2022 PUERTO RICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

Scholarship Fund Gala

SEPTEMBER 29, 2022

CHAMPION

Kasowitz Benson Torres LLP congratulates our partner **Kim Conroy**, Attorney of the Year, **Justice Lucindo Suarez**, **Jeanine Ramirez** and **Council Member Marjorie Velazquez** for being honored at the Puerto Rican Bar Association Scholarship Fund Gala.

Kasowitz's core focus is commercial litigation, complemented by our exceptionally strong bankruptcy/restructuring and real estate transactioal practices. We are known for our creative, aggressive litigators and willingness to take on tough cases.

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PROGRAM

WELCOME

Anthony Beneduce, Esq.
Treasurer, Puerto Rican Bar Association and PRBASF Alumnus

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Lieutenant Jessica Hernandez
President of the Latino Court Officers Society

BENEDICTION

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS AWARD PRESENTATION

Jeanine Ramirez
Award-Winning Journalist

Presented by
Honorable Wilma Guzman
Past President, Board Member, Puerto Rican Bar Association

PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD PRESENTATION

Council Member Marjorie Velázquez
New York City Council, District 13

Presented by
Honorable Wanda Y. Negron
Board Member, Puerto Rican Bar Association

ATTORNEY OF THE YEAR AWARD PRESENTATION

Kim Conroy, Esq.
Partner, Kasowitz Benson Torres LLP

Presented by
Peter Rivera, Esq.
Board Member, Puerto Rican Bar Association

JUDICIARY EXCELLENCE AWARD PRESENTATION

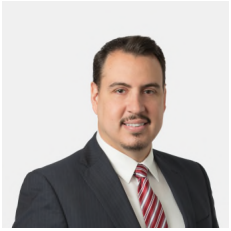
Honorable Lucindo Suarez
Justice, Supreme Court, Bronx County

Presented by
Honorable Mary V. Rosado
Board Member, Puerto Rican Bar Association

CLOSING REMARKS

Steven Cordero, Esq.
President, Puerto Rican Bar Association

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



DEAR MEMBERS, HONORED GUESTS, FAMILY AND FRIENDS:

It is a tremendous honor to be re-elected and serve as the 65th President of the Puerto Rican Bar Association and follow in the footsteps of the extraordinary jurists, public officials, and practitioners who preceded me. I stand on the shoulders of my predecessors and, arm-and-arm with my fellow officers and directors, to continue the PRBA's leadership role in community service, mentorship for new and developing attorneys, and inclusivity that allows for greater access to positions within the larger legal community.

The PRBA was founded in 1957 to serve the burgeoning Puerto Rican community in New York City by providing a home for Puerto Rican and Latino attorneys who had been denied membership in other organizations. Sixty-five years later we continue to provide this home. Our events have been virtual and in-person, when appropriate, as we emerge from the grips of the worst pandemic in a century that has robbed us of over one million loved ones. As we have done every year since 1978, we are once again awarding scholarships to help Puerto Rican and Latino law students with a connection to New York to assist in their education.

I want to congratulate this year's Gala honorees who have each immeasurably uplifted our community through their leadership and service. The Honorable Lucindo Suarez, Kim Conroy, Esq., Council Member Marjorie Velázquez, and Jeanine Ramirez exemplify an outstanding commitment to the community, law, and mentorship.

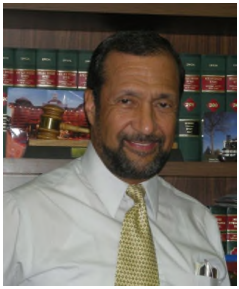
I am incredibly thankful to all our members who continue to support the PRBA and its mission, through offering the "Three T's": their time, talents, and treasures. I am also thankful to our donors, both longtime and those who just joined us on this journey.

In these times of crisis, it is important to look forward. There will be a better tomorrow and the Puerto Rican Bar Association will be with you every step of the way as we get there.

