

Women's Law Student Association Panelist bios September 23, 2021

Sharon Apple L'01 G'01

Associate General Counsel
Nestlé
Florham Park, NJ



Sharon Apple is an Associate General Counsel with Nestlé, a multinational food and beverage company headquartered in Vevey, Switzerland. Apple has been an in-house attorney with Nestlé for 15 years, representing various business verticals within the company, including Gerber Products Company (baby food), PowerBar (performance nutrition), and most recently, Nestlé Health Science (food, beverage, medical nutrition, vitamins and dietary supplements).

During her tenure at Nestlé, Apple has served as lead employment counsel for each of the above-mentioned US-based business in addition to advising on commercial law matters involving marketing, advertising, and food law, and related commercial contract dealings across numerous brands and product portfolios.

Prior to joining the company, Apple was an associate in the Labor and Employment and School Law practices at Riker Danzig Scherer Hyland & Perretti LLP.

Apple is a graduate of Rutgers University Douglass College (BA), Syracuse University College of Law (JD) and Syracuse University Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs (MA, International Relations).

In addition to her academic work at Syracuse, Apple was the Form and Accuracy Executive Editor for the *Syracuse Law Review* and a member of the International Law Moot Court Team. She was a summer law clerk for the Honorable William H. Walls of the U.S. District Court of New Jersey and an intern at the Department of Justice, Office of Immigration Litigation, in Washington, D.C.

Apple also met her husband Seth while attending Syracuse College of Law (00'). They have been married for 17 years and are blessed with three beautiful children, Shayne (15), Sophie (13) and Sydney (11).

Hon. Thérèse Wiley Dancks L'91

U.S. Magistrate Judge
Northern District of New York
Syracuse, NY



Hon. Thérèse Wiley Dancks is a United States Magistrate Judge for the Northern District of New York. She graduated *magna cum laude* from Le Moyne College in 1985 and earned her J.D. degree *cum laude* from Syracuse University College of Law in 1991.

At the time of her appointment to the federal bench in February of 2012, Judge Dancks was a co-founding partner in the law firm of Gale & Dancks, LLC, where her practice centered on civil litigation and trial work. She was associated with the law firm of Mackenzie Hughes, LLP from 1991 to 1997. As a practicing attorney, she represented a variety of medical and other professionals, individuals, municipal entities, corporations, and small businesses in state and federal courts. As a Magistrate Judge her docket includes criminal cases and a variety of civil cases involving constitutional issues including civil rights and employment claims, as well as personal injury, commercial, environmental, and intellectual property claims.

Judge Dancks has always been an active member of state, local, and specialty bar associations. In addition to serving as chair of several bar association committees, she served on the Board of Directors of the Central New York Women's Bar Association and the Onondaga County Bar Association. Judge Dancks is a past president of the Central New York Women's Bar Association and established the organization's award-winning Domestic Violence Legal Assistance Clinic during her term. Currently, she serves on local bar association committees, district-wide court committees, and U.S. Second Circuit court committees. As an advocate of promoting public confidence in the courts through diversity on the bench, she is co-chair of the Federal Magistrate Judges Association Diversity Committee.

Judge Dancks is a native Central New Yorker and has been a board member of several charitable and community organizations. She lends her time and energy to local community and professional organizations, with an emphasis on helping providers of legal services to the indigent and poor and educational institutions. She served as Chairwoman of the Board of Directors of the Hiscock Legal Aid Society and as Secretary of the Board of Directors of St. Elizabeth College of Nursing. She is a current member of the Le Moyne College Board of Regents and a director of the Volunteer Lawyer Project, Inc. She regularly helps train future

lawyers by participating in externship programs for law students throughout the academic year, as well as summer internship programs.

Judge Dancks has co-authored articles for the Syracuse Law Review, and she frequently lectures for federal, state, and local bar associations on many substantive law topics. She is a frequent guest speaker and lecturer at primary, secondary, and higher educational institutions, including Syracuse University College of Law, and consistently participates as a moot court judge for high school, college, and law school programs.

Over her career, Judge Dancks has received numerous honors including Vera House's Sister Mary Vera Award for her work to prevent domestic violence, the Central New York Business Journal's Women in Business Award, the SU College of Law's Moot Court Society Honored Alumni Award, and the SUNY Upstate Medical Center President's Award for Outstanding Volunteer Faculty Service.

Stephanie Hoppe Fedorka L'17 G'17

Associate

Bond Schoeneck & King PLLC

Syracuse, NY



Stephanie Fedorka focuses her practice in labor and employment law matters serving clients in both the public and private sector. Fedorka has experience in assisting clients with matters arising under Title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the New York Human Rights Law, among others. She also has experience in matters arising under the National Labor Relations Act and the Taylor Law. She also has experience with issues pertaining to New York and Federal wage and hour laws and regulations.

