

Speaker Bios



Hon. Cheryl Gonzales

Judge Gonzales is Supervising Judge, Housing Court, Civil Court of the City of New York, New York County. She was appointed by Chief Administrative Judge Jonathan Lippman, 2005 to 2010; Re-appointed by Chief Administrative Judge Ann Pfau, 2010 to 2015; Re-appointed by Chief Administrative Judge A. Gail Prudenti, 2015 to 2020. Judge Gonzales is admitted to the New York State Bar, Second Department and received her J.D. degree from the City University of New York, Queens College.

Hon. Jean T. Schneider

Hon. Jean T. Schneider is Supervising Judge, Housing Court, Civil Court of the City of New York, Kings County, Appointed by Chief Administrative Judge A. Gail Prudenti, 2012 to Present. She was Supervising Judge, Housing Court, Civil Court of the City of New York, New York County, Appointed by Chief Administrative Judge Ann Pfau, 2009 to 2011 and a Judge, Housing Court, Civil Court of the City of New York, New York County, Appointed by Chief Administrative Judge Jonathan Lippman, 1997 to 2007; Re-appointed, 2008 to 2012; Re-appointed by Chief Administrative Judge A. Gail Prudenti, 2012 to 2017. Her other experience includes The Legal Aid Society, Association of Legal Aid Attorneys and Bedford-Stuyvesant Community Legal Services Corp. She received a BA from Swarthmore College and a J.D. from Yale School of Law.

Hon. John S. Lansden

Hon. John S. Lansden is Supervising Judge, Housing Court, Civil Court of the City of New York, Queens County, Appointed by Chief Administrative Judge A. Gail Prudenti, 2013 to Present. He was Supervising Judge, Housing Court, Civil Court of the City of New York, Kings County, 2007 to 2013 and a Judge, Housing Court, Civil Court of the City of New York, New York County, Appointed 2003 to 2008, Re-appointed, 2008 to 2013. His prior experience included serving as a Court Attorney for Housing Court Judge Timmie Elsner, NY County; an Associate at Penn, Proefriedt, Schwarzfeld & Schwartz, Horing, Welikson & Rosen P.C., and Rosenberg & Estis P.C. He attended Connecticut College and received a J.D. from St. John's University School of Law. He is a member, Housing Court Public Services Committee of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York.

Hon. Jaya K. Madhavan

Hon. Jaya K. Madhavan is Supervising Judge, Bronx County Housing Court, Appointed by Chief Administrative Judge Jonathan Lippman, 2007 to Present. She was a Judge, Housing Court, Civil Court of the City of New York, Bronx County, Appointed by Chief Administrative Judge Jonathan Lippman, 2004 to 2009; Re-appointed by Chief Administrative Judge Ann Pfau, 2009 to 2014; Re-appointed by Chief Administrative Judge A. Gail Prudenti, 2014 to 2019. Previously she was a Staff Attorney at The Legal Aid Society, Community Law Offices and an Associate at Himmelstein, McConnell, Gribben & Donahue. She attended Fordham University and received a JD from Pace University, School of Law.

Andrew Scherer

Andrew Scherer is the Policy Director of the Impact Center for Public Interest Law at New York Law School and a Distinguished Adjunct Professor at the law school, where he teaches Land Use Regulation. He also directs the Impact Center's Right to Counsel Project. Professor Scherer is the author of the treatise, Residential Landlord-Tenant Law in New York (Thomson Reuters), originally published in 1994 and updated annually, and of numerous law review articles and other published works. For many years, Professor Scherer has played a prominent role in access to justice, housing policy and other public interest issues, locally, nationally and internationally. Professor Scherer has been an advocate for the right to counsel in civil matters, particularly eviction proceedings, for over thirty years. He has written law review articles on the topic for the Harvard Civil Liberties Civil Rights Law Review, NYU Review of Law and Social Change and Cardozo Public Law, Policy and Ethics Journal, among others. He was lead counsel in *Donaldson v. State of New York*, a class action that sought to establish a right to counsel for low-income tenants facing eviction. Under Professor Scherer's direction, the Impact Center's Right to Counsel Project currently focuses on working with the NYC Coalition for a Right to Counsel in Housing Court and others advocating for NYC legislation establishing a right to counsel in housing cases. In 2010, Professor Scherer stepped down after nine years as Executive Director of Legal Services NYC, the largest nonprofit exclusively devoted to civil legal services in the United States, where he had worked in a variety of capacities since 1978. Among his many affiliations, Professor Scherer is an active member of the New York City Bar Association and a former chair of its Executive Committee, an active member of the New York State Bar Association and the current chair of the Civil Gideon subcommittee of the President's Committee on Access to Justice, a founding member of the National Coalition for a Civil Right to Counsel, and a former co-chair of the NYS Legal Services Project Director Association. Professor Scherer is also a consultant to nonprofit, governmental and private clients around matters of access to justice and the rule of law; delivery of legal aid services; housing, property and land rights; social, economic and civil rights; and poverty law. Professor Scherer is also an Adjunct Professor at the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation and has taught at CUNY Law School, NYU Law School (in the Root-Tilden public interest scholars program), Yangon University in Myanmar, and Bennington College. He has lectured widely in the U.S. and in Latin America, Africa and Asia. He received his B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania and his J.D. from NYU Law School. He is fluent in Spanish.

