

HALFWAY TO HISTORY: PROGRESS & CHALLENGES IN CLOSING RIKERS ISLAND

A symposium and reception to mark the midway point in closing the jails on Rikers Island

The Honorable Jonathan Lippman, Former Chief Judge of New York State



The Honorable Jonathan Lippman, former Chief Judge of New York and Chief Judge of the New York Court of Appeals, the state's highest court, is Of Counsel in the New York office of Latham & Watkins LLP and a member of the firm's Litigation & Trial Department. He provides strategic counsel to clients on New York Law and appellate matters nationwide and is a leader of the firm's *pro bono* practice.

Judge Lippman served as Chief Judge of the State of New York and Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals from February 2009 through December 2015. During his tenure on the Court of Appeals, Chief Judge Lippman authored major decisions addressing constitutional, statutory and common law issues shaping the law of New York, the contours of state government,

and the lives of all New Yorkers.

As the state's Chief Judge, he championed equal access to justice issues in New York and around the country and took the leadership role in identifying permanent funding streams for civil legal services. Chief Judge Lippman made New York the first state in the country to require 50 hours of law-related pro bono work prior to bar admission and established the Pro Bono Scholars and Poverty Justice Solutions Programs to help alleviate the crisis in civil legal services. He strengthened the state's indigent criminal defense system, addressed the systemic causes of wrongful convictions, created Human Trafficking Courts across New York State, and led efforts to reform New York's juvenile justice, bail and pre-trial justice systems. Judge Lippman championed the state's commercial division as a world-class venue for business litigation, reformed the state's attorney disciplinary system, adopted the Uniform Bar Exam, and succeeded in the creation of a statewide salary commission for judges.

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Chief Judge Lippman has served at all levels of the New York State Court system in a career spanning more than four decades, including service as a staff attorney, administrator and judge. From January 1996 to May 2007, he served as the longest-tenured Chief Administrative Judge in state history, playing a central role in many far-reaching reforms of New York's judiciary and its legal profession. From May 2007 to 2009, Judge Lippman served as the Presiding Justice of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, First Department, dramatically reducing the court's pending backlogs.

In 2008, Judge Lippman received the William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence, presented each year by the nation's Chief Justice to a state court judge who exemplifies the highest level of judicial excellence, integrity, fairness and professional ethics. Judge Lippman was selected for his "unparalleled ability to promote and achieve reform in the state courts. His leadership in the New York courts contributed to numerous improvements in that state's justice system and served as an example for courts across the country." In 2013, the *American Lawyer* named Chief Judge Lippman one of the Top 50 Innovators in Big Law in the Last 50 Years. A *New York Times* article in December 2015 stated that Judge Lippman had left an altered legal profession in New York by using "his authority to promote an ideal of lawyering as a public service."

Judge Lippman was the 2016 American Bar Association's John Marshall Award recipient, an award whose prior recipients include Supreme Court Justices Anthony Kennedy and Sandra Day O'Connor. Judge Lippman presently serves as the Chair of the Independent Commission on New York City Criminal Justice and Incarceration Reform, a 27 person blue ribbon commission, formed to examine the future of the Riker's Island jail facilities in the context of systemic criminal justice reform.

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Brendan McGuire ***Chief Counsel to [the Mayor and City Hall](#)***



Brendan R. McGuire is a Partner at WilmerHale, and current Chief Counsel to Mayor Adams and City Hall. He served for nearly 11 years as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York. McGuire concluded his tenure as Chief of the Terrorism and International Narcotics Unit. Among other cases, he oversaw the trial teams that secured convictions of Sulaiman Abu Ghayth, Usama Bin Laden's son-in-law and the most senior al Qaeda leader to have been convicted in an Article III court; Khalid al Fawwaz, Usama bin Laden's media

representative at the time of al Qaeda's bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania; and Mustafa Kamel Mustafa, a/k/a "Abu Hamza," a radical British cleric who attempted to establish a terrorist training camp in the United States.

