New York State Conference of Bar Leaders
Executive Council 2012 – 2013

Abayomi Ajaiyeoba, Esq. | aajaiyeoba@aol.com
Second Department

"Yomi" is a Deputy Managing Attorney and Administrative Law Judge with the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings/New York City Environmental Control Board (OATH/ECB) where she works under the direction of the Managing Attorney to direct the legal operation of the administrative tribunal, including, but not limited to, managing staff productivity and acting as a legal advisor to administrative personnel. In addition she serves as the agency's EEO Counselor.

Ms. Ajaiyeoba is an experienced litigator, certified mediator, arbitrator, and adjunct professor at Touro College. Ms. Ajaiyeoba graduated from Rutgers School of Law-Newark in May 2004, where she was an associate editor of the *Race and the Law Review*, member of the Moot Court Board, clinician with the Community Development Clinic and provided pro bono services to the Domestic Violence Project. She received her B.A. from Connecticut College, graduating *cum laude* with distinction in Psychology and a Helen Lehman Buttenweiser scholar.

She started her legal career at the New York City Law Department, where she served as an Assistant Corporation Counsel in the Administrative Law Division and is admitted to the New York State Bar, Southern and Eastern Districts of New York.

She serves as the President of the Nigerian Lawyers Association ("NLA") and is a Board member of the Association of Black Women Attorneys ("ABWA").

Ms. Ajaiyeoba is committed to empowering and servicing the community through her involvement in various organizations: she has chaired NLA's Legal Clinic Committee, chaired ABWA's Community Service Committee, served as a mentor for the Practicing Attorneys for Law Students Mentoring Program, a volunteer mediator with the Institute for Mediation and Conflict Resolution, Inc., and Safe Horizon; provided pro bono services to Changer, Inc., BBA's Volunteer Lawyers Project, and InMotion, Inc. In addition, she serves on BBA's Part 137 Fee Dispute Committee and serves as a volunteer arbitrator in Small Claims Court.

Ms. Ajaiyeoba has a featured essay in the publication, Conquering the Bar Exam, Insight for First-Generation and Minority Law Students and Graduates.

Earamichia N. Brown, Esq. | enb.esq@verizon.net
Immediate Past Chair

Earamichia works for the New York State Office of the State Inspector General, having previously served as Director of Intake and Intelligence at the Office of the Inspector General for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. She spent over ten years as an Assistant District Attorney in the Bronx District Attorney's Office, as supervisor in the Investigations Division's Arson, Auto, and Economic Crime Unit. She is most noted for her use of two-way teleconferencing with an adult witness.

Additionally, Ms. Brown has worked with not-for-profit organizations, where she drafted performance and event contracts and managed their legal affairs.

She currently serves as Co-Chair for the New York State Bar Association's Committee on Women in the Law's Best Practices Subcommittee, serves on the New York State Bar Association's Membership Committee, the Special Committee on Rules, the House of Delegates and the New York Bar Foundation.

Linda J. Clark, Esq. | lclark@hblaw.com
Third Department Representative

Linda Clark is a partner with the law firm of Hiscock & Barclay LLP in their Albany, New York office. Ms. Clark concentrates her practice in the areas of

state and federal, commercial, mass tort, health care and class-action / group-claim litigation.

Ms. Clark is very active in the community, having served as a long-time board member and past President of the Capital District Women's Bar Association. She is a town attorney and serves as a member of the Albany County Democratic Committee.

She is a member of the Executive Committee of the New York State Bar Association's Commercial and Federal Litigation Section, and has served as a speaker at the highly respected Women on the Move program.

Ms. Clark received her law degree from Albany Law School (cum laude) and is a magna cum laude graduate of Siena College.

Cheryl Smith Fisher, Esq. | cfisher@magavern.com
Fourth Department Representative

Cheryl Smith Fisher has been a member of the firm of Magavern, Magavern & Grimm since 1986, practicing in the areas of employment law, commercial litigation, bankruptcy, and professional ethics. She was admitted to the Bar in 1977 after graduating cum laude from the University Of Buffalo School Of Law where she taught research and writing and completed a student federal judicial clerkship with the Hon. John T. Curtin.

Ms. Fisher was president of the Bar Association of Erie County from 2007–2008. She served as a director from 1996–1999. She is a member of the Federal Practice and Ethics Committees and is a past chair of the Ethics Committee.

Ms. Fisher is chairman of the Committee on Character and Fitness, Eighth Judicial District, and a member of the New York State Bar Association Committee on Professional Ethics. She served in the House of Delegates from 2007–2010.

Ms. Fisher has been a presenter at many CLE programs in the areas of Ethics, Commercial and Employment Law.

