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**New York County Lawyers Association Members Take Oath as Special Masters
In Partnership with the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission and the Unified Court System**

March 28, 2022 New York, New York – Members of the New York County Lawyers Association (NYCLA) took their oaths at a swearing in ceremony for the 2022 Class of Special Masters in the rotunda at the Supreme Court, New York County on March 22, 2022. The Administration of the Oath was delivered by Hon. Deborah Kaplan, Deputy Chief Administrative Judge (NYC). The ceremony also included remarks from the Honorable Troy K. Webber, Associate Justice, Appellate Division, First Department & Co-Chair of the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission; Hon. Richard Rivera, Supervising Judge, Albany County Family Court & Co-Chair of the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission, Vincent T. Chang, President of the New York County Lawyers Association; and Hon. Adam Silvera, Administrative Judge, Supreme Court New York County (Civil).

“We are proud to announce the 2022 Class of Special Masters. This program delivers opportunities for underrepresented communities to play a more visible role in our legal system and provide essential support to our overburdened courts” said L. Austin D’Souza, Commissioner, Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission and NYCLA’s Special Master Coordinator.

Critical to the success of this program are the participating Justices of the New York Supreme Court, New York County (Civil Term):

- Hon. Suzanne Adams
- Hon. Lyle E. Frank
- Hon. Judy H. Kim
- Hon. Gerald Lebovits
- Hon. David Cohen
- Hon. Paul Allan Goetz
- Hon. Sabrina B. Kraus
- Hon. W. Franc Perry

- Hon. Dakota D. Ramseur
- Hon. Leslie A. Stroth
- Hon. Verna L. Saunders
- Hon. J. Machel Sweeting

Congratulations to the 2022 Class of Special Masters:

- Judith C. Aarons, Esq.
- Onya U. Brinson, Esq.
- Christina Chelliah, Esq.
- Evette C. Ennis, Esq.
- Jasmine James, Esq.
- Grace E. Lee, Esq.
- Tyear Middleton, Esq.
- Joshua David Riegel, Esq.
- Richard Swanson, Esq.
- Crystal R. Villasenor, Esq.
- Alyson E. Bass, Esq.
- Thomas F. Cathcart, Esq.
- Caroline L. Y. Chen, Esq.
- Jennifer Frankola-Crawford, Esq.
- Kerry S. Jamieson, Esq.
- May T. Li, Esq.
- Joyce Campbell Priveterre, Esq.
- Diana Lozada Ruiz, Esq.
- Sabrina M. Tann, Esq.

For more information on each new Special Master, the Special Masters Training Program instructors, Special Masters Screening Panel, and the Special Masters Committee Members of the Franklin Williams Judicial Commission, [click here](#).

About the Special Masters Program

NYCLA first launched the Special Masters Program in 1976 to help the New York court system manage its congested calendars during a statewide budget crisis. 350 NYCLA lawyers volunteered as Special Masters of the courts to relieve the burden. The relaunched Special Masters Program, in partnership with the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission and the New York State Unified Court System, will focus on creating a pipeline for attorneys of color and other underrepresented communities to volunteer in the courts and inspire them to become judges.

Special Masters are trained through NYCLA’s CLE Institute and work closely with Justices in the Supreme Court, Civil Term in New York County. They will assist judges at discovery and settlement conferences, conducting legal research, drafting memoranda of law advising the Court on legal issues, and handling

other assignments as needed. Special Masters will work closely with judges, be mentored by them, and get a feel for working on cases from an impartial perspective.

The relaunched Special Masters Program is spearheaded by L. Austin D'Souza, who serves on NYCLA's Board of Directors and is a Commissioner with the Franklin H. Williams Commission. Mr. D'Souza works as a Principal Law Clerk for the Honorable Faviola A. Soto in the New York Court of Claims.

To learn more about the Special Masters Program, [click here](#).

About the New York County Lawyers Association

The New York County Lawyers Association (www.nycla.org) was founded in 1908 as one of the first major bar associations in the country that admitted members without regard to race, ethnicity, religion, or gender. Since its inception, it has pioneered some of the most far-reaching and tangible reforms in American jurisprudence. For more information on NYCLA please visit nycla.org.

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