2020 at 6:00 P.M.**

### **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

Melinda Colón Cox, Esq., President, Hispanic Bar Association of New Jersey (HBA-NJ)  
*Partner, Parker Ibrahim & Berg LLP*

### **WELCOME REMARKS**

Arianna Mouré, Esq., Trustee, HBA-NJ  
*Associate, Chiesa Shahinian & Giantomasi PC*

### **KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

#### **A CELEBRATION OF THE WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE CENTENNIAL**

(Introduction: Jacqueline S. Peña, Esq., Membership Secretary, HBA-NJ, *Associate, Cozen O'Connor, P.C.*)

Congresswoman Bonnie M. Watson Coleman  
*United States House of Representatives for New Jersey's 12th Congressional District*

### **BLAZING TRAILS – SUCCEEDING & STAYING ON TOP**

(Introduction: Rachel A. Gonzalez, Esq., Trustee, HBA-NJ, *Partner, Day Pitney LLP*)

Clara N. Jimenez, Esq., *Senior Counsel, Patent Litigation, Johnson & Johnson*  
Hon. Jaclyn V. Medina, J.S.C., *Superior Court of New Jersey, Bergen County*  
Melissa C. Rodriguez, Esq., *Partner, Morgan Lewis*  
Hon. Camelia M. Valdes, Esq., *Passaic County Prosecutor*  
**Moderator:** Alba V. Aviles, Esq., *Senior Associate, Day Pitney LLP*

### **2020 CENSUS – A COMPLETE COUNT MATTERS**

(Introduction: Arianna Mouré, Esq., Trustee, HBA-NJ, *Associate, Chiesa Shahinian & Giantomasi PC*)

Sylvia-Rebecca Gutiérrez, Esq., *Associate, Gibbons P.C.*

### **CLOSING REMARKS**

Jacqueline S. Peña, Esq., Membership Secretary, HBA-NJ  
*Associate, Cozen O'Connor P.C.*

### **RAFFLES & VENDOR PRESENTATIONS**

Joseph L. Linares, Esq., HNBA Liaison, HBA-NJ  
*Associate, Walsh Pizzi O'Reilly Falanga LLP*

Kathy I. Oviedo, Esq., Acting Treasurer, HBA-NJ  
*Associate, Reed Smith LLP*

### **NETWORKING**

## 2019-2020 HBA-NJ PRESIDENT

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### **Melinda Colón Cox, Esq.**

*Partner, Parker Ibrahim & Berg LLP*

Melinda Colón Cox, Esq. is a Partner at the law firm of Parker Ibrahim & Berg LLP (“PIB Law”), a national firm with offices in Somerset, New Jersey, Orange County, Philadelphia, and Boston. Melinda was elevated to a partner in August 2015, making her the first female partner in PIB Law’s Somerset headquarters. Mrs. Cox represents national banks and financial institutions, mortgage lenders and servicers, and small and large businesses with an emphasis in commercial litigation, contested foreclosures, consumer finance and protection, contract disputes, and state and federal regulatory compliance.

Prior to joining the law firm of Parker Ibrahim & Berg LLP, Mrs. Cox was a law clerk to the Hon. Michael A. Shipp, U.S.D.J. in the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey. Prior to her clerkship, Mrs. Cox was an associate at a large New Jersey firm, as a member of the Redevelopment Team, Redevelopment Strategic Business Unit Team and the Commercial Real Estate Team.

Mrs. Cox received her B.A. from Union College in Schenectady, New York, graduating *magna cum laude*. She received her J.D. from Rutgers School of Law – Newark, where she was the Senior Articles Editor for the Rutgers Law Review, President of the Association of Latin American Law Students, a Student Bar Association Class Representative and Co-Chair of the Student Affairs Committee for the Minority Student Program. Melinda has been on the Board of the Hispanic Bar Association of New Jersey (“HBA-NJ”) since 2008, and is currently serving as the 40th President. Her theme for the year is Rise Up - Engage, Empower, Educate. As an HBA-NJ Board member, Melinda co-founded the Young Lawyers Committee in 2009 and in 2015 reinstated the publication and circulation of the *Abogados* Newsletter. She is admitted to practice in New Jersey and New York and is an active member of the New Jersey State Bar Association (elected as a Fellow to the inaugural class of the 2015 Leadership Academy and is a member of the Diversity Committee and Professional Ethics Committee), and the Hispanic National Bar Association (“HNBA”). Melinda also is a member of the New Jersey Supreme Court Civil Practice Committee and was recognized by the Executive Women of New Jersey as an Honoree at the 2018 Salute to Policy Makers Gala, and by the Association of Latin American Law Students at Rutgers Law School – Newark in 2017. Melinda has been named a New Jersey Super Lawyers Rising Star from 2014 through 2020 and received the HNBA’s Top Lawyers Under 40 in 2019.

## 2020 W.E.L.L. COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR

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### **Rachel A. Gonzalez, Esq.**

*Partner, Day Pitney, LLP*

Rachel A. Gonzalez represents management in traditional labor law, employment counseling and litigation.

Rachel regularly partners with clients and serves as a strategic advisor on labor and employee relations issues. Rachel represents employers during union election campaigns, collective bargaining negotiations, arbitrations and before the National Labor Relations Board. She leads employer bargaining committees during collective bargaining negotiations. Rachel provides clients with advice on strike preparations and during strike injunction proceedings. Rachel also advises corporations on workforce planning during business changes including business sales, acquisitions, stock and asset purchases, and plant closings and relocations. She has represented management in matters involving the IBEW, CWA, UAW, IBT, IAM, SEIU, AFSCME, RWDSU, UFCW, USW, IATSE, Amalgamated Lithographers, Hotel Workers, IUOE, AFM and NOITU unions.

Rachel regularly counsels and trains employers on wage and hour issues, workplace investigations, the FMLA, the ADA accommodation process and compliance with other federal and state employment laws. She has represented employers in claims involving discrimination and retaliation under Title VII, ADA, NJLAD NYHRL, Section 1981 and USERRA; breach of contract; workers' compensation retaliation; wrongful discharge; negligent hiring and Section 301 claims, in state and federal courts and agencies. She also regularly advises foreign corporations establishing U.S. operations on federal, state and local employment and labor laws.

Prior to entering the legal profession, Rachel worked as a human resources professional in unionized and non-unionized facilities in the United States and Sweden. While in law school, Rachel worked with the National Labor Relations Board in Hartford, Connecticut.

Rachel serves in a leadership role with the Day Pitney Attorneys of Color Network and is the Firm's Hiring Chair. She is also a member of the Firm's Diversity Committee.



## 2020 W.E.L.L. COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR

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### **Arianna Mouré, Esq.**

*Associate, Chiesa Shahinian & Giantomasi PC*

Arianna Mouré is an Associate at Chiesa Shahinian & Giantomasi P.C. ("CSG") with the firm's Labor & Employment and Litigation Groups. Arianna is a litigator with substantial experience with employment law matters. Prior to joining CSG, Arianna was an Associate at Day Pitney LLP in Parsippany, New Jersey. She is also a court certified mediator with a native fluency in Spanish.

Arianna earned her juris doctor with a concentration in Health Law and a Healthcare Compliance Certification from Seton Hall University School of Law ("Seton Hall Law"). Before earning her J.D., Arianna was a pharmaceutical representative in the greater New York City area for two top pharmaceutical companies.

While in law school, Arianna served as a judicial extern for the Honorable Michael A. Shipp, United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey and in the New Jersey Superior Court for the Honorable Alberto Rivas. She also worked as a Legislative Aide to New Jersey State Senator, Bob Smith. Following her graduation from law school, Arianna served as a Judicial Law Clerk for the Monmouth County Assignment Judge, the Honorable Lisa P. Thornton, New Jersey Superior Court. During her clerkship, she handled civil, criminal and family law matters.

During law school, Arianna represented juveniles in criminal matters in the Superior Court of New Jersey through Seton Hall Law's Juvenile Justice Clinic. She also represented pro-se clients in employment disputes in the United States District Court, Southern District of New York through the S.D.N.Y. Mediation Practicum. Also during law school, she interned with Bristol-Meyers Squibb's in-house legal department in their employment law and privacy law group. She also clerked for a Roseland-based law firm where she dealt with complex litigation issues.

Arianna has been a member of the Hispanic Bar Association since 2011 and is honored to be working as co-chair on this year's Women's Empowerment and Leadership and the Law under the tutelage of current president, Melinda Colon Cox. She is also a member of the Supreme Court Committee on Women in the Courts, the New Jersey Women Lawyers Association, and several regional bar associations. Arianna also serves on the New Jersey State Bar Association's Standing Diversity Committee.

## 2020 W.E.L.L. COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR

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### **Jacqueline S. Peña, Esq.**

*Associate, Cozen O'Connor, P.C.*

Jacqueline S. Peña is a litigation attorney at Cozen O'Connor P.C. She focuses her practice on complex and commercial litigation matters. She is a trial attorney and experienced litigator. Jacqueline has successfully completed several jury and bench trials, all resulting in verdicts in favor of her clients. Prior to joining Cozen O'Connor, Jacqueline worked at Travelers Insurance as Counsel, where she specialized in management and resolution of product liability, automobile liability, and commercial premises liability cases, which included analysis of additional insured and indemnification issues. Jacqueline has also argued before the New Jersey Appellate Division. She served as a judicial law clerk to the Honorable Esther Suarez, J.S.C for the 2013 – 2014 term.

Jacqueline received her Bachelor of Arts from Boston University and received her Juris Doctor from Seton Hall University. While in law school, Jacqueline was a member of the Seton Hall Circuit Review and was President of the Latin American Law Students Association (LALSA). She was a founder of MetroLALSA (an organization comprising the thirteen New York and New Jersey metropolitan law schools), and a member of the Mock Trial Board, where she competed in three national mock trial competitions. She also sat on two Student Bar Association committees. Jacqueline was a judicial intern for the Honorable Esther Salas, U.S.D.J. in Newark, New Jersey and was selected for the Seton Hall Law Civil Litigation Clinic.

Jacqueline is Deputy Regional President of Region III – New Jersey of the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA) and the National Chair-Elect of the HNBA Young Lawyers Division (YLD). In addition, Jacqueline serves on the executive board of the Hispanic Bar Association of New Jersey (HBA-NJ) as the Membership Secretary. In that capacity, she serves as a Vice-Chair of the American Dream Pipeline Mentorship Program at Passaic High School in Passaic, New Jersey, where she mentors inner-city youth. She also serves as a Chair of the HBA-NJ Women Empowerment Leadership and Law Annual Women's Conference. She is a board member of Amigas, Inc., a New Jersey-based organization dedicated to the empowerment of women. Jacqueline is also a member of Omega Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. She is fluent in Spanish.



## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

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### **Congresswoman Bonnie M. Watson Coleman**

*United States House of Representatives for  
New Jersey's 12th Congressional District*

Bonnie Watson Coleman, a long-time public servant and advocate for New Jersey families, was elected in 2018 to her third term in the U.S. House of Representatives. The first African American woman to represent New Jersey in Congress, Watson Coleman is passionate about the issues affecting working families of all backgrounds, including criminal justice reform, building an economy that works for all families rather than a wealthy few, and rebuilding infrastructure to improve this country and support job creation. She focuses on these priorities and other critical issues as a member of the House Committees on Appropriations and Homeland Security.

The daughter of legendary state legislator John S. Watson, Watson Coleman has continued a family legacy of public service, fighting for women, economically and socially disadvantaged populations, and other vulnerable groups in our society. Prior to her election as Representative for New Jersey's 12th Congressional District, Watson Coleman served eight consecutive terms in the New Jersey General Assembly and shattered racial and gender barriers to become the first Black woman to serve as Majority Leader, and as the Chair of the New Jersey Democratic State Committee. During her time as Majority Leader, Watson Coleman convened a year-long series of public hearings on reforms to prisoner re-entry programs while shepherding legislation through the Assembly that the New York Times called "a model for the rest of the nation," on prisoner rehabilitation and release.

Since coming to Congress, Watson Coleman has continued to champion protections for vulnerable Americans including authoring the Healthy MOM Act, which would allow women to enroll in, or change their health coverage if they become pregnant; the End For-Profit Prisons Act, which would prohibit the federal government from contracting with for-profit prison corporations; the SAFER Pipelines Act that would reform the gas pipeline approval process overseen by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission; and the Customer Non-Discrimination Act, which would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prohibit discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in "public accommodations," such as schools, recreational facilities and retail stores. In 2016, Watson Coleman founded the Congressional Caucus on Black Women and Girls alongside two of her colleagues, the first caucus aimed at bringing both the tremendous challenges and incredible successes of Black women to the fore in Congress's policy debates. Watson Coleman is an active member of the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Progressive Caucus, the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, The Congressional LGBT Equality Caucus, and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus.

Watson Coleman's belief in equality is one of the main reasons she first decided to run for Congress and extends to all the matters that shape working families' lives, including the notion that neither income, social status, occupation nor lack thereof should determine someone's access to high-quality, affordable healthcare. Her fight for that access for all Americans became deeply personal in 2018 when a small, cancerous spot was removed from one of her lungs. She is blessed to be cancer-free today, after undergoing treatment and receiving and lifting many prayers. Her experience strengthened her resolve to make healthcare a right in this country. Watson Coleman is a graduate of Thomas Edison State College, and has received honorary doctorate degrees from the College of New Jersey, Rider University, and Stockton University. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and co-chair of the Girl Scouts of America Capitol Hill Honorary Troop. She resides with her husband, William, in Ewing Township. The two are blessed to have three sons: William, Troy and Jared; and three grandchildren: William, Ashanee and Kamryn.

## PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Alba Aviles, Esq.**

*Senior Associate, Day Pitney LLP*

Alba Aviles represents private and public sector businesses in commercial litigation matters before state and federal courts, such as shareholder litigation, enforcement of restrictive covenants and intellectual property disputes. She has experience handling employment matters, including drafting employee handbook policies, arbitration of employment, sexual harassment, retaliation, and hostile work environment claims. Alba also represents mortgage companies, loan servicers and other financial institutions in the defense of claims by borrowers. Additionally, she has experience drafting EB-5 petitions for immigrant investors, real estate developers and regional centers.

Alba served as a law clerk to The Honorable Walter Koprowski, Jr., Presiding Judge in the New Jersey Superior Court's Chancery Division - General Equity/Probate Part in Essex County. There, she gained experience in business litigation, as well as probate litigation. During law school, she was a legal intern for the Honorable Michael Shipp, U.S.D.J., while he served as a magistrate, and the Honorable Faith Hochberg, U.S.D.J. in the District of the New Jersey. Prior to law school, Alba worked in New York City for two start-ups, where she gained unique perspective on the growth and development of these businesses.

## PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Carlos A. Bollar, Esq.**

*Partner, Archer & Greiner P.C.*

Carlos is a partner at Archer & Greiner P.C. where he represents clients in complex toxic tort, product liability and environmental litigation matters. He is experienced in handling environmental litigation cases in all of the contexts in which they arise, including single plaintiff cases, mass actions involving hundreds of plaintiffs, class actions and defending clients against state and federal government. Carlos typically handles high stakes litigation with massive potential damages. He has tried numerous contested matters in federal and state courts and has experience in all aspects of pre-trial and trial work.

Carlos has been involved in many professional, charitable and community organizations over the years. He is currently the Finance Director of the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA). Carlos is a Past President of the Hispanic Bar Association of New Jersey (HBA-NJ). Carlos also currently serves on the board of Legal Services of New Jersey and on the Board of Trustees of the New Jersey State Bar Association. Carlos is currently the Co-Chair of the Personnel Committee at Archer & Greiner.

Carlos frequently lectures on various topics relating to environmental law, complex litigation, e-discovery and diversity in the legal profession. Some of Carlos' recent speaking engagements include: "Serving the Hispanic Business Community", South Jersey Chamber of Commerce, (September 21, 2018), "The Next Generation of Trial Attorneys", Corporate Litigation Retreat, March 1, 2018, "Managing Outside Counsel Spend: Strategies for In House Counsel", HBA-NJ Corporate Counsel Roundtable (January 23, 2018), "How and When To Break the Rules: Effective Cross-Examinations", HNBA Annual Conference (September 8, 2017), "2017 Recent Developments in New Jersey Law", New Jersey State Bar Association (July 27, 2017); and "Taking and Defending Depositions", Camden County Bar Association (November 29, 2016).

Carlos has received numerous awards and recognition over the years. Carlos is rated AV Preeminent by Martindale Hubbell. In 2019, Carlos was named to the list of the "Nation's Best Attorneys" by Lawyers of Color. Carlos was named "Latino Lawyer of the Year" by the HNBA. In November 2017, Carlos was named one of the "2017 Professional Lawyers of the Year" by the New Jersey Commission on Professionalism in the Law. Under Carlos' leadership, the HBA-NJ received the Affiliate of the Year Award from the HNBA. Carlos has also received the Leadership Award from the Boy Scouts of America. Carlos was named to the New Jersey Law Journal's "Forty Under 40." Carlos also received the Campones de la Justicia Award presented by Alianza, Rutgers School of Law.

Carlos graduated from Rutgers College in 1994 and Rutgers School of Law, Camden Campus in 1997. Carlos clerked for the Honorable William J. Cook in the New Jersey Superior Court, Camden County from 1997-1998. Carlos lives in Mt. Laurel with his wife and three children.

## PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Yael Bromberg, Esq.**

*Chief Counsel for Voting Rights,  
The Andrew Goodman Foundation*

Yael Bromberg is Chief Counsel for Voting Rights (Outside Counsel) at The Andrew Goodman Foundation, and Principal of Bromberg Law LLC. She is also of counsel with NJ firm Weissman & Mintz LLC, which represents unions and progressive organizations within the state. Yael is a constitutional rights attorney with twenty years of experience in community organizing, advocacy, and campaigns. Formerly, Yael served as a supervising attorney and teaching fellow at Georgetown University Law Center's Civil Rights Clinic and Voting Rights Institute, where she received an L.L.M. in Advocacy with distinction.

She previously worked in the Washington, D.C. headquarters of Common Cause, and clerked for the late Honorable Dickinson R. Debevoise in the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey. Yael is a graduate of Rutgers Law, where she was a Kinoy/Stavis Fellow in the Rutgers Constitutional Litigation Clinic, an Ella Baker Fellow with the Center for Constitutional Rights, and received upon graduation the Eli Jarmel Memorial Award for greatest interest and proficiency in public interest law. In 2015, she received the Eric Neisser Public Service Alumni Award in recognition of her work in democracy law. Her pathbreaking article and legal call to arms, "Youth Voting Rights & The Unfulfilled Promise of the Twenty-Sixth Amendment," was recently published in the University of Pennsylvania Journal of Constitutional Law. Yael is barred in New York, New Jersey, and the District of Columbia.

## PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Milagros Camacho, Esq.**

*Partner, Camacho Gardner & Associates, LLP*

Milagros was born in Las Villas, Cuba and immigrated to the United States with her parents in 1973. They resided in West New York, New Jersey where she started her studies in the public school system as a first grade student in the E.S.L. Program at P.S. #4, graduated as Valedictorian of her eighth grade class at P.S. #1, and continued as an honors program student at Memorial High School. Milagros attended New York University where she received a degree in Psychology with minors in Political Science and Education. She clerked for Honorable Severiano Lisboa, III, J.S.C.

In 1994, Milagros served as one of only four Hispanic attorneys in the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office. She was promoted to supervise the Sexual Assault Victim Assistance Unit, the Domestic Violence Unit and the Megan's Law Unit. Through her work, Milagros became a recognized spokesperson on victim and child advocacy issues. In 2004, she joined the United States Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey where she was assigned to the O.C.D.E.F.T. Unit.

As a partner at Camacho Gardner & Associates, LLP, Milagros specializes in criminal defense, matrimonial and immigration matters. She is a staff attorney at the Office of the Public Defender. She has taught at Fairleigh Dickinson University and has also lectured for New Jersey's Institute of Continuing Legal Education. She has also been teaching third grade religious education in her Catholic parish for a number of years.

