

NEW YORK DIVERSITY FORUM

Continuing Legal Education Seminar
Friday, April 28, 2017, 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

U.S. District Courthouse
225 Cadman Plaza East, Brooklyn, New York



This program will consist of a series of sessions that will address key issues impacting traditionally unrepresented and marginalized groups and will provide a unique opportunity for cross-cultural collaboration among community leaders. The forum has been structured to allow partnering organizations to address issues critical to their members with the goal of promoting greater understanding and enabling a constructive dialogue between community/identity interest groups, bar associations, and members of the community.

The forum is being presented by the following organizations, with the support of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York:

- Federal Bar Association LGBT Section
- FBA EDNY Chapter
- Muslim Bar Association of New York
- Latino Judges Association
- Puerto Rican Bar Association
- Dominican Bar Association
- Long Island Hispanic Bar Association
- Latino Lawyers Association of Queens County
- International Cultic Studies Association
- Asian American Bar Association of New York
- South Asian Bar Association of New York
- Hispanic National Bar Association, Region II (NY)



This program is suitable for both practitioners and non-practitioners.

FEE (includes lunch): \$50 — Attorneys seeking CLE credits (4.0)

\$30 — Non-practitioners

Free — Judges, Federal Law Clerks, and Law Students

CLICK “REGISTER” BUTTON BELOW, or paste the following into a browser:
fbaedny-diversity-forum.eventbrite.com (Note: may not work in all browsers).

CLE Provider/Financial Aid Policy: The provider is the EDNY Chapter of the Federal Bar Association, an accredited provider of continuing legal education. The chapter offers fee waivers or fee reductions in appropriate circumstances. Please contact Mary Ryan at (631)-712-5765 for information about our financial aid policy.

FBA EDNY Chapter, P.O. Box 7216, Garden City, New York, 11530

PROGRAM

OPENING REMARKS • 9:30-9:50 AM

Chief Judge Dora L. Irizarry, United States District Court, Eastern District of New York

MORNING, SESSION 1 • 9:50-10:40 AM

SPONSOR: Muslim Bar Association of New York

TOPIC: Being Muslim in America: An Introduction to Islam and the Challenges Currently Facing the Muslim Community

PANELISTS: Asim Rehman, General Counsel, Office of the Inspector General for the NYPD; Sania Khan, Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Bureau, Office of the NYS Attorney General; Merium Malik, Immigration & Criminal Defense Attorney

MORNING, SESSION 2 • 10:40-11:30 AM

SPONSOR: Federal Bar Association, LGBT Section

TOPIC: "Religious Freedom" vs. LGBT Equality: Legislative Attempts to Empower Anti-LGBT Discrimination

PANELISTS: Roberta A. Kaplan, Paul Weiss; Susan Sommer, Lambda Legal. **Moderator:** David Thompson, Stecklow & Thompson

MORNING, SESSION 3 • 11:40 AM-12:30 PM

SPONSOR: International Cultic Studies Association

TOPIC: The Common Thread of Undue Influence in Nefarious Relationships and the Challenges to Establishing Undue Influence in the Courtroom

PANELISTS: Alan W. Schefflin, Emeritus Professor of Law, Santa Clara University School of Law; Stephanie Spanos, M.D. **Moderator:** Robin Boyle Laisure, Professor of Legal Writing, St. John's University Law School

NETWORKING LUNCH • 12:30-2:00 PM

AFTERNOON, SESSION 4 • 2:00-2:50 PM

SPONSORS: Hispanic National Bar Association, Region II (NY), Latino Lawyers Association of Queens County, Dominican Bar Association, Puerto Rican Bar Association, Long Island Hispanic Bar Association, Latino Judges Association

TOPIC: Racial Profiling of the Latino Community

PANELISTS: Jose Perez, LatinoJustice; Luis Pagan, Pagan Law Group; Christopher Cassar, Law Office of Christopher Cassar; Kevin Satterfield, NYC Department of Corrections. **Moderator:** Matthew Fernandez Konigsberg, Regional President, National Hispanic Bar Association, Region II (NY)

AFTERNOON, SESSION 5 • 2:50-3:40 PM

SPONSORS: Asian American Bar Association of New York, South Asian Bar Association of New York

TOPIC: Legacy of Exclusion: Learning the Lessons of History, from the Chinese Exclusion Act to the Current Immigration Executive Orders

PANELISTS: Rose Cuison Villazor, Professor of Law, UC Davis School of Law; Amol Sinha, State Policy Advocate, Innocence Project; Annie J. Wang, Staff Attorney, Asian American Defense & Education Fund. **Moderator:** Christopher M. Kwok, Supervisory ADR Coordinator, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (NY Office)

At the conclusion of the Program, please visit the Charles P. Sifton Gallery on the First Floor to view "Perseverance," an exhibit of paintings by Ndume Olatushani, a former death row inmate who spent 28 years in prison before his conviction was vacated.

Light refreshments will be served.

Perseverance

Paintings by
Ndume Olatushani



The paintings of Ndume Olatushani, a self-taught African American artist, astonish. Vibrantly colored African figures congregating at work and play radiate from his canvases. Olatushani’s accomplished execution of rippling water and draped clothing reflect his exceptional artistic talent. These elegant paintings, strikingly composed, would be impressive on their own; but upon learning of their creator’s challenging history and years on death row, one cannot help but marvel at these peaceful reflections of a calm and enduring world, in which the artist seeks contentment by reaffirming his cultural roots.

Olatushani – which means “unifier” in Swahili – was born Erskine Johnson in a notorious housing project in St. Louis. In 1984, he was charged in the shooting death of a grocery store owner during an attempted robbery in Memphis, Tennessee. Because the getaway car used in the botched robbery had been stolen from a St. Louis airport, the Memphis authorities looked to St. Louis for leads. In 1985, Erskine Johnson, a 25-year-old high school dropout with a criminal record, was tried, convicted, and sentenced to death by an all-white jury – despite multiple witnesses who placed him in St. Louis shortly before the shooting. He spent 28 years in prison, nearly 20 of them on death row.

Two years after his conviction, Olatushani was devastated to learn of his mother’s death in a car accident. As an outlet for his anger and despair, he first took up drawing and then painting. It was through his art that, in 1992, he met Anne-Marie Moyes, a recent college graduate who was facilitating prison art shows around the country. Convinced of his innocence, Moyes was instrumental in securing pro bono counsel to represent Olatushani in what stretched into 17 years of post-conviction proceedings.

Olatushani’s legal team not only uncovered exculpatory evidence that the prosecution had withheld, but also developed powerful proof that another group of individuals had committed the crime. An appellate court vacated his death sentence in 2004, and Olatushani was resentenced to life imprisonment. In December 2011, after years of further litigation, his conviction was vacated, and Olatushani was finally released from custody in June 2012. The following month, he married Moyes, who, in the interim, had enrolled in and graduated from law school, and now works for the Federal Public Defender in Nashville.

Since his release, Olatushani has worked as an advocate, here and abroad, against the death penalty and mass incarceration. Through the Children’s Defense Fund, he also has been mentoring children of color living in Nashville’s housing projects. Olatushani recently was commissioned to create a new work, titled “Disrupting the Cradle to Prison Pipeline,” which was displayed at the United Methodist Church building on Capitol Hill, across from the U.S. Supreme Court.

