



20<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY *of the* NEW YORK COURTS

2022 Gala

CELEBRATING OUR 20<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

Empowering Students Through Education:  
Building Informed Citizens



# The Historical Society is Born



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“Much of the history of the New York State Courts lies buried in the memories of hundreds of judges and lawyers, as well as in storerooms and attics across the country. With the formation of the Historical Society, we put in place a vehicle to collect and preserve the wonderful history of the New York courts for future generations.”

**Hon. Judith S. Kaye, Founder *from her oral history interview in 2011***

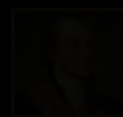


When Judge Albert M. Rosenblatt joined Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye on the Court of Appeals, they wondered about those who came before them and began to plan a historical society dedicated to NYS legal history





Judges Kaye and Rosenblatt assembled a group of planners to discuss their historical society idea. This meeting laid the groundwork for outreach to other likeminded lawyers and judges and the creation of a formal charter



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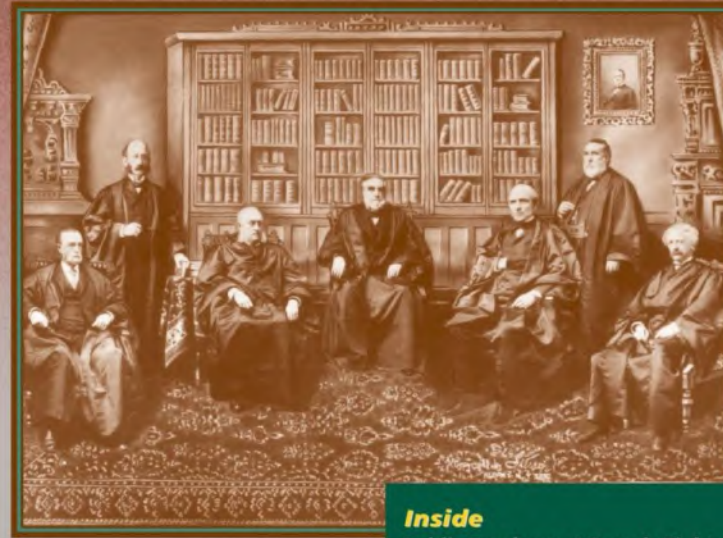


NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

SEPTEMBER 2002 | VOL. 74 | NO. 7

# Journal

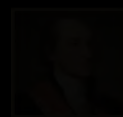
**FORMING A HISTORY SOCIETY  
FOR THE NEW YORK COURTS**



**Inside**

Public Employees' Speech Rights  
Mediation in Commercial Cases  
Proof of Service by Mail

The Society's formal debut in 2002 was a cover story in the New York State Bar Association's Journal



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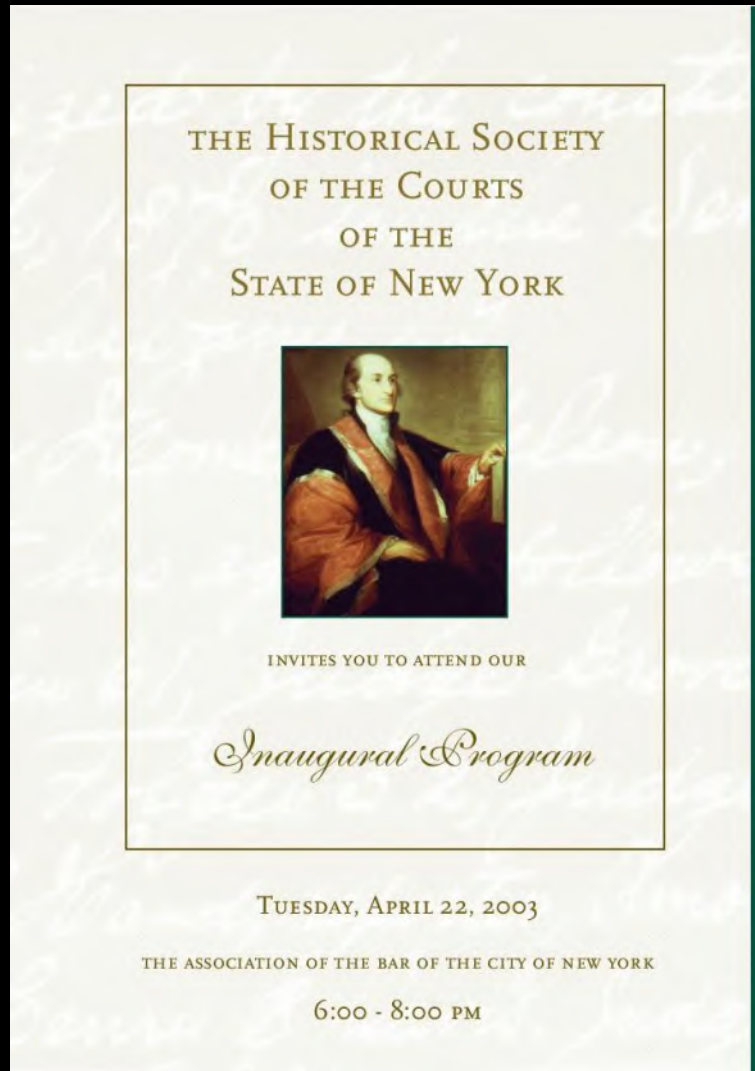
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# Public Programs: Open to All



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Shortly after its founding, the Society began connecting with the legal community and the general public through its events. Its inaugural event was a fitting theme *The Framing of the Constitution: New York's Role* (2003)

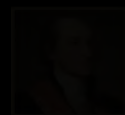




Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Judge Judith S. Kaye discuss women in the law during a program from the partnership series with the Supreme Court Historical Society (2011)



*Asian Americans and the Law (2014) and Celebrating the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Erie v. Tompkins (2018), from the Stephen R. Kaye Program Series, sponsored by Proskauer Rose*



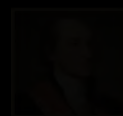
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*Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye: A Clerk's Eye View (2016) and Then & Now: A Look Back at Women Trailblazers & Forward—Has Equality Been Achieved? (2018), from the Judith S. Kaye Program Series, sponsored by Skadden Arps Slate Meagher & Flom*

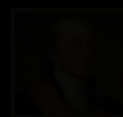


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The Young Lawyers Committee Series Cocktails & Commentary brings together young and established attorneys in programs such as *A Conversation with Roy L. Reardon & Patricia M. Hynes* (2017) and *Kosciuszko: A Bridge to Liberty for All* (2017)



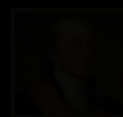
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Celebrating the restoration of Chancellor James Kent's gravestone with Hon. Albert M. Rosenblatt and Kent's descendants at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Beacon, NY (2016)



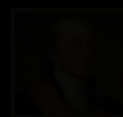
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Celebrating the heritage of the Oneida Indian Nation and its collaboration with Court of Appeals judges to build a system of laws that would respect Native American law and coordinate with NY State law (2018)



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Celebrating justice for LGBTQ people in New York, with the recent program *From Stonewall to Windsor* (May 2022)



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Celebrating justice for developmentally disabled people in New York, with the recent program on the Willowbrook State School (September 2022)

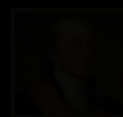


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Celebrating the activism of Sojourner Truth and the NYS courts' role in freeