

# Public Interest/Public Service Fellows Program

## Public Interest/Public Service Fellows Program – Practitioner Advisory Board



### **ESHA BHANDARI '10**

#### *Deputy Director, ACLU Speech, Privacy, and Technology Project*

Esha Bhandari is the deputy director of the ACLU Speech, Privacy, and Technology Project, where she works on litigation and advocacy to protect freedom of expression and privacy rights in the digital age. She also focuses on the impact of big data and artificial intelligence on civil liberties. She has litigated cases including *Sandvig v. Barr*, a First Amendment challenge to the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act on behalf of researchers who test for housing and employment discrimination online, and *Alasaad v. Wolf*, a challenge to suspicionless electronic device searches at the U.S. border. Esha was previously an Equal Justice Works fellow with the ACLU Immigrants' Rights Project, where she litigated cases concerning a right to counsel in immigration proceedings and immigration detainer policies. She has argued before multiple federal district and appellate courts about constitutional issues affecting civil rights and liberties. Esha is a graduate of McGill University, where she was a Loran Scholar and received the Allen Oliver Gold Medal in Political Science. She has an M.S. from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and a J.D. from Columbia Law School, where she received the Robert Noxon Toppan Prize in Constitutional Law and the Archie O. Dawson Prize for Advocacy. Esha was a member of the Columbia Human Rights Clinic, the Columbia Law Review, and the Columbia Journal of Gender and Law. Following law school, Esha served as a law clerk to the Hon. Amalya L. Kearsse of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

### **MOLLY BIKLEN '04**

#### *Deputy Legal Director, New York Civil Liberties Union*

Molly Biklen is the Deputy Legal Director of the New York Civil Liberties Union. As the Deputy Legal Director, she works with the Legal Director to supervise the litigation program of the NYCLU's Legal Department and to manage the Legal Department's staff. Prior to joining the NYCLU in January 2020, Biklen served as the Counsel for Wage and Hour at the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Office of the New York Regional Solicitor, where she supervised litigation to enforce wage and hour laws in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Before she joined DOL as a trial attorney in 2009, she was a Skadden fellow and staff attorney at the Community Development Project of the Urban Justice Center, now TakeRoot Justice, where she litigated workers' rights cases and supported low-wage and immigrant workers seeking to organize and enforce their rights in the workplace. Biklen also served as a law clerk to the Honorable Sonia Sotomayor, then on the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, and the Honorable Lewis A. Kaplan of the District Court for the Southern District of New York. She holds a J.D. from Columbia Law School and a B.A. from Wesleyan University.

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### **MICHAEL BOCHENEK '95**

#### *Senior Counsel, Children's Rights Division, Human Rights Watch*

Michael Garcia Bochenek is senior counsel to the Children's Rights Division of Human Rights Watch, focusing on juvenile justice and refugee and migrant children. He has researched and reported on criminal and juvenile justice systems and prison conditions, the protection of refugees and internally displaced persons, the exploitation of migrant workers and other labor rights issues, the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, and rights violations in armed conflict, including the use of children as soldiers. From 2006 to 2015, he was director of policy and then director of law and policy for Amnesty International's secretariat in London, where he oversaw strategic litigation, among other responsibilities. Earlier, he worked as counsel, senior researcher, and then deputy director of Human Rights Watch's Children's Rights Division in New York, directed a non-profit immigration legal services office in Washington State's Yakima Valley, and was the Leonard Sandler Fellow with Human Rights Watch's Americas Division in Washington, D.C. He holds a bachelor's degree from Michigan State University and a law degree from Columbia University. In addition to English, he speaks Spanish and Portuguese.



