

2018 Harrison Tweed Nomination Form

Name of Bar Association Nominated: Suffolk County Bar Association
Nominated Bar Address: 560 Wheeler Rd
Nominated Bar City/State/Zip Code: Islandia, New York 11749
Nominated Bar Telephone/Fax: 631 234-8585 / 631 234-8702
Nominated Bar Executive Director: 560 Wheeler Rd
Size of Nominated Bar Association: 2,700
Nominated Bar Email: scba@scba.org

President: Patricia M. Meisenheimer
President Address: 1050 Old Nichols Rd Suite 200
President City/State/Zip Code: Islandia, New York 11749
President Telephone/Fax: 631 234-8585 / 631 234-8702
President Email: pmeisenheimer@margolinbesunder.com

President-Elect: Justin M. Block
President-Elect Address: 267 Carleton Ave Suite 301
President-Elect City/State/Zip Code: Central Islip, New York 11722
President-Elect Telephone/Fax: 631 650-1200 / 631 650-1207
President-Elect Email: jblock@smklaw.net

Brief Description of Activity (limited to 500 characters): The Suffolk County Bar Association (SCBA) partners with Nassau Suffolk Law Services to sponsor the Suffolk Pro Bono Project with the goal of increasing the availability of civil legal services to Suffolk County's poor and disabled population in a variety of practice areas. Through the SCBA's pro bono efforts and programs, hundreds of disabled people and disadvantaged families receive free legal information and services every year.

Person w/ most specific information First and Last Name: Maria Dosso
Person w/ most specific information Organization: Nassau Suffolk Law Services
Person w/ most specific information Address: 1757 Veterans Hwy Suite 50
Person w/ most specific information City/State/Zip Code: Islandia, New York 11749
Person w/ most specific information Telephone/Fax: 631 232-2400 x 3369 / 631 232-2489
Person w/ most specific information Email: mdosso@nsls.legal

Nominator First and Last Name: Maria Dosso
Nominator Organization: Nassau Suffolk Law Services
Nominator Address: 1757 Veterans Hwy Suite 50
Nominator City/State/Zip Code: Islandia, New York 11749
Nominator Telephone/Fax: 631 232-2400 x 3369 / 631 232-2489
Nominator Email: mdosso@nsls.legal

NOMINATION NARRATIVE- The Suffolk County Bar Association

Nassau Suffolk Law Services is proud to nominate our valued pro bono partner, the Suffolk County Bar Association, for the ABA's esteemed Harrison Tweed Award.

In 1980, the Suffolk County Bar Association (SCBA) was one of the first local bar associations in New York to commit to a pro bono effort in its community. The SCBA began its collaboration with Nassau/Suffolk Law Services Committee, Inc. (NSLS) to form The Suffolk Pro Bono Project, a nationally lauded program. This strong partnership depends on the active, voluntary involvement of the SCBA and its members working together with NSLS, the Legal Services Corporation (LSC)-funded civil legal services agency that serves Long Island. The Suffolk Pro Bono Project (PBP) is administered by NSLS, with the loyal support of the SCBA and the Suffolk County Bar Pro Bono Foundation, the charitable arm of the SCBA, providing the PBP with financial support, consultation, and oversight of its pro bono efforts.

The primary goal of the Suffolk Pro Bono Project is to increase the availability of legal services to Long Island's poor and disabled population in a variety of substantive civil law areas, including bankruptcy, consumer law, education, family and matrimonial law, disability law, guardianships, and wills and estates. These goals and case priorities are regularly discussed between NSLS and SCBA leaders to confirm that unmet needs are identified. Together with the expertise of the private bar and the NSLS staff of poverty law specialists, a broad range of legal services is delivered to thousands of disabled and disadvantaged people in the Suffolk community every year.

Enduring Pro Bono Services

In the area of **Matrimonial law**, indigent litigants and victims of domestic violence have relied on volunteer attorneys since the Suffolk Pro Bono Project's inception, especially because there are effectively no other free legal services alternatives in this practice area. The SCBA has consistently supported pro bono efforts to provide counsel to matrimonial litigants in Suffolk County. With over 100 applications for assistance every month, and Suffolk County having one of the busiest matrimonial calendars in New York, the importance of SCBA's involvement and supportive efforts cannot be underrated. SCBA members with extensive matrimonial experience have lent support to the PBP's Matrimonial Clinics. The pro bono attorneys screened cases and used their professional contacts to place cases at a time when the PBP was experiencing serious backlogs and long waiting lists for services. The SCBA's Academy of Law, recognizing this gap in services and the demand for pro bono divorce attorneys, has assisted in recruitment efforts by agreeing to co-sponsor Matrimonial Boot Camps and other SCBA-sponsored family law seminars, generously offering free tuition and CLE credit to attorneys who volunteer to accept a pro bono case from the Project.

In 1990, the Pro Bono **Bankruptcy Clinic** was launched due in great part to SCBA leader, Rick Stern. The bi-monthly clinics are held at the Islandia offices of NSLS where a panel of volunteer attorneys meet, screen, and evaluate the low income applicants for pro bono bankruptcy representation. This clinic model has been a critical pro bono service

throughout the years, especially given the dearth of free bankruptcy legal services. Mr. Stern received the New York State Bar Association President's Pro Bono Service Award in 1992 and again in 1996 for his outstanding commitment to the Clinic which continues to the present day.

Over time, with changing economic demands and demographics, the SCBA has stepped up to support and help spearhead several initiatives intended to respond to the need for legal assistance and to promote the pro bono ideal to its membership.

Special Projects

Foreclosure Settlement Conference Project: In 2008, as the mortgage crisis began to peak, Suffolk County ranked first in the number of New York foreclosure cases filed. In the absence of dedicated foreclosure funding at the time, the SCBA had the foresight to create a pro bono Foreclosure Settlement Conference Project with the support and cooperation of Touro Law School and the Suffolk Courts to serve the thousands of families facing foreclosure. Bar leader, Barry Smolowitz, utilized his technology skills to produce an online Case Management System, appropriately called *FAST* (Foreclosure Appointment Status Tracker). The system allowed volunteer lawyers to see the scheduled pro bono cases that were referred by the court and to assign themselves to a case, thus creating a confidential automated system. All of the files, documents, and notes for a case were scanned or entered into the system electronically. The system also allowed attorneys access to all forms and case law. Although automated, Smolowitz spent hundreds of pro bono hours setting up the clinics, recruiting pro bono attorneys, designing the technology and supervising law students from Touro Law School. This outstanding program operated successfully for several years partnering with the PBP, until state Foreclosure funding became available enabling NSLS to take over full administration of the project. Mr. Smolowitz was recognized with the President's Pro Bono Service Award by the New York State Bar Association in 2012 for his access to justice efforts.