Before serving as Chief of the unit, McGuire led the investigations and prosecutions of some of the country's most significant terrorism cases, including the 2009 kidnapping of Captain Richard Phillips by Somali pirates in the Indian Ocean, the 2010 prosecution of Faisal Shahzad for attempting to detonate a car bomb in Times Square, and the 2011 prosecution of Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout for conspiring to kill Americans.

McGuire received his B.A. cum laude in 1998 from Williams College and his J.D. in 2002 from New York University Law School.

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Darren Mack
Co-Director, [the Freedom Agenda](#)



Darren Mack is an activist, advocate, and organizer.

Darren is a Co-Director at Freedom Agenda, a member-led organization, dedicated to organizing people and communities directly impacted by incarceration, to achieve decarceration and system transformation.

Through Leadership of people most impacted by mass incarceration, the Freedom Agenda advocates for investments in communities that are too often disrupted by systems of punishment.

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Errol Louis ***Chief Political Anchor, [NY1](#)***



Errol Louis is the Political Anchor of NY1 News, where he hosts "Inside City Hall," a nightly prime-time show about New York City politics, featuring interviews with top political and cultural leaders. Louis has conducted interviews with ex-mayors Ed Koch, David Dinkins, Rudy Giuliani, Mike Bloomberg and Bill de Blasio; Govs. Andrew Cuomo and Kathy Hochul; and presidential candidates including Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump.

Louis has moderated dozens of debates between candidates for mayor, public advocate, city and state comptroller, state Attorney General, congress and U.S. Senate. In 2016 he was a questioner in the final CNN presidential debate between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump.

In addition to political leaders, Louis has interviewed iconic cultural figures including filmmaker Ken Burns, activist Gloria Steinem and authors Robert Caro and Gay Talese. In 2019 he launched a popular weekly podcast, "You Decide with Errol Louis," that features longer discussions with political and cultural figures including ex-President Bill Clinton; playwright Aaron Sorkin; actors Edward Norton and Brian Cox; and congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

Louis is a longtime CNN Contributor, providing on-air commentary on key events including presidential primaries and Election Night. He writes regularly for CNN.com, as well as a weekly column for New York Magazine on a range of political and social affairs.

Louis was recently ranked #36 on the list of the 100 most powerful people in New York City politics. He is an adjunct professor of Urban Reporting at the Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism at CUNY, where he has taught political and investigative reporting to more than 100 graduate students. He is co-editor of *Deadline Artists*, a two-volume anthology of America's greatest newspaper columns published in October 2011.

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Louis graduated from Harvard College with a B.A. in Government. He also earned an M.A. in Political Science from Yale University and a J.D. from Brooklyn Law School.

He lives in Brooklyn with his wife, Juanita Scarlett, and their son Noah.

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The Honorable Matthew D’Emic
Administrative Judge for Criminal Matters, Kings County Supreme Court



Judge Matthew D’Emic was appointed to the bench in 1996. In 2014 he was appointed Administrative Judge for Criminal Matters in Kings County Supreme Court. In addition to his administrative duties, Judge D’Emic presides over the Brooklyn Mental Health Court.

Judge D’Emic is a member of the New York State Judicial Committee on Women in the Courts and the New York State Judicial Committee on Elder Justice. He is a past chair of the Brooklyn Supreme Court Gender Fairness Committee and a past chair of the Alternatives to Incarceration and Diversion Committee of the American Bar Association. Judge D’Emic served on the Steering Committee of Mayor Bloomberg’s Citywide Justice and Mental Health Initiative and Mayor DeBlasio’s Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Task Force. He is a commissioner of the New York City Commission on New York City Criminal Justice and Incarceration Reform, commonly known as the Lippman Commission.

Judge D’Emic has been recognized for his work in domestic violence and mental health and frequently lectures on these topics. He has served on the boards of the Guild for Exceptional Children, the Mercy Home and Xaverian High School. He is also an adjunct professor at Brooklyn Law School.

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Wesley Caines **Chief of Staff, [Bronx Defenders](#)**



Wesley Caines is a graduate of Bard College and New York Theological Seminary. His life's journey has enriched him with a perspective on the importance of human connection and community engagement, and he is a frequent speaker at colleges and universities as well as on panels and in conferences across the country on his exceptional personal journey and how it informs his work in criminal justice reform.

As Chief of Staff, Wes spearheads the organization's systemic reform efforts which includes overseeing the policy, impact litigation and community organizing, teams. Prior to his current role, he was Director of Reentry & Community Engagement, roles which allowed him to work closely with directly impacted communities in understanding and developing

strategies to overcome barriers that perpetually punish those ensnared in government systems.

Before joining The Bronx Defenders, Wes worked at *Brooklyn Defender Services* and launched the Records Accuracy Project which utilized local area law students to identify and correct RAP (records of arrest and prosecution) sheet errors. To date, he has trained nearly 50 law students in the complex world of reentry and reentry policy work. Wes sits on the boards of the Correctional Association of New York, Inside Change, Brooklyn Community Bail Fund, and Network Support Services, Inc.,—leveraging his expertise in the furtherance of helping those who are economically and socially disadvantaged to improve their systems involvement outcomes. Wes is a member of the New York City Bar, Reentry Subcommittee, a former member of the American Bar Association, Criminal Justice Section, and a founding member of the National Justice Impacted Bar Association. Wes' life goal is the empowerment of underserved and marginalized communities as they become creative self-advocates who challenge policy-makers' notion of the social contract.

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Courtney Bryan
Executive Director, [Center for Court Innovation](#)



As executive director of the Center for Court Innovation, Courtney Bryan oversees an annual budget of more than \$80 million and 600 employees. Bryan's commitment to criminal justice reform and community change was forged shortly after college when she worked at the Center for Court Innovation as a program associate, where she learned firsthand about the importance of engaging

communities in implementing lasting reforms.

She left the Center to become a lawyer, graduating from Temple University School of Law, and then worked as a public defender for the Legal Aid Society in Brooklyn and as a staff attorney at the National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women in Philadelphia. She returned to the Center to serve as director of the Midtown Community Court and helped expand the Center's criminal justice programming, providing more opportunities to divert people from incarceration. She worked with reformers across the country to promote new responses to human trafficking and domestic violence and also led the Center's Rikers initiative by coordinating staff and research for the Independent Commission on New York City Criminal Justice and Incarceration Reform, which successfully argued for closing the jails on Rikers Island.

Before returning to the Center in 2020 as director, Bryan served as an executive at the JP Morgan Chase & Co. Foundation, which sought inclusive economic growth in communities worldwide by strengthening workforce systems, revitalizing neighborhoods, growing small businesses, and improving the financial health of individuals. At the foundation, she helped launch the Second Chance Opportunities initiative to support greater economic prospects for people with criminal convictions. Bryan is a member of the Council on Criminal Justice.

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Au Hogan
Chief of Streets, [Life Camp Inc.](#)



A lifetime resident of South Jamaica Queens, AU Hogan currently works as the Chief of Streets at LIFE Camp, Inc., one of the largest anti-gun violence organizations in the country. Mr. Hogan was also President of Baisley Park Houses, a position he held for 18 years, where he diligently advocated affordable housing for South Jamaica community members.

AU currently serves as an Advisor on the Police Advisory Committee at 1 Police Plaza, guiding law enforcement and the community on how to proactively produce and maintain public safety. Mr. Hogan is also a board member of the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB).

As a graduate of the City University System of New York (BA In Psychology from York College/Masters in Urban Studies from Queens College), AU believes in the importance and necessity of higher learning, and is dedicated to achieving education equality for marginalized neighborhoods. AU is also committed to health and wellness; He is a Golden Gloves Boxing champion and has also worked as a trainer with at-risk youth, providing a safe and effective alternative to street violence.

AU is an author, writer, actor, and director of film and stage— an Urban Renaissance Man®.

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Richard M. Aborn
President, [Citizens Crime Commission of New York City](#)



Richard M. Aborn is president of the Citizens Crime Commission of New York City, a non-partisan non-profit organization with multidisciplinary expertise that works to improve public safety through innovation. At the Crime Commission, Mr. Aborn advances strategies to improve the justice system, strengthen gun policies and practices, prevent youth gun violence, and prevent cybercrime.

Under Mr. Aborn's leadership, the commission has been instrumental in passage of several laws in New York including legislation to expand the use of [DNA evidence](#) to convict the guilty and exonerate the innocent, a comprehensive gun violence reduction package, known as the NY SAFE Act, and legislation increasing the penalty for carrying an illegal loaded firearm in the state. The commission also works with law enforcement, government agencies, community-based organizations, and academia to implement effective, comprehensive strategies to prevent crime.

Mr. Aborn led the design and implementation of New York City's "[Project Fast Track](#)," bringing together the New York City Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, the NYPD, the NY Office of Court Administration, local prosecutors and others to swiftly investigate and prosecute firearm offenders. He also brought the NYPD and FBI together to establish a first-of-its-kind joint strike force tasked with preventing two of the fastest-growing crimes in the city: identity and high-end electronics thefts. In partnership with the FBI, a new NYPD grand larceny unit with 300 officers investigates criminal rings that steal and re-sell smartphones and tablet computers, as well as perpetrators of online financial crimes.

Also under Mr. Aborn's leadership, the commission launched the [Predictive Prevention Lab](#), an incubator to develop predictive prevention solutions to enhance the effectiveness of crime prevention through behavior change. The commission partnered with researchers at New York University to develop a program, called [E-Responder](#), rooted in proven conflict resolution strategies, which trains community-based anti-violence professionals to interrupt conflicts on

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social media before the conflict escalates into real-world violence. In addition, the commission partnered with Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh to create an [intelligent tutoring system](#) that builds internet users' resilience to phishing attacks.

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Brad Lander
New York City Comptroller



New York City Comptroller Brad Lander was elected to serve as our city's budget watchdog and chief accountability officer on November 2nd, 2021. Lander's background in community organizing and urban planning informs his work to make government work better for all New Yorkers. First elected to the City Council in 2009, Lander co-founded the Council's Progressive Caucus and has a strong track

record of partnering with community advocates to win transformative change for a more just and equitable city.

In the City Council, Lander spearheaded efforts to protect workers and build a more equitable economy, working closely with labor advocates to win groundbreaking laws to end unfair firings and establish a fair work week for fast food workers, protect freelancers from wage theft, ban discriminatory credit checks for employment, and guarantee a living wage for app-based drivers and delivery workers.

Lander's hard-hitting reports and campaigns have led to better bus service, air-conditioning for all NYC school classrooms, and restored hundreds of millions of dollars for affordable housing. He helped lead a successful grassroots effort to desegregate the middle-schools of Community School District 15 (which serves students from Carroll Gardens, Park Slope, Red Hook, and Sunset Park) and partnered with advocates and legislators to combat discriminatory stop-and-frisk policing.

A longtime champion of more inclusive and transparent government, Lander helped bring participatory budgeting to NYC to give residents a voice in how city government invests in their neighborhoods. Throughout his work, Lander has taken an innovative, data-driven, and collaborative approach to tackling some of NYC's biggest challenges, from reckless driving to infrastructure investments.

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Lander was one of the founders of Local Progress, now a 1000-member strong network of local elected officials advancing a racial and economic justice agenda through all levels of local government. Prior to holding public office, Lander spent 15 years in the nonprofit sector as the director of the Fifth Avenue Committee and the Pratt Center for Community Development. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife, Meg Barnette, President and CEO of NonProfit New York, and their children, Marek and Rosa.

David Brand
Deputy Editor in Chief, [City Limits](#)



David Brand is deputy editor at City Limits. He previously served as editor of the Queens Daily Eagle, a daily print newspaper covering the World's Borough.

He is the co-host of City Watch, a one-hour weekly program on radio station WBAI. Before his career in journalism, Brand worked as a licensed social worker.

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Councilmember Lincoln Restler ***District 33, [New York City Council](#)***



Born in the 33rd Council District, Lincoln was raised by and has worked with the communities that make up the district his whole life – from Greenpoint to Brooklyn Heights and from Boerum Hill to Williamsburg.

Lincoln spent most of his career as a public servant in New York City government, where he fought hard to deliver for those New Yorkers who always seem to be overlooked by our elected officials. He designed and implemented programs like IDNYC – providing the first U.S. government issued photo identification for many of our city’s 600,000 undocumented residents and negotiated the creation of safe, affordable bank accounts that have benefited thousands of “unbanked” New Yorkers. Lincoln formerly served as Executive Director of the New York City Employment and Training Coalition, a nonprofit coalition of community-based organizations, union training funds, and community colleges that provide job training and job placement services to hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers annually.

And over a decade ago, Lincoln helped form New Kings Democrats, an organization dedicated to bringing transparency, accountability, and integrity to Brooklyn politics.

Understanding what our district needs is integral to how Lincoln works—he wants to tackle the affordability crisis, revitalize small businesses, and deliver solutions to climate change. He ran for office because he’s committed to being a problem solver for residents and showing up on every issue, big and small.

Lincoln grew up in Brooklyn Heights and lives in Greenpoint with his partner. He graduated from Brown University and attended neighborhood schools.

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Dana Kaplan

Senior Advisor, [the Independent Commission on New York City Criminal Justice and Incarceration Reform](#)



Dana Kaplan is Senior Advisor to the Independent Commission on New York City Criminal Justice and Incarceration Reform, and a current Art for Justice Fund Fellow. Most recently, she was Deputy Director of Close Rikers and Justice Initiatives at the New York City Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, where she oversaw programming to reduce the city's jail population and played a leadership role in the development of the plan to close the jails on Rikers Island.

Dana also coordinated implementation of Raise the Age, school climate reform, and other city initiatives to reduce unnecessary incarceration and support community-based public safety solutions. Prior to her time in City government, she was the Executive Director of the New Orleans-based non-profit legal and advocacy organization the Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana. She has also been a Soros Justice Fellow with the Center for Constitutional Rights, and has worked throughout the US on issues including detention reform, the cost of collect calls from prison, and policing reform.

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Kandra Clark ***Queens Neighborhood advisory Committee***



Kandra Clark is the Vice President of Policy and Strategy of Exodus Transitional Community - a preventative, reentry and advocacy non-profit organization located in East Harlem that serves over 3,400 people in community and 10,000 New Yorkers on Rikers Island each year. They employ over 300 staff – 80% of whom are directly impacted by incarceration including Kandra. Kandra oversees Exodus' policy and advocacy efforts, including supporting the closure of Rikers Island and the transformation of

our justice system. She also oversees fundraising efforts for the agency, including writing government and foundation grant proposals and meeting with potential donors. Most recently, she is the Project Manager working to develop supportive and affordable housing for the justice-impacted population.

Kandra holds a Master's Degree in Public Policy & Administration from John Jay College of Criminal Justice. She sits on several City-appointed Commissions, including the Board of Corrections Task Force on Issues Faced by Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming, Non-Binary, and/or Intersex People in Custody, as well as the Closure of Rikers Island and Reinvestment Commission (through the Speaker's Office). Kandra was also a 2018 NY Nonprofit Media 40 Under 40 Rising Star awardee.

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Gilly Delgado, Member of Guns Down Life Up



Gilly Delgado is an outreach/violence interrupter with 'Guns Down Life Up' (GDLU). The organization, which is a NYC Health + Hospitals/Lincoln Hospital (Bronx, NY) response to inner-city gun violence, brings together public health experts and community leaders to break the cycle of violence and empower youth. GDLU

prevents violence by offering after-school and summer recreational activities and hospital-based youth development programs, with mentoring and scholastic support.

GDLU builds coalitions of community stakeholders, which are called Circles of Safety. These coalitions convene regularly to discuss and share information on local public safety issues and accomplishments, as well as develop community-informed support strategies to advance public safety.

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Dean Meminger
Anchor, [NY1](#)



Dean Meminger is one of the city's most recognized reporters on the street with 20 years of experience covering news in New York City on TV and radio. In April 2011, he was named NY1's Criminal Justice Reporter.

Prior to that, Meminger was NY1's long-time Bronx reporter covering some of the city's major stories ranging from the site of the World Trade Center after 9/11 to the police shooting deaths of Amadou Diallo in 1999 and Sean Bell in 2006. In 2009 he captured the only video shot of US Airways flight 1549 minutes before it made its miracle landing on the Hudson River.

In December of 2013 Meminger was the only local New York City television reporter to travel to South Africa for a series of special reports following the death of Nelson Mandela. In March of 2012, one year after an earthquake and tsunami devastated parts of Japan, he visited areas that suffered nuclear meltdown, death, and destruction to see how the country began its efforts to rebuild.

On special assignment in Port au Prince, Haiti, in January of 2010, Meminger covered the relief efforts of New Yorkers after the earthquake that ravaged that country. In May 2009 he traveled to Mexico City to cover the effects of the H1N1 flu epidemic on area residents. In December of 2007 Meminger traveled to the Dominican Republic to investigate if relief supplies from New Yorkers were helping residents on the island devastated by Tropical Storm Noel. In Mali, West Africa, in April of 2007, he covered the journey and burial of an African family tragically killed in a house fire in the Bronx.

As a reporter who covers issues affecting the boroughs, Meminger took to the streets and ran 26.2 miles in the 2010 ING New York City Marathon, helping to raise funds for people who suffer with various forms of mental illness.

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In addition to his work in television, Meminger often hosts and appears on numerous radio programs on WBLS, HOT 97, NPR, WNYC and WOR Radio. Previously he delivered morning news and commentary on the station formerly known as 98.7 KISS-FM.

Meminger began his career in 1995 as a reporter and stand-in anchor at BronxNet TV (News 67). While there he also produced and hosted the entertainment show "Bronx Magazine."

He attended Pace University in Westchester County on a track and cross country scholarship. While at Pace, he was a radio disc jockey for the college's radio station, and eventually became the station's news director.

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Michael Jacobson

***Founding Director, [Institute for State and Local Governance](#), and
Former NYC Commissioner of Correction***



Michael Jacobson is ISLG's founding Executive Director as well as a sociology professor at the CUNY Graduate Center (GC). Prior to joining CUNY in May 2013 to help create ISLG, Michael was president of the Vera Institute of Justice, serving from 2005 to 2013. He is the author of *Downsizing Prisons: How to Reduce Crime and End Mass Incarceration* (New York University Press 2005).

Holding a Ph.D. in sociology, he has had an ongoing academic career coupled with more than 20 years of government service. From 1998 to 2005 he was a professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice and the GC. He was New York City correction commissioner from 1995 to 1998, New York City probation commissioner from 1992 to 1996, and worked in the New York City Office of Management and Budget from 1984 to 1992 where he was a deputy budget director. In 2010 to 2012, Michael served as the chair of Altus, a global alliance working across continents and from a multicultural perspective to improve public safety and justice.

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Charles Billups
Chairperson, [Grand Council of Guardians](#)



Mr. Charles Billups presently holds the position of Chairperson in The Grand Council of Guardians (The Council) and has done for over 25 years. The Grand Council of Guardians Inc. was formed in 1974 as an umbrella organization that consists of six African Americans fraternal organizations in the field of Law Enforcement, Uniform and Civilians throughout New York City. Realizing that there were other Law Enforcement African American organizations that were having similar problems and stood alone with no support, Mr. Billups decided to reorganize The Council by bringing in these different fraternal organizations throughout New York State together.