Hasta pronto,

Steven M. Cordero, Esq.
65th President of the Puerto Rican Bar Association

HONOREE



JUDICIARY EXCELLENCE AWARD

HONORABLE LUCINDO SUAREZ

Justice, Supreme Court, Bronx County, Former Presiding Justice of the Appellate Term, First Department, and Former Statewide Coordinating Judge for Summary Jury Trials

The **Hon. Lucindo Suarez** was elected to Bronx Civil Court in 1993 and to Bronx Supreme Court in 1995. In 2000, he was appointed Associate Justice of the Appellate Term, First Department, 1st and 12th Judicial Districts, and in 2002 as its Presiding Justice, the first Latino Presiding Justice of an Appellate Court. In 2006 he was named Statewide Coordinating Judge for Summary Jury Trials, the first Latino named to a statewide judicial position where he served for fifteen years. Since 2006, over 7,000 Summary Jury Trials have been conducted in New York State. Justice Suarez was reelected to Bronx Supreme Court in 2010. His present Supreme Court inventory consists of labor law, products liability and non-medical professional malpractice cases.

Major decisions by Justice Suarez include *Stiglianese v. Vallone* (1995), subject of a *NY Times Sunday Magazine* report, where he held that persistent, loud and intense sounds from heavy metal rock band practice, amplified home stereo and guitar music, and portable and automobile radios, over a three year period, were sufficiently objectionable to deprive homeowners of the beneficial use and enjoyment of their property; and *NY Cnty Lawyers Ass'n v. State* (2003), where he ruled that State's failure to increase compensation rates for assigned counsel, violated the constitutional and statutory right to meaningful and effective representation of children and indigent adult defendants in family and criminal court cases.

Justice Suarez has conducted over 100 Summary Jury Trial presentations to judges and bar associations across New York State. He's also presented in California, Colorado, New Mexico, Michigan and Texas. He has also taught Business Law for seven semesters as a volunteer faculty member at Malcom-King College Extension in Harlem, and Paralegal Studies for seven years at Bronx Community College where he attained tenure and the rank of Associate Professor.

Justice Suarez was born in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. He earned his bachelor's degree from Fordham University and his J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania Law School. He recently celebrated his 51st wedding anniversary with his wife Hilda. They have two children - Roslyn and Roxanne, and two grandchildren - Isaiah and Jeremiah.

HONOREE

ATTORNEY OF THE YEAR AWARD

KIM CONROY, ESQ.

Partner, Kasowitz Benson Torres LLP

Kim Conroy is a Partner at Kasowitz Benson Torres LLP. She focuses her practice on high-stakes complex civil litigation and investigations. Kim represents numerous investment firms and hedge funds, financial institutions, corporations and individuals in a wide range of disputes, including securities, fraud and business matters, with extensive experience handling large complex disputes in state and federal civil and bankruptcy courts at the trial and appellate levels, as well as in arbitrations.

Kim has been recognized as a Notable Hispanic Leader and Executive by Crain's New York Business and a Top Latino Lawyer by Latino Leaders Magazine.

Additionally, Kim is committed to public service. She serves on the Board of Directors for Directions For Our Youth, a Bronx-based non-profit organization that provides quality out-of-school and in-school programing for young people in underserved areas of New York City. She was also instrumental in organizing a Latin Dance Party fundraiser at The Copacabana in Manhattan, raising significant funds for Puerto Ricans in the devastating aftermath of Hurricane Maria.

Kim received her J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania Law School, and her B.A. from Hunter College of the City University of New York.

HONOREE

PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

COUNCIL MEMBER MARJORIE VELÁZQUEZ

New York City Council, District 13

Council Member Marjorie Velázquez represents District 13 of the New York City Council. As the daughter of Puerto Rican parents who moved here in the 1970's to build a better life, she learned the values of hard work, dedication and commitment to education at a young age. Marjorie's roots in the community were formed during her early years attending public schools in Parkchester and St. Catharine's Academy for high school in Pelham Parkway before earning her degree in Finance and Accounting at NYU. She worked in several corporate finance, budgeting, and accounting positions, where she designed and implemented accounting strategies for various regions around the world.

In 2012, Marjorie suffered life-changing injuries from a workplace accident and a subsequent serious car crash that left her temporarily disabled. Always a fighter, she found a path to recovery through giving back to her community. During her recovery, Marjorie's life went from one of painful struggle to one of public service. Marjorie volunteered her time to elect several elected officials through historic and decisive wins. She also joined Bronx Community Board 10 where she served as treasurer and Municipal Services Committee chair, which focused on providing a much-needed voice to the community on issues ranging from transportation to parks services and other quality of life issues.

Marjorie also served as a volunteer on the boards of Amplify Her and the Broad Room, both of which are dedicated to empowering women through civil and political engagement. She also served on the board of St. Joseph's School for the Deaf Children's Fund, the Bronx- Westchester advisory board of Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and the Bronx River Alliance that advocates for environmental justice and resiliency.

HONOREE

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS AWARD

JEANINE RAMIREZ

Award-Winning Journalist

Jeanine Ramirez is an award-winning journalist who covered New York City news, as well as stories on Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, for more than two decades. She reported on the catastrophic events surrounding 9/11; the dramatic trial of drug lord El Chapo; the devastation from Superstorm Sandy; the controversial construction of Barclays Center; and the rebirth of Coney Island.

Among her many honors, Jeanine served as one of the Grand Marshals in the National Puerto Rican Day Parade on Fifth Avenue. She's a five-time Emmy Award-nominee and has received awards from the National Hispanic Media Coalition; New York Press Club, City & State; El Diario/La Prensa as well as from elected officials, organized labor and community groups.

A native of Brooklyn, Jeanine majored in communications both at Brooklyn Technical High School, where she was a member of ASPIRA and at Fordham University, where she was founder and co-captain of the school's dance team Ram Rhythm. She landed her first television job at WPIX in New York and then moved for her first on-air position to Midland-Odessa, Texas. She worked at the NBC affiliate KWES-TV where she reported, anchored and hosted the syndicated, weekly Latino music program Colores del Barrio. Jeanine has been a member of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists throughout her career.

2022 SCHOLARSHIP AWARD RECIPIENTS

THE DARE TO DREAM SCHOLARSHIP

Thania Barbecho, *Hofstra Law School*

THE FELIPE N. TORRES & FRANK TORRES SCHOLARSHIP

Celeste Kabemba, *Cardozo Law School*

PUERTO RICAN BAR ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP FUND SCHOLARSHIP

Natasha Alvarado, *CUNY Law School*
Abdiel Caballero, *NYU Law School*
Lisette Candia-Diaz, *Brooklyn Law School*
Mercy Romero-Aleman, *Brooklyn Law School*
Samantha Velez, *Cardozo Law School*

2022 PRBA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Steven Cordero, *President*
Angelicque Moreno, *President-Elect*
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Elena Makau, *Recording Secretary*
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GALA COMMITTEE

Steven Cordero
Angelicque Moreno
Patrick Torres Hayes
Hon. Wilma Guzman
Hon. Mary V. Rosado
Hon. Wanda Y. Negron
Peter Rivera

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Maya Ureño-Dembar
Prior Scholarship Award Recipient

Samantha Velez
Cardozo School of Law

Keanu Velez
Brooklyn Law School

OUR HISTORY

The Puerto Rican Bar Association, Inc. (PRBA) was established in 1957 with the purpose of offering both personal and professional support to Puerto Rican and Latino attorneys in an effort to address the concerns of a rapidly growing Latino community in New York City. Sixty-five years later, the PRBA continues to provide a home across the spectrum of our legal community: from Puerto Rican and Latino law students to justices on our highest court, from small-firm associates to big-law partners, from those entering private practice to those who have spent decades in the public sector, and from multigenerational attorneys to those who are the first in their family to become a lawyer. The PRBA hosts events throughout the year such as CLE programming, workshops, and social gatherings.

In 1978, the PRBA founded the Puerto Rican Bar Association Scholarship Fund, Inc. as a separate corporate entity registered under New York State Not-For-Profit Corporation Law by the then-PRBA President, the late Donald Grajales, a distinguished New York State Court of Claims Judge.

OUR MISSION

The Scholarship Fund was created for the purpose of raising funds to award financial scholarships to deserving law students. Through the generosity of our sponsors and the contributions of our members and supporters, the Scholarship Fund has been able to award a substantial amount in scholarships throughout the years, including in 2020 and 2021 despite the COVID-19 Pandemic, to deserving Puerto Rican and Latino law students.