She is a Trustee of the New Jersey State Bar Association, a member and past President of the Hispanic Bar Association of NJ, and a member of the Hispanic National Bar Association and the National Hispanic Prosecutors Association. She is President of the Board of Directors of El Colegio Nacional de Abogados Cubanos en el Exilio (NY/NJ Chapter). She is a member of the Hudson County Bar Association, and is an Associate member of the Bergen County Bar Association. She is a member and legal advisor to the National Association of Cuban American Women. She is a member of Eagleton Institute Center for American Women and Politics Ready to Run/Eleccion Latina Conference Steering Committee. She has served on the Board of Latinas United for Political Empowerment PAC. She serves as President of the Board of Directors of the Visiting Home Maker Service of Hudson County.

She has received numerous awards for her work as an advocate for women and children from various civic, professional and educational organizations including Rutgers School of Law, Save Latin America, Inc., National Association of Cuban American Women, and numerous awards and individual recognition from the Division of Youth and Family Services. In 2016, she was named by the American Institute of Criminal Law Attorneys as one of the "10 Best" Attorneys in New Jersey. In 2015, she was selected by Rue Ratings Best Attorneys in America and the National Trial Lawyers top 100 criminal defense trial lawyers. In 2011, she was recognized by Super Lawyers magazine as a super lawyer in the field of criminal defense. She has been certified by the New Jersey Supreme Court as a criminal trial attorney for over twenty (20) years.

## PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Sylvia-Rebecca Gutiérrez, Esq.**

*Associate, Gibbons P.C.*

Sylvia-Rebecca (“Becky”) Gutiérrez concentrates her practice in commercial litigation at both the trial and appellate levels. Becky advises both individual and corporate clients in pre-litigation and litigation proceedings, and has experience representing companies in connection with investigations by the Department of Justice. She is responsible for managing the legal affairs of a New Jersey university, including advising senior management of schools and divisions on an array of legal issues.

As part of her pro bono practice, Becky helps ex-offenders recently released from custody successfully reintegrate into their communities by resolving legal impediments such as municipal summonses and associated fines. She has also advocated on behalf of victims of domestic violence, civil liberties organizations, and alleged incapacitated adults in guardianship proceedings.

Becky was raised in Hudson County with her three sisters by her Puerto Rican mother, Sylvia, and her Cuban father, Ariel. She received her A.B. from Boston College. She was conferred her J.D., *cum laude*, and LL.M in Taxation from the University of Miami School of Law. After law school, Becky worked as a senior tax consultant for Deloitte Tax LLP, where she analyzed tax implications of the international operations of U.S. and foreign multinational companies and assisted with U.S. and international regulatory compliance. Becky then had the honor of serving as a law clerk to The Honorable Carmen Messano, then-Deputy Presiding Judge of Administration in the New Jersey Superior Court’s Appellate Division.



## PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Clara N. Jimenez, Esq.**

*Senior Counsel, Patent Litigation, Johnson & Johnson*

Clara N. Jimenez is senior counsel with Johnson & Johnson's ("J&J") litigation department where she contributes to protecting J&J's intellectual property ("IP") across the world. Prior to joining J&J, Clara worked at a national top intellectual property law firm where she counseled clients of all sizes in obtaining and protecting patents and trade secrets in the pharmaceutical, chemical and medical device industries. Clara holds a bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering and worked in the industry prior to attending law school.

In addition to her work as an IP litigator, Clara is a passionate advocate for communities of color. Clara has represented clients facing family and immigration claims related to domestic violence, and gender, religious and politically based persecution. Clara volunteers with organizations in her native Colombia, Washington, DC and Jersey City, NJ to advocate on behalf of children of color facing poverty, neglect and abuse. Clara also serves as a mentor and advocate for diversity and inclusion initiatives in the law through various organizations including, the Legal Council for Leadership Diversity (LCLD), Corporate Counsel Women of Color (CCWCO) and the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA).

## PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Hon. Jaclyn V. Medina, J.S.C.**

*Superior Court of New Jersey, Bergen Vicinage*

Judge Jaclyn V. Medina, J.S.C., sits in the Family Division of the Superior Court of New Jersey, Bergen Vicinage, and serves on the Supreme Court Committee on Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement. Prior to her appointment, Judge Medina was a managing attorney in the Bergen Criminal Trial Region of the New Jersey Office of the Public Defender (OPD). She served on the OPD's statewide Continuing Legal Education Committee and as Co-Chair of the Ethics and Professionalism Committee. Judge Medina sat on the New Jersey Supreme Court's District Ethics and Minority Concerns Committees. In 2016, the New Jersey Law Journal selected her as a recipient of the New Leaders of the Bar Award and the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA) honored her as a Top Attorney Under 40. Judge Medina was honored by Rutgers Law School for her commitment to public service and by Fairleigh Dickinson for her distinguished service. She is an active member of the Hispanic Bar Association of New Jersey and sat on its board for seven years, chairing various committees and most recently serving as Vice President of the Northern Region.

