

## 2022 NJSBA Annual Meeting

### **Pathways to the Bench – The Annual Meeting Edition**

*Co-Sponsored by the Minorities in the Profession Section, the Women in the Profession Section, the Diversity Committee and the Commission on Racial Equity in the Law*

Moderator/Speaker:

Carolyn V. Chang, Esq.

*Law Office of Carolyn V. Chang, Mt. Holly*

*Co-Chair, NJSBA Commission on Racial Equity in the Law*

*Past President, Association of Black Women Lawyers of New Jersey*

Speakers include:

Hon. Julio Mendez (Retired)

Jason E. Foy, Esq.

President, Bergen County Bar Association

*Partner, Foy & Sepowitz, Hackensack*

Parimal Garg, Esq.

*Chief Counsel, Office of the Governor of the State of New Jersey*

Maria Vallejo, Esq.

*Chasan Lamparello Mallon & Cappuzzo, PC, Secaucus*

List of relevant links:

Courts need judges now, lawmakers warned: <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2022/04/nj-judge-record-high-judge-vacancies-massive-case-backlog-500-plus-people-detained-more-than-two-years/>

How to Become a Judge -- <https://www.insidernj.com/how-to-become-a-judge/>

Explainer: How Judges Make it to the Bench in New

Jersey: <https://www.njspotlightnews.org/2014/06/14-06-02-explainer-how-judges-make-it-to-the-bench-in-new-jersey/>

New Jersey Constitution Article VI: <https://www.nj.gov/state/archives/docconst47.html#page13>

NJ Courts Guide to the Judicial

Process [https://www.njcourts.gov/forms/12246\\_guide\\_judicial\\_process.pdf](https://www.njcourts.gov/forms/12246_guide_judicial_process.pdf)

Governor Murphy Renews Hughes

Compact <https://tcms.njsba.com/PersonifyEbusiness/News/GovernorMurphyRenewsHughesCompact.aspx#:~:text=Since%201969%2C%20in%20an%20agreement,candidates%20in%20a%20confidential%20process.>

## **Pathways to the Bench Speaker Bios**

### **Carolyn V. Chang, Esq.**

Law Office of Carolyn V. Chang, Mt. Holly  
Co-Chair, NJSBA Commission on Racial Equity in the Law  
Past President, Association of Black Women Lawyers of New Jersey

Carolyn V. Chang was born and raised in Jamaica, West Indies. She immigrated to the United States with her siblings in 1972 and resided in East Orange, NJ. Mrs. Chang brings to her law practice more than thirty years of Family Law experience. Her practice includes all aspects of family law, including divorce, non-dissolution (FD matters), custody, paternity and child support. Mrs. Chang also serves as a Court appointed Guardian ad litem both in the Family Part as well as Guardian of the Person and Property in Guardianship matters. She also serves as Court appointed Administrator in Estate matters. Mrs. Chang served as the President of the Association of Black Women Lawyers of New Jersey (ABWL) for the 2017-2018 term and is currently the Chair of ABWL's Social Justice Committee. She also served on the Law & Justice Committee of the Gov. Murphy/Lt. Gov. Oliver Transition Team as well as on the Transition Team for the Burlington County Democrat Freeholders. Ms Chang currently serves as Co-Chair of the NJSBA's Commission on Racial Equity in the Law.

Mrs. Chang is proud of her public service to the residents of Westampton Township where she has served as Committee Woman since January 2011 and Mayor from January 2013 to December 2016.

Mrs. Chang is similarly proud of her volunteer service to the communities of Eastampton, Mount Holly and Westampton where since 1997 she has sponsored various soccer, baseball and softball teams.

Mrs Chang is a founding member of the United Black Agenda (UBA), a group of social justice advocates who promote policies which benefit people of color in New Jersey.

### **Hon. Julio L. Mendez, A.J.S.C. (Ret.)**

Judge Mendez served on the New Jersey bench for 20 years. Judge Mendez was appointed Assignment Judge of the Atlantic Cape May Vicinage by Chief Justice Stuart Rabner effective November 1, 2011. He served in that capacity until his retirement on March 1, 2022. As Assignment Judge he served as a member of the Judiciary Judicial Council for 10 years, partaking in the governance of the Judiciary for a decade. In Judicial Council he participated in the administration, policy and program development, implementation of procedures, directives and initiatives, and case management.

Judge Mendez also served as a Superior Court Judge for Vicinage 15, including the counties of Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem. In June of 2005, Judge Mendez was named Presiding Judge of the Family Part for Vicinage 15, serving until he was named Assignment Judge. His distinguished judicial career included serving in all divisions and handling all dockets, with 11 of his trial court opinions approved for publications. Judge also performed as teacher and mentor for Judges, taught at judicial college, presented local and statewide CLE programs, and was actively engaged with the local, specialty and State Bar associations.