### **CAITLIN BOYCE '10**

#### *Policy Specialist, UN Development Programme (UNDP)*

Caitlin Boyce is a women's human rights lawyer and policy/programming professional, with a specialization in the area of women's access to justice, sexual reproductive health and rights, and gender-based violence. She has more than 15 years of experience working in Australia, the Asia-Pacific, the United States and Africa, within government, the UN, national and international NGOs and in private legal practice. Caitlin currently works with UNDP as a gender and crisis specialist, to ensure development programming aligns with UN Security Council mandates related to women peace and security. Prior to this she worked for UN Women as a human rights policy specialist, as well as with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to strengthen the UN's joint response to women's access to justice. In 2011 she joined the UN Mission in Liberia as a Gender Officer, advising the Liberian government on gender-sensitive constitutional reform, gender-based violence prevention, and the new domestic violence bill. Admitted to the bar in Australia, Caitlin has previously practiced as an anti-discrimination attorney in Sydney as well as for the Federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner of the Australian Human Rights Commission. She holds first-class honors degrees in Religion and Gender Studies from the University of Sydney, a Law Degree from the University of New South Wales, and is a proud Columbia Law School LLM graduate from the class of 2010.

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### **CARMEN CHEUNG '02**

#### *Executive Director, Center for Justice and Accountability*

Carmen Cheung is Executive Director at the Center for Justice and Accountability, which is dedicated to working with impacted communities to seek truth, justice and redress for crimes against humanity, war crimes, torture, and other core international crimes through innovative litigation and transitional justice strategies. An international litigator, Carmen has acted as counsel in significant public interest cases involving security and human rights, and has provided expert testimony before governments and international human rights bodies. Prior to joining CJA, she was a Professor of

Global Practice at the University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, where her research and teaching focused on security, terrorism, criminal justice reform, and human rights. Carmen began her legal practice as a litigation associate with Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP in New York. She received her JD From Columbia Law School and graduated with an AB in Social Studies from Harvard University.



### **KINARA FLAGG '11**

#### *Trial Attorney, U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, Housing and Civil Enforcement Section*

Kinara Flagg is a trial attorney in the Housing and Civil Enforcement Section of the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division. Kinara focuses on investigating and prosecuting violations of civil rights laws that protect our access to housing, access to credit, and access to places of public accommodation, and that prevent discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability status, among other protected classes. Kinara also works on cases involving

discriminatory zoning and land use. She is currently a member of the Civil Rights Division's AAPI Working Group and previously served as the Attorney Advisor to the Civil Rights Division's Fair Housing Testing Program, providing legal advice and guidance on testing investigations under the Fair Housing Act, Equal Credit Opportunity Act, Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Kinara is a graduate of Columbia College and Columbia Law School, where she served as the Editor-in-Chief of the *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*, and was a James Kent Scholar. Kinara is the recipient of the 2011 Ellen P. Chapnick Award, the Holthusen-Schindler Scholarship, and the Max and Dale Berger Enhanced LRAP fellowship. Kinara clerked for Judge Rosemary S. Pooler on the Second Circuit, and for Judge Janet Bond Arterton in the District of Connecticut. Before law school, Kinara worked in homelessness services and advocacy in New York City at Homes for the Homeless and the Institute for Children and Poverty. Kinara is certified as a yoga instructor and is a retired cellist who lives in Washington DC with her family.

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### **MARIA FOSCARINIS '81**

#### *Founder, National Homelessness Law Center*

Maria Foscarinis is founder and former executive director of the National Homelessness Law Center, a not-for-profit organization based in Washington, D.C., and the only national organization dedicated to using the power of the law to end homelessness in America. Ms. Foscarinis has advocated for solutions to homelessness at the national level since 1985, when she left her career at a major law firm to become an advocate for homeless people. She is a primary architect of the McKinney-Vento Act, the first major federal legislation addressing homelessness, and has led successful litigation to secure the legal rights of homeless persons. Ms. Foscarinis has published dozens of articles, book chapters and opinion pieces; speaks regularly about legal and policy issues affecting homeless and poor persons; and is frequently quoted in national and local media. She is a graduate of Columbia Law School, Columbia University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and Barnard College. Ms. Foscarinis is the recipient of the 2006 Public Interest Achievement Award from the Public Interest Law Foundation at Columbia Law School and the 2016 Katharine and George Alexander Law Prize from Santa Clara University's School of Law. She serves on the Board of Advisers of the Economic Hardship Reporting Project, and holds an adjunct appointment at Columbia Law School, where she teaches a seminar on law and policy of homelessness.

