

The logo for the New York City Bar, featuring the text "NEW YORK CITY BAR" in a serif font, centered between two horizontal blue bars.

NEW YORK CITY BAR

Media Advisory
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NYC BAR ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF THE THIRD ANNUAL DIVERSITY CHAMPION AWARD CEREMONY AND DINNER, JUNE 4TH

The New York City Bar's Enhance Diversity Committee will be presenting the Third Annual Diversity Champion Award at an Award Ceremony and dinner being held on June 4, 2008, at the New York City Bar Association, 42 West 44th Street. The award recognizes the critical role individuals have played in initiating and sustaining change within their organizations and the overall New York legal community.

The 2008 Diversity Champion Award winners are:

Michael A. Cardozo, Corporation Counsel of the City of New York;
Hon. Juanita Bing Newton, Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Justice Initiatives and Administrative Judge of the Criminal Court of the City of New York;
James B. O'Neal, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Legal Outreach, Inc.

Criteria

The award seeks to honor individuals who embody the New York City Bar's Statement of Diversity Principles. Nominations are limited to attorneys, although it is not necessary that they be actively practicing law. Applicants were welcomed from a wide range of positions and sectors within the legal community: government, firm, corporation, and non-profit. Nominees have been evaluated on their excellence in one or more of the following areas:

- 1) Influencing Others
- 2) Being a Role Model
- 3) Continually Learning
- 4) Cultivating Diverse Teams
- 5) Innovating and Taking Risks
- 6) Holding Oneself and Others Accountable for Diversity
- 7) External Leadership Involvement

Selection Process

- A selection panel, composed of Enhance Diversity Committee members representing a cross-section of legal employers, was convened to evaluate nominations.

- The panel conducted interviews with finalists and their references before determining the winners.
- Awards will be presented at the **June 4, 2008 Diversity Champion Award Dinner**.

New York City Bar's Office for Diversity

The Office for Diversity was created in 2004 to work with NYC legal employers to foster more diverse work environments. The Office serves as a resource for individuals seeking to advance and develop their careers, as well as to assist law firms, corporations and other legal employers in their diversity initiatives. The Office was the first office of its kind in a bar association.

In December 2003, the Association announced the adoption of the Statement of Diversity Principles. The Statement is the most recent effort by the Association to voice its commitment to enhance diversity in the legal profession. To date, we have 130 signatories to our Statement of Diversity Principles - 112 law firms and 18 corporate legal departments. The Statement of Diversity Principles defines diversity as an inclusive concept, encompassing race, color, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, religion, nationality, age, disability and marital and parental status.

Winner Descriptions

Michael Cardozo. As head of the New York City Law Department, Michael Cardozo has worked continuously since his appointment in 2002 to enhance diversity within the legal profession. Upon taking office, Mr. Cardozo initiated a process of identifying the core values, mission and vision of the agency and identified diversity as one of these core values. He emphasized that maintaining a diverse legal staff at all responsibility levels is critical to the success of the office and it is through his leadership that he has influenced others to value diversity in hiring. Mr. Cardozo has focused on the hiring, retention and promotion of ethnically diverse attorneys as well as gay and lesbian attorneys and attorneys with disabilities. He emphasizes the importance of "quality of life" issues as a means of fostering a diverse workplace and has addressed work-life balance issues, including maternity leave and part-time status, which have been of particular interest to women attorneys in the office. He is active in promoting the City Bar's goals for in-house law departments by spear-heading the City's initiative to hire more minority and women-owned law firms where it has been deemed necessary to hire outside counsel. Reaching out to the non-legal community, he also encourages diverse high school students to consider law as a career option. Holding himself and those who report to him accountable for diversity, Mr. Cardozo has created a diverse leadership team at the New York City Law Department and has been a role model to his staff and the greater New York community.

Hon. Juanita Bing Newton. Throughout her career, Judge Newton has been deeply devoted to promoting diversity in New York's justice system and has both directly and indirectly facilitated diversity in the hiring, retention and promotion of diverse attorneys, as well as in the attainment of leadership positions, within all aspects of the New York court system. Currently serving as Administrative Judge of the Criminal Court of the City of New York and Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Justice Initiatives, she works tirelessly for a broad and inclusive concept of diversity, one that is not limited to race, color or ethnicity. A mentor and role model for many, including law students, new attorneys and less experienced judges, she encourages full involvement in the work of the courts and works tirelessly to bridge the gap between diverse communities. Judge Newton strives to increase diversity in the legal profession as a whole

through public outreach programs and her work on various task forces and committees, and has also promoted continual learning with respect to diverse groups through her access to justice initiatives. From her contributions to creating a diverse workforce and a more diverse leadership within the court system, to her ongoing support of diversity awareness and mentoring others, Judge Newton's work in the last year has built upon her career-long commitment to eliminating barriers to the success of diverse talent in the legal profession.

James B. O'Neal. As the Co-Founder and Executive Director of Legal Outreach, Inc., James O'Neal has battled the educational pipeline crisis for over two and half decades and is at the forefront of efforts to ensure that progress in diversity continues into future generations. Founded by O'Neal in 1983, Legal Outreach is an intensive law-related college preparatory organization that prepares New York City middle and high school students to compete at high academic levels and facilitate their pursuit of higher education. Legal Outreach's mission is accomplished through two core programs, "Law-Related Education," which introduces junior high school students to the power of the law and the operations of the legal system, and "College Bound," an intensive four-year academic enrichment and support program for LRE participants interested in preparing for college and the pursuit of professional careers. 100% of College Bound participants graduate high school in four years, as compared to 60% of all New York City high school students and 77.8% of high school students nationally, and over 99.5% of College Bound students matriculate at colleges across the U.S., with more than half attending top-ranked institutions. A byproduct of Mr. O'Neal's aim to foster vision, confidence and a passion for law and education in students is that the mentoring lawyers enrolled in Legal Outreach's program begin to view and value these students as the next generation of potential clients and lawyers of their firms. Forging connections with law schools, colleges and high schools, as well as the City Bar, to broaden the diversity pipeline, James O'Neal has become a true advocate for change in the New York legal community.

To learn more about the Diversity Champion Award, visit: www.nycbar.org.

About the Association

The New York City Bar Association (www.nycbar.org) was founded in 1870, and since then has been dedicated to maintaining the high ethical standards of the profession, promoting reform of the law, and providing service to the profession and the public. The Association continues to work for political, legal and social reform, while implementing innovative means to help the disadvantaged. Protecting the public's welfare remains one of the Association's highest priorities.