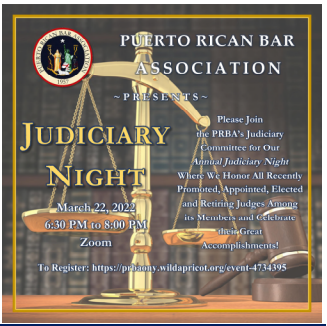
Our scholarship recipients are employed in diverse legal settings: state and federal courts, city and state agencies, law firms, corporations, not-for-profit organizations, law schools, solo practitioners and also as elected officials.

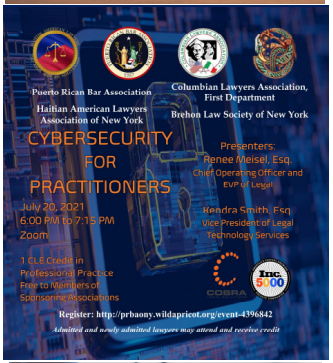
OUR GOAL

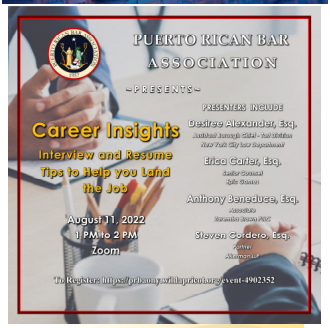
The goal of the Scholarship Fund is to support diversity in the legal profession by providing financial assistance to underrepresented law students. Diversity in law schools are supported through scholarships, grants, tuition and financial assistance programs.

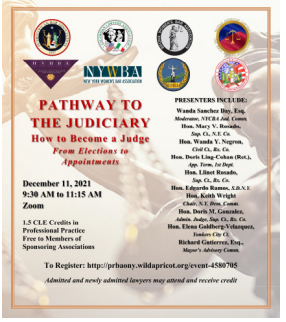
These types of programs are all viable methods of ensuring that Latinos remain represented in the legal profession and the PRBA is proud to support well deserving law students in our community through our scholarship program.

PROGRAMING AND EVENTS ♦ 2021-2022

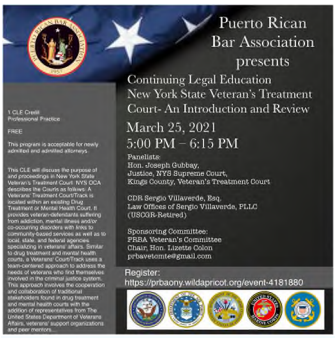


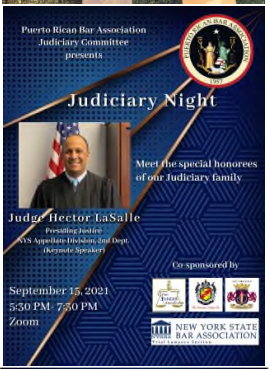






PROGRAMING AND EVENTS ♦ 2021-2022





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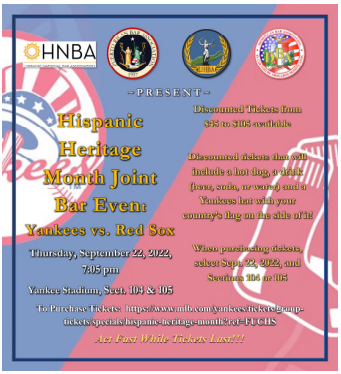

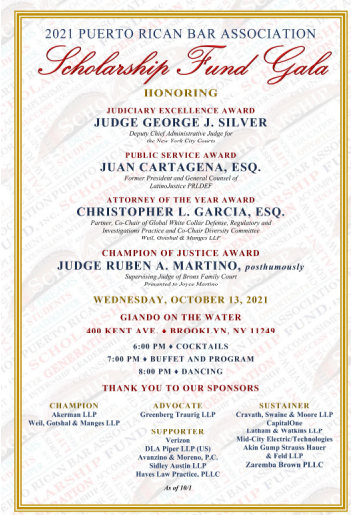

COMMENDATION LETTERS

STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ALBANY 12224

KATHY HOCHUL
GOVERNOR

September 29, 2022

Puerto Rican Bar Association
c/o Akerman LLP
1251 Avenue of the Americas, 37th Floor
New York, NY 10020

Dear Friends:

It is my pleasure to send greetings to everyone gathered for the Puerto Rican Bar Association (PRBA) Scholarship Fund Gala.