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### **MARGARET GARNETT '00**

#### *Deputy U.S. Attorney, Southern District of New York*

Margaret Garnett is the Deputy U.S. Attorney in the office of U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York. Before assuming this role, she served at the Department of Investigations for 3 years after being nominated by Mayor Bill de Blasio in November 2018 and confirmed by City Council the same month. She took office on December 10, 2018 and led one of the oldest municipal anti-corruption agencies in the country, rooting out corruption, wrongdoing, negligence, and abuse from New York City; furthering integrity; and upholding New Yorkers' confidence in government.

Garnett previously served as Executive Deputy Attorney General for Criminal Justice in the Office of the New York State Attorney General, where she supervised more than 150 prosecutors and 130 criminal investigators while advising the Attorney General on criminal justice policy. Prior to her time with the New York State Attorney General, Garnett spent 12 years as a federal prosecutor in the office of the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, where she was responsible for prosecuting gang violence, racketeering, organized crime, violent crime, financial crimes, and tax fraud.

At the U.S. Attorney's Office, she served as Chief of Appeals and Chief of the Violent and Organized Crime Unit, among other roles. In 2011, Garnett received the Director's Award for Outstanding Performance as an Assistant United States Attorney, the second-highest award in the Department of Justice. In 2016, Ms. Garnett received the Stimson Medal, given annually by the Association for the Bar of the City of New York.

Garnett was previously an associate at Watchell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz; has served as an adjunct professor at Columbia University Law School and Brooklyn Law School; and clerked for the Honorable Gerard E. Lynch in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. She received her B.A. at the University of Notre Dame, her M.A. from Yale University, and her J.D. from Columbia University. Garnett lives in Brooklyn with her husband and their twins.

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### **LEE GELERNT '88**

#### *Deputy Director, ACLU Immigrants' Rights Project*

Lee Gelernt is a lawyer at the ACLU national office in New York. During the past two years, he has argued several of the highest profile challenges to Trump Administration policies. He is the lead lawyer in a national class action against the Administration's unprecedented practice of separating immigrant families at the border, which resulted in a nationwide injunction holding the practice unconstitutional and requiring the Administration to reunite the approximately 2,800 separated families. In July 2018, his work on the family separation issue was featured prominently in a New York Times magazine cover story about the ACLU. Mr. Gelernt also argued the first case challenging the president's travel ban on individuals from certain Muslim-majority nations and the first challenge to the president's asylum ban. Mr. Gelernt also successfully argued *Rodriguez v. Swartz*, involving the fatal cross-border shooting of a Mexican teenager in Mexico by a U.S. border patrol officer firing into Mexico from U.S. soil through the border fence in Nogales, Arizona. The Court of Appeals ruling in August 2018 in favor of the boy's family was the first-ever federal court decision to hold that the Fourth Amendment applies beyond our nation's borders. Over his career, Mr. Gelernt has argued dozens of other notable civil rights cases at all levels of the federal court system, including in the U.S. Supreme Court and virtually every federal court of appeals in the country. He has also testified before both the Senate and House as an expert on civil rights issues. He is a frequent guest speaker around the country, and regularly appears in the national and international media. Mr. Gelernt has received numerous honors for his work over the years, and has been recognized as one of the 500 leading lawyers in the country in any field. In addition to his work at the ACLU, he is an adjunct professor at Columbia Law School, and previously taught as an adjunct at Yale Law School.

