



**Jewish Lawyers
Association
of Nassau County**

ANNUAL
INSTALLATION DINNER

OCTOBER 30, 2024
TEMPLE BETH SHOLOM

DINNER JOURNAL



**Jewish Lawyers
Association of
Nassau County**

THE HISTORY OF JEWISH LAWYERS ASSOCIATION OF NASSAU COUNTY

The Jewish Lawyers Association of Nassau County, commonly referred to as the JLA, was established in 1973 and continues to thrive as a vital component of the Nassau County legal community. The JLA was created by Jewish lawyers and judges and was born of a desire to gather members of the bench and bar around shared beliefs and promote the Jewish values of Torah tzedek u'mishpat (charity, justice, and learning). The JLA offers access to meaningful and exciting events, educational programs, and professional opportunities, all taking place in a cordial and welcoming atmosphere.

Neil T. Shayne was a former President and one of the founding members of the Jewish Lawyers Association of Nassau County. Neil believed in the importance of having an organization for Jewish lawyers and judges. As a founder of the Jewish Lawyers Association, Neil paved the way to make the profession more accessible for his fellow Jews. Neil mentored many young lawyers in the Jewish Lawyers Association and always made himself available to help lawyers in Nassau County and all over the country solve their legal and personal problems. There was a time when Jews were discriminated against in the legal profession, and it is because of the leadership and commitment of outstanding Jewish lawyers such as Neil that the legal profession is as accessible to Jews as it is today. The Neil T. Shayne Distinguished Service Award honors individuals who have shown leadership and commitment to the ideals and values set forth in both secular and Jewish law.

Paul. J. Widlitz was the first Jewish Judge in Nassau County. He served in the District Court, the County Court, and then in the Supreme Court, where he was appointed the Administrative Judge overseeing all the judges in the county. After leaving the bench, Judge Widlitz devoted himself to the public good. Judge Widlitz was a jurist and philanthropist who is remembered for his love of the law and his love of the Jewish people. The Paul J. Widlitz Award honors judges who have served the legal and Jewish communities with distinction.

If you would like to find out more about the Jewish Lawyers Association of Nassau County or become a member of the organization, please visit our website at www.jlanassau.com



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INDUCTION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS
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INDUCTION OF CO-PRESIDENTS HON. GARY F. KNOBEL AND DANIELLA S. PESSAH
INSTALLING OFFICER HON. ROWAN D. WILSON

INTRODUCTION OF HON. NORMAN ST. GEORGE
PRESIDENT HON. GARY F. KNOBEL

REMARKS BY HON. NORMAN ST. GEORGE

PRESENTATION OF THE PAUL J. WIDLITZ AWARD
TO HON. NORMAN ST. GEORGE

INTRODUCTION OF STEPHEN GASSMAN, ESQ.
PRESIDENT HON. GARY F. KNOBEL

REMARKS BY STEPHEN GASSMAN, ESQ.

PRESENTATION OF THE NEIL T. SHAYNE AWARD
PRESIDENT HON. GARY F. KNOBEL

RECOGNITION OF ILANA KOPMAR, DIANE CLARKE SMITH, ISAAC ALTMAN & DAVID ROSENFELD
PRESIDENT HON. GARY F. KNOBEL

CLOSING REMARKS BY PRESIDENT DANIELLA S. PESSAH

DESSERT



Jewish Lawyers
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INSTALLATION DINNER

HONORING

Stephen Gassman, Esq.

NEIL T. SHAYNE AWARD

Honorable Norman St. George

PAUL J. WIDLITZ AWARD

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WEDNESDAY, OCT. 30TH, 2024

5:30PM-8:30PM

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**Jewish Lawyers
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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENTS



Hon. Gary F. Knobel & Daniella S. Pessah, Esq.

Shalom

It has been a very difficult and painful year since we last met. As of this writing (October 22, 2024), American and Israeli hostages are still being held captive in Gaza by Hamas terrorists. Expressions of hatred and bigotry towards Jewish students, professors and Israel by “progressive” professor and student organizations have spread like wildfire across college and university campuses in the United States.

Unfortunately, the hatred of the Jewish people, individually and collectively, is nothing new. The JLA, and our umbrella advocacy group, the Jewish Bar Alliance of New York, whose mission statement is inter alia to fight against antisemitism and racism in New York, and advocate in support of Israel’s right to exist as an independent and democratic Jewish nation, stand as a bulwark against this virulent rising tide.

This is why our Officers and Directors chose this year to honor and recognize individuals who exemplify Torah values and perform the good deeds (mitzvot) of tikuun olam, of repairing the world, and pursuing equal justice for all (“tzedek, tzedek tirdof” [Deuteronomy 16:20]). The Honorable Norman St. George, the indomitable First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge of the New York State Courts, works tirelessly to achieve social justice, fairness and access to our state court system,

and to educate employees and attorneys, through antibias presentations, about antisemitism and all forms of prejudice. Stephen Gassman, Esq., a distinguished matrimonial attorney and litigator, is a driving force behind the Nassau County Bar Association's charitable arm, We Care, which has helped hundreds of people who are in need of assistance. Nassau County Legal Aid attorneys Ilana Kopmar, Diane Clarke Smith, Isaac Altman and David Rosenfeld personify integrity and the highest ethical and moral standards of the legal profession by challenging their union's antisemitic and anti-Israel's actions and statements, which were not only against the policy of the Legal Aid Society, but also breached the attorneys' ethical duties and responsibilities in properly representing indigent individuals.

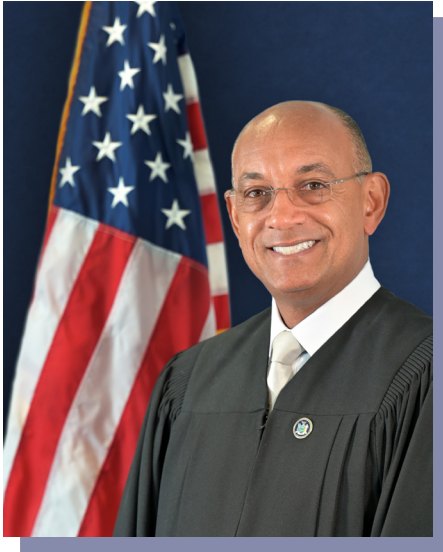
The only way to combat the epidemic of Jew hatred, and perhaps eradicate it, is for people of all racial, ethnic, religious and non-religious beliefs to join together in solidarity and push back against antisemitism, intolerance and prejudice. "Chazak, Chazak, V'nitchazek!" – "Let us be strong, Let us be strong, and let us strengthen others as well!"

Congratulations to the honorees, and to the officers and board members of the JLA, and THANK YOU ALL for your support during these trying times.





Jewish Lawyers
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Honorable Norman St. George

PAUL J. WIDLITZ AWARD

HON. NORMAN ST. GEORGE was appointed as First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge, the second-highest ranking administration position within the New York State Judiciary, effective May 19, 2023. The appointment was made by Chief Administrative Judge Joseph A. Zayas, with the consultation and approval of Chief Judge Rowan D. Wilson and in consultation with the Presiding Justices of the Appellate Divisions. In this capacity and on behalf of the Chief Administrative Judge, Judge St. George oversees all trial-level courts throughout the State, as well as all departments and operations within the Office of Court Administration. He also directly supervises the courts in the Tenth Judicial District, Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

Immediately prior to his current position, Judge St. George served as the Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Courts Outside of New York City. In that role, he worked with local Administrative Judges in overseeing implementation of the court system's programs and initiatives and in optimizing allocation of personnel and other court resources to meet the needs and goals of the courts. Additionally, he was responsible for oversight of New York's Town and Village Courts.

Judge St. George is an elected Justice of the Supreme Court for the 10th Judicial Department. Judge St. George served as the District Administrative Judge for all courts in Nassau County from 2019 through August of 2021. In that capacity, Judge St. George oversaw the Supreme Court, County Court, Family Court, Surrogate Court, District Court, and all City and Village Courts. From 2013 through 2018, Judge St. George served as the Supervising Judge of the Nassau County District Court. The Nassau County District Court is comprised of both criminal and civil courts and it is one of the busiest courts in New York State, handling over one hundred thousand criminal and civil cases each year.

