



The Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission
Pathways to Equity in Legal Education
and the Profession
Materials

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BIOGRAPHIES



Hon. Shirley Troutman

Hon. Shirley Troutman is an Associate Justice of the Appellate Division, Fourth Department and the co-chair of the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission. She previously served as a trial judge in New York State Supreme Court, assigned to the Eight Judicial District, where she handled matrimonial and general civil litigations matters. Prior to her election to Supreme Court, Justice Troutman was a County Court Judge where she handled felony criminal cases, appeals and civil matters. She began her judicial career as a Buffalo City Court Judge, where she presided over civil and criminal court matters within the courts' jurisdiction.

Prior to joining the bench, Justice Troutman was an Assistant United States Attorney for the Western District of New York, Assistant State Attorney General and an Assistant District Attorney.

She has served as an Adjunct Professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo Law School. She has served as a Lecturer of the New York State Judicial Institute, as well as CLE programs and seminars, including serving as a Faculty Member for the National Judicial Institute on Domestic Violence. She is also a member of the Ethics Commission of the New York State Unified Court System, member of the New York State Bar Association Task Force on Attorney Well-Being and has served as a member of the Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics.

Justice Troutman received a B.S. from the State University of New York at Buffalo and a J.D. from Albany Law School of Union University. She is also designated as an Advanced Science Technology and Resource (ASTAR) fellow, which is a program sponsored by the United States Department of Justice. As an ASTAR fellow, she is qualified as a resource judge for members of the judiciary of New York State handling complex cases involving scientific evidence.

Justice Troutman served as a member of the editorial board that published "New York State Public Health Legal Manual" in 2011 and authored a report on minority representation on juries in the Eighth Judicial District, which included recommendations on how to improve diversity in jury pools.

She has received the following honors: M. Dolores Denman Award - WNY Chapter of WBASNY, Legal Service Award - Minority Bar Association of WNY, Achievement Award - Committee on Women in the Courts and Local Specialty Bar Associations, and numerous other recognitions.



Hon. Troy K. Webber

Hon. Troy K. Webber is a graduate of New York University School of Law. She has served as Assistant District Attorney in New York County; senior associate at medium-sized law firm; Deputy Bureau Chief at New York City Corporation Counsel and Law Assistant to a State Supreme Court Justice.

Justice Webber was elected to the Civil Court, countywide in November 1993. She was thereafter elected to Supreme Court from New York County in November 2002 and assigned to Bronx Supreme Court, Criminal Division. Appointed Acting Surrogate New York County in January 2009. In February 2016, Justice Webber was appointed to the Appellate Division First Department.

Justice Webber is an adjunct professor of law at Monroe College.

She is a member of the Metropolitan Black Bar Association, The Bronx Black Bar Association, the Association of Woman Judges, The Judicial Friends, the New York County Lawyers Association as well as serves as Co-Chair of the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission. She serves on the New York State Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics and the Advisory Committee on Criminal Law and Procedure.

Justice Webber mentors students who attend the City University of New York, John Jay College of Criminal Justice as well as Fordham University School of law.

She has also participated in the Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial Program which encourages Bronx middle and high school students to pursue a legal career, as well as the moot court programs sponsored by New York University School of Law and New York Law School.

Justice Webber is a proud mother whose daughter was recently admitted to the Bar of the State of New York.

Message from the Co-Chairs



The Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission (formerly the New York State Judicial Commission on Minorities) was formed in 1988 to conduct an in-depth study on minority participation on the Unified Court System bench and nonjudicial workforce as well as perceptions regarding racial bias in the courts. Led by noted attorney-statesman Franklin H. Williams, the Commission held public hearings, met with members of the legal community and surveyed minority attorneys, litigants and others, submitting its interim report to the New York State Chief Judge in May 1990. Sadly, Mr. Williams passed away days after the report's release, with his successor, James Goodale, issuing the Commission's final report the following year.