Volunteers for Vets was a series of outreach events hosted by the Suffolk County Bar Association, created to serve veterans by providing free consultations and referrals on a variety of legal matters. (See attached *World of Pro Bono Legal Services*). The event was sponsored on several occasions and attracted between 60-70 attorney volunteers each time, exceeding expectations. Suffolk veterans service agencies and veterans attended to take advantage of this free service. The outpouring of support from the Bar and the expressions of gratitude from the veterans encouraged similar events to follow.

17A Guardianship Project This limited scope project was started in 2018 to provide pro se assistance to disabled petitioners and their caretakers assisting them in completing their guardianship petitions and guiding them with the process. NSLS launched this initiative with the full support of the SCBA who hosted a Guardianship CLE with free tuition to those attorneys who volunteered to help. This effort is now well underway and serving many severely disabled adult children and their families.

SSI/SSD Application Project Responding to the many requests for assistance by people with disabilities and their community advocates, this project was recently launched. It provides legal guidance and direct assistance to clients in the application stage of disability benefits with the goal of improving the quality of the applications and thereby advancing the prospects for successful applications. The SCBA actively publicizes the program and sponsors the CLE sessions with free tuition to attendees who agree to participate as volunteers in the program.

Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief The SCBA joined forces with Touro Law School soon after Hurricane Sandy devastated thousands of Long Island homes (see attached *SCBA & Touro to hold Pro Bono Legal Clinics*). Within three days of the storm's aftermath, a local hotline was set up to answer questions. The SCBA hosted pro bono clinics which were held to assist disaster victims, offering free legal advice and guidance on disaster law, landlord tenant, FEMA claims, unemployment insurance, etc.

Child Support Project Several years ago the District Administrative Judge, C. Randall Hinrichs, explored the possibility of providing a pro bono service to child support litigants. He engaged the involvement of SCBA members who actively participated in all the planning meetings. The Child Support Self Help Project continues to this day, with a strong foundation of support from the SCBA and the judiciary.

Justice for All Project New York State was one of seven states to receive a grant from the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) and supported by the Public Welfare Foundation to develop a strategic action plan that would provide effective assistance to 100% of low-income New Yorkers in matters involving the essentials of life. Impressed with the involvement and collaboration between community agencies, judiciary, legal service and the SCBA, the NYS Permanent Commission on Access to Justice chose Suffolk County to pilot the local strategy approach which is engaging local stakeholders and generating local solutions. The SCBA was invited to take a leadership role on the planning committees and continues to be actively involved in this pioneering initiative and its implementation.

Staffing

The SCBA receives no dedicated funding to assist in pro bono programs but nevertheless works in partnership with NSLS which employs a Director of Communications and Volunteer Services to coordinate pro bono efforts. The SCBA Executive Director, Jane LaCova devotes her time to organizing bimonthly Pro Bono Foundation meetings, to liaison with the Executive Board regarding pro bono initiatives, and coordinating and publicizing special pro bono events (pro bono recognition events, Veterans Fair, clinics, etc.)

Recruitment

In addition to web-based pro bono enrollment, facilitated through their website, the SCBA regularly makes pro bono recruitment presentations a part of CLE events and committee meetings. Pro bono recruitment begins when new members join the SCBA

with a packet of information about pro bono opportunities.

Pro Bono Recognition Nominations and awards for outstanding pro bono attorney involvement are publicized in SCBA's *Suffolk Lawyer* every month. Annual recognition events are hosted at the SCBA to honor and encourage pro bono attorneys who selflessly serve the community. (reprint from *The Suffolk Lawyer, A Pro Bono Celebration*).

Financial Support For purposes of staff education and program development, one of NSLS' pro bono staff attends the annual ABA-sponsored Equal Justice Conference every year which is generously underwritten by the SCBA. The conference has consistently proved to be extremely informative and valuable to pro bono staff, particularly in the role of technology, networking, and as a forum for gathering ideas and problem solving. The SCBA also extends its CLE programs at half price to NSLS staff and produces pro bono recruitment brochures.

Training Support The SCBA generously offers free training videos, audio, and written materials on specific legal topics, to pro bono attorneys. For experienced attorneys, who require training in order to participate in pro bono, the SCBA offers live trainings and training videos to re-train pro bono attorneys in the relevant practice areas and on working with indigent clients. Furthermore, the SCBA provides vouchers for free Academy of Law seminars for CLE credit awarded to an attorney who concludes a case for PBP.

Promoting a Pro Bono Culture The pro bono mission is an integral part of the SCBA's structure. It is exemplified in so many ways, with programs, public relations and SCBA's own policies. In order to encourage pro bono, the SCBA instituted a policy over 25 years ago requiring all SCBA future officers to serve as Chair of the SCBA Pro Bono Foundation. The tradition has enabled future SCBA Presidents to experience the issues involved working with low income and disabled clients while gaining firsthand knowledge of NSLS's work. The model was so successful that the New York State Bar Association adopted this policy as well.

At every level, the SCBA promotes the pro bono spirit. Patricia Meisenheimer, SCBA President, recently authored an inspiring piece on the front page of *The Suffolk Lawyer*, extolling the virtues of pro bono and a volunteer mentality. (See *Spirit of the Holidays*). The article leaves no doubt that the SCBA's volunteer commitment is more than just skin deep.

The SCBA's community involvement is not just limited to pro bono programs. It has worked closely with our local judiciary over the years to insure that low income litigants have access to the courts. One example of this collaboration is the Suffolk County Children's Center, co-sponsored by the SCBA as a means of providing free daycare in the courts for litigants who would otherwise have difficulties accessing court proceedings due to a lack of child care (see *Suffolk Bar Association Hosts 3rd Annual Cohalan for Kids*). The SCBA also supports local students by coordinating mock trial tournaments in Suffolk County high schools. These annual tournaments are judged by SCBA members and give the students a valuable educational experience (see attached Newsday article, *The Bayshore Team...*).

Over the years, the American Bar Association, the New York State Bar Association, and the National Association of Pro Bono Professionals have all recognized the Suffolk Pro Bono Project for its innovations in the recruitment, retention, and recognition of volunteer attorneys, and the scope and quality of its client services. Along with state and local pro bono award recognition of many individual SCBA members, other awards were presented to the SCBA for its community service including: The Liberty & Justice Community Award from Touro Law Center in 2018, the Long Island Hispanic Bar Association in 2015, the Amistad Long Island Black Bar Association in October 2016 and the Cohalan Cares for Kids in March 2018.

