



December, 2021
Report from District 2
Honorable Leslie A. Stroth

New York, Connecticut, Vermont

MEMBERSHIP

The membership in District 2 continues to grow, with the number of members standing at 152 as of December 7, 2021. This includes 9 new judges since October. We expect our robust membership to grow following the November elections and the inductions of the recent mayoral appointments. We will contact District 2 women judges whose terms begin in January 2022 and invite them to join NAWJ. District 2 will also make special efforts to increase the membership and involvement of judges in Connecticut and Vermont. A new member virtual meet and greet reception will be held in January 2022.

District 2 will continue to work with Justice Shirley Troutman, NAWJ-NY Chapter President, to increase membership. Justice Troutman, who presides in the Appellate Division, Fourth Department in Western New York, has been instrumental in increasing active membership across New York State. She and President-Elect Marcia Hirsch have been keeping members informed of programming, current initiatives, and achievements of our fellow women judges in the “Sisters in Law” New York Chapter quarterly newsletter. (The next issue will be released this month).

PROGRAMMING

The New York Chapter’s Fall Judicial Internship program concluded on November 12, 2021 and was a big success. Law students were paired with NAWJ mentor judges and enhanced their learning by working in the courtroom and chambers, as well as with virtual programming. Plans are underway for the New York Chapter’s Spring Judicial internship program.

NAWJ-NY strengthened its internship program this past year as a way to create a diverse pipeline into the legal profession and the judiciary. This effort was led by Judges Hilary Gingold, Lenora Foote-Beavers, and Linda Kevins, with the outstanding assistance of Principal Law Clerk Jasmine Valle and Associate Court Attorney Jaime Hyman.

Another amazing program presented by the Women in Prison Committee of NAWJ-NY this year was “Belly of the Beast” which educated judges on the importance of protecting the right of women to give informed consent before being subjected to medical procedures, and how that right is especially fragile when women are imprisoned. Acknowledgment goes to Judges Cheryl Gonzalez, Sally Unger and Betty Williams (ret) for their continued efforts to life up society’s most vulnerable women.

NAWJ-NY’s Women in Prison Committee has also collected toiletries for the annual gift bags that are delivered to women during the December holidays, and will be gathering soon to put the gift bags together.

District 2’s Pilot High School Internship Program, a virtual program with Bronx NAWJ judges and St. Barnabas high school in the Bronx, is expected to be launched in the winter academic semester.

District 2 is working on the Resource Guide that was suggested following the 2021 Color of Justice virtual speaker series, which will serve as a resource for college students interested in a legal career. It will include information about topics such as the LSAT and applying to law school, adjusting to law school, activities in which one should be involved in law school, how to seek internships, preparing for the bar exam, and employment after law school. Once completed, the guide will be posted on the District 2 page of the NAWJ website.

The Annual Scales of Justice Academy Inc. commenced virtually on August 9, 2021. This was a successful legal educational program attended by 29 outstanding yet underserved female high school students, the faculty for which consisted of NAWJ District 2 members. The program will be held again in 2022.

RECENT NAWJ MEMBER ADVANCEMENT/RECOGNITION

Hon. Shirley Troutman (President of the NAWJ NY Chapter) was appointed to New York's highest court, the NY Court of Appeals, by Governor Kathy Hochul (New York State's first woman governor) on November 24, 2021.

Hon. Deborah A. Kaplan was appointed Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for the New York City Courts on October 1, 2021 and will oversee the management and day-to-day operations of New York City's trial courts, which are among the largest and busiest in the country.

Hon. Carolyn Walker-Diallo was appointed as Administrative Judge of the New York City Civil Court on August 16, 2021. She oversees the administration and operation of the Civil Court throughout the five boroughs. She was the first Muslim woman elected as a NYS judge in 2016.

Hon. Betty Weinberg Ellerin was honored at the October 26, 2021 dedication of the "Betty Weinberg Ellerin Children's Center" at the NY City Civil Court in Manhattan. To quote Chief Judge Janet DiFiore, "This much-needed Children's Center is named in honor of our trailblazing judge whose seven-decade career has been defined not only by so many historic firsts- the first woman law clerk in the NYS Courts, and first woman Presiding Justice of the Appellate Division, First Department – but by her deep commitment and impactful work to improve the treatment of women and children in our courts and the justice system."

Hon. Juanita Bing Newton was awarded the Fund for Modern Courts Career Public Service Award on October 16, 2021.

Hon. La Tia Martin was awarded the Hon. Sheila Abdus-Salaam Outstanding Jurist Award by the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission's Diversity Awards Gala.

Hon. Leslie E. Stein, retired Associate Judge, NY Court of Appeals is starting as Director of the Government Law Center at Albany Law School in January 2022.

Hon. Marcy Kahn and many members of the NAWJ-NY Chapter are commended for their advocacy in promoting passage of the emergency travel resolution proposed

by the NAWJ LGBTQ committee, which resolution was adopted by members attending the Nashville conference live and virtually on October 9, 2021.

Hon. Kathy King, former District 2 Director, submitted a statement in support of the resolution “based on my belief that Anti-LGBTQ laws stigmatize, perpetuate stereotypes and impair the rights of the LGBTQ community to self-determination.” As current District 2 Director, I join in these beliefs and will continue to promote the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion that our judges so strongly support.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- New York Chapter Virtual Holiday Party: December 16, 2021
- New York Chapter Virtual Annual Meeting: January 2022
- New York Chapter Spring Retreat: May 1-3, 2022 in Jamestown, NY, home of the Chautauqua Institute, the Lucille Ball Desi Arnaz Museum/the National Comedy Center, and the beautiful Lake Chautauqua.