



Nina Aasen, Esq.

Cuddy Law Firm, P.L.L.C.
5693 South State Street Road
Auburn, NY 13021
(315) 370-2406
naasen@cuddylawfirm.com



Nina C. Aasen is an attorney in the Auburn office. She is a graduate of SUNY Oswego (B.S., Education), Elmira College (M.S., Education) and Syracuse University College of Law (J.D.). Prior to joining the Firm, she was employed as a teacher for fourteen years and served as director of the Team Child Project at the Center for Children's Advocacy in Hartford, Connecticut, advocating for the educational needs of inner-city children in the juvenile justice system. As an attorney in private practice, Nina represented children in New York State Family Court and in Appellate Division appeals. She has supervised law students in the child advocacy clinic at Cornell Law School. Nina resides in Ithaca and is the mother of three and the grandmother of two.



Lisa Allen, Esq.

The Law Offices of Lisa J. Allen, PLLC
2805 Wehrle Drive, Suite 3
Buffalo, NY 14221
(716) 580-3113
lisajallenatty@msn.com



Lisa J. Allen concentrates her legal practice in trusts and estate planning, disability advocacy, elder law, Medicaid eligibility, guardianships, supplemental needs trusts, and probate estates and administration.

Admitted to practice in all New York State courts, Lisa is also an adjunct professor at the University at Buffalo School of Law, a frequent community lecturer on elder law and issues effecting individuals with disabilities, and a certified instructor of continuing education for financial professionals, accountants, and attorneys.

Lisa is also a member of the Trusts and Estates Section and Elder Law Section of the New York State Bar Association, the Special Needs Section of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, and the Surrogate's Court Practice and Procedure Committee, Elder Law Committee, and Disability Law Committee of the Erie County Bar Association.

A recognized leader in the area of elder law and trusts and estates, Lisa was formerly the Eighth Judicial District's representative on the Trusts and Estates Section of the New York State Bar Association, and a member of the Estate Analysts of Western New York, Financial Planning Counselors of Western New York, and the Network in Aging of Western New York.

Lisa received her law degree from the University at Buffalo School of Law, receiving the prestigious Outstanding Law Student Award from the Bureau of National Affairs at graduation and a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honors for outstanding academic performance from Harpur College at Binghamton University, where she received the Albert V. House Memorial Prize for outstanding academic achievement as a history major. While in law school, Lisa was awarded a Baldy Fellowship for the study of law and social policy.

Her community service has included serving on the Boards of Directors for the People Inc. Foundation, the University at Buffalo Law Alumni Association, and the Professional Advisory Committee of the Buffalo Community Foundation. She has been named a Business First™ Woman of Influence, a New York Super Lawyer by the Thomson Reuters™ news organization, and a Best Lawyer of Western New York by Buffalo Spree™ magazine.



Joyce Berkowitz, Esq.
Office of Joyce B. Berkowitz
315 Packetts Landing
Fairport, NY 14450
(585) 421-9094
berkolaw48@yahoo.com

I have a master's degree in special education from the University of Maryland, College Park. I received my law degree in 1994 from the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, Cleveland State University, in Cleveland, Ohio and have been an attorney ever since. I concentrate my practice on special education law – helping parents obtain appropriate programs and placements for children who have disabilities. Additionally, I represent parents on behalf of their children in other educational contexts such as disciplinary and residency matters.

I am admitted to practice in all New York State courts, United States District Courts for the Western District of New York, the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, and the United States Supreme Court.

I am married and have two grown children, a daughter-in-law, and four grandsons. All of us have our challenges, and all of us help one another rise to meet and overcome them.



Sarah Frederick, Esq.
Frederick Law Offices PLLC
4467 South Buffalo Street
Orchard Park, NY 14202
(716) 662-2962
sarah@frederickdisability.com



Ms. Frederick has been advocating for individuals with disabilities and their families for over 15 years. She founded Frederick Law Offices in 2015, focusing her practice on public disability benefits, special education advocacy, and guardianships and trusts for individuals with disabilities. Ms. Frederick frequently collaborates and presents to community groups, parents, and other professionals regarding disability law issues. She has offices located in Orchard Park and Buffalo, NY.

Ms. Frederick has served Lawyers for Learning as a volunteer tutor at Buffalo Public School 18 since 2004, and was president of their board of directors from 2012-2015. She is currently vice president of the board of Women Lawyers of Western New York, the oldest women's organization in Western New York. Ms. Frederick also serves as a volunteer panelist on the Surrogate Decision Making Committee for the New York State Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs, and as a volunteer member of the corporate guardianship committee for the Arc Erie County. She is an active member of the Erie County Bar Association Committee for the Disabled, and the WNY Chapter of the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York (WBASNY).

Ms. Frederick is a 2002 graduate of University at Buffalo Law School where she completed the Community and Economic Development Clinic. She obtained her B.A. in Political Science from American University in Washington, DC. Ms. Frederick is admitted to practice in New York State, and Federal District Courts for the Western District of New York and the Western District of Pennsylvania.



Andrew Freedman, Esq.
Hodgson Russ LLP
140 Pearl Street, Suite 100
Buffalo, NY 14202
(716) 848-1332
afreedman@hodgsonruss.com



Andrew focuses his practice on education law and has extensive experience counseling school districts and boards of education on the full range of complex legal challenges they face. His experience includes representing school districts in proceedings and appeals before the Commissioner of Education, advising school boards on their powers and duties under New York State Education Law, representing schools in all phases of special education litigation and student discipline matters, and advising on the development and implementation of school district policies.

Andrew teaches education law courses as an adjunct professor at University at Buffalo School of Law and Buffalo State College Education Administration Program.



Judith Gerber, Esq.

The Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc.
290 Main Street, Suite 400
Buffalo, NY 14202
(716) 853-9555
jgerber@legalaidbuffalo.org

Judith Gerber is a long-time advocate in Western New York for children and families both in the education and child welfare arena. She currently serves as an attorney at the Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, leading its Education Advocacy and Policy Reform Initiative. Through direct legal advocacy and collaborative community-based initiatives, Ms. Gerber represents the educational interests of court-involved, at-risk or homeless children in both the general and special education arenas. Ms. Gerber is a member of the New York State Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children and formerly served as a consultant to the Commission, spearheading its statewide initiative to address the educational needs of children in foster care. Ms. Gerber has also served on the faculty at the University of Buffalo Law School, where she taught the Special Education Law Clinic, and at Buffalo State College, where she taught special education law in the school leader certification program. Ms. Gerber appears frequently as a lecturer and trainer. She is a graduate of Princeton University and the University of Buffalo Law School.



Donna Roberts
Parent Advocate
(716) 270-9299
donnaroberts1211@gmail.com



Professor Melinda Saran

University at Buffalo School of Law
614 O'Brian Hall, North Campus
Buffalo, NY 14260-1100
(716) 645-6603
saran@buffalo.edu



A 1986 graduate of the University of Rochester, Melinda Saran received a B.A. in psychology, cum laude, and a master's of public health. She received her J.D. from the University at Buffalo School of Law. At UB, Saran teaches Legal Profession and Ethics, Special Education Law and a colloquium for J.D./MSW dual-degree students.

Before becoming vice dean, Saran was supervising attorney for the Special Education Law Clinic. During this time she also served as associate director and acting director of clinical education at the School of Law. A frequent lecturer on education and disability law issues, Saran trains educators, attorneys, individuals with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, and other professionals. She has written chapters in *Benefits Management for Working People With Disabilities: An Advocate's Manual* (Greater Upstate Law Project) and co-wrote a chapter on "Discipline of Students With Disabilities" in *Representing People With Disabilities*, now in its third edition (New York State Bar Association).

She has received numerous awards for her work, including the Hannah Cohn Pro Bono Award from the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York in 2007. In December 2008, she was named Lawyer of the Year by the Women Lawyers of Western New York.



Jeffrey Weiss, Esq.
Harris Beach, PLLC
726 Exchange Street, Suite 1000
Buffalo, NY 14210
(716) 200-5141
jweiss@harrisbeach.com



Jeff focuses primarily on representing public school districts in special education matters, including impartial due process hearings, appeals to the Office of State Review, and federal and state court actions. He also counsels school districts on their duties and responsibilities under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504). Jeff is frequently invited to present at school districts and BOCES centers throughout western and southern New York on topics in special education law, including the IDEA, Section 504 and the development of appropriate individualized education plans. Jeff has lectured at the University at Buffalo, Niagara University and D'Youville College, and at programs presented by the New York State School Boards Association, Western New York Education Services Council, New York State Bar Association and Erie County Association of School Boards. Following law school, Jeff served for three years as an assistant corporation counsel in the New York City Law Department, General Litigation Division, where he represented the City of New York and municipal agencies, including the New York City Board of Education.