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### **FARHANG HEYDARI '11**

#### *Executive Director, Policing Project*

Farhang Heydari is the Executive Director of the Policing Project at New York University School of Law, a non-profit organization that partners with communities and police across the country to promote public safety through transparency, equity, and democratic engagement. Farhang also serves as an adjunct professor at NYU Law School and Columbia Law School, teaching various civil rights courses. Farhang began his legal career at the civil rights law firm Neufeld, Scheck and Brustin, where he represented numerous individuals who had been victims of police, prosecutor, and other official misconduct. Farhang is a graduate of Harvard University and Columbia Law School, where he served as the editor-in-chief of the Columbia Law Review and director of the Society for Immigrant and Refugee Rights. He previously clerked for Judge Kimba Wood of the Southern District of New York and Judge Diana Gribbon Motz of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals.



### **ADRIENE HOLDER '91**

#### *Attorney-in-Charge, Civil Practice, The Legal Aid Society*

Adriene serves as Attorney-in-Charge of the Civil Practice of The Legal Aid Society and has devoted her entire professional career to challenging poverty and racial injustice for the advancement of equal rights. Adriene is responsible for managing the provision of comprehensive civil legal services through a network of neighborhood offices, courthouse based offices, and specialized city-wide units serving all five boroughs of New York City with more than 500 staff working on nearly 49,000 cases each year. Prior to her appointment to Attorney-in-Charge of the Civil Practice, Adriene served as Attorney-in-Charge of the Harlem Office; practiced law as a staff attorney in the Law Reform Unit of the Civil Practice; and began her career as a staff attorney in the Harlem Office Housing Law Unit. In addition to her formal duties, Adriene also serves as a member of the New York State Permanent Commission on Access to Justice, and is an executive board member for Housing Court Answers, and previously served as a Tenant Representative on the New York City Rent Guidelines Board for 10 years. Adriene has also served as an adjunct professor at The New School and as a volunteer instructor at Columbia Law School. Often called upon to work on the Society's legislative agenda, Adriene frequently testifies before legislative bodies on the city and state levels. She also is consulted on various legal and policy matters impacting low-income communities by the media, law schools, and policy or governmental agencies. She is the recipient of numerous honors and awards including the Thurgood Marshall Award - recognition of service as pro bono counsel to an individual under a sentence of death; The Legal Aid Society Pro Bono Award for work on the Alabama Pro Bono Death Penalty Project; New York Moves Magazine – Power Woman; Earl Warren Legal Scholar and a Reginald L. Lewis Fellow by her law school and a Melvin C. Steen Fellow by The Legal Aid Society when she started her employment. Adriene received her B.S. in Political Science from Spelman College, and received her J.D. from Columbia Law School.

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### **HON. CAROLINA HOLDERNESS '06**

#### *Judge, Criminal Court of the City of New York*

Hon. Carolina Holderness is a Judge for the Criminal Court of the City of New York. Prior to her appointment, she was the Chief of the Human Trafficking Response Unit and the Deputy Chief of the Special Victims Bureau at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office. In her roles at the District Attorney's Office, Ms. Holderness has prosecuted a variety of cases, including domestic violence incidents, sexual assaults, and homicides, in addition to sex and labor trafficking crimes. In addition, Ms. Holderness has spearheaded collaborations with technologists, financial institutions, and social service providers to support survivors and to bring innovative prosecutions of violent crimes. These partnerships have resulted in long-term, evidence-based actions against trafficking organizations, and in better support for survivors participating in the criminal justice process. Carolina has committed her career to addressing gender-based violence and combating exploitation of our community's most vulnerable members. In addition to her work at the DA's Office, Carolina has served as an expert in human trafficking prosecutions in both domestic and international contexts. She previously served as a law clerk to the Honorable L.M. McKenna in the Southern District of New York. Carolina is a 2006 graduate of Columbia Law School, where she interned with Sanctuary for Families and the ACLU Women's Rights Project and participated in a clinic addressing the family rights of incarcerated individuals. Carolina is a member of LeGaL, the LGBT Bar Association of Greater New York.