For all of the impressive pro bono work and the unwavering volunteer spirit of the SCBA's generous membership, Nassau Suffolk Law Services enthusiastically nominates the Suffolk County Bar Association as a most deserving recipient of the 2018 Harrison Tweed Award.



State of New York
UNIFIED COURT SYSTEM
SUFFOLK COUNTY
DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE'S OFFICE
JOHN P. COHALAN, JR. COURT COMPLEX
400 Carleton Avenue
P.O. Box 9080
Central Islip, NY 11722-9080
(631) 208-5605 Fax (631) 853-7741

LAWRENCE K. MARKS
Chief Administrative Judge

C. RANDALL HINRICHS
District Administrative Judge
Suffolk County

MICHAEL V. COCCOMA
Deputy Chief Administrative Judge
Courts Outside New York City

WARREN G. CLARK, Esq.
District Executive

April 2, 2018

Harrison Tweed Award Selection Committee
American Bar Association
321 N. Clark Street, 17th Floor
Chicago, IL 60654-7598

Attention: Tamaara Piquion

Dear Ms. Piquion:

On behalf of the Suffolk County Courts, this letter serves to support the nomination of the Suffolk County Bar Association for the ABA's Harrison Tweed Award recognizing extraordinary achievements of state and local bar associations in the development of or significant expansion of civil legal services for the persons living in poverty.

The Suffolk County Bar Association has spearheaded or been instrumental in the development and expansion of civil legal services to persons living in poverty in Suffolk County. Specifically, the Pro Bono Committee of the Suffolk County Bar Association develops programs, hosts training, and provides access to legal and other resources for court programs throughout the county. It has worked tirelessly in the planning and establishment of the Justice For All program in Suffolk County. Suffolk County hosts the only project of its kind in New York State whose focus is to eliminate the justice gap in civil legal services and access around the essentials of life such as employment, education, health care and housing. In addition, the Suffolk County Bar Association has worked with the Nassau Suffolk Law Services to create the Pro Bono Project to expand access to legal service in consumer debt, bankruptcy, disability, elder law, public benefits and matrimonial services, and other subject areas. Finally, the Suffolk Bar Association developed the Pro Bon Foundation that works with the courts and legal service providers to secure pro bono attorneys for guardianship, foreclosure, veterans matters, and has developed attorney mentioning opportunities for lawyers interested in providing pro bono services.

The Suffolk County Bar Association has not only strengthened, but has also helped transform, access to civil legal services for indigent residents throughout Suffolk County, New York. As the Administrative Judge for the last seven years, it has been my privilege to work with the Suffolk County Bar on many pro bono initiatives and they are very well deserving of consideration for the Harrison Tweed Award.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Randall Hinrichs". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the last name.

C. Randall Hinrichs
District Administrative Judge

CRH:dh

cc: Maria Dosso, Esq. Nassau Suffolk Law Services
Warren G. Clark, District Executive
Mary Porter, Principal Law Clerk

Judge A. Gail Prudenti

Dean

244 Law School tel: 516-463-4068
121 Hofstra University fax: 516-463-4990
Hempstead, NY 11549 Gail.Prudenti@hofstra.edu

March 27, 2018

Maria Dosso, Esq.
Nassau Suffolk Law Services
1757 Veterans Highway, Suite 50
Islandia, NY 11749

Dear Ms. Bosso:

I understand Nassau Suffolk Legal Services is nominating the Suffolk County Bar Association for the highly prestigious Harrison Tweed Award. It is hard to imagine a more deserving organization, and I join you in encouraging the ABA to give the SCBA the recognition it deserves and has earned.

In my various roles—trial and appellate judge, Chief Administrative Judge of the State of New York and, currently, dean of Hofstra Law School— I have personally witnessed the extraordinary efforts and sincere commitment of the Suffolk County Bar to the proud tradition of *pro bono publico*. The Suffolk County Bar has demonstrated an enduring and perpetual obligation to meet the legal needs of the people on Long Island. With the Suffolk County Bar Association, *pro bono* is not a fad, but a fixture.

For example, the SCBA Pro Bono Foundation marshals the resources of several groups, including the Suffolk County Courts, Nassau/Suffolk Law Services and other entities, to provide unrepresented litigants with *pro bono* services by a qualified attorney.

The Suffolk County Bar has been a vital supporter of the efforts of the NYS Permanent Commission's Access to Justice, the Suffolk Foreclosure Settlement Project and the Volunteer for Veterans clinic. And I know that the SCBA partners with your organization on the Pro Bono Project, which provides representation in family law, consumer law, bankruptcy, wills and estates, uninsured negligence defense and other areas.

As you know, I am forever preaching that practicing law is a privilege, not a right, and in exchange for that privilege, attorneys have an obligation to use their special gifts, advanced education and the power of the law to improve our society. When I make that pitch, which is often, I hold up the Suffolk County Bar Association as an example. It is a truly a leader, and it is my hope that our students and other bar groups follow its lead.

Recognition by the ABA would advance the cause of *pro bono* generally and bolster the effectiveness of the SCBA in recruiting and retaining attorneys who take seriously their responsibility to give back.

Warm personal regards,



JUDGE GAIL PRUDENTI

Dean

AGP/bjr



PERMANENT COMMISSION ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE

HELAINE M. BARNETT, CHAIR

April 2, 2018

Re: 2018 Harrison Tweed Award Nomination for Suffolk County Bar Association

Dear Harrison Tweed Award Committee:

As Chair of the New York State Permanent Commission on Access to Justice, I write this letter in strong support of the nomination of the Suffolk County Bar Association for the Harrison Tweed Award.

Since early 2017, the Permanent Commission has been working closely with the Suffolk County Bar Association in conjunction with our statewide efforts to develop an action plan to help achieve effective assistance for 100% of low-income New Yorkers in need. As part of these efforts, a local pilot was established in Suffolk County. A main factor in choosing Suffolk County is its supportive legal community led by the County Bar Association.

From the outset of the planning process, the Suffolk County Bar Association has been an enthusiastic and active partner, with its President, Patricia M. Meisenheimer, and Past President, Donna England, serving on the Suffolk County Leadership Team and as co-leaders of the Local Task Force on Legal Representation. Working closely with Nassau Suffolk Law Services, the Bar leaders assessed the current landscape of civil legal services with a twofold purpose: to expand an existing resource guide to serve as the foundation of a more effective and comprehensive referral system for the county; and to increase legal services to address existing gaps in services. Regarding the latter, the Bar Association's involvement has been invaluable, including spearheading plans to expand pro bono services for family (uncontested divorces, post-judgment divorce issues and child support), immigration (immigration defense and citizenship applications) and re-entry (veterans, servicemembers and formerly incarcerated) matters.