While in law school, Fedorka had the opportunity to work in the Office of General Counsel for an administrative agency in Washington, DC where she exclusively worked on labor and employment law matters. Fedorka also served as the Secretary and Vice President of the Latin American Law Student Association and as the Editor in Chief of the Syracuse Law and Civic Engagement Forum at the Syracuse University College of Law. While earning her Juris Doctor at the College of Law, Fedorka simultaneously earned her Master's in Public Administration from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Rochester.

Honors & Affiliations

Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch, Labor and Employment Law - Management, 2022

New York Super Lawyers®, Upstate New York Rising Star, Employment and Labor, 2021

American Bar Association

CNY Women's Bar Association

Hispanic National Bar Association
New York State Bar Association
Puerto Rican Bar Association
William Herbert Johnson Bar Association
Central New York Society for Human Resource Management (CNY SHRM), Legislative
Committee Member
Society for Human Resource Management (National SHRM), Member
New York State Bar Association, Committee on Diversity and Inclusion

Other Activities

ACR Health, Board of Directors
Delta Gamma Fraternity, Volunteer Advisor
Labor and Employment Relations Association of CNY, Management Vice President
Syracuse City Ballet, Community Steering Committee Member
Vera House Gala Committee
William Herbert Johnson Association, Fundraising Committee

Suzanne Galbato L'98

Member
Co-Deputy Chair, Litigation Department
Bond, Schoeneck & King PLLC
Syracuse, NY



Suzanne Galbato is Co-Deputy Chair of the Litigation Department at Bond, Schoeneck & King PLLC in Syracuse, NY, where she litigates commercial, False Claims Act, employment discrimination, antitrust, and environmental cases. She also handles multi-district litigation and class actions; drafts and argues appeals in state and federal court; and represents clients in administrative hearings, mediation and arbitration. Her clients come from the healthcare, manufacturing, media, pharmaceutical, financial, defense, insurance, not-for-profit, small business, and education industries. Before joining Bond in 2000, Galbato served for two years as law clerk to the Hon. Rosemary S. Pooler of the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

Galbato earned her J.D. (*summa cum laude*) in 1998 from Syracuse University College of Law. She also holds an A.B. (1995, *magna cum laude*) from Harvard University. At Bond, she serves as a member of the firm's Management Committee and is a former Chair of the Associate Committee, Recruiting Committee, and Women's Initiative. She also has been an active member of the firm's Diversity Committee. For several years, she has served on the Board of Directors of the Syracuse University Law Alumni Association, and she has worked on the Law Honors Committee. Also for her alma mater, she coaches student advocates for competition, judges advocacy competitions, and speaks regularly about private practice, interviewing, mentoring, work/life balance and diversity.

Actively engaged with the local legal community, Galbato is a trustee of the Northern District Federal Court Bar Association, where she participates in continuing legal education programs and bench/bar activities. She is a former member of the Board of Directors of Hiscock Legal Aid Society and served as Board Chair for three years. She also is a member of the New York State Bar Association Women in the Law Section and has served as Co-Chair of the Appellate Committee of the Commercial and Federal Litigation Section. She also serves as a Board member of the Central New York Women's Bar Association and the Onondaga County Bar Foundation. Galbato provides pro bono legal services through various organizations and NYSBA has designated her as an Empire State Counsel for her pro bono work.

Galbato joined the College of Law Board of Advisors in 2020.

Colleen M. Gibbons L'17

Deputy Director, Upstate Office
Center for Court Innovation
Syracuse, NY



Colleen Gibbons is the Deputy Director of the Center for Court Innovation's Upstate office. Reporting to the Director of the Syracuse office, Gibbons works on a variety of state court initiatives, including supporting the expansion of opioid courts; developing new projects in the criminal, civil and family court systems; and overseeing the office's numerous existing initiatives. In addition, Gibbons spends a portion of her time working with the Center's National Technical Assistance team, helping to provide training and technical assistance to jurisdictions across the country on a wide range of justice issues.

Gibbons graduated from the College of Law in 2017, having completed curricular programs in disability law and policy and estate planning. In her 1L summer, Gibbons interned at the Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County, where she worked in the Family Clinic and Landlord-Tenant Clinic providing legal assistance and advice to low-income members of the Syracuse community.

In her 2L summer and immediately after graduation, Gibbons worked at a Syracuse law firm, focusing on not-for-profit and elder law matters.

