



DCBAR

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District of Columbia
Judicial & Bar Conference**

APRIL 28, 2023



Access to Justice in the District: Where We've Come and Where We're Going

April 28, 2023
2:15 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.



Continuing Legal Education

**Access to Justice in the District:
Where We've Come and Where We're Going**

About the Speakers

The Honorable Anna Blackburne-Rigsby became Chief Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals in March 2017. Prior to being designated Chief Judge, Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby was nominated by President George W. Bush in August 2006 to serve as an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. Before that, she was nominated by President William Jefferson Clinton to serve as an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia from 2000-2006, and she previously served as a Magistrate Judge on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia from 1995-2000. She chairs the Joint Committee on Judicial Administration for the DC Courts. Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby is also a member of the CCJ/COSCA Blueprint for Racial Justice in State Courts National Steering Committee. Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby also serves on the Board of Directors of the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), and the National Steering Committee for the NCSC Eviction Diversion Initiative.

Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby is currently the President-Elect of the National Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ), and chairs the CCJ Committee on Public Engagement Trust and Confidence. Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby served on the District of Columbia's Access to Justice Commission and chaired the District of Columbia Courts' Standing Committee on Fairness and Access. She has served in leadership roles in several judicial organizations including serving as the Chair and Moderator of the National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts and serving as a Past President of the National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ). Through her work with these organizations, Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby has sought to promote the rule of law and equal access to justice.

Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby has taught Trial Advocacy at the Harvard Law School and Professional Responsibility as an Adjunct Professor at the David A. Clarke School of Law at the University of the District of Columbia. She has also taught Continuing Legal Education courses for the District of Columbia Bar. Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby has trained judges from other countries in conjunction with the National Center for State Courts and the United States Department of State.

Her prior positions include: Deputy in Charge of the Family Services Division of the District of Columbia Office of the Attorney General; Special Counsel to the District of Columbia Attorney General (formerly known as Office of the Corporation Counsel) and Associate at the law firm of Hogan Lovells US LLP (formerly Hogan and Hartson). Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby earned her law degree from Howard University School of Law. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Duke University. She is a recipient of the American Bar Association's Margaret Brent Women Lawyers of Achievement Award and the Washington Bar Association Charles Hamilton Houston Medallion of Merit Award.

Chief Judge Blackburne-Rigsby is married to Judge Robert R. Rigsby, Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, former Corporation Counsel for the District of Columbia, and a retired Colonel and Military Judge of the United States Army Reserves. They are the proud parents of an adult son.

Nancy Drane (Moderator) is Executive Director of the D.C. Access to Justice Commission, where she leads its efforts to increase resources for DC civil legal services, reduce access-to-justice barriers experienced by DC residents, and improve planning and coordination of civil justice efforts.

Nancy is on the Board of Directors of Washington Council of Lawyers, DC's pro bono and public interest bar association, and DC Refers, a directory of lawyers offering reduced rate legal services to individuals of modest means.

Prior to joining the Commission in November 2016, Nancy spent 13 years at Children's Law Center as a staff attorney, training director, and pro bono director.

Nancy graduated from Loyola University Chicago School of Law and following graduation, clerked for the U.S. District Court (D. Conn.) Before attending law school, Nancy was an elementary school teacher and administered an education non-profit. She graduated from Boston College.

Jodi Feldman joined the District of Columbia Courts in March 2023 as the first ever Pro Bono Program Manager. In this new role, Jodi leads the Courts' effort to provide legal assistance for litigants who cannot afford representation by elevating the importance of pro bono and low-cost work by lawyers and coordinating with the legal services provider community.

Before joining the DC Courts, Jodi was the Managing Attorney for Legal Operations at Legal Aid DC where she oversaw a range of programs, including the Pro Bono, Intake, and Student Intern/Volunteer Programs. In December 2014, the Washington Council of Lawyers honored Ms. Feldman with its inaugural Legal Services Award, recognizing her accomplishments on behalf of enhancing access to justice for persons living in poverty in the District of Columbia.

Jodi previously was a Staff Attorney and Pro Bono Coordinator at Whitman-Walker Health, a DC community-based organization providing health and wellness services to all with an emphasis on LGBTQ+ and HIV care, and a litigation associate attorney at Wiley Rein LLP.

She graduated from Amherst College with a B.A. in Psychology and earned her J.D., magna cum laude, from Georgetown University Law Center.