The Suffolk County Bar Association exemplifies the important role of the bar in furthering access to justice, consistently demonstrating its commitment through the expansion of pro bono legal services and other resources to meet the needs of the county's residents. These extraordinary achievements are deserving of recognition by honoring the Suffolk County Bar Association with the Harrison Tweed Award.

If I can provide any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helaine M. Barnett".

Helaine M. Barnett

25 BEAVER STREET, ROOM 1150, NEW YORK, NY 10004

WWW.NYCOURTS.GOV/ACCESSTOJUSTICECOMMISSION



Nassau/Suffolk Law Services Committee, Inc.

One Helen Keller Way, Hempstead, NY 11550-3903 • (516) 292-8100 • Fax (516) 292-6529

Douglas J. Good
Chairman

Jeffrey A. Seigel
Executive Director

American Bar Association
321 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60654

April 2, 2018

RE: Suffolk County Bar Association Nomination
Harrison Tweed Award

To Whom It May Concern:

I enthusiastically support the nomination of the Suffolk County Bar Association for the ABA's *Harrison Tweed Award*. As the Executive Director of Nassau Suffolk Law Services for the past nineteen years, the LSC-funded legal service agency for Long Island, I have firsthand experience with the remarkable support and dedication demonstrated time and again by the leaders and members of the SCBA.

Our Suffolk County Pro Bono Project has grown and adapted since its formation in early 1981 and the SCBA has been an ardent supporter every step of the way. At a time when many bar associations are justifiably preoccupied with their own financial issues and challenges in sustaining membership, the SCBA has remained resolute in its support and continues to provide financial, in kind and moral support to our Suffolk County Pro Bono Project and to local initiatives which promote access to justice in our community. Members of the SCBA also serve on our Board of Directors and our Advisory Council, and are among our most loyal and hard working.

I cannot think of an organization on Long Island that is more deserving of the American Bar Association's *Harrison Tweed Award*.

Very truly yours,

Jeffrey A. Seigel
Executive Director



NASSAU SUFFOLK LAW SERVICES COMMITTEE, INC.

Law Services News

Spring 2015 Issue

The World of Pro Bono Legal Services

VOLUNTEERS FOR VETERANS



Long Island attorneys demonstrated their resounding support for local veterans by participating in the *Volunteers for Veterans* event. The event, held on February 11, 2015 at the Suffolk County Bar Association (SCBA), was organized to provide short term consultations and guidance to veterans and their families on a wide variety of legal matters. This collaborative effort to serve Long Island veterans was initiated by the SCBA, the Suffolk Pro

Bono Foundation and Nassau Suffolk Law Services to give back to veterans of all ages and their families, in gratitude for their service and their sacrifices. Over 60 attorneys signed up to help. The veterans who attended were clearly touched and impressed by the legal community's outpouring of support.

Almost 40 veterans participated on a wintry day, along with several Suffolk County veteran's service agencies, who were on sight to inform the veterans and the attorneys of the support services their agencies provide, making the event an inspiration to all. The veterans expressed their appreciation and commented on the kindness showed to them by the consulting attorneys. With an ample number of volunteers filling the Suffolk County Bar Association's Great Hall, the veterans were impressed, upon arriving, by the image of so many attorneys in the room showing their care and concern for the everyday problems and struggles being faced by servicemen and servicewomen. The Suffolk County Bar Association and Nassau Suffolk Law Services hope to repeat this event later this year and will spread the word among local veterans and their families that the Long Island legal community is here to help them.



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- ABOUT TOURO LAW
- ADMISSIONS
- ACADEMICS
- STUDENT RESOURCES
- ALUMNI & GIVING
- CAREER SERVICES
- LAW LIBRARY
- PUBLIC SERVICE INITIATIVES
- NEWS & CALENDARS



News & Calendars

Events Calendar

Academic Calendar

- Future Calendars

News

- 2016 - 2017
- 2015 - 2016
- 2014 - 2015
- 2013 - 2014
- 2012 - 2013
- 2011 - 2012
- 2010 - 2011
- 2009 - 2010

Touro Law in the News

Conferences

- Law & Society: The Jews of Shanghai
 - Overview of the Program
 - Hotel Information
 - Post Conference Trip
 - Speakers
 - CLE Materials
- Enhancing Social Justice through the Development of Incubators & Residency Programs
- 2016 NEPOC
 - Directions to St. John's - Oakdale
- The End of Voting Rights
- 2012 Conference of Religiously Affiliated Law Schools
- 2013 - Religious Legal Theory
- Gitenstein Lecture in Health Law & Policy

News

Suffolk County Bar Association & Touro Law to Hold ProBono Legal Clinics for Those Affected by Hurricane Sandy

December 3, 2012



The Suffolk County Bar Association (SCBA) and Touro Law Center will offer free legal clinics for individuals and small business owners in need of legal advice in the wake of Hurricane Sandy on Tuesday, December 11 from 4 – 7 pm and Tuesday, December 18 from 3-6 pm. The Clinics will take place at the Suffolk County Bar Association building located at 560 Wheeler Road in Hauppauge, NY.

"People are facing many legal issues in the wake of Hurricane Sandy and we are glad to be able to offer this service to community members in need," said Arthur Shulman, President of the SCBA.

Attorneys who are familiar with disaster law, landlord-tenant problems, insurance and unemployment issues and other matters related to post-storm legal help will be on hand to help those in need. Appointments are not necessary. Anyone in need of help is encouraged to attend.

"The victims of this kind of natural disaster will need long-term help rebuilding and dealing with legal issues that arise as the result of property damage, lost wages, insurance issues and other storm-related problems," said Touro Law Center Dean Patricia Salkin. "Along with our partners at the Suffolk County Bar Association, we are committed to helping those in need."

For additional information, please call the SCBA at (631) 234-5511.