Judge Medina served as an adjunct professor at Fairleigh Dickinson University for 11 years where she taught undergraduate and graduate students as well as diplomats from various consulates and missions to the United Nations. She received her B.A. from the School of Diplomacy and International Relations at Seton Hall University and her J.D. from Rutgers Law School in Camden, New Jersey, where she earned the Chief Justice Richard J. Hughes Award for Excellence in Lawyering, held a two-term Presidency of Alianza, was Vice-President of Committees of the Law Student Division of the HNBA and served as the Public Relations Editor for the Journal of Law and Urban Policy.

## PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Jennifer Mondino, Esq.**

*Senior Counsel, TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund & Legal Network for General Equity  
National Women's Law Center*

Jennifer Mondino is Senior Counsel with the TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund and Legal Network for Gender Equity. Immediately prior to joining the National Women's Law Center in August 2018, Jennifer spent eight years as a Senior Trial Attorney with the Special Litigation Section of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), where her practice focused on pattern-or-practice investigations of police departments and other law enforcement agencies, including litigating and negotiating settlement agreements to resolve investigative findings. She played a leading role in the DOJ's investigation of the Baltimore Police Department, litigation against Sheriff Joseph Arpaio of Maricopa County, Arizona, the investigation of law enforcement in Missoula, Montana, the DOJ Civil Rights Division's first pattern-or-pattern investigation to focus on the collective law enforcement response to allegations of sexual assault, and in drafting the DOJ guidance released in 2015 on preventing gender bias in the law enforcement response to sexual assault and domestic violence. During her tenure with the DOJ, she also spent a year on detail as an Attorney Advisor with the DOJ's Office of Violence Against Women (OVW), where she provided policy advice to the Department and legal counsel to OVW and its grantees.

Ms. Mondino's legal career has been focused on civil rights and women's rights issues, with a particular emphasis on legal advocacy on behalf of undocumented women and survivors of sexual and domestic violence. Her previous experience includes working for the Center for Reproductive Rights, the Civil Rights Bureau of the New York State Attorney General's Office, the Safe Horizon Domestic Violence Law Project in New York City, and the international law firm, Mayer Brown LLP. She received her J.D. from the New York University School of Law and B.S. from the University of Virginia.

## PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Henal Patel, Esq.**

*Director of the Democracy & Justice Program  
New Jersey Institute for Social Justice*

Henal Patel is the Director of the Democracy & Justice Program at the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice (the “Institute”). The Institute’s mission is to empower New Jersey residents to realize and achieve their full potential. It is known for its dynamic and independent advocacy aimed at toppling load-bearing walls of structural inequality to create just, vibrant, and healthy communities.

Ms. Patel leads the 1844 No More Campaign, which seeks to restore voting rights to everyone in New Jersey with a criminal conviction. She serves as the General Counsel to and is a Board Member of the New Jersey Leadership Program.

Before joining the Institute, Henal was an associate at McElroy, Deutsch, Mulvaney & Carpenter. Previously, Henal had the honor of serving as a law clerk to Chief Justice Stuart Rabner on the New Jersey Supreme Court. While in law school, Henal was an Eagleton Institute of Politics fellow, participated in the Constitutional Litigation Clinic, and served as an assistant to the Chairman of the New Jersey Redistricting Commission. Henal received her J.D. from the Rutgers University School of Law – Newark. While in law school, Ms. Patel was an Eagleton Institute of Politics fellow, participated in the Constitutional Litigation Clinic, and served as an assistant to the Chairman of the New Jersey Redistricting Commission.

## PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Sara Peña, M.P.A.**

*Director, Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development, NJ Department of State*

Sara Peña, was born, raised and educated in Newark, New Jersey. Her mother was born in Ecuador and her father in the Dominican Republic. Sara has two decades of initiating and delivering sustained results across a wide range of industries including healthcare and government.

She received her Bachelor's Degree in Management from Kean University and her Master's Degree in Public Administration from Rutgers University in Newark. She was inducted into the National Honor Society for Public Affairs and Administration, Pi Alpha Alpha and a proud sister of the first multicultural sorority at Kean University, Mu Sigma Upsilon Sorority, Inc.

Inspired by her son, Anthony, Ms. Peña founded the Boys to Leaders Foundation to empower and motivate young men by providing leadership training, educational programs, and positive personal and professional development. Sara has volunteered at the Immigration Department at La Casa De Don Pedro.

Sara was appointed by Newark Mayor, Ras J. Baraka to the Commission on Status of Women. She has served on Governor Phil Murphy and Lieutenant Sheila Oliver's Human and Children Services Transition Advisory Committee, the Community Justice Advisory Board with the Essex County Prosecutor's Office, and as Chair on the Board of Trustee to Roseville Community Charter School and on the Newark Pre-School Council Board.

Sara serves on the Newark Public Library President's Coterie, the Executive Board of LUPE Fund, Inc., and the New Jersey for Puerto Rico Relief (NJ4PR) Board of Directors.

Sara has been honored by The Newark Circle of Sisters, The Institute for Latino Studies, Friends of the Hispanic Research and Information Center, Woman in Media – Newark, Girls; Live, Love, Laugh Incorporated, and the Puerto Rican Day Parade Committee of Newark.