Judge St. George served as an elected Nassau County Court Judge and an Acting Supreme Court Justice from 2008 to 2018. In 2018, Judge St. George established Nassau County's Youth Part under New York State's Raise the Age Law. While presiding

Continued on next page



**Jewish Lawyers
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Honorable Norman St. George: Continued

over the Youth Part, Judge St. George published cases of first impression interpreting the Raise the Age Law. As an Acting Supreme Court Justice, Judge St. George presided over serious felony criminal cases, commercial cases, medical malpractice cases, and oversaw the Integrated Domestic Violence Court, the Domestic Violence Court and the Sex Offense Court.

Judge St. George served as an elected District Court Judge from 2004 to 2008. In addition to presiding over criminal and civil cases, Judge St. George was charged with the responsibility of establishing Nassau County's first misdemeanor Domestic Violence Court. Judge St. George also established and presided over a Driving While Intoxicated Court. Judge St. George lectures at the Judicial Institute and at various Bar Associations on criminal and civil trial practice.

Prior to ascending to the bench, Judge St. George practiced law for sixteen years as a federal and state trial attorney. After graduating from Hofstra Law School, he worked as a Tax Attorney with Arthur Anderson and Company. He then began his litigation training at the Garden City law firm of Reisch, Simoni, Bythewood & Gleason. Judge St. George handled an extensive caseload of criminal and civil cases, including major Federal criminal and civil RICO actions.

Thereafter, Judge St. George served as an Assistant District Attorney for the County of Nassau under District Attorney Denis Dillon. He served in the District Court Bureau, Felony Screening Bureau, Grand Jury Bureau and County Court Bureau. Judge St. George left the Nassau County District Attorney's Office to become a partner in the Wall Street firm of Jackson, Brown, Powell and St. George, LLP. In addition to being responsible for all the firm's civil litigation, Judge St. George served as the managing partner. Judge St. George next established his own law firm with offices in Mineola and Manhattan. Judge St. George successfully tried numerous federal and state criminal cases, federal copyright infringement cases, commercial litigation cases, and personal injury cases. Two of Judge St. George's trial verdicts were reported by the Jury Verdict Reporter. While a practicing attorney, Judge St. George frequently appeared on Court Television as a trial commentator.



Jewish Lawyers
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Stephen Gassman, Esq.

NEIL T. SHAYNE AWARD

STEPHEN GASSMAN is the senior partner of the firm of Gassman Baiamonte Gruner, P.C., Garden City, N.Y., which limits its practice to matrimonial and family law. He is a graduate of the University of North Carolina and New York Law School.

Mr. Gassman is a Fellow and former Vice President of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, New York Chapter. He has served as President of the Bar Association of Nassau County, Chair of the Family Law Section of the New York State Bar Association, Member of the statewide Matrimonial Practice and Rules Committee of the Unified Court System of NYS; Chair of the Matrimonial & Family Law Committee of the Nassau County Bar Association; Adjunct Professor of Law at Touro Law School; member of the Judicial Hearing Officer Screening Committee and the Law Guardian Advisory Committee for the Tenth Judicial District of NYS; and Special Master for Mediation of Appeals, Appellate Division, Second Department.

Mr. Gassman has authored "Cross Examination: A Primer for Family Lawyers", published by the ABA, and has co-authored with Timothy M. Tippins "Evidence for Matrimonial Lawyers" and "Matrimonial Valuation", and has co-authored with Rosalia Baiamonte the "Library of New York Matrimonial Law Forms", published by the NY Law Journal Press.

He has lectured at hundreds of matrimonial law seminars and symposiums conducted under the aegis of numerous bar and judicial groups, in NYS and other states. He is listed in The Best Lawyers in America and New York Super Lawyers. He has been a guest and moderated television shows dealing with matrimonial law.

He is the founder of the Nassau County Bar Association's We Care Fund, the charitable arm of the bar association, the recipient of the association's Gold Medalion Award, and Past Presidents Award.