XXX

News

Touro Law Offers New Child Advocacy Clinic

Posted On February 21, 2018

Touro Law has opened a new Child Advocacy Clinic. The clinic, headed by veteran family law attorney... [Read More](#)

Famed Harlem Renaissance Artist William Henry Johnson Exhibit to Open at Touro Law

Posted On February 12, 2018

Touro Law will host an exhibit celebrating the brilliant works and tragic life of Harlem Renaissance... [Read More](#)

Touro Law Announces New FlexTime J.D. Program

Posted On January 17, 2018

Touro Law is pleased to announce its new FlexTime J.D. program to begin in fall 2018. This unique... [Read More](#)

Academic Calendar

Schedule of Classes

Exam Schedules

Media Guide

Touro Times

Touro Times (prior to Jan. 2013)

- Fall 2012
- Spring 2012
- Fall 2011
- Spring 2011
- Fall 2010

The Suffolk County Bar Association (SCBA), a professional association comprised of almost 3,600 lawyers and judges, was founded in 1908 to serve the needs of the local legal community and the public. The Association sponsors educational programs throughout the year through its education arm, the Suffolk Academy of Law, and features public services such as our Lawyer Referral & Information Service, where members of the public can be referred to lawyers with expertise in a wide variety of areas of law, a speakers bureau providing free speakers on legal subjects to community, educational and civic organizations. For information about these or other programs or services, call the Bar Center (631) 234-5511.

Touro College Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center's 185,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility is located adjacent to both a state and a federal courthouse in Central Islip, New York. Touro Law's proximity to the courthouses, coupled with programming developed to integrate the courtroom into the classroom, provide a one-of-a kind learning model for law students, combining a rigorous curriculum taught by expert faculty with a practical courtroom experience. Touro Law, which has a student body of approximately 750 and an alumni base of more than 5,000, offers full- and part-time J.D. programs, several dual degree programs and graduate law programs for US and foreign law graduates. Touro Law Center is part of the Touro College system.

About the Touro College and University System

Touro is a system of non-profit institutions of higher and professional education. Touro College was chartered in 1970 primarily to enrich the Jewish heritage, and to serve the larger American and global community. Approximately 19,000 students are currently enrolled in its various schools and divisions. Touro College has branch campuses, locations and instructional sites in the New York area, as well as branch campuses and programs in Berlin, Jerusalem, Moscow, Paris, and Florida. Touro University California and its Nevada branch campus, as well as Touro College Los Angeles and Touro University Worldwide as separately accredited institutions within the Touro College and University System. For further information on Touro College, please go to: <http://www.touro.edu/media/>

For more info contact:

Patti Desrochers
Director of Communications
pattid@tourolaw.edu
(631) 761-7062



It was a day to celebrate volunteer attorneys who are committed to helping those who need legal help but can't afford it.

A Pro Bono Celebration

By Sarah Jane LaCova

A Pro Bono Recognition luncheon, honoring attorney volunteers for their exemplary efforts on behalf of the economically disadvantaged citizens of Suffolk County, was held in the Great Hall on June 22.

President Patricia Meisenheimer welcomed the Hon. A. Gail Prudenti, retired Chief Administrative Judge and Hofstra Law School Dean, as the keynote speaker. She thanked Dean Prudenti for her gracious acceptance of our

invitation to celebrate the generosity of attorney volunteers who devote thousands of hours of their professional services to provide free legal representation to the low income, disabled and disadvantaged individuals so that they may have equal access to the civil justice system on Long Island.

During her remarks President Meisenheimer said that our Pro Bono Foundation has demonstrated its commitment to improving legal services to the poor and to coordinate and strengthen pro bono activities in Suffolk County. Our Pro

Bono Project, co-sponsored by Nassau Suffolk Law Services, was founded in 1980. This strong collaboration has resulted in the development of exceptional initiatives, which include bankruptcy and matrimonial clinics, a Foreclosure Settlement Conference Project and collaboration with Touro Law School faculty and law students.

We have also formed a partnership with our Academy of Law to provide free training and resource materials that assist our volunteers and expand their familiarity of the applicable law.

Our Academy of Law has offered free training in Guardianship, Family Law, Matrimonial and Bankruptcy law. The Academy has also presented free training program for our attorney volunteers who represent our veterans in various aspects of the law. These programs are produced in collaboration with our Military & Veterans Affairs Committee.

Note: Sarah Jane LaCova is the executive director of the Suffolk County Bar Association.

PRO BONO HONOREES 2017

Robin Abramowitz
Harvey Arnoff
Richard Artura
Tracy Auguste
Scott Augustine**
Kenneth Baaden
David Baram
Hon. Stephen Behar
Leslie Berman
Hermon Bishop
Lee Blumberg
Joshua Blumberg
Kevin Bowman
Regina Brandow
Brooke Breen
Maxine Broderick
Debra Brown
Carole Bums
Frank Chery
Debra Cohn
Daniel Collins
Vincent Cuocci
Timothy Davies
Eric De Barba

Dennis Deangelis
Erica Diner
Jodi Ann Donato
Laura Ann Ellis
Howard Ende
Alison Leigh Epilone
Crysti Farra
Richard Feinsilver
Lisa Fine**
Alan Finkel
Lisa Fitzgerald
Edward Flood**
Giuseppe Franzella
William Gearty
Janet Geasa
Stuart Gelberg
Christian Goetz
William Grigo
Elizabeth Grosso
Robert Grundfast
Harold Guberman
Ivan Guerrero
Robin Guttman
Dawn Hargraves

Anne Hayes
Stephen Hellman**
Evans Hillen
Jeffrey Hom
Melvyn Jacoby
Richard Jacoby
Joy Jorgensen**
Thomas Kwon
Joseph Lamport
John Leonard
Susan McLaughlin
David Mejias
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Eve Nowak**
Mary O'Neill
Gina Pellettieri
Noemi Perez Hicks

Thomas Persichilli**
Brian Picarello
Waldy Pierre
Judith Pluviose
Lynn Poster-Zimmerman
George Roach*
Craig Robins
Ted Rosenberg
Matthew Rubino
Leif Rubinstein**
Daniel Russo
Sean Sabeti
Eric Sackstein*
Joel Salinger
Donald Sallah
Karen Sartain
Harvey Savitt
Maria Scheuring-Elbert**
Harold Seligman
Mitchell Shapiro
Kaleem Sikandar
Karen Silverman
Lewis Silverman
Kathy Small

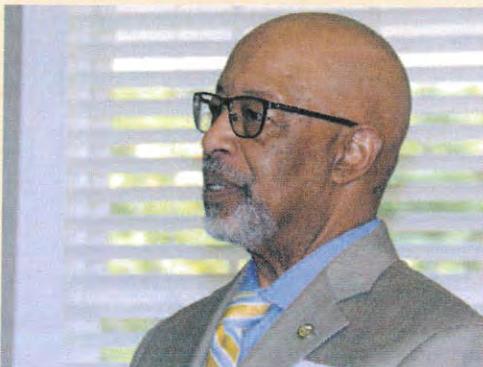
Edwin Smith
Tarsha Smith
Darryn Solotoff
Jessica Sparacino
Concetta Spirio
Richard Stem
Louis Sternberg
Joseph Stroble
Una Tapper
William Timmons
Mary Toner
Joseph Tonetti**
David Vallone
Christine Verbitsky
Karyn Villar
Aida von Oiste
James Wallin
Christena Ward
Stacy Wardle
John Weber
Janis Weissman
Margaret Williams
Edward Zinker

*special Acknowledgment **Pro Bono Attorney of the Month

Pro Bono Luncheon Honors the Volunteer Attorneys That Make the Suffolk County Bar Association Proud



Photos by Barry Smolowitz





THE SUFFOLK LAWYER

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INSIDE DECEMBER 2017 FOCUS ON HELPING COURTS

Human Trafficking intervention....6
Drug Treatment Court5
Court that helps veterans.....6

Dean's List14
Retirement party for Judge Eng3
Meet Your SCBA Colleague3



SCBA happenings.....17, 18

Legal Articles

ADR.....	11
Bankruptcy	9
Bench Briefs.....	4
Civil Rights	16
Commercial Litigation.....	8
Consumer Bankruptcy.....	19
Corporate.....	10
Court Notes.....	4
Criminal and Family	12
Cyber.....	20
Family (LoFrumento).....	12
Family (Mitev).....	8
Future Lawyers Forum.....	16
LGBT.....	14
Personal Injury - Devlin.....	20
Real Estate	10
Tax.....	21
Technology	13
Trusts and Estates.....	15
Vehicle and Traffic	18

Among Us	7
CLE Course Listings.....	30-31
SCBA Calendar	2
Freeze Frame.....	19

Ring in the Holidays SCBA-style

By Laura Lane

The entrance to the Suffolk County Bar Association was the first indication that it was time to celebrate the holidays. Festively decorated, there were red and gold Christmas balls, wreaths, and a table in the lobby surrounded by poinsettias. This year even the ceiling shimmered, with a sprinkling of tiny green and red lights that twinkled.

Inside a small area right before the entrance to the Great Hall a nativity scene

was on view. It was so beautifully arranged and included nearby citizens who also must have heard that someone special had been born. The nativity is donated each year in memory of Kenneth Grabie, who had been active at the SCBA.

It was the work of the staff at the Association that created the magical holiday scene. They always work so hard to ensure that people feel the warmth of the holiday. Proof of their success? As people entered they smiled and commented on how nice everything appeared.

And Santa Claus stopped by too. Busy handing out candy canes he wished everyone a happy holiday. Santa is a big fan of the SCBA. "The SCBA is one of the best bar associations in the state," he said, "maybe even the country."

Throughout the evening, everyone enjoyed an array of hot food, festive holiday desserts and just catching up with colleagues and friends. The SCBA provides so many opportunities for joy, but its holiday party each year is perhaps one of its best achievements.

New phone system at the courts

The Suffolk County Courts are converting to a new I.P. phone system, which is being implemented in various phases. Phase one will result in new phone numbers for all judicial and non-judicial personnel in the Central Islip Cohalan Court Complex effective January 3, 2018. Prior to this date, a new telephone listing for all judges and other personnel will be provided via an e-blast from the SCBA. — LaCova

Retirement party for a dear friend of the SCBA



Photo by Barry Smolowitz

The Appellate Practice, the Supreme Court and the SCBA Board of Directors hosted a retirement party for the Honorable Randall T. Eng, New York State Supreme Court, Appellate Division, Second Judicial Department on Nov. 9. SCBA President Patricia Meisenheimer, left, and SCBA Executive Director Jane LaCova thanked Justice Eng for his service. See story on page 3 and see photos on page 18.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Spirit of the Holidays

By Patricia Meisenheimer

The holiday spirit is a tangible part of who we are, bringing out the best in all of us and reminding us of our blessings and friendships. While we count our blessings, rather than our differences, we share the spirit of the holidays, deepening our understanding of the values embodied in the spirit of this holiday season.

This spirit is particularly evident in our interactions with others and when we go the extra mile to assist and to share with others who live in need. The holiday season can humanize us like no other time of the year.

True holiday spirit urges us to do good, motivating us to spread the joy of the season to those around us. Why not stretch yourself beyond your comfort

zone to share the spirit of the season with those in need of legal assistance. Let this holiday season be a starting point for renewed commitment to help those less fortunate. Keep the holiday spirit alive throughout the year by volunteering with the Suffolk County Bar Association's Pro Bono Project.

At the SCBA we embrace a rich and dynamic culture of diversity, inclusion and of reaching out to help others in the community. The challenge is to do more, to acknowledge and celebrate the spirit of the holidays by fostering awareness of the exceptional work that our Pro Bono lawyers do for the legal com-

(Continued on page 23)



Patricia Meisenheimer



BAR EVENTS

Swearing in & Robing Ceremony

Monday, Jan. 8 at 9 a.m.

Touro Law Center

225 Eastview Drive, Central Islip

Join us to honor our distinguished members of the Judiciary at their Swearing-in ceremony.

SCBA Wishes Everyone a Happy Holiday!



Suffolk County Bar Association President Patricia Meisenheimer, the Executive Board, Executive Director Jane LaCova and the staff at the Association wish our members and their families a safe and happy holiday season.

FOCUS ON HELPING COURTS SPECIAL EDITION

President's Message (Continued from page 1)

munity and to keep that spirit alive all year.

The Latin term “*pro bono publico*” means “for the public good,” and involves the delivery of legal services to those of limited means. Pro bono work certainly can enrich a lawyer’s life, especially for newer attorneys who will gain knowledge and experience in handling a matter that involves substantive legal work. There are opportunities for all lawyers, both newly admitted, as well as the experienced lawyer, in giving time to those who would otherwise face the legal process without assistance. In volunteering, an attorney not only fosters the spirit of the holiday season, but will also effectively learn networking skills, develop leadership experience and acquire transactional, trial or negotiation experience. These opportunities are invaluable and will enhance an attorney’s career.

Many do pro bono work because they have a sense that this work is a moral obligation, they want to make a meaningful contribution to our society, gain experience or help address social disadvantage and provide access to justice.