Today, The Council consists of or is affiliated with over two dozen Law enforcement fraternal organizations throughout New York State. Being a tremendous source of support and a strong voice for members of The Council, Mr. Billups is always working on fixing the Gap between Black Law Enforcement, the African Americans and Latinos communities by reinforcing the community base ties in many different ways (i.e., doing community outreach during times like Thanksgiving & Christmas, Supporting Gun Legislation that take guns out of our communities and Legislation that made N.Y. Police agencies accountable on questionable shootings, holding Press Conferences about the injustice in the African American communities, Take Back Our Community (TBOC), Adopting Public School Mentoring Programs, workshops on what to do when stop by the police, which The Council started displaying in New York in 1994).

Mr. Billups is also a Law Enforcement Consultant on N.Y. Policing and N.Y. Correction policies and a criminal investigator for different NY Law Firms, and a Pass member of The N.Y.C.L.U. Advisory Task Force Board on Police Brutality and Community Policing. Mr. Billups has been involved in various organizations in communities throughout New York State with over 25 years as a Law Enforcement Officer (retired), and a NYS Municipal Police Instructor (various subjects). Mr.

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Billups attended NYC Public School and went to college for studies in Electrical Engineering. He has received a various number of awards from different organizations throughout the country and from a host of Elected Officials for the work he has done throughout different communities.

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Rev. Sharon White-Harrigan
Executive Director, [Women's Community Justice Association](#)



Sharon has been the Executive Director of the Women's Community Justice Association since 2018. Drawing on her experience as a licensed social worker, domestic violence survivor, and formerly incarcerated person, she has expertise in various direct services and policy advocacy campaigns that support justice-impacted women. Sharon was a leader in the successful effort to enact New York State's Domestic Violence Survivors Justice Act in 2019.

She also serves as an advisory member of the Survivor's Justice Project, the co-lead of the Bedford Hills project, a strategic consultant and senior advisor to the Women & Justice Project, a member of the International Advisory Committee with the National Council of Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls, co-creator of the Justice 4 Women Task Force (#J4WTF), Policy Council Member, and co-founder & executive member of Women Building UP. She holds a master's degree in Social Work from Lehman College, a bachelor's degree in Social Work and Criminal Justice from City University of New York where she was a Thomas W. Smith Fellow, and an associates degree in Liberal Arts from Marymount Manhattan College. Sharon is the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including the Frank & Lisina Hoch Award for Social Justice Advocacy and Activism, and the 2019 Leadership Award for her advocacy to pass the Domestic Violence Survivors Justice Act.

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John Gallagher
Former Deputy Warden in Command, [NYC Department of Correction](#)



John Gallagher, former Deputy Warden in Command, Population/Custody Management, New York City Department of Correction (DOC) was assigned to Rikers Island as a rookie Correction Officer in 1989. Thirty years later, he is credited with transforming the Department's approach to treating inmates with mental illnesses. He played a leadership role in ensuring that seven jails on Rikers Island have mental

health units that house and provide support to inmates with mental illnesses. He is also attributed with developing Crisis Intervention Training on how to de-escalate situations involving inmates with mental health issues for over 600 Correction Officers. In recognition of his work excellence and outstanding dedication to municipal and public service, Gallagher was presented with a Sloan Public Service Award by the Fund of the City of New York in 2019.

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Elizabeth Gaynes
Former Executive Director, [the Osbourne Association](#)



Elizabeth Gaynes was Executive Director of the Osbourne Association, a 75-year-old nonprofit organization based in New York City that provides a wide range of educational, employment, treatment and family services to individuals affected by incarceration. Gaynes is a nationally recognized expert on prisoner reentry and the impact of incarceration on children and families.

Under her leadership, Osbourne had developed and operated programs in community sites in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens, as well as 20+ state prisons, city jails, and courts.

Osbourne offers job training and placement, prison and reentry services, and prevention and treatment programs. In 1985, Ms. Gaynes spearheaded the creation of FamilyWorks, the first comprehensive parenting program in a men's state prison, and launched some of the nation's first and most innovative services for children with parents in prison, including children's visiting centers at upstate New York prisons.