Among other findings, the 1991 report revealed a severe lack of racial diversity on the bench and in high-level court system positions and a perception

among some citizens that minorities are not fairly treated in the courts. Following the release of the 1991 report, the Commission was established as a permanent entity and renamed in honor of Franklin H. Williams.

Recommendations of the 1991 report and commission proposals put forth since then have generated employment, training and other initiatives that have had a positive impact in the advancement of minorities in the courts, also promoting ongoing dialogue among members of the court community and legal profession on issues of concern to people of color.

As a nation, we have undoubtedly overcome some racial barriers. However, while we celebrate how far we have come, we must not lose sight of how far we have yet to go.

Until we live in a society where all people are treated equally, the conversation about the impact that race, racism and ethnic-based discrimination have on our legal system—and in our everyday lives—must continue.

"By ensuring diversity in the courts, we reinforce the public's confidence in an impartial justice system. For it is only through knowledge and awareness that we can defend the principle of justice for all...."

— Honorable Rose H. Sconiers

About the Commission

The Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission was permanently established in June 1991 to educate and advise decision makers in the New York Court System on issues affecting both employees and litigants of color; and to implement recommendations developed to address those issues.

Created in 1988, the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission (then known as the New York State Judicial Commission on Minorities) conducted a comprehensive study on the participation and perception of people of color in the courts and legal profession. In 1991, the Commission released a detailed report of findings and recommendations and was established as a permanent entity in the courts. The Commission was charged with the responsibility for developing programs to improve the perception of fairness within the court system and to ensure equal justice in New York State. The members of the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission are judges, lawyers and court administrators all appointed by the Chief Judge of the State of New York.

About Franklin H. Williams

The Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission is named in honor of the distinguished attorney and civil rights leader, Franklin H. Williams. In 1988, Chief Judge Sol Wachtler appointed Mr. Williams chair of the New York State Judicial Commission on Minorities charging him with the responsibility for conducting extensive research on the perception and treatment of people of color in the court system. It was Mr. William's unwavering pursuit of justice and his efforts to address and correct the perception of injustice that resulted in the Commission becoming a permanent entity in the courts. His legacy continues as the Commission advances its initiatives to improve diversity and ensure equal justice and fairness in the courts.

"... As we look to the new century, creation of an atmosphere without even the appearance of racial bias must be the prime objective of our courts ... we should not open the wound unless we are prepared to heal it."

Franklin H. Williams
1917 – 1990



Mission Statement

The Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission seeks to promote equal access and full participation in the Court system by persons and communities of color in the judicial process and the legal profession by:

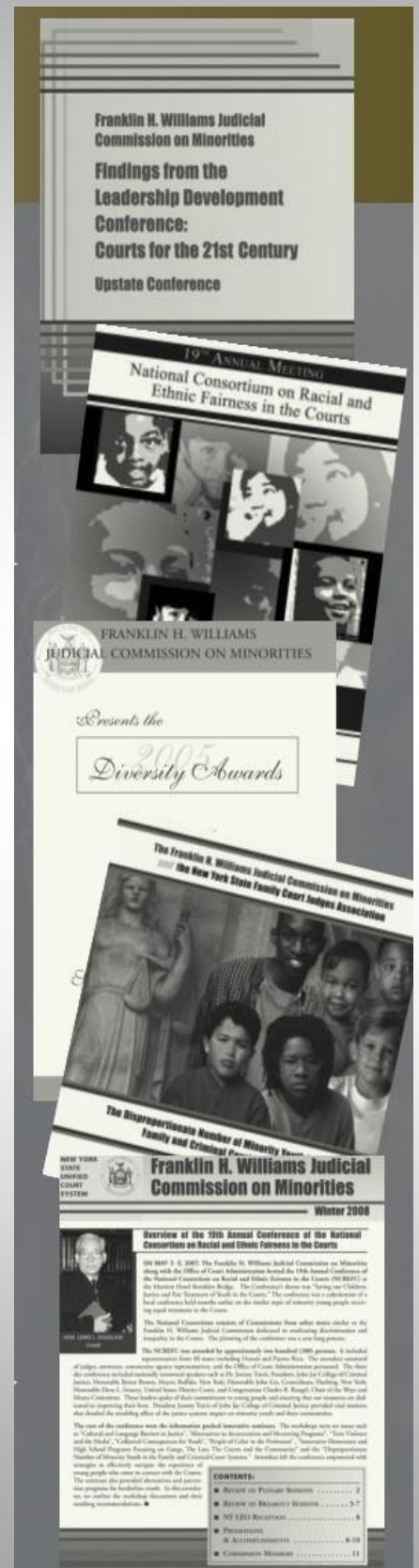
- Eradicating systemic racism in the court system by taking affirmative steps to address and eliminate barriers to racial and ethnic fairness in the courts;
- Increasing racial and ethnic group representation in all levels of the court system through examination and review of current practices and recommending measures to enhance racial and ethnic diversity in the selection, retention and promotion of judicial officers, court staff and professionals in the legal community;
- Advising Court administrators and stakeholders on issues of racial and ethnic fairness in the courts in order to formulate policy to address barriers to racial and ethnic diversity in the courts;
- Serving as a voice for concerns of employees (both judicial and nonjudicial personnel) with respect to terms and conditions of employment;
- Addressing issues that impact the community to ensure equal justice and treatment under the law;
- Providing educational programming to court employees, the bench and the bar to raise awareness of racial and ethnic bias in the State court system and partnering with other Court Commissions, Committees, bar associations and justice partners to provide such programming; and
- Conducting research, reviewing statistical data, and publishing periodic reports regarding racial and ethnic equity in the court system and in the legal profession.

OVERVIEW OF COMMISSION OPERATING PLAN

- Eradicate Systemic Racism in the Court System
- Increase Racial and Ethnic Group Representation in All Levels of the Court System
- Advise Court Administrators and Stakeholders on Issues of Racial and Ethnic Fairness
- Serve as a Voice for Concerns of Employees and the Public on Issues of Race and Bias
- Address Issues that Impact the Community to Ensure Equal Justice and Treatment Under the Law
- Provide Educational Programming for Court Employees and the Judiciary to Raise Awareness of Issues of Racial And Ethnic Bias
- Conduct Research, Review Statistical Data, and Publish Periodic Reports Regarding Racial and Ethnic Equity in the Court System and Legal Profession

PROMOTING DIVERSITY ON THE BENCH AND IN THE COURT WORKFORCE

- The Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission on Minorities is actively involved in a variety of initiatives aimed at promoting diversity on the bench and in the court workforce. These range from outreach events to raise awareness about job opportunities in the courts among people of color and educate minority attorneys about the steps involved in pursuing a judgeship to professional development conferences tailored to minority court employees at varying levels.
- Through these and other such efforts, participation by persons of color on the bench and in the court workforce has grown considerably over the past three decades. Though concrete progress has undoubtedly been made in this area since the Commission's inception, achieving the goal of a judicial system that is truly representative of the multiple communities it serves will require continued vigilance.



THE WORK CONTINUES

TODAY, THE COMMISSION CONTINUES ITS PURSUIT OF EQUAL JUSTICE:

- Serving as a conduit to persons of color within the court system, meeting annually with the Chief Judge and court administrators to discuss issues of concern to minority court employees and matters pertaining to racial and ethnic fairness in the courts
- Presenting diversity-related workshops to judges during their annual judicial seminars and developing sensitivity training programs for new judges and town and village justices
- Holding professional development and leadership workshops for personnel of color and providing judicial mentors for attorneys interested in judicial appointments
- Acting as a liaison to community groups, fraternal organizations within the court, minority bar associations and judicial appointing authorities, including the Governor and New York City Mayor
- Producing and distributing various publications, including a newsletter
- Conducting outreach to candidates of color regarding civil service job examinations and promotional opportunities
- Overseeing an awards program to honor individuals for their outstanding contributions to the advancement of racial and ethnic justice, cooperation and harmony in the New York state courts and greater community
- Hosting seminars for Judges and others exploring issues affecting litigants of color, defendants, juvenile offenders and youngsters in foster care
- Sponsoring seminars and conferences for Judges and court personnel
- Maintaining a mentoring program for law students of color