Whatever the motivating factor, it is a fact that pro bono work does help grow your business. It provides skills, helps to build networks, not only in the community, but also in the legal field, provides opportunity for potential referrals and for further business. While pro bono work offers an opportunity for professional

development, to get expertise and experience in new areas of law, it also provides an opportunity for future referrals of paying clients.

The SCBA’s efforts in the pro bono area are organized and delivered through two related organizations, the Pro Bono Project and the Pro Bono Foundation, which have provided assistance to Suffolk County’s indigent population for over 30 years.

The Pro Bono Project, co-sponsored by Nassau Suffolk Law Services, was founded in 1980. A strong collaboration between the SCBA and Nassau Suffolk Law Services, along with Touro Law School, has resulted in the development of exceptional programs, helping hundreds of low-income clients receive legal assistance from generous volunteer attorneys.

The SCBA’s Pro Bono Foundation was created in 1989 to coordinate efforts to increase the availability of legal services for the economically disadvantaged. The quality and quantity of SCBA volunteer efforts has been recognized by the NYSBA and the ABA as one of the premier volunteer efforts in the country. Our pro bono effort includes attorneys from many areas of law, including matrimonial law, family law, guardianships, bankruptcy and landlord tenant, as well as public sector and corporate law. In a few months, the SCBA hopes to initiate a program in immigration law to assist immigrants with the application process for citizenship.

In conjunction with the Suffolk Academy of Law,

the Pro Bono Project provides training and resource materials that assist volunteers, expanding knowledge of the applicable law. Along with the Military & Veterans Affairs Committee, the Academy presents a program where volunteers are trained in various areas of law to represent our veterans, who otherwise would not have legal assistance.

William Hubbard, Past President of the ABA once stated “The Preamble to the Constitution says ‘We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice...,’ ‘justice’ is the first item in the preamble of the Constitution. If people don’t have access to that justice, they don’t have justice.”

It is a pleasure to celebrate the accomplishments and exemplary work of SCBA volunteer attorneys who “do the public good.” Without the assistance of our volunteers, access to the legal system would be out of reach for many. By embracing the spirit of this season, by working together to provide the delivery of quality legal representation to the economically disadvantaged, we can have a positive influence on the legal profession, while making a contribution to Suffolk County, to our communities, to our system of justice, and most importantly, to the clients who we serve.

I want to wish all our members the warmth of this holiday season, health for you and your family, peace, friendship, prosperity and happiness throughout the new year.

When Commercial Principles Surface in a Wrongful Death Action (Continued from page 8)

On May 30, 2008, approximately one month after being erected, the crane was being used for the construction of the 14th floor of the project when, with the decedent operator in the cab, the crane teetered and then fell backward from a height of 200 feet, struck another building and bounced off a number of terraces until it crashed down upon the other decedent. The First Department, in extraordinary and compelling narrative, summarized the trial court testimony concerning the hell that the crane operator encountered between the time that the crane failed and his ultimate demise many stories below. Indeed, much of the decision centered upon the basis for plaintiffs’ pre-impact terror damages:

“The injuries [Plaintiff] sustained from the impact were “blunt impact head trauma” with “cranial fracturing,” “pulpification of the brain” and “near-complete decapitation.” Specifically, [Plaintiff] suffered multiple rib fractures piercing his lungs, a fractured pelvis, head trauma, bilateral humerus fractures, and bilateral transected leg fractures. Medical testimony was elicited that the fractures to his arms and legs indicated that he was aware of his situation and tried to brace himself, aware of his impending death. It was also opined that [Plaintiff] was consciously aware, and under a significant amount of physical and mental dis-

stress, while trapped in the glass cab, alone, and able to see everything as it happened. [Plaintiff’s] father, also a crane operator, saw his son in the rubble with his eyes open and shaking. The EMS technician reported him as alive and conscious approximately seven minutes after the accident, and the medical examiner determined the time of death to be nine minutes after that . . .”

“The evidence supported the jury’s findings that [Plaintiffs] both endured inconceivable pre-impact terror. It is undisputed that the crane did not fall straight to the ground. With [Plaintiff] in the glass cab, it first teetered, and then fell backward from a height of 200 feet (approximately 14 stories), struck the Electra building, and bounced off a number of terraces before reaching the ground, where it crashed down onto [co-Plaintiff]. [Plaintiff], trapped in the glass cab, was aware of his impending death, as detailed by witnesses in the adjacent apartment buildings. Witnesses described the look of sheer panic and fear on [his] face. They described him making a series of hand movements and putting his hands together as if praying. They described him as then seeming to attempt to brace himself, placing

both his hands forward on the cab glass, and they described the cab as ultimately sliding to [Plaintiff’s] left side until it was gone.”

The trial court

Two wrongful death actions were commenced wherein the plaintiffs contended that the accident was the result of a defective weld by RTR during the manufacture of the bearing ring. The jury determined that Lomma, JF Lomma and NY Crane were negligent and that the corporate veil should be pierced to assess personal liability against Lomma.

The Appellate Division

Defendants appealed arguing that the awards should be set aside as excessive and that the trial court erred in permitting the jury to pierce the corporate veils of NY Crane and JF Lomma. Although the Appellate Division agreed that the awards were excessive and significantly reduced them, the court upheld the jury’s decision to pierce the Lomma entities’ respective corporate veils.

Relying upon, *inter alia*, the Court of Appeals’ decision in *Matter of Morris v. New York State Dept. of Taxation and Fin.*, 82 N.Y.2d 135 (1993), the Appellate Division held that jury’s conclusion to pierce the corporate veils of NY Crane and JF Lomma was warranted because Lomma had conducted business in his various corporations

“as a single entity.” The evidence presented in the cases demonstrated that while different Lomma-controlled entities served different purposes, the entities rented out each other’s equipment at will and the actual ownership of the equipment amongst the entities did not matter. Lomma also had the discretion to shift profits between his companies and all the entities were from the same offices using the same email system, as well as the same management and administrative personnel. The court found that Lomma exercised domination and control over multiple corporations that he treated as one entity, warranting piercing. The court further determined that jury’s determination of Lomma’s personal liability was warranted due to his personal participation in the corporate defendants’ affirmatively tortious acts launching the dangerous instrumentality that caused the accident.

While it is certainly rare for commercial principles to appear in the personal injury realm, the interplay is a gentle incentive for lawyer “cross-training” (wherein “niche” practitioners occasionally sit for CLEs outside their primary practice areas to keep abreast of developments in distinct practice areas).

Note: Leo K. Barnes Jr., a member of BARNES & BARNES, P.C. in Melville, practices commercial litigation and can be reached at LKB@BARNESPC.COM.