Stephen Gassman and his wife, Meryl, reside in Manhasset and have three children and four grandchildren.



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Hon. Norman St. George '88

Paul J. Widlitz Award Recipient

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Hofstra Law alumni officers and board members.

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Congratulations to all the officers and honorees!



Congratulations
to Justice Norman St. George,
on receiving the *Paul J. Wilditz Award*.

Thank you for your years of distinguished service,
professionalism and dedication
to the court system and its many employees.
It is an honor to work alongside you.

Congratulations
to Stephen Gassman Esq.,
our well deserved recipient of the
Neil T. Shayne Award,
acknowledging his exceptional
legal expertise and professionalism.

With admiration and respect,
Chambers of
Hon. Erica Prager

Congratulations

to the

Honorable Norman St. George,

A great leader and friend

on receiving the

Paul J. Widlitz Award

&

Stephen Gassman, Esq.,

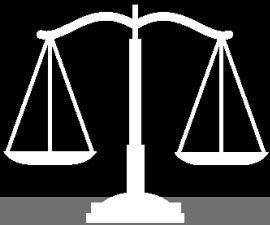
on receiving the

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and
Stephen Gassman, Esq.
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on these well-deserved honors
and their years of service to the people of Nassau County
&
to all the Officers & Board Members on their installation!

Further, thank you to the
Jewish Lawyers Association of Nassau County
for all their great work!



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to the recipients of this year's awards

 Stephen Gassman, Esq.



Mark E. Weinberger, Esq.
Attorney at Law

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on receiving the Jewish Lawyer's Association's Neil T. Shayne
Award. You continue to be a shining beacon for WE CARE and
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And our esteemed Colleague

STEPHEN GASSMAN, ESQ.

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It is with utmost pride, boundless love and immeasurable joy that we celebrate the man whose devotion to his family is rivaled only by his dedication to the law.

Steve, the legacy which you have created, both in your career and with our family is one to be praised and congratulated by all. As your partner and best friend who has been charmed by you since first grade, I share with the JLA of Nassau County the gift of your compassion and dedication to the legal and Jewish communities.



With love always,

Meryl

David, Darren, Rachel, Gary, Alyson

Ari, Michael, Drew and Sienna



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PREEMINENCE IN MATRIMONIAL & FAMILY LAW

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Stephen Gassman, Esq.

&

PAUL J. WIDLITZ AWARD RECIPIENT

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TO TONIGHT'S HONOREES

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NORMAN ST. GEORGE**

PAUL J. WIDLITZ AWARD

AND

**STEPHEN GASSMAN,
ESQ.**

NEIL T. SHAYNE AWARD

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Dana J. Finkelstein, Esq., Allison L. Rockmore, Esq., and Green, Kaminer, Min & Rockmore LLP would like to formally congratulate the honorees, *Honorable Norman St. George* receiving the *Paul J. Widlitz Award*, and *Stephen Gassman, Esq.* receiving the *Neil T. Shayne Award*, as well as to the induction of the JLA Officers and Board of Directors to the Jewish Lawyers Association of Nassau County.



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and
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for being Honored
by the Jewish Lawyers Association;
honors well deserved to an
exceptional Jurist and exceptional Attorney.*

*Best of luck to the Officers and the Board
in their induction to the
Jewish Lawyers Association and
their worthwhile and generous commitment.*