Since its founding in 1957, the Puerto Rican Bar Association has grown from a small group of individuals into one of the country's oldest and largest affinity bar organizations, representing the interests of Puerto Rican and Latino attorneys. PRBA utilizes the Women's Committee, the Committee to Encourage Judicial Excellence, and the Legislative Committee to strengthen diversity and take an active role in shaping policy that affects the Latino community, ensuring equal rights and representation. The Puerto Rican Bar Association Scholarship Fund, Inc. awards outstanding Puerto Rican and Latino law students with grants, allowing them to pursue their full potential across a range of legal settings.

Today, you come together to both gather support for your Scholarship Fund program, but also to recognize several distinguished individuals and commend them for their exceptional service to the community. I join in presenting Justice Lucindo Suarez with the Judiciary Excellence Award, Kim Conroy, Esq. with the Attorney of the Year Award, Jeanine Ramirez with the Media & Communications Award, and Council Member Marjorie Veláquez with the Public Service Award. Your commitment to professional excellence will continue to assist your members for years to come.

Best wishes for an enjoyable celebration.

Atentamente,

Kathy Hochul

Kathy Hochul
Governor

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

COMMENDATION LETTERS

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY

September 29, 2022

Dear Friends:

Please accept my sincere greetings as you celebrate the Puerto Rican Bar Association's (PRBA) 42nd Anniversary Scholarship Fund Gala and 65 years of service to the legal community.

Established in 1957, the PRBA is one of the oldest affinity bar associations in the country, offering personal and professional support to Puerto Rican and Latino attorneys in New York City. In 1978, the PRBA created the non-profit Puerto Rican Bar Association Scholarship Fund, Inc. to raise funds to award financial scholarships to Puerto Rican and Latino law students. Through the generosity of members and supporters, the Scholarship Fund awarded a substantial amount in scholarships throughout the years, including throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic, to deserving Puerto Rican and Latino law students, who compete for the funds through the annual essay writing competition.

I am delighted to offer my congratulations to tonight's honorees: Hon. Lucindo Suarez, Justice, Supreme Court, Bronx Country, Former Presiding Justice of the Appellate Term, First Department and Former Statewide Coordinating Judge for Summary Jury Trials, receives the *Judiciary Excellence Award*; Council Member Marjorie Velázquez, New York City Council, District 13, receives the *Public Service Award;* Kim Conroy, Esq., Partner, Kasowitz Benson Torres, LLP., receives, the *Attorney of the Year Award*; and Jeanine Ramirez, award-winning journalist, receives the *Media & Communications Award*. The honorees can be proud of what they have accomplished in their professional careers and of the tremendous support they have given to the Puerto Rican Bar Association. I join with their family and friends in saluting them for a job well done.

Again, congratulations to tonight's honorees and the return of the PRBA scholarship fund gala. Best wishes to the Puerto Rican Bar Association for continued success.

Sincerely,

Carl E. Heastie

CARL E. HEASTIE
Speaker

COMMENDATION LETTERS

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS
NEW YORK STATE SENATE, 35TH DISTRICT
PRESIDENT PRO TEM ♦ MAJORITY LEADER

August 9, 2022

Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the ***2022 Puerto Rican Bar Association's Scholarship Fund Gala.*** Established in 1957, PRBA is one of the oldest affinity bar associations in the country, offering personal and professional support to Puerto Rican and Latino attorneys in New York City. The scholarship fund has been able to award many scholarships throughout the years to deserving Puerto Rican and Latino law students.