In 2004, together with her daughter, Emani Davis, she was the first American ever nominated for the prestigious international World's Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child, for their work defending the rights of children with parents in prison. She is the recipient of the 2000 Jessie Ball duPont Fund Award, the foundation's highest honor for leadership, and the 2003 Martin Luther King Drum Major for Justice Award, Center for Law and Justice (SUNY Albany) and serves as the Chair of the Board of Directors of OPEN Children, an Ethiopia-based children's charity.

Ms. Gaynes, an attorney, began her legal career as a criminal defense attorney involved in representing prisoners at Attica following the 1971 prison uprising, and later joined Prisoners Legal Services of New York as a staff attorney in the Albany office. She later became an associate at the Pretrial Services Resource Center in Washington, D.C., which provides technical assistance to jurisdictions around the

HALFWAY TO HISTORY: PROGRESS & CHALLENGES IN CLOSING RIKERS ISLAND

A symposium and reception to mark the midway point in closing the jails on Rikers Island

country seeking to reduce their jail populations and develop alternatives to jail and prison.

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Councilmember Carlina Rivera ***District 2, [New York City Council](#)***



Carlina Rivera represents the 2nd Council District which includes the diverse neighborhoods of the East Village, Flatiron, Gramercy Park, Rose Hill, Kips Bay, Murray Hill and the Lower East Side. During her time in the Council, Carlina has already introduced and passed legislation related to sexual harassment, immigration, criminal justice reform, affordable housing, small business survival, and bicycle safety.

Carlina was born and raised in the 2nd District of Lower Manhattan by a single mother who emigrated from Puerto Rico. She began her career in afterschool programming, working with children at some of New York City's highest-needs schools. She went on to serve her local community, creating and organizing

initiatives for seniors and homeless New Yorkers as Director of Programs and Services at Good Old Lower East Side (GOLES), a local non-profit focused on social justice.

Carlina has a history of bringing people together to improve the lives, resources and well-being of the residents of Manhattan's East Side, whether as a community board member, as an organizer or on a taskforce that secured funding for East River waterfront resiliency in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. After Sandy, Carlina helped coordinate thousands of volunteers to assist over 10,000 homebound residents as part of a recovery network that would go on to support families affected by the Second Avenue and Flatiron Explosions. She has already secured millions of dollars for her district to improve services, programs, schools and cultural institutions.

Carlina lives with her husband, pug, and turtle. She graduated from Marist College with a B.A. in Journalism, after attending local district schools her entire life.

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Karol V. Mason
President, [John Jay College of Criminal Justice](#)



Over the course of her long career, John Jay College President Karol V. Mason has been a legal pioneer and an exceptional voice for equality, fairness, and criminal justice reform. She was a leader in the Obama Administration on juvenile justice issues, bail reform and re-entry for individuals leaving prison, and in her distinguished career at Alston & Bird LLP, she was the first African American woman elected as chair of the management committee at any major national firm.

As United States Assistant Attorney General and head of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, Mason oversaw an annual budget of \$4 billion to support an array of state and local criminal justice agencies, juvenile justice programs, and services for crime victims, and oversaw the National Institute of Justice and the Bureau of Justice Statistics, among a wide range of other efforts. She led the Department of Justice's work to address the issue of community trust in the justice system through a variety of programs including the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice, a partnership with John Jay College and other academic institutions across the country designed to address lack of trust in the criminal justice system.

Previously, Mason served as Deputy Associate Attorney General from 2009 to 2012. She led the Office of Justice Programs from June 2013 to January 2017 after being nominated by President Obama and confirmed by the U.S. Senate. Mason spent almost three decades at Alston & Bird, LLP, where she chaired the Public Finance Group. She was also a member of the Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina from 2001 to 2009 and Vice Chair of that Board from 2007 to 2009. Mason received an A.B. in Mathematics from the University of North Carolina, and a J.D. from the University of Michigan Law School.