Newark City Council has recognized Ms. Peña with the “*Trailblazer Award*” for her outstanding achievements. Essex County Freeholder President and Assemblywoman Britnee N. Timberlake recognized Sara for her entrepreneurial success and for empowering women to make a difference in their communities. She was also honored by the City of Newark Municipal Council for her unwavering commitment to the residents through her affiliations with the Hispanic community and community at large. Sara was twice named NJ's Insider 100: Policy-Makers Power List for her work leading the Center.

## PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Senator Nellie Pou**

*New Jersey Legislative District 35*

*New Jersey Legislative Latino Caucus Chair*

Senator Nellie Pou proudly represents the 35<sup>th</sup> Legislative District in the New Jersey State Senate. She first won election to the State Legislature in November 1997 as a member of the General Assembly, where she served for a period of 14 years. She was first elected to the State Senate in 2011 and re-elected in 2013 and 2017. She holds the dual distinctions of being the first woman and the first Latina to represent the 35<sup>th</sup> District in the State Legislature. She is a veteran of the City of Paterson's municipal administration, having served in various capacities for over three decades, including as Director of Human Resources.

In the Senate, she serves as Chair of Commerce Committee, Vice-Chair of the Higher Education Committee, member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, member of the Joint Committee on Economic Justice and Equal Employment Opportunity, and Chair of the Legislative Latino Caucus. She has prime-sponsored landmark legislation signed into law, such as the "Human Trafficking Prevention, Protection and Treatment Act" which broadens the definition of trafficking and increases penalties for this crime putting New Jersey at the forefront of combating forced servitude in the form of labor and prostitution which affects underage teenagers, runaway or homeless youth and others living on the margins of society. The most recent legislation signed into law allows New Jersey DREAMers – undocumented students brought to the U.S. as children – to pay in-state tuition rates at the state's higher education institutions affording them the opportunity to pursue higher education.

While a member of the General Assembly, Ms. Pou served on the Assembly Appropriations Committee for over 10 years, including six years as its Chair, facilitating the passage of legislation pertaining to stem cell research, needle exchange, autism treatment, and other aspects of social and fiscal policy. She also served as member of the Assembly Budget Committee and the Bicameral Joint Budget Oversight Committee, where she sponsored and supported initiatives to create jobs, provide property tax relief, and stimulate economic growth. Senator Pou has served as Chair of the Legislative Latino Caucus since 2006 promoting inclusion of Latinos, women, and other minorities in electoral politics, civil service, State procurement process; she has also raised awareness of the importance of participating in the Census and other civic domains.

Since in office, Senator Pou has navigated many of her prime-sponsored bills into law in the areas of civil rights, consumer affairs, economy and jobs, education, environment, health, housing, children and families, non-profit organizations and military/veteran affairs. Senator Pou is also a member of the National Council of State Legislators, the National Order of Women Legislators, National Foundation of Women Legislators, Women in Government, the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, the Council of State Government, amongst others.



## PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Assemblywoman Annette Quijano, Esq.**

*New Jersey Legislative District 20*

*Deputy Majority Leader*

Assemblywoman Annette Quijano has represented the 20th Legislative District since 2008 and has earned the reputation of a champion legislator, tackling the various issues people face in daily life. She understands the challenges middle-class families must overcome and works tirelessly to improve the lives of seniors, veterans, women, children and workers. She is currently the Chairwoman of the Assembly Judiciary Committee, and a member of the Financial Institutions and Insurance and the Oversight, Reform and Federal Relations Committees. She also serves as a Deputy Majority Leader and is a member of the New Jersey Legislative Latino Caucus.

Assemblywoman Quijano is the prime sponsor of landmark legislation including the bill to legalize recreational cannabis and expunge criminal records, expand paid family leave, increase penalties for wage theft, remove the statute of limitations on sexual assault, and the Thomas P. Canzanella Twenty First Century First Responders Protection Act. She is also at the legislative forefront of gun safety, animal rights, LGBTQ equality, and improving security for vulnerable religious communities and against emergent threats.

Quijano is a New Jersey native born to Puerto Rican parents. After a Bachelor of Science in Management from Rutgers University, she earned her Juris Doctor from Rutgers School of Law in Newark. She was later admitted to the bars in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. During her time as Chairwoman of the Assembly Homeland Security and State Preparedness Committee, she was the only elected official in the country to attend Harvard University's Leadership in Crises: Preparation and Performance, which used real-life examples to successfully manage, survive, and recover from the unexpected.

Assemblywoman Quijano's career began as a teen advocate organizing a grassroots campaign to dispute a local cable company's decision to eliminate Spanish language programming. This led to a growing recognition and her election as the youngest board member of the Puerto Rican Congress of New Jersey (PRC). While in the PRC, she became their youngest Vice-President. Later in her career, Quijano served as Governor's Counsel for Governors Codey, McGreevey, and Corzine. She has served as the Chairwoman of the Assembly Homeland Security Committee (2011-2018), Vice Chair on the Board of Hispanic Caucus Chairs, and Chairperson of the Hispanic Delegation on Racial Equity. She is a member of various organizations, including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the NJ State Bar Association, the Women's Political Caucus of New Jersey, Latinas United for Political Empowerment, and the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials. She is a Red Cross Volunteer, and an Honorary Girl Scout.