In her final year at SUCOL, Gibbons was president of the Student Bar Association (SBA) and Pro Bono Fellow. She also served a term as president of Syracuse's Women's Law Student Association, and was an active member of many student organizations, including the Disability Law Society, Syracuse Public Interest Network, OutLaw, If/When/How, and the Student Animal Legal Defense Fund.

Gibbons completed the Low Income Taxpayer and Disability Law clinics, was a Research Assistant for Professor Mary Helen McNeal, and served as a student mentor for international students enrolled in the LL.M. program in American Law. Gibbons also traveled to Santa Monica and Brooklyn as an arguing member of two intercollegiate trial teams, and during her 3L year she, along with her partner Justin Wilson, won the College of Law's Lionel O. Grossman Trial Competition.

Gibbons completed her M.S. and Ph.D. in Human and Community Development at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and her B.S. in Exceptional Education at Buffalo State College. Prior to attending SUCOL, Gibbons worked at Syracuse University's Falk College as the Project Manager for a National Institutes of Health grant. She also taught elementary school in Oneida, NY for five years.

Gibbons is actively involved with the Onondaga County Bar Association's Volunteer Advocate Lawyer for Animals program and is a member of the OCBA's Community Engagement Committee. In addition to serving on the SULAA Board, Gibbons is on the boards of the Central New York Women's Bar Association, the Syracuse Cooperative Market, and ARISE. She has two dogs and two cats and occasionally fosters dogs who are waiting for their forever homes.

Lisa K. Levine L'96

General Counsel

National Women's Soccer League (NWSL)

Chicago, IL



Lisa K. Levine is General Counsel to the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL), the only sanctioned women's professional soccer league in the United States. Embarking on its historical ninth competitive season in 2021, Ms. Levine was part of the team that formed NWSL in 2012, drafting the league's governing documents as well as its player contracts, manuals, rules and guidelines that control the league's day-to-day operations. Ms. Levine also negotiated sponsorship, broadcast, and licensing agreements on behalf of the league, and assists with all aspects of league functions.

Prior to her position at NWSL, Ms. Levine served as General Counsel to the United States Soccer Federation, the governing body for soccer in the United States and the National Governing Body of the sport as recognized by the United States Olympic Committee.

Prior to joining U.S. Soccer, Ms. Levine was Corporate Counsel to The Scott Fetzer Company, which is owned by Warren Buffet's Berkshire Hathaway, and was associate counsel for IMG, a global sports marketing firm.

Before joining IMG, Ms. Levine spent two years in private practice, focusing on intellectual property and employment issues.

Ms. Levine is a frequent lecturer, and has been an adjunct law professor since 2001, in subjects ranging from sports law to business law.

Ms. Levine is a graduate of Virginia Tech (B.A.) and the College of William and Mary (M.A.), with degrees in English. She earned her Doctor of Jurisprudence (magna cum laude) from Syracuse University College of Law.

Connie A. Matteo L'91

Assistant General Counsel
Pfizer Inc.
Peapack, NJ



Connie Matteo is an Assistant General Counsel at Pfizer. Prior to joining Pfizer in October 2009, Ms. Matteo was a Senior Corporate Counsel at Wyeth. Before going in-house, Ms. Matteo was a principal of Porzio, Bromberg & Newman in Morristown, New Jersey and a member of the firm's Litigation Department. Her practice focused on complex product liability, pharmaceutical drug and medical device product liability claims. Ms. Matteo also counseled pharmaceutical clients on issues related to regulatory compliance. Ms. Matteo has authored a number of articles related to product liability litigation and regulatory compliance. Ms. Matteo frequently speaks on topics related to pharmaceutical product liability litigation and serves as guest lecturer at two law schools.

Ms. Matteo's professional affiliations include CPR, the Defense Research Institute, the Association of Corporate Counsel and the Product Liability Advisory Council. Ms. Matteo is the co-chair of CPR's Healthcare and Life Science Committee. Ms. Matteo also serves on the Dean's Board of Advisors for Syracuse University's College of Arts and Sciences.

Carla M. Palumbo L'82

President & CEO

Legal Aid Society of Rochester, NY

Rochester, NY



Carla M. Palumbo is the President and CEO of the Legal Aid Society of Rochester, NY (LASROC). Ms. Palumbo is an attorney with over 35 years of experience. She has a distinguished record of public service in law, community and government. Ms. Palumbo has been with LASROC since 1984, where she focused much of her career on advocating for victims of domestic violence and access to justice for the most vulnerable in our community. She has been instrumental in the dramatic growth and development of the Legal Aid Society over the past three decades. She holds a Juris-Doctor degree from Syracuse University (1982) and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish and Italian Education from the State University of New York at Albany (1979).