Aracelis Gray is the Director of Programs of the DC Bar Foundation, the District's leading funder of civil legal aid with a commitment to transforming DC's legal aid network so that all residents have a fair and equal legal experience. She brings to this role, over 20 years of experience leading programs and initiatives and building organizational capacity to improve outcomes for children, youth, and their families.

Aracelis received a Master's in Public Policy from the University of Michigan and is a certified Project Management Professional.

Ariel Levinson-Waldman is the Founding President and Director-Counsel of Tzedek DC, a public interest center headquartered at the UDC David A. Clarke School of Law with the mission of safeguarding the legal rights and financial health of DC residents with lower incomes facing debt-related problems. Full professional bio here.

Ariel's commitment to access to justice in our society stems in part from his grandparents' experiences as Holocaust survivors and his father's experience as an immigrant to the United States. Ariel is a Ward 4 resident in the District of Columbia with his wife Rachel Levinson-Waldman, a civil liberties lawyer, and their daughter and son, and twelve pound pandemic puppy.

Darryl Maxwell is the Director of Nonprofit & Small Business Legal Assistance Programs for the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Center, the largest provider of pro bono services and information in the District of Columbia. His focus is on providing pro bono counsel to community-based nonprofits and disadvantaged small businesses. Prior to working with the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Center, Darryl worked in private practice.

Darryl is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and the George Washington University Law School. He serves at his law school alma mater as a Professorial Lecturer in Law. He has been published in the Journal of Affordable Housing & Community Development Law. He currently serves as Board Chair of the Latino Economic Development Center, an organization that assists Latinos and other DC-area residents with small business development, microlending and affordable housing preservation. Darryl also serves on the Corporate Advisory Board of So Others Might Eat (SOME) an interfaith, community-based organization that

supports D.C. residents experiencing homelessness and poverty with food, clothing, healthcare as well as affordable housing, job training, addiction treatment, and counseling.

Gabrielle Mulnick Majewski has served as Executive Director of DC Affordable Law Firm since January 2020. Gabby oversees all aspects of DC Affordable Law Firm’s programs and operations, leading the high-quality work of the staff, building and strengthening community partnerships, and guiding the strategic direction of the organization.

Prior to joining DC Affordable Law Firm, Gabby served as a Guardian ad litem, supervising attorney, and program manager with Children’s Law Center.

Gabby has served on the Board of Directors and, previously, on the Advisory Board of BEST Kids, and was a prior recipient of the Frederick B. Abramson Public Service Award. In 2022, Gabby was named a “40 Under 40” honoree by the Washington Business Journal. Gabby is an active member of the Women’s Bar Association of the District of Columbia and serves as Co-Chair of the WBA’s Working Parents Committee.

Gabby earned her law degree from American University Washington College of Law and graduated with honors from the University of Delaware with Bachelor’s degrees in Political Science and Criminal Justice with a concentration in Public Law.

James J. Sandman is Distinguished Lecturer and Director of the Future of the Profession Lab at the University of Pennsylvania Law School. He is President Emeritus of the Legal Services Corporation, the largest funder of civil legal aid in the United States.

Jim formerly served as Managing Partner of Arnold & Porter, as General Counsel of the District of Columbia Public Schools, and as President of the District of Columbia Bar.

He is Chair of the Advisory Board of the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System, Vice Chair of the District of Columbia Access to Justice Commission, and a member of the board of the Pro Bono Institute. Jim is a graduate of Boston College and the University of Pennsylvania Law School. He began his legal career as a law clerk to Judge Max Rosenn of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit.

TAB ONE

Meet Your Panelists



Hon. Anna
Blackburne-Rigsby



Ariel Levinson-
Waldman



James J. Sandman



Gabby Mulnick
Majewski



Aracelis Gray



Darryl Maxwell



Jodi Feldman



Nancy Drane



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Federal Poverty Guidelines

Persons in Household	Poverty Guideline	200%	300%	400%
1	\$14,580	\$29,160	\$43,740	\$58,320
2	\$19,720	\$39,440	\$59,160	\$78,880
3	\$24,860	\$49,720	\$74,580	\$99,440
4	\$30,000	\$60,000	\$90,000	\$120,000
5	\$35,140	\$70,280	\$105,520	\$140,560
6	\$40,280	\$80,560	\$120,840	\$161,120

Average annual rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Washington DC: **\$27,792**

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