Suffolk Bar Association Hosts 3rd Annual Cohalan Cares for Kids Event; Supports Children's Center

FEBRUARY 18 2014 BY

(Hauppauge, NY) EAC Network joined the Suffolk County Bar Association on **Thursday, February 6th** at its headquarters in Hauppauge, NY to host the 3rd Annual Cohalan Cares for Kids event.

The annual event raised almost **\$24,000** and benefited **EAC Network's Suffolk County Children's Center** at Cohalan Court. It was also held in coordination with Enright Court Reporting, the Long Island Hispanic Bar Association, the Suffolk County Charitable Foundation, the Suffolk County Criminal Bar Association, the Suffolk County Matrimonial Bar Association, and the Suffolk County Women's Bar Association.

"Once again, the Suffolk County legal community demonstrated its phenomenal generosity and support for the Children's Center," stated **Rebecca Bell, Executive Vice President & COO at EAC Network**. "The willingness of everyone to help maintain the Center as a vital resource to the Courts is deeply appreciated."



Pictured, (l-r) **Sarah Ann Lawton, Executive Director, Suffolk County Bar Association**; **Marian Tinari, Court Attorney-Referee, Suffolk County**

The event included a special wine tasting courtesy of **Rothmann's Steakhouse** and a beer tasting by **Brickhouse Brewery Fireside Caterers** of **East Northport** provided delicious food, and **Gerard Donnelly, Esq., Rafael Penate, Esq., and Thomas Lavalley, Esq.**, provided live music. Photography was provided by **Barry M. Smolowitz, Esq.**

EAC Network's Suffolk County Children's Center at Cohalan Court offers an alternative to crowded courtrooms and waiting areas and enables parents with young children to attend to their court business. The center is a safe, secure, and nurturing environment for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years of age. Last year the center served over 900 children and their families.

About EAC Network

EAC Network provides a broad array of educational, vocational, counseling, and criminal justice services. The organization's 70 programs protect children, create opportunities for seniors, promote healthy families and communities, empower people through employment and education, and provide alternatives for people with substance abuse and mental health needs. For more information about EAC Network, please call 516 539 0150 or visit www.eac-network.org

LONG ISLAND / EDUCATION

Bay Shore team is Suffolk mock trial champ



A team from Bay Shore High School won this year's Suffolk County Mock Trial Tournament and will compete in the state finals in Albany. Photo Credit: Bay Shore School District

By Michael R. Ebert

michael.ebert@newsday.com

Updated May 14, 2017 7:08 PM

The judges have spoken.

Mock trial teams from W. Tresper Clarke High School in the East Meadow district and Bay Shore High School are this year's Nassau and Suffolk county regional winners, respectively, and are heading to the state level of competition.

W. Tresper Clarke placed first in Nassau's regional championship at the State Supreme Court in Mineola, defeating a team from The Wheatley School in Old Westbury in the final round. Meanwhile, Bay Shore defeated a team from Ward Melville High School in East Setauket in their regional championship's final round at the Suffolk County Courthouse in Central Islip.

Bay Shore had been eliminated by Ward Melville in the final round of their regionals for the past two years. The school also won regional titles in 1984 and 2007.

"These students work extremely hard throughout the year to prepare and their dedication is evident from the performance they deliver in the courtroom," Bay Shore Superintendent Joseph Bond said.

This year's fictional case consisted of a civil plaintiff suing a county for false imprisonment in relation to a robbery and slaying at a convenience store. Teams received the case summary in December to prepare for the regular season's preliminary rounds, which began in February. The playoff tournaments ended in early April.

Judging, which was handled by attorneys and judges throughout the various rounds, was based on factors ranging from the strength of cases to the students' knowledge of legal proceedings.

The Nassau County Bar Association coordinates the annual mock trial tournament in Nassau County, and with 50 high school teams participating, it is the largest single-county contest in the state. **The Suffolk County Bar Association coordinates the tournament for high school teams in that county.**

The Clarke and Bay Shore teams will face six other regional winners at the state finals in Albany on May 21-23.

Sign up for the Power on Trial newsletter

Get our insider's look and analysis of the key moments in the Mangano-Venditto trial.

Email address

Sign up

**HOLBROOK/WADING RIVER
Junior Iron Chef**

Teams from Seneca Middle School and Little Flower School placed first in the Middle School and high school divisions, respectively, of the Long Island Junior Iron Chef Competition, which challenged teams of three to five students to create recipes.

Seneca's "Super Fresh Breakfast Boyz" beat 12 Middle School teams with a guacamole sunrise stack, while Little Flower's "Tiger Lilies" beat seven high school teams with a lentil quinoa kale broth. Recipes were limited to five main ingredients, including two USDA ingredients used in school cafeterias.

The event was coordinated by the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County and Whole Foods Market.

COUNTYWIDE Journalism Awards

Six Suffolk County students and one school newspaper were first-place winners in various categories at LIU Post's Best of High School Journalism Awards. Entries had to be original work appearing in a student publication or broadcast in 2016, with judging based on accuracy, clarity, creativity and adherence to journalistic standards.

Winners and their categories were: Nicole Rosenthal and Christine Seo, Half Hollow Hills High School West, best commentary/editorial; Marlie Allen and Megan Konfino, Commack High School, best sports story; Zach Abrams and James Oldham, Commack High School, best news story; and The Red & Black, Patchogue-Medford High School, best online publication.

ISLANDWIDE Merit scholarships

Ten Long Island students were among more than 1,000 high school seniors nationwide named recipients of corporate-sponsored scholarships through the National Merit Scholarship Corp. The scholarships range from single payments of between \$2,500 and \$5,000 to annual stipends of up to \$10,000 that are renewable for up to four years of undergraduate study.

Winners and their high schools were: Jonathan Gao, Great Neck North; Michelle Gery, Syosset; Emily Knott and Carley Rowe, Smithtown East; Nikita Podobedov, Ward Melville in East Setauket; Vishal Nyayapathi of Half Hollow Hills East in Dix Hills; Lauren Reiss, Great Neck South; Edgar Sit, Roslyn; Nita Wong, Herricks; Cory Zhou, Smithtown West.

CLARIFICATION: A previous version of this story did not include mention of the Nassau County Bar Association and Suffolk County Bar Association as coordinators of mock trial tournaments in the respective counties.



By Michael R. Ebert
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Michael Ebert is an education researcher and has worked for Newsday in various capacities since 2003. He was part of an 11-person team named 2008 Pulitzer Prize finalists for investigative coverage of the LIRR's platform safety issues.