Frank Furno, Esq. | frankly@adelphia.net
Fourth Department Representative

Frank has been active in Oneida County Bar Association (OCBA) activities for some time. He has received both the "Lawyer Under Ten Year Community Service Award" and the "Lawyer Over Ten Year Community Service Award." He was five times the Chairman of the Annual Law Day Program, served on the OCBA Centennial Committee in 2006, sat on the Mock Trial Bench on numerous occasions for the annual NYSBA High School Mock Trial program, and worked his way up the association's officer ladder to serve as OCBA President in 2010.

For fun, since 2004, Frank is the Department Head of the Oneida County Public Defender – Civil Division, which provides legal representation to the indigent pursuant to Family Court Act Section 262. Frank also is a founding team member of the Oneida County Family Treatment Court, a specialty court that seeks to help the caretakers of abused and neglected children who have an underlying alcohol and/or substance abuse problem that negatively impacts how they parent their children.

Sophia J. Gianacoplos | sgianacoplos@nycla.org
Executive Director Representative

Sophia Gianacoplos is the Executive Director of the New York County Lawyers' Association. As such, her responsibilities include managing the overall operations and resources of the Association including strategic planning, membership recruitment and retention, committee and section activities, continuing legal education, library, pro bono, special events, human resources as well as the restoration and maintenance of NYCLA's landmark building.

Ms. Gianacoplos is Chair of the Conference's Standing Committee of Executive Directors and serves as a liaison between the committee and the Conference.

Prior to a management career she taught for the New York City Department of Education in specialized schools for at-risk students and in schools with accelerated learning programs for gifted and talented students.

In 2010, Ms. Gianacoplos was appointed by Chief Judge Jonathan Lippmann to serve as a member of the New York State Judicial Institute on Professionalism in the Law. She is a member of the National Association of Bar Executives and in the past served as President-Elect and Vice-President of the Association of Legal Administrators, New York City Chapter as well as Chair of its Corporate Section and Co-Chair of its Managing Partner Luncheon Program Committee.

Taa Grays, Esq. | tgrays@metlife.com
Network of Bar Leaders Representative

Taa Grays sits on the Executive Council as the President of the Network of Bar Leaders. The Network is a coalition of 46 bar associations dedicated to bringing together the leadership of the diverse bar associations of the greater New York Metropolitan area. It provides a forum for the exchange of information and ideas and serves as a vehicle for joint action on issues of mutual concern and pending legislation.

Taa has worked extensively with various bar associations, including the Association of Black Women (President), Black Bar Association of Bronx County (Vice President), National Bar Association (Member-at-Large on Board), Committee on Women in the Law of the State Bar (Chair), and the New York State Conference of Bar Leaders (Chair).

Taa is an attorney with MetLife serving as the Chief of Staff to the General Counsel in its Legal Affairs Department. She has worked at MetLife since 2003. Prior to joining MetLife, she was an Assistant District Attorney with the Bronx District Attorney's Office for five and half years.

Diane Herrmann, Esq. | dianeherrmannesq@yahoo.com
Vice Chair

Diane Herrmann is a private-practice attorney in Family Law, focusing on children's legal rights. She received her JD from the University at Buffalo School of Law, and a BA from Temple University.

Diane served as Executive Director of the Schenectady County Bar Association. She is a member of the New York State Bar Association's House of Delegates, representing the Schenectady County Bar Association.

She is also a member of the Schenectady City School Board and Chair of the Board of Commissioners, Schenectady Municipal Housing Authority.

M. Barry Levy, Esq. | mbarrylevy@spcblaw.com
Member-at-Large

M. Barry Levy, a former U.S. Customs Inspector, is the President of Sharretts, Paley, Carter & Blauvelt, P.C., which practices customs and international trade law exclusively. He has served on the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of the New York County Lawyers Association, and chaired five of its committees.

He was President of the Association of the Customs Bar (1980–1981), President of the Customs and International Trade Bar Association (1981–1982), President of the Empire State Chapter of the Federal Bar Association (1999–2006), and President of the Network of Bar Leaders (2008–2010).

He currently chairs the Quality of Life Committee of the Senior Lawyers Section of New York State Bar Association and was recently reappointed to a second term of the Executive Council of NYSBA's Conference of Bar Leaders.

Deborah L. Martin, Esq. | deborahmartinesq@gmail.com
First Department

Deborah is a member of the Executive Council representing the First Department. She is currently the Deputy Director of the National Bar Association, Region II which serves as liaison to African-American bar associations in Connecticut, New York and Vermont. Deborah is a founding member and Secretary for Friends of the Metropolitan Black Bar Association, Inc., a not-for-profit which provides scholarship to diverse law students attending law school in New York State. She was recently appointed by New York State Bar Association President Seymour W. James., Jr. as a member of its House of Delegates. Deborah is a former Board of Director of the Metropolitan Black Bar Association and was its Chief of Staff from 2010-2012.

Deborah is a Staff Attorney for Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan, LLP in their New York Office. She is a graduate of Hofstra University School of Law. Prior to attending law school, Deborah was a paralegal for the Legal Aid Society, ABC, Inc. and the United States District Court of the Eastern District of New York.

Donald K. Sandford, Esq. | dks.esq1@me.com
Second Department

Donald K. Sandford represents the 2nd Department on the New York State Conference of Bar Leaders Executive Council.

Mr. Sandford began his professional career as an on-air reporter in radio and cable television. He moved from there to government, serving as speech writer and traveling assistant to then-Westchester County Executive Andrew O'Rourke and Chief of Staff to the Westchester County Board of Legislators. During that time, he obtained his J.D. and Certificate in Environmental Law from Pace Law School in White Plains.

Shortly after graduation, Mr. Sandford was elected as President of the Alumni Association at Pace Law School where he served two terms. He was subsequently elected as Secretary, Vice President and then President of the Westchester County Bar Association, the youngest President in the Bar's 100-plus year history. He has also served as a member of the New York State Bar Association House of Delegates.

Professionally, Mr. Sandford spent the bulk of his practice with Wilson, Elser, Moskowitz, Edelman & Dicker and has also represented the NYPD in Federal Civil Rights litigation. He currently manages his own general litigation practice in Rye, New York where he lives with his son.

David M. Schraver, Esq. | dschraver@nixonpeabody.com
President-Elect, NYSBA

David Schraver's practice includes a broad range of complex civil and commercial litigation in state and federal courts, with a special emphasis on Indian law, energy/utilities litigation, contract litigation, and fiduciary and professional liability. He is a founding member of the firm's Indian Law & Gaming team, which has been recognized as a nationally ranked practice by *Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business*.

Mr. Schraver has served as a member of the firm's Governing Committee, Partner Evaluation Committee, Professional Responsibility Committee, and Operations Committee, and as chair of the Personnel Committee. He has been actively involved in the firm's continuing legal education program and has served as an instructor in interviewing, counseling, and negotiating skills. He is also an author and speaks regularly on Indian law and on matters of legal ethics and professionalism. Before joining the firm, he was on active duty in the United States Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps.

Leadership posts include Chair of the Finance Committee, and member of the House of Delegates, Committee on Standards for Attorney Conduct and Commercial and Federal Litigation Section of the New York State Bar Association. He also served as chair of the New York State Conference of Bar Leaders (1999 – 2000). He is a member of the American Bar Association's House of Delegates (2003-2009, 2012 -) and the Litigation Section, is Past President of The Metropolitan Bar Caucus of the National Conference of Bar Presidents (2002-2003), and Past President of the Monroe County Bar Association (1997-1998). He has also served on the boards of a number of community organizations.

Karla D. Wilsey, Esq. | kwilsey@abramslaw.com
Chair

Karla Wilsey is a partner at Abrams, Fensterman, Fensterman, Eisman, Greenberg, Formato & Einiger, LLP.

Ms. Wilsey has over 20 years of experience as in-house general counsel and a senior executive for closely held businesses and was corporate counsel and a senior executive for a Fortune 300 company. Prior to joining the firm, Ms. Wilsey was Of Counsel with Boylan, Brown, Code, Vigdor & Wilson, LLP, where she executed general counsel legal services including business, corporate and employment matters, real estate and leasing transactions, and estate planning and administration. She also served as Senior Vice President and Corporate Counsel to First American Title Insurance Company of New York.

She has served on the Executive Council of the Conference starting as the 7th Judicial District Representative since 2006.

Ms. Wilsey is a member of the New York State and Monroe County Bar Associations, and is also a member of the Association of Corporate Counsel and the Greater Rochester Association of Women Attorneys. She is also an active volunteer in the community, devoting her time to the Mental Health Association of Rochester and acts as Co-Chair of its Resource Development Committee, the Volunteer Legal Services Project, and is a board member of the Monroe County Industrial Development Corporation

Ms. Wilsey served as the Treasurer of the Monroe County Bar Association and Chair of its Strategic Planning Committee. She was chair of the Monroe County Bar Association's House Finance and Audit Committee and a member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. She has previously served as Secretary (2006–2008), chair of the Strategic Planning Committee (2006–2010), chair of the Real Estate Council (2000–2001) and a member of the Board of Trustees (2004–2006).

Ms. Wilsey was recognized for her leadership in Strategic Planning Initiatives and was the recipient of the President's Award in 2007 by the Monroe County Bar Association.

Ms. Wilsey received her J.D. from University of Buffalo, SUNY and her B.A. from William Smith College.