Judge Mendez was often called upon to serve in statewide committees and working groups including as the Chair of the Supreme Court Committee on Municipal Court Operations, Co-Chair of Ad Hoc Committee on Domestic Violence, Chair of the Drug Court Working group, Co-Chair of the Judicial Council Management and Operations Committee, and as Chair of the NJ Municipal Court Regionalization Subcommittee of the Supreme Court Municipal Court Reform Working Group. During his tenure on the bench, he also served as chairman for the Children in Court Committee of the Conference of Family Presiding Judges and as a member of the New Jersey Supreme Court Family and Municipal Practice Committee. He also actively participated in national Organizations, and often presented programs nationally. He is currently on the Board of NAPCO, the national association of presiding judges and chief court administrators.

Judge Mendez contributions and exemplary career have been acknowledged by multiple awards, including New Jersey State Bar Thurgood Marshall recognition. Judge Mendez received his J.D. from Rutgers School of Law-Camden

### **Parimal Garg, Esq.**

Chief Counsel, Office of the New Jersey Governor

Parimal Garg has served as Chief Counsel to Governor Phil Murphy since October 2020. In this role, he acts as the Governor's primary legal advisor and manages an office of 20 attorneys. Prior to becoming Chief Counsel, he served as Deputy Chief Counsel from 2018 to 2020. Parimal was a Senior Policy Advisor during the Murphy for Governor campaign in 2017, helping to formulate the campaign's substantive positions.

Parimal started his legal career as an attorney at Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP in Washington, DC, where his practice focused on antitrust matters, financial investigations, and appellate arguments. He also served as a law clerk for New Jersey Supreme Court Chief Justice Stuart Rabner.

Parimal grew up in Lawrence Township in Mercer County. He received his B.A. from Georgetown University, magna cum laude, and J.D. from Harvard Law School, cum laude.

**Jason Foy**

Foy & Seplowitz, Hackensack  
President, Bergen County Bar Association

Prior to become a founding partner of the criminal defense firm of Foy & Seplowitz, LLC in 2013, Foy founded Foy & Foy, LLC in 2001 with his wife and Harvard educated lawyer, Karla Y. Foy.

Prior to entering private practice, Mr. Foy prosecuted crimes while serving as an Assistant District Attorney with the Bronx District Attorney's Office. It was while with the Bronx District Attorney's Office that Foy laid the foundation to become a successful trial lawyer.

Mr. Foy is admitted to the practice of law in the States of New York and New Jersey, the United States District Courts for the Southern and Eastern Districts of New York, the United States District Courts for the District of New Jersey, and the Supreme Court of the United States. Mr. Foy has been named in the New Jersey Super Lawyers publication as a "Super Lawyer" for criminal defense in 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2020. He has also been named in the (201) Magazine Bergen's Top Lawyers section.

Mr. Foy is a member of the Bergen County Bar Association (where he currently serves as the President and as co-Chair of the Criminal Practice Committee), the Garden State Bar Association, the Bronx Bar Association, the Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers of New Jersey, the New York Criminal Bar Association, the New York and New Jersey State Bar Associations, and the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers. Mr. Foy formerly served a four (4) year appointment by the New Jersey Supreme Court with the Bergen County District IIB Ethics Committee, which investigates and prosecutes ethics complaints against attorneys.

Mr. Foy earned his law degree from the University of Maryland School of Law in Baltimore, Maryland. He earned his B.A. in Political Science from Syracuse University in Syracuse, NY.

**Maria Vallejo, Esq.**

Co-Chair, NJSBA Diversity Committee  
Chasan Lamparello Mallon & Cappuzzo, PC, Secaucus

Maria P. Vallejo is a litigation and land-use attorney with extensive experience representing individual, corporate and public-entity clients in State and Federal Court. Concentrating on commercial litigation and public entity defense, she has successfully litigated breach-of-contract, shareholder dispute, construction, Constitutional law and employment/labor actions. In addition to her robust litigation practice, Maria also concentrates on representing private and corporate

clients in all phases of land use, zoning and permitting matters, while serving as counsel to the South Bound Brook Planning/Zoning Board.

Maria is an adjunct professor of law at Rutgers Law School, teaching land use law and practice. She is involved in a multitude of professional and charitable organizations, where she has gained recognition for her contributions and achievements.

Maria is slated to become the first Filipina-American president of the Hudson County Bar Association. Her strong commitment to diversity is evident in her leadership roles in the New Jersey State Bar Association, where she sits on the Nominating Committee, while co-chairing the NJSBA's Diversity Committee for the third year in a row. She also was a former director of Asian Pacific American Lawyers Association of New Jersey and served as Secretary for the District VI Ethics Committee.

Prior to practicing law, Maria worked as a business journalist for nearly 10 years. She is a member of the NJSBA Commission on Racial Equity in the Law.