I would like to take a moment and extend my congratulations to this year's awardees: **Justice Lucindo Suarez**, Supreme Court Justice of Bronx County, Former Presiding Justice of the Appellate Term, First Department and Former Statewide Coordinating Judge for Summary Jury Trials with the *Judiciary Excellence Award*; **Kim Conroy, Esq.**, Partner of Kasowitz Benson Torres, LLP with the *Attorney of the Year Award*; **Jeanine Ramirez,** award-wining journalist with the *Media & Communications Award;* and **Council Member, Marjorie Velázquez**, New York City Council of District 13 with the *Public Service Award.*

This event would not have been possible without your attendance and support. I truly appreciate you being here. ***The Puerto Rican Bar Association*** is well-served by your involvement, and I thank you for helping make a difference in the lives of others.

Best Wishes,

Andrea Stewart-Cousins
New York State Senator, 35th District
President Pro Tem, Majority Leader

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2022 GALA DONOR LIST

THE DARE TO DREAM SCHOLARSHIP

Honorable Sallie Manzanet-Daniels

THE FELIPE N. TORRES & FRANK TORRES SCHOLARSHIP

The Torres Family

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The Latino Judges Association
Congratulates

The Puerto Rican Bar Association
and its distinguished honorees:

Hon. Lucindo Suarez
Judiciary Excellence Award

Kim Conroy, Esq.
Attorney of the Year Award

Jeanine Ramirez
Communications Award

Council Member Marjorie Velázquez
Public Service Award

Capital One

Celebrating your excellence.

Capital One Business Banking is proud to support the **Puerto Rican Bar Association Scholarship Fund, Inc**. Congratulations to the scholarship recipients.

capitalone.com/small-business-bank

Sharif Khalek
Market Sales Executive, Business Banking
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SUSTAINER

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STRAUSS HAUER & FELD LLP

Supporting diversity in the legal profession

We are proud to sponsor the **Puerto Rican Bar Association** Scholarship Fund Gala Banquet.

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We're sharing our technology to help communities realize the promise of a digital world.

Wherever the world needs technology to solve social issues, we're there. We invest in our brightest minds to help make our communities better places to work, live and learn.

Verizon is a proud sponsor of the 2022 Puerto Rican Bar Association Scholarship Fund Gala.

verizon

SUSTAINER

BORAH GOLDSTEIN ALTSCHULER NAHINS & GOIDEL, P.C.
is proud to support the
Puerto Rican Bar Association Scholarship Fund
and all of the 2022 Honorees and Recipients.

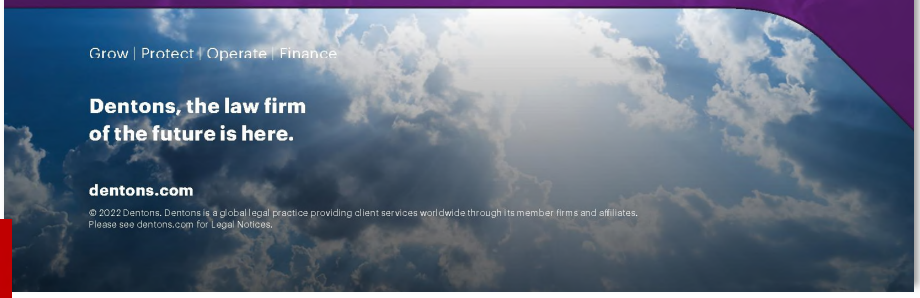
BORAH GOLDSTEIN
ALTSCHULER NAHINS & GOIDEL, P.C.
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

SUSTAINER

大成 DENTONS

Dentons is proud to support the Puerto Rican Bar Association Scholarship Fund and congratulates this year's gala honorees.

Dentons also salutes our own Tomasita Luz Sherer, a former vice president of the PRBA, in her ongoing efforts to promote diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives in our firm.