DOCUMENTARY - A BRIDGE TO JUSTICE: THE LIFE OF FRANKLIN H. WILLIAMS

A Bridge to Justice: The Life of Franklin H. Williams - A documentary on civil rights leader, lawyer and Peace Corps organizer.

Franklin Hall Williams was born on October 22, 1917, in Flushing, New York. He graduated from Lincoln University in Pennsylvania in 1941. After serving in the United States Army, he completed Fordham University Law School in New York City in 1945. He served as an assistant counsel to Thurgood Marshall, special counsel to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People ("N.A.A.C.P."). From 1950 to 1959, Mr. Williams was the Director of the West Coast Office of the N.A.A.C.P. and was credited with major inroads in the civil rights movement involving cases on school desegregation and restrictive covenants. Indeed, Mr. Williams played a significant role in battling a once common practice of systematically excluding African Americans from juries. Forty years before the Supreme Court formally ended that practice in *Batson v. Kentucky*, Mr. Williams was effectively arguing the same issue.



Mr. Williams was also instrumental in the development of the Peace Corps and eventually became the Peace Corps Regional Director for Africa. The Peace Corps currently honors his memory with the Franklin H. Williams Awards given thus far to over 90 outstanding returned Peace Corps Volunteers. Franklin H. Williams went on to serve as the United States Ambassador to Ghana. His contributions as Ambassador were recognized by the State Department, which presented him with Distinguished Service Award, and he was honored by numerous Ghanaian tribes and communities.

After returning from Ghana, Ambassador Williams assumed the Directorship of the new Urban Center at Columbia University in 1968. The following two years were marked by innovative changes in personnel utilization and curriculum, and the publication of a major study, "The Uses of the University." From 1970 to 1990, he served as president of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, promoting educational opportunities for Africans, African Americans, and Native Americans. Ambassador Williams served on the boards of Consolidated Edison, the American Stock Exchange, and many other corporations. He was also a board member of several nonprofit groups, among them the Boys Choir of Harlem, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the Foreign Policy Association.

Williams chaired the New York State Judicial Commission on Minorities from 1987 to 1990. The Commission studied the treatment of minority group members in state courts and issued a report in 1991 which revealed a severe lack of diversity on the bench and in management positions and a widespread perception of racial bias in the courts. To address the issues raised in the report, the Commission was established as permanent entity in the courts and renamed the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission in honor of Ambassador Williams. Williams, a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., was married to Shirley Broyard and had two sons. Williams died in 1990 at the age of 72.

A Bridge to Justice: The Life of Franklin H. Williams – Video Link: <https://youtu.be/lcipe61lb6c>

Panel Discussion on the Documentary – Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ba5w2MMJTLU>

Links to Videos and Articles on Diversity and Inclusion

Videos

- The Race: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4K5fbQ1-zps>
- The Look: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=aJav36Nbn58>
- Why Diversity Matters – US Supreme Court: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gjg61hfHKQE>
- Gayle King interviews Professors Ibram X. Kendi and Robin DiAngelo <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=POnUfzVP5uI>
- Young Children Can Have Implicit Bias: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hyAxQJgowL0>

Implicit Bias Training Video

- New York State Court System's Implicit Bias Training (you already may have seen this) [Implicit Bias training](#)

Implicit Bias Training Test

- Implicit Bias Test: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatestv2.html>