Quijano continues to fight for economic, social, and racial equity. In her home district, she is known for working hard to provide the poor and most vulnerable with food, clothing, and gifts during the holidays.

## PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Melissa C. Rodriguez, Esq.**

*Partner, Morgan Lewis*

Melissa C. Rodriguez advises clients on the full spectrum of labor and employment law matters. This includes single-plaintiff, class, and collective action litigation (both wage and hour and discrimination claims); wage and hour and other employment counseling; and traditional labor work. In her litigation practice, she represents employers in individual, class, and collective action litigation, and in administrative agency actions concerning federal and state labor and employment statutes. Her clients hail from sectors including the retail, airline, transportation, food services and financial services industries.

In her litigation practice, Melissa handles all aspects of a dispute. She presents oral arguments to US federal and state courts (including jury trials), and second-chaired a multi-plaintiff litigation in federal court. She has defended employers as first- and second-chair in forums such as the American Arbitration Association, and the National Association of Securities Dealers Inc. (now known as the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, or FINRA). She also represents employers under investigation by administrative agencies, including the US Department of Labor, the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and local and state agencies.

Melissa has experience with a host of federal and state labor and employment statutes. These include Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), the Older Workers Benefit Protection Act, the Equal Pay Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the Railway Labor Act, New York State and New York City Human Rights Laws, the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), New York Labor Law, and the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

In addition to her litigation background, Melissa has advised clients with respect to compliance with the requirements of the FLSA and state law wage and hour requirements. Melissa also has conducted a number of comprehensive internal wage and hour audits to assist clients in properly classifying workers as employees or independent contractors or exempt or nonexempt employees and to revise other wage and hour practices as necessary. She has also represented clients in federal and state Department of Labor audits and negotiated favorable settlements of violations. Clients also turn to Melissa for counseling on harassment claims, the accommodation of employee disabilities, employee disciplinary issues, and termination decisions. She leads internal investigations into harassment and discrimination claims, and provides harassment and diversity training.

Melissa also routinely counsels employers with operations in Puerto Rico and represents employers in federal litigation and administrative matters in Puerto Rico. Melissa has served as a faculty member at the Fordham Law School Summer Institute teaching an Employment Law course. While in law school, Melissa externed with Judge Sonia Sotomayor at the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

## PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES

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### **Hon. Camelia M. Valdes**

#### *Passaic County Prosecutor*

The Honorable Camelia M. Valdes is the Passaic County Prosecutor. When Ms. Valdes was appointed on May 16, 2009 by Governor Jon S. Corzine and confirmed by the New Jersey State Legislature, she became the first Latina county prosecutor in the State of New Jersey, the first woman prosecutor in Passaic County, and the first lead prosecutor of Dominican ancestry in the United States. Governor Chris Christie re-appointed Ms. Valdes to a second term on June 26, 2015. As the chief law enforcement official in Passaic County, Ms. Valdes is responsible for the management of approximately 185 assistant prosecutors, detectives, victim advocates and support staff, a \$20 million office budget and the oversight of 16 municipal police departments, the police departments of William Paterson and Montclair State Universities, and the Passaic County Sheriff's Department.

Ms. Valdes is a career prosecutor. She served as a Municipal Prosecutor in the City of Newark, a Deputy Attorney General in the New Jersey Attorney General's Office, an Assistant Governor's Counsel to Governor Christine Todd Whitman and Acting Governor Donald T. DiFrancesco, and as an Assistant United States Attorney in the U.S. Attorney's Office in Newark. Her experience has ranged from investigating and prosecuting municipal offenses to complex federal crimes that included human trafficking, health care fraud, financial offenses, and violent crimes.

Ms. Valdes is extensively involved in criminal law policy, bar associations, and community service work. She is a past President of the County Prosecutors Association of New Jersey and the Hispanic Bar Association of New Jersey. The Hispanic National Bar Association named Ms. Valdes the 2016 Latina Lawyer of the Year. The American Bar Association honored Ms. Valdes with the Norm Maleng Minister of Justice Award in 2019.

Born to Dominican parents in the Bronx and raised in Newark, New Jersey, Ms. Valdes is a product of the Newark Public Schools. She received her undergraduate degree in sociology from Seton Hall University in 1993, her law degree from Rutgers Law School-Newark in 1996 and her LL.M. in Trial Advocacy from Temple University School of Law in May 2001. As the proud mother of two beautiful autistic girls, Isabela and Elsa, ages 15 and 13, Ms. Valdes endeavors to raise awareness about autism. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

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Founded in 1980, the HBA-NJ is a 501(c)(6) nonprofit Association that is comprised of attorneys, judges, law professors, law students, and other professionals who share a common interest in addressing the issues affecting Hispanics within the legal community.

The purpose of the Association is to serve the public interest: (i) by cultivating the art and science of jurisprudence, (ii) by advancing the standing of the legal profession, and (iii) by preserving high standards of integrity, honor, and professional courtesy among Hispanic lawyers.

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