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### **PERNILLE IRONSIDE '02**

*Deputy Director, Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring, UNICEF*

Pernille Ironside is a humanitarian, human rights advocate and international civil servant with the United Nations. Since January 2020, she has been serving as UNICEF's Deputy Director of the newly established Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring (DAPM) at UNICEF Headquarters in New York and oversees the work on Strategic Planning, Monitoring, Implementation and Reporting. Prior to that, she was

UNICEF's Deputy Representative in Nigeria, which is amongst UNICEF's largest programmes for development and humanitarian response. During this time, she led the development of a new 5-year country programme (2018-2022) for UNICEF as well as a new UN Strategic Development Partnership Framework (2018-2021) for the United Nations with the Government of Nigeria. Previously, she was UNICEF's Chief of Field Operations in Iraq based in Baghdad, where she led efforts to deliver humanitarian assistance to vulnerable children and their families across Iraq, particularly in relation to the Anbar and Mosul humanitarian crises. From 2013-2015, she served as UNICEF's Chief of Field Office in the Gaza Strip for which she and her team were awarded an internal UNICEF staff team award for their humanitarian action during the 51-day conflict in Gaza in 2014. Since joining the UN in 2002, Ms. Ironside has also served in Tacloban leading UNICEF's emergency child protection response in the immediate aftermath of super-typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda) in the Philippines in 2013; in Yemen as Chief of Child Protection; in Goma, DRC as a Child Protection Specialist; and in UNICEF global Headquarters in New York during which she advised UNICEF child protection staff and management working in 20 countries affected by armed conflict and/or natural disaster involving frequent deployments to the frontlines. She is specialized in negotiating the release of children associated with armed forces/groups and supporting their community reintegration. In addition to her work with UNICEF, Ms. Ironside has held positions with the UN Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) in Goma, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in New York, the Canadian Human Rights Commission and the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. A licensed lawyer, Ms. Ironside holds Canadian degrees in Commerce and Law, as well as a Masters in Law from Columbia University in New York with a specialization in International Human Rights, Humanitarian Law, Comparative Law and Transitional Justice. Pernille was born and raised in Edmonton, Canada.

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### **MAYRA JOACHIN '15**

#### *Staff Attorney, National Immigration Law Center*

Mayra Joachin is a Staff Attorney at the National Immigration Law Center. She focuses on advancing the rights of low-income immigrants through impact litigation, direct work with affected individuals, administrative advocacy, and technical assistance. Her passion for immigrants' rights stems from her experiences as a Salvadoran immigrant. Her main areas of work involve expanding immigrants' access to status and crucial services, including access to health care and to public utilities, for all individuals regardless of race, status, or national origin. Ms. Joachin has appeared as counsel on: *Batalla Vidal v. Wolf*, a lawsuit challenging the DACA rescission which resulted in the Supreme Court setting aside the 2017 Duke Memorandum that ended DACA, allowing hundreds of thousands of DACA recipients to continue to apply for protection from deportation and work authorization; *GA State Conference of the NAACP v. City of LaGrange*, a lawsuit in Georgia challenging two discriminatory utility policies that disproportionately affect Black and Latino residents in LaGrange; and *La Clinica de la Raza v. Trump*, the first lawsuit on behalf of organizations challenging the Trump Administration's public charge regulation. Ms. Joachin holds a bachelor's degree from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a J.D. from Columbia Law School.

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### **DINAH MANNING '14**

*Deputy Federal Public Defender, Trial Unit, Office of the Federal Public Defender Central District of California*