Articles on Microaggressions

- <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/a33404079/what-are-microaggressions/>
- https://apple.news/A_g6iz7N_SYac1XwahxQuHQ

Additional Resources

Books

1. The New Jim Crow - Michelle Alexander
2. White Fragility - Robin DiAngelo
3. Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents - Isabel Wilkerson

Documentaries/Movies/Series

1. 13th - Netflix
2. United Shades of America - CNN Series
3. Bias - Amazon Prime Video
4. Just Mercy - HBO
5. The Central Park Five - Netflix
6. True Justice: Bryan Stevenson's Fight for Equality - HBO

Podcasts

1. 1619 Project - Nikole Hannah Jones, NY Times Staff Writer, 2020
Pulitzer Prize Award
2. Into America - Trymaine Lee, MSNBC Contributing Journalist, 2006
Pulitzer Prize Award



CO-CHAIRS

Hon. Shirley Troutman

Hon. Troy K. Webber

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mary Lynn Nicolas-Brewster, Esq.

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Karlene A. Dennis, Esq.

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Hon. Llinét M. Rosado

Sandra Rivera, Esq.

Hon. Robert E. Torres

Adrienne Williams, Esq.

Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission

Mentor Request Form

DATE: _____

NAME: _____

EMAIL: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

CURRENT
POSITION: _____

CURRENT
COMPANY/AGENCY/ORGANIZATION _____

Are you seeking judicial office through:

_____ appointment _____ election _____ both

If you are seeking judicial office where an application is required, have you completed that judicial application? ☐ Yes ☐ No

For which judicial position(s) are you applying (Family, Criminal, Civil, Court of Claims, County Court, District Court, Housing Court):

Which Judicial District are you interested in serving: _____

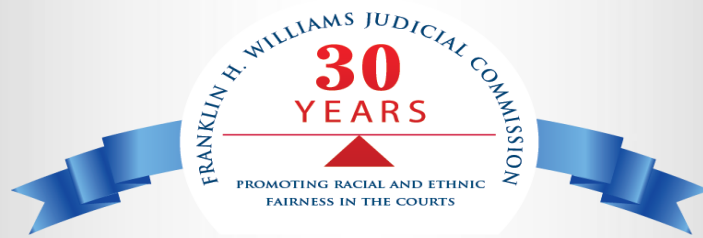
What year were you admitted to the Bar? _____ *

Have you previously received a judicial mentor through the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please email your completed application to the Commission's Executive Director, Mary Lynn Nicolas-Brewster at FHWilliams@nycourts.gov

**Individuals interested in a judicial mentor with the FHW Commission should be admitted to the bar for a minimum of five years.*





FRANKLIN H. WILLIAMS JUDICIAL COMMISSION

CHAIRS

Hon. Shirley Troutman

Associate Justice

Appellate Division, Fourth Department

Hon. Troy K. Webber

Associate Justice

Appellate Division, First Department

CHAIRS EMERITI

Hon. Richard B. Lowe III—September 2015-December 2017

Supreme Court Justice (retired)

Hon. Rose H. Sconiers—May 2009-August 2015

Associate Justice (retired)

Appellate Division, Fourth Department

Hon. Lewis L. Douglass—1992-April 2009

Supreme Court Justice (retired)

FRANKLIN H. WILLIAMS JUDICIAL COMMISSION MEMBERS

Hon. Shahabuddeen (Shah) A. Ally
Supervising Judge, New York County Civil Court

Hon. Vanessa Bogan
Judge, City Court, Syracuse, NY

Dr. Betty L. Campbell
Commissioner of Jurors, Westchester, NY

Hon. George B. Daniels
*United States District Court Judge
Southern District of New York*