Zaremba Brown would like to congratulate the nominees of the 2022 Puerto Rican Bar Association

Scholarship Fund Gala

JUDICIARY EXCELLENCE AWARD
JUSTICE LUCINDO SUAREZ
Justice, Supreme Court, Bronx County, Former Presiding Justice of the Appellate Term, First Department and Former Statewide Coordinating Judge for Summary Jury Trials

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS AWARD
JEANINE RAMIREZ
Award-Winning Journalist

PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD
COUNCIL MEMBER MARJORIE VELÁZQUEZ
New York City Council, District 13

ATTORNEY OF THE YEAR AWARD
KIM CONROY, ESQ.
Partner, Kasowitz Benson Torres, LLP

Zaremba | Brown PLLC

zarembabrown.com | 40 Wall Street, 52nd Floor, New York, NY 10005 | (212) 380-6700

CANALES PLLC

Congratulations to all Honorees and Award Recipients!

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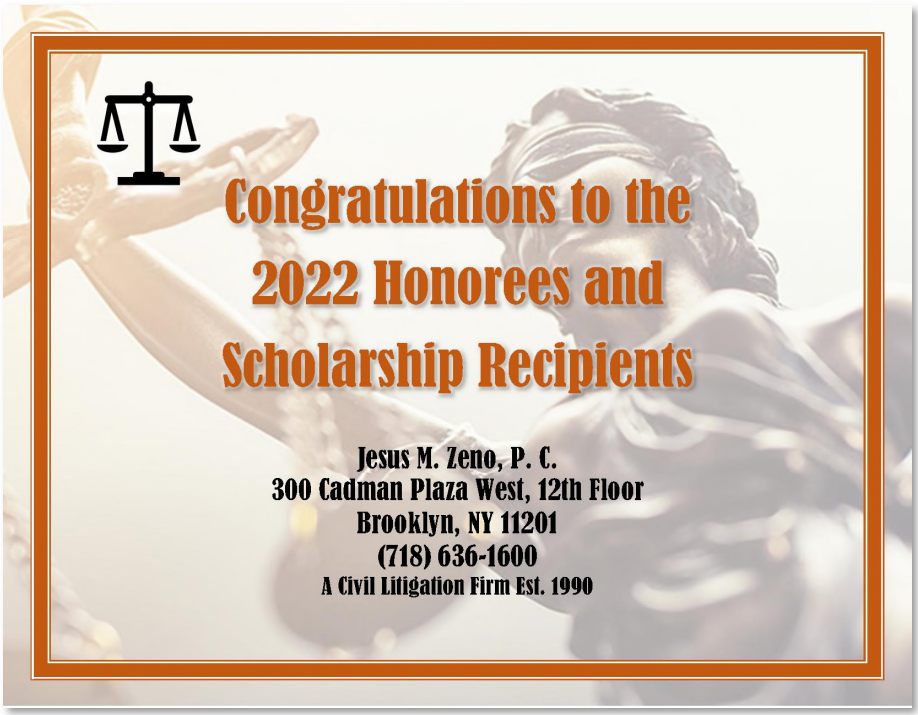
Southold, NY Office: 55000 Main Road, Southold, New York 11971
(212) 988-2039 Jason@canalespllc.com



SUSTAINER

Congratulations

We are pleased to support the Puerto Rican Bar Association and recognize the accomplishments of tonight's honorees, Justice Lucindo Suarez, Kim Conroy, Esq., Jeanine Ramirez and Marjorie Velázquez.

CRAVATH, SWAINE & MOORE LLP

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF LAW

Salutes the

Puerto Rican Bar Association

For providing over 60 years of dedicated service to the Puerto Rican and Latino community.

Best wishes for a successful 2022 Scholarship Gala!

Michael A. Simons
Dean and John V. Brennan Professor of Law and Ethics

Law Offices

of

Congratulates
all scholarship recipients
and would like to illuminate the
continued dedication to these students
by the
Puerto Rican Bar Association

www.bhnylaw.com

Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick
Co-Chair, GT National Appeals & Legal Issues Group
One Vanderbilt Avenue | New York, NY 10017 | 212.801.9200

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WORLDWIDE LOCATIONS

United States, Europe, Middle East, Asia, Latin America

¡Felicidades!

Akerman is proud to support the Puerto Rican Bar Association Scholarship Fund Gala and our Partner, Steven M. Cordero, as the 65th President.

We join in congratulating all the honorees.

CHAMPION

Steven M. Cordero
New York, NY
212 822 2231
steven.cordero@akerman.com

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