*Thank you to all the special attendees and
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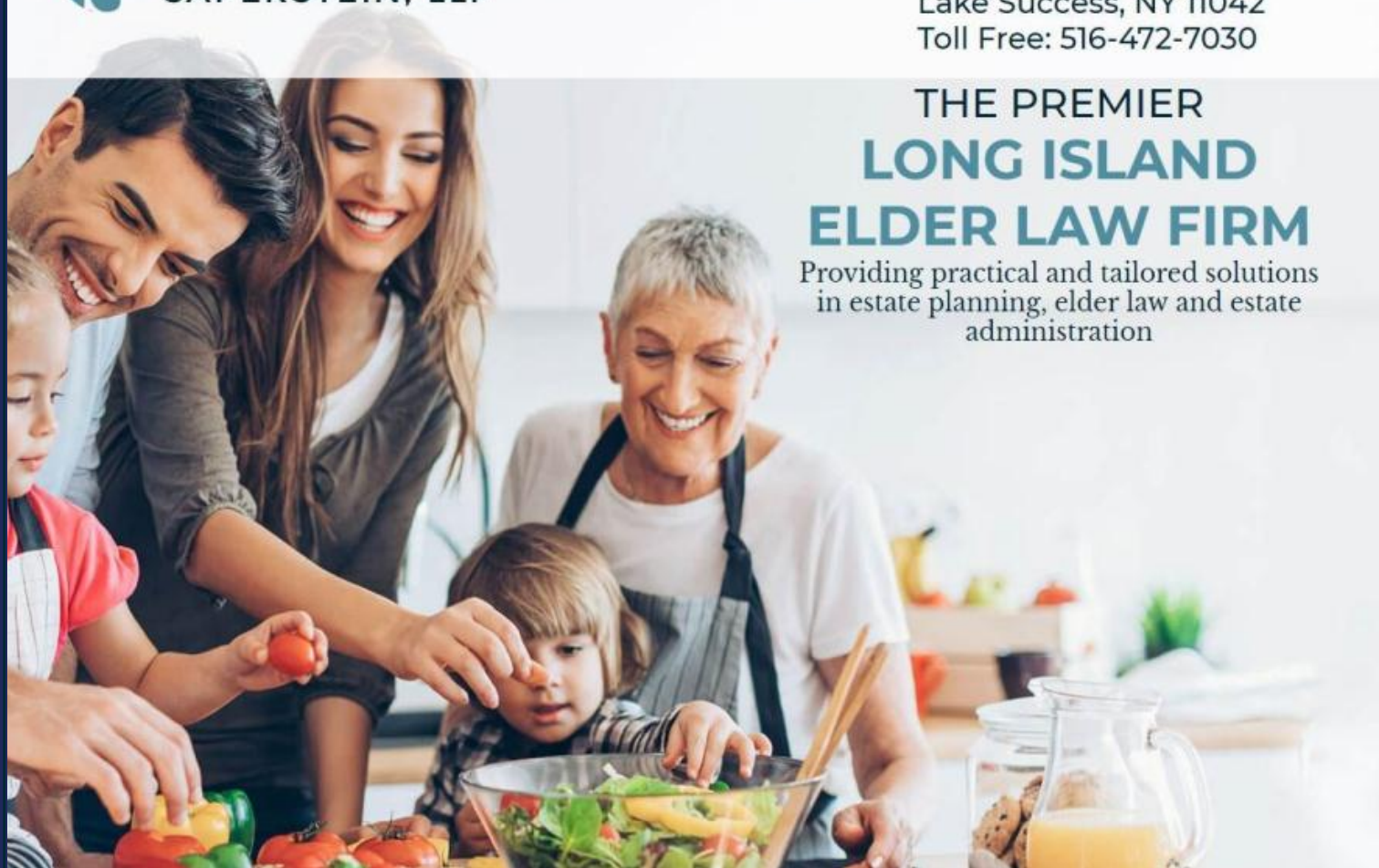


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Am Yisrael Chai!

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From,
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THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

O say can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;
O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

HATIKVA – התקנה

<i>Kol od balevav penimah</i>	כל עוד בלבב פנימה
<i>Nefesh Yehudi homiyah,</i>	נפש יהודי הומיה
<i>Ul(e)fa'atei mizrach kadimah,</i>	ולפאתי מזרח קדימה
<i>Ayin leTziyon tzofiyah;</i>	עין לציון צופיה
<i>Od lo avdah tikvateinu,</i>	עוד לא אבדה תקותנו
<i>Hatikvah bat sh(e)not alpayim,</i>	התקנה בת שנות אלפים
<i>Lihyot am chofshi b(e)'artzeinu,</i>	להיות עם חפשי בארצנו
<i>Eretz-Tziyon viY(e)rushalayim.</i>	ארץ ציון וירושלים.



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