Dinah M. Manning is currently a Deputy Federal Public Defender in the trial unit of the Office of the Federal Public Defender Central District of California. Ms. Manning represents indigent clients who are charged with violating federal criminal statutes by handling all stages of federal criminal trial matters in the District Court. Prior to joining the Federal Public Defender, Ms. Manning was a supervising attorney in the trial division at the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia (PDS). At PDS, Ms. Manning represented indigent clients who were charged with serious felony crimes including homicide, armed offenses, and possession offenses. Additionally, she served as a Program Director for the Criminal Defense Trial Practice Institute, was an instructor in the PDS trial practice group summer series, and served as a mock trial coach for the UDC David A. Clarke School of Law. Ms. Manning is also a founding member of the Black Public Defender Association, a national organization that aims to improve the quality of defense provided to low-income communities across the United States by creating and maintaining a national network of skilled Black public defenders that identify with and are committed to the populations they serve. Ms. Manning earned her Juris Doctorate from Columbia Law School as a Harlan Fiske Stone scholar. While at Columbia Law School, she was heavily involved in public interest matters, focusing primarily on the criminal system and its collateral impact on underrepresented minorities. She externed with The Bronx Defenders and received her trial advocacy training under the tutelage of Rick Jones, Director of the Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem. Additionally, Ms. Manning worked with the Center for Institutional and Social Change to determine the best practices for engaging and retaining formerly incarcerated young adults in peer mentorship programs aimed at promoting academic success. She was awarded the Simon H. Rifkind prize for best moot court performance in the 1L class and the Whitney North Seymour medal, which is awarded to the graduating student who shows the greatest promise of becoming a distinguished trial advocate. Prior to law school, Ms. Manning graduated from the University of Southern California with a degree in philosophy and entertainment communications. Ms. Manning is a proud first-generation Salvadoran-American and African-American who hails from South Central Los Angeles, California. She has spent her legal career fighting for people who are marginalized, oppressed and subjugated by the criminal injustice system.

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### **OSCAR LOPEZ '13**

*Senior Staff Attorney, Mental Health Practice Group (MHPG),  
National Immigration Law Center*

Oscar Daniel Lopez is a Senior Staff Attorney in the Mental Health Practice Group (MHPG) at Disability Rights California (DRC). The MHPG works to increase community mental health treatment and housing for individuals to avoid unnecessary institutionalization or homelessness. Prior to joining DRC, Oscar was the Interim Director of the Education Advocacy Clinic at the East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC), a partnership with Berkeley Law School. The Education Advocacy Clinic advocates for students, primarily youth of color with disabilities, who are pushed out of school and into the juvenile legal system. Oscar also partnered with grassroots community organizers to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline through local policy and statewide legislative efforts. He previously worked at Public Counsel in California and Advancement Project in Washington, DC, where he served as a Skadden Fellow. Oscar is a graduate of UCLA and Columbia Law School.



### **JONATHAN MILLER '05**

*Legal Director, Public Rights Project*

Jonathan Miller is an experienced litigator and government attorney who has committed his career to public interest endeavors. Prior to joining PRP, Jon served as the Chief of the Public Protection & Advocacy Bureau in the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office. In that role, he led a 150-person team engaged in investigations, litigation, and other advocacy in the areas of civil rights, consumer protection, and workers rights. He was co-counsel with Attorney General Healey in a successful challenge of the federal Defense of Marriage Act, and helped lead a team that secured more than \$100 million of consumer relief in an enforcement action against a subprime lender following the financial crisis of the late 2000s. Jon's portfolio of work has included a wide range of matters from those brought on behalf of individuals facing housing discrimination or violation of their civil rights to U.S. Supreme Court advocacy on national topics such as affirmative action, reproductive rights, and marriage equality. In addition to Bureau Chief, Jon served as both an Assistant Attorney General in and Chief of the Civil Rights Division. Most recently, Jon participated in or oversaw Massachusetts's cases challenging the travel bans, the termination of the DACA program, regulations that would permit employers to deny contraceptive coverage to their workers, and several actions by the Department of Education relating to for-profit schools. Eager to find creative solutions to difficult problems, Jon also helped to lead an initiative partnering with the Massachusetts Medical Society to develop instructional materials and other information for medical providers to engage in gun safety conversations with their patients. Throughout his career, Jon has been committed to teaching students and other lawyers. He is a Lecturer in Law at Harvard Law School. Jon graduated from Dartmouth College, where he played baseball, and Columbia Law School. He lives in the Boston area with his family.

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### **NANCY NORTHUP '88**

#### *President & CEO, Center for Reproductive Rights*

Nancy Northup, President & CEO, has led the Center for Reproductive Rights since 2003. Under Ms. Northup's leadership, the Center's game changing litigation work—combined with its unparalleled expertise in the use of constitutional, international, and comparative human rights law—have transformed how reproductive rights are understood by courts, governments, and human rights bodies. She has led the organization's exceptional growth: tripling its operating budget over the course of a decade; opening four overseas offices; conceiving and implementing its strategic focus on ensuring reproductive health and freedom as a fundamental human right; and establishing the Center as an international resource for litigation strategy and innovation. She was previously the founding director of the Democracy Program at the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law; a prosecutor and Deputy Chief of Appeals in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York; and a law clerk to the Honorable Alvin B. Rubin of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. She has taught human rights and constitutional law as an adjunct professor at NYU Law School and Columbia Law School and appears frequently in leading media and press. She is a graduate of Brown University and Columbia Law School, where she was a Kent Scholar and Managing Editor of the Columbia Law Review.



### **PATRICIA OKONTA '18**

#### *Law Clerk, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York*

Patricia Okonta is a law clerk for Chief Judge Margo K. Brodie of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York. Prior to this position, Patricia was a law clerk for the Honorable Jane B. Stranch in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit where she worked on a variety of criminal and civil appellate matters. Before clerking, Patricia was a Skadden Fellow at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF). Patricia's Skadden project utilized public education, legislative reform, and impact litigation to successfully compel a Atlanta-area subsidized housing provider to change housing restrictions that disproportionately affected individuals of color with criminal records. In addition to housing work, Patricia also worked on a variety of racial justice issues across the country including, desegregation litigation, federal death row relief, parole advocacy, NYPD training and accountability monitoring, and challenging grooming policies that target Black people for wearing their natural hair. At Columbia Law School, Patricia served as the Executive Editor of the Columbia Human Rights Law Review, clinical student in the Challenging the Consequences of Mass Incarceration Clinic, executive board member of the Black Law Students' Association (BLSA), and competitor and coach of the Frederick Douglass Moot Court. She was also a research assistant for Professor Katherine Franke.

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### **NINA PERALES '90**

#### *Vice President of Litigation, MALDEF*

Nina Perales is Vice President of Litigation for MALDEF, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund. In that role, Ms. Perales supervises the legal staff and litigation docket in MALDEF's offices throughout the United States. Ms. Perales is best known for her work in voting rights, including redistricting and vote dilution cases. Her litigation has included successful statewide redistricting cases in Texas and Arizona including *LULAC v. Perry* (2006), a Voting Rights Act challenge to Texas congressional redistricting which Ms. Perales led through trial and argued successfully in the U.S. Supreme Court. Ms. Perales also led the challenge under the National Voter Registration Act to an Arizona voter law and secured a favorable ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court in *Arizona v. ITCA* (2013) and the challenge to Texas legislative redistricting in which the U.S. Supreme Court found racial gerrymandering of Latino voters in 2018 (*Abbott v. Perez*). Ms. Perales also specializes in immigrants' rights litigation, including leading the case striking down an anti-immigrant housing ordinance in Farmers Branch, Texas and the defense of DACA in a multi-state challenge to that initiative. Ms. Perales earned a Bachelor's degree from Brown University and a J.D. from Columbia University School of Law.



### **BRENDA T. PIPESTEM '99**

#### *Justice, Supreme Courts of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians*

Brenda Toineeta Pipestem, a citizen of the Eastern Band of Cherokee, has dedicated her life to empowering tribal communities and protecting the sovereignty of American Indian Tribes through education, law, policy, philanthropy and support of the arts. Pipestem serves as a Justice on the Supreme Courts of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. In addition, Brenda serves on the Advisory Circle of the Spirit Aligned Leadership Program for Indigenous Women elders. Brenda previously worked for the White House Commission on Race under President Bill Clinton, and the Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs working with Tribes on national and local policy issues, and serving a legislative detail with the U.S. Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior and Related Agencies. Brenda served consecutive three-year terms on the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) Board of Trustees, serving as Chair of the Board of Trustees for two years and Chair of the Repatriation Committee for three years prior. Brenda currently serves on the Board for the Booker T. Washington Foundation for Excellence, the Board of Advisors for the University of Tulsa Center for the Humanities, and on the Tulsa United Way Board of Directors. Brenda is an alumna of Duke University (Public Policy Studies, BA '90) and Columbia Law (JD '99). Brenda and Wilson Pipestem parent four wonderfully strong-minded children. They moved to Oklahoma in 2013 from the Washington, DC area.

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### **SUSAN BUTLER PLUM**

#### *Senior Advisor, Skadden Foundation*

Susan Butler Plum is the senior adviser for the Skadden Foundation. Before transition to this role, Ms. Butler Plum served as the founding director of the Skadden Foundation, which awards two-year grants to 28 public interest attorneys per year. The foundation was established in April 1988 and has made grants to 849 attorneys who provide civil legal services to the poor. Prior to joining Skadden, Ms. Butler Plum was the director of the Botwinick-Wolfensohn Foundation and program director of the Booth Ferris Foundation. She also was the associate director for the Environmental Defense Fund. She is a graduate of the University of Miami. Among her board affiliations are trusteeships of the Stella and Charles Guttman Foundation, where she is president, and of the Community Opportunity Fund. She is also a board member of Deaf Legal Advocacy Worldwide, which was founded by a former Skadden Fellow. Ms. Butler Plum is also a board member of Justice Labs, a Hong Kong-based public interest legal organization, and of Partners for Justice. She also is a member of the Foundation Board of Stella and Charles Guttman Community College of CUNY, the International Advisory Council of the Harvard School of Public Health AIDS Initiative, the Harvard Law School Venture Fund Advisory Group, the New York Weill Cornell Council, and the Columbia Law School Public Interest/Public Service Fellows Program Advisory Board. In 2008, she received the annual North Star Award, Honoring New Yorkers Committed to Social Justice. In 2013, she received a special Lifetime Achievement Award from the New York Law Journal shared with the Skadden Fellowship Foundation. In 2015, Ms. Butler Plum was selected as one of 50 Inspiring Change Makers worldwide by the Harvard Law and International Development Society and the Harvard Women's Law Association. In 2017, Ms. Butler Plum was honored by the Center for Popular Democracy.

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### **CAMILLA TAYLOR '96**

#### *Director of Constitutional Litigation, Lambda Legal*

Camilla B. Taylor is the Director of Constitutional Litigation for Lambda Legal, the oldest and largest national legal organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of all lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and people with HIV. She spearheads Lambda Legal's litigation challenging the Trump/Pence administration's assault on LGBT rights. Taylor was the National Marriage Project Director at Lambda Legal from 2011 through 2015. In 2015, the Marriage Project concluded its work as a result of victory in the consolidated cases titled *Obergefell v. Hodges*. Taylor has been counsel in numerous cases challenging the constitutionality of marriage bans around the country including, most significantly, *Obergefell v. Hodges* and *Varnum v. Brien*. In addition to her work as a litigator, Taylor has contributed to legislative efforts concerning marriage and parenting around the country and has testified multiple times before state legislatures in support of marriage bills and in opposition to measures that would permit discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. Prior to joining Lambda Legal, Taylor was a staff attorney with the Criminal Appeals Bureau of the Legal Aid Society of New York City and a litigation associate with Shearman & Sterling.

Taylor received her J.D. from Columbia Law School and her B.A. from Yale College. She has taught LGBT Law at Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law and the University of Chicago Law School, is a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation, and serves on the American Constitution Society Chicago Chapter Board of Advisors. In 2009, she was named one of Crain's Chicago Business's "40 under 40." Recognition for her work also includes induction into the Chicago LGBT Hall of Fame (2015), the American Constitution Society Ruth Goldman Award (2012), Columbia Law School Public Interest Initiative Distinguished Graduate award (2012), Laurel School Young Alumna of Distinction Award (2009), and Matthew Shepard Scholarship Award for Leadership (2009).