Hon. Kathie E. Davidson
Administrative Judge, Ninth Judicial District

L. Austin D'Souza, Esq.
*Principal Law Clerk to Hon. Faviola A. Soto
Court of Claims*

Hon. Lenora B. Foote-Beavers
Judge, City Court, Buffalo, NY

Thomas J. Garry, Esq.
Harris Beach, PLLC, Uniondale, NY

Hon. Craig D. Hannah
Chief Judge, City Court, Buffalo, NY

Nadine C. Johnson, Esq.
*Principal Court Attorney to Administrative Judge
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Supreme Court, Staten Island, NY*

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*Law Professor
Syracuse University College of Law*

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*District Executive
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Appellate Term, First Department (ret.)*

Hon. Michael Carlos López
*Judge, Rochester City Court
Criminal Branch*

Major Clemont Mack
Criminal Command Operations, Bronx, NY

Hon. Mark A. Montour
Judge, Supreme Court, Erie County

Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones
*Acting Supreme Court Justice
Supreme Court, Kings County*

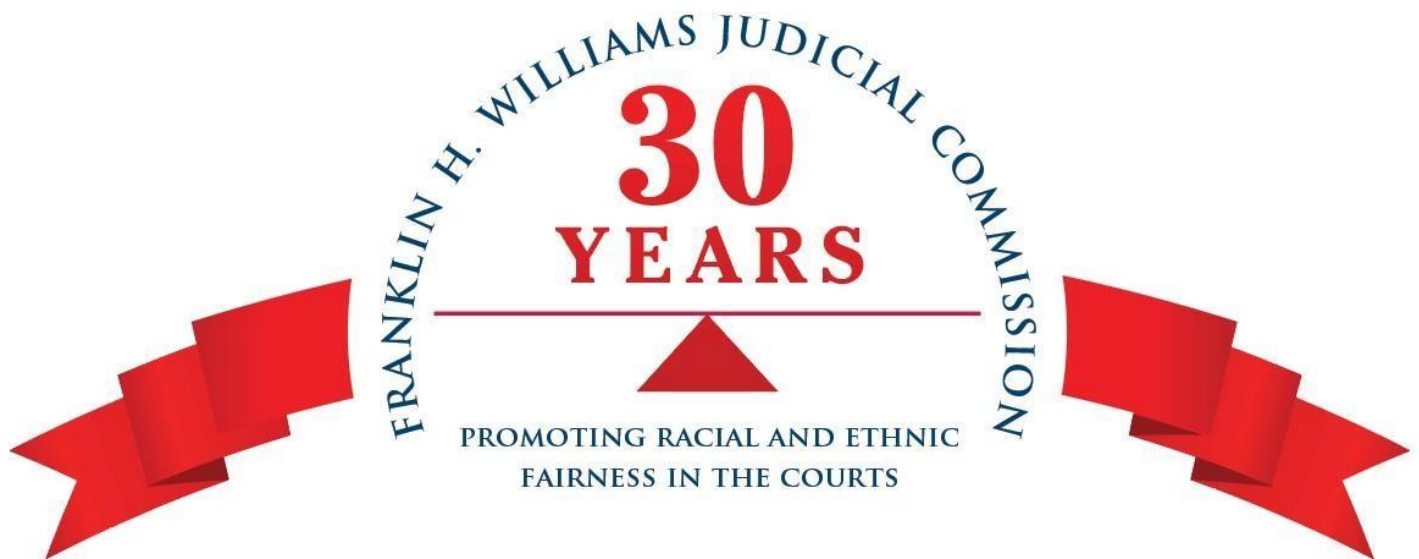
Hon. Richard Rivera
Judge, Family Court, Albany County

Sandra Rivera, Esq.
Rivera Law, PLLC, Albany, New York

Hon. Llinét M. Rosado
*Judge
Supreme Court, Civil Term, Bronx County*

Hon. Robert E. Torres
*Associate Justice
Appellate Term, First Department (ret.)*

Adrienne Williams, Esq.
*Court Attorney-Referee
Supreme Court, Suffolk County*



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Website:

<http://ww2.nycourts.gov/ip/ethnic-fairness/index.shtml>