Since her appointment as President and CEO in 2014, LAROC has nearly doubled in size. The agency now serves residents in a 7 county region of the Fingers Lakes and has an operating budget of \$8.5 million and 100 staff members.

Ms. Palumbo served on the Monroe County Legislature from 2001 to 2007 and was the Minority Leader of the Legislature from 2005 until 2007. In 2007, she was elected to the Rochester City Council where she represented Northwest Rochester until 2014. Ms. Palumbo served as Chair of the Council's Neighborhood and Business Development Committee during her time on Council.

Ms. Palumbo serves on numerous boards and committees in Rochester and New York State. She currently serves as President of the Board of the New York Bar Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the New York State Bar Association. She serves as a Trustee of Monroe Community College. Ms. Palumbo is co-author of the 3rd and 4th Editions of The Law of Sex Discrimination, (Lindgren, Taub, Palumbo and Wolfson, Thompson Publishers, August 2004 & 2009).

Lisa A. Peebles L'92

Federal Public Defender
Northern District of New York
Syracuse, NY



Lisa Peebles joined the Northern District of New York Federal Public Defender's Office in August 1999. Appointed First Assistant Public Defender in 2005 and Interim Federal Public Defender in November 2010, she was officially appointed the Federal Public Defender in 2013.

Peebles has practiced law in the Syracuse area for more than 20 years. She worked as a Clerk in the US Attorney's Office in Syracuse during law school, and, after being admitted to the Bar, in the Jefferson County (NY) Public Defender's Office.

In private practice, Peebles' emphasis was on criminal defense. She has tried almost 50 civil and criminal cases to verdict, and she has handled numerous appeals in the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. She has dedicated her career to indigent defense work, and in 2014 she was awarded the Thurgood Marshall Award for Outstanding Criminal Practitioner by the New York State Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.

Peebles received her undergraduate degree from Akron University and her law degree from Syracuse University in 1992.

Jill S. Sherman '96 L'00

Third Party Risk Manager, VP
MUFG Union Bank
San Diego, CA

Jennifer Sherman is a Third Party Risk Manager with MUFG Union Bank where she is responsible for the ongoing management of assigned Third Party relationships. As part of her role she provides gap analysis on documentation to ensure compliance with federal regulations and program requirements. After internships and working at a small law firm, she relocated to the southeast and began working in the corporate sector drawing upon skills from law school and acquiring business acumen. Before relocating to the west coast and joining MUFG Union Bank she was with Bank of America working in Sourcing and Vendor Management where she was responsible for high risk Third Party testing for process adherence and standardization.

Sherman received her Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology and policy studies from Syracuse University and her Juris Doctorate from Syracuse University College of Law.

Nicolette J. Zulli L'18

Associate
Duane Morris LLP
Houston, TX



Nicolette J. Zulli (“Nico”) is a trial lawyer with a practice focused on all phases of complex commercial litigation in the energy, insurance and banking/finance industries. Ms. Zulli has experience in matters concerning complex breach of contract, business torts, bankruptcy, non-competition and non-solicitation agreements, and trade secrets. Her practice also regularly consists of providing litigation insights on high-stakes commercial real estate transactions and assisting with commercial foreclosures in Texas. Ms. Zulli is also a member of the firm’s White-Collar Criminal Defense Group, and serves as a co-manager and contributor to the Duane Morris White-Collar Criminal Law Blog.

Ms. Zulli has valuable experience representing clientele of varying sizes in state and federal trial courts throughout Texas, and regularly assists on client matters in state and federal courts across the United States. She has also represented clients in non-judicial forums, including arbitration and administrative proceedings.

Ms. Zulli is admitted to practice in Texas and New York. In addition to representing businesses and individuals in commercial litigation, she serves the local community as an Editorial Member of the Houston Bar Association’s *The Houston Lawyer Magazine* and Co-Chair of the HBA’s Law Week Fun Run Committee.

Ms. Zulli also devotes a substantial amount of time providing pro bono legal services. She has worked with pro bono clients, including the International Development Law Organization, and The Crossing, a professional chamber choir based out of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Most recently, Ms. Zulli was a member of the Duane Morris pro bono team that worked with the National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum and Asian Americans Advancing Justice-AAJC on an Amicus Brief submission to the Supreme Court of the United States.

Ms. Zulli is a 2018 graduate, with honors, of Syracuse University College of Law, where she was a member of the Syracuse Law Review, and a graduate, with honors, of Baylor University with a B.A. in Journalism, with a minor in Film & Digital Media.

Ms. Zulli is a lifelong singer-songwriter and is the lead vocalist of the Duane Morris Firm Band. She is also an avid runner, and serves as the Legal Officer of BON Running Club in Houston.