Mark Levine

Mark Levine began his professional career as a bilingual math and science teacher at JHS149 in the South Bronx. He later served as Executive Director of Teach For America-New York, where he oversaw placement and training of hundreds of high-performing teachers in schools throughout Upper Manhattan and the Bronx. He continued his education leadership as Executive Director of the Center for After-School Excellence, a non-profit initiative supporting after-school programs throughout the five boroughs. While Mark was a teacher, he saw how the families of his students lacked access to basic financial services, including bank accounts. He decided to address this need by founding Upper Manhattan's first and only community development credit union, Neighborhood Trust. The credit union has helped thousands of local low-income residents obtain loans to start businesses, pay for education, and even become owners of their own homes and continues to be a pillar of the Washington Heights community. In 2007, Mark was first elected to serve as Democratic District Leader in Northern Manhattan. In the 2008 presidential election he was honored to run on Barack Obama's slate of delegate candidates and in early 2009 he founded one of New York City's newest political clubs, the Barack Obama Democratic Club of Upper Manhattan, which has quickly become a force for empowering community residents to make their voice heard in local politics. Mark also served as chair of the Traffic and Transportation Committee of Community Board 12, where he led calls for improved subway and bus service, and championed the cause of making streets safer for bicyclists. As a City Council Member, Mark will continue to advocate for New York to be a place that works for everyone—where people of all incomes have an affordable place to live, a good school to send their kids to, and a job that pays a living wage. Mark is a longtime resident of Washington Heights with his wife Ivelisse and their two sons, who attend local public schools. He is an active member of the Hebrew Tabernacle synagogue. Mark earned a B.A. in Physics from Haverford College, and a Masters in Public Policy from Harvard University. He is fluent in Spanish.



Keith L.T. Wright

Keith L.T. Wright was elected to represent the 70th Assembly District in 1992. Since then he has earned a reputation for getting results for his constituents and for improving the quality of life for New Yorkers across the State. He has chaired several standing committees in the Assembly including election law, social services, labor and his current chairmanship of the housing committee. He has sponsored bills to create affordable housing and is a champion for civil rights and social justice. As chair of the Harlem Community Development Corporation he has made a substantial, tangible impact on economic development in Harlem, developing and renovating properties to create hundreds of units of affordable housing, grow small business, increase services for children and seniors and expand cultural services. As Chair of the Housing Committee, he has maintained his commitment to ensure the preservation of programs that provide critical services to neighborhoods across New York City as well as those geared to empowering and increasing higher education and employment opportunities for underrepresented communities and at-risk youth. He has authored numerous pieces of legislation to strengthen the rights of tenants against unscrupulous landlords. He is a graduate of Rutgers Law School and Tufts University.

Adam Leitman Bailey

Adam Leitman Bailey is actively at the helm of the law firm he built from scratch where he practices residential and commercial real estate law. Among New York's most successful and prominent real estate attorneys, Mr. Bailey has been identified among the top five percent of attorneys in the New York area, repeatedly named a Super Lawyer by Law & Politics magazine, ranked in Chambers & Partners, and honored with a Martindale-Hubbell "AV" Preeminent rating as well as a Best Lawyer for himself and his law firm. Mr. Bailey has successfully defended a number of leading title companies and lenders in the nation and prevailed in numerous trials and settlements involving commercial and residential building owners, tenants, real estate developers, real estate brokerages, insurance companies and cooperative and condominium boards. In addition, Mr. Bailey has favorably represented a number of tenant and homeowner associations as well as commercial and residential tenants, garnering millions of dollars in compensation and rent abatements for these associations and individuals. For clients facing landlords who leave buildings in disrepair, Mr. Bailey has an unusually successful track record of getting those residential towers, apartments, and stores repaired and all services restored. Mr. Bailey has also applied his expertise in closing various real estate deals and commercial leases. He has been named to the Board of Editors for Commercial Leasing Law & Strategy and has a regular real estate column in the New York Law Journal. His success as cooperative and condominium general counsel earned Mr. Bailey recognition in "Who's Who in Real Estate" by Habitat Magazine. As an assistant adjunct professor at New York University, Mr. Bailey taught commercial and residential landlord-tenant law. In 2011, Mr. Bailey took on the role of author to guide first-time home buyers through the purchasing process. John Wiley and Sons published his first book, Finding the Uncommon Deal: A Top New York Lawyer Explains How to Buy a Home for the Lowest Possible Price which became a No. 1 New York Times bestseller and is available for purchase worldwide. Mr. Bailey has also been elected a Fellow of the American College of Real Estate Lawyers (ACREL), where he serves on the Insurance and Title Insurance committees, and the American College of Mortgage Attorneys (ACMA). He graduated with honors from Rutgers University and Syracuse University College of Law.

