



May 16, 2026 Meeting
Midyear Report
Report from District 3
Honorable Lisa James-Beavers, District Director

District Three held a wonderful Color of Justice Program at the Hall of Justice in Camden, New Jersey on April 17, 2026. The theme of the program was “Declaring Independence for 250 Years.” It featured two panels, one on Civics and one on Careers in the Law. We first had welcome marks from Assignment Judge of the Camden Superior Court Honorable Steven Polansky and United States District Court Judge Karen Williams, and me, followed by a thought-provoking keynote address by former Hispanic National Bar President Carlos M. Bollar, Esq. of Archer & Greiner, PC.

The Civics Panel, moderated by Gina Labrecque, Deputy Attorney General, featured a lively discussion among the panel about the country’s 250th anniversary in the context of their stories of how they became lawyers and judges. The panelists were Honorable Kim Belin, Administrative Law Judge; District Court Judge Williams; Rhasheda Douglas, Assistant Dean of the Minority Student Program, Rutgers Law School; and Steven Salinger, Esq., CEO Volunteer UP Legal Clinic. They had amazing, inspiring, stories to tell about what sparked their interest in the law and how they went about pursuing their dream.

The Careers in the Law panel brought to light the many ways in which people practice law. We presented the Honorable Gwendolyn Blue, Presiding Judge, Camden; Rahat N. Babar, Executive Director and General Counsel, NAPABA; Jasmyn Montgomery, Law Clerk; Geovanny Mora, Esq. White and Williams, LLP; and Tyrell Powell, Detective, Camden County. In addition to his amazing civilian career, Mr. Powell talked about his military service in the National Guard. The students hung on to his every word as he recounted the bravery of his fellow soldiers.

We thank the students and chaperones of our participating high schools, Camden County Technical School; Camden High School; Cherry Hill High School West; Eastside High School; KIPP High School; Urban Promise High School; and Winslow High School. We thank the students for their excellent questions and for being an attentive and engaged audience. We thank the various school boards who approved their participation. In addition, we thank the students who came from Camden County College, some of whom had participated in the program last year and wished to attend again.

I thank Committee members Honorable Kim Belin, ALJ; Honorable Gwendolyn Blue; Elizabeth Davies, DAG; Erin Deitz, Assistant Prosecutor; Erin Gallagher, Assistant Prosecutor; Honorable Rosemary Gambardella, U.S. Bankruptcy Judge (ret.); Gina Labrecque, DAG; Honorable Lourdes Santiago, JSC (ret.); Honorable Siobhan Teare, JSC (ret.); and Honorable Karen Williams, USDC. Additionally, the program would not have been possible without the assistance of Laurie Hein Denham, CAE, NAWJ Executive Director, who secured the funding and kept us on track. Thank you, Laurie.



Welcoming remarks from District 3 Director and Chair.



Keynote speaker Carlos Bollar, Esquire



Civics Panel



Committee, panelists and student participants



Committee, panelists of Careers in the Law, students and teachers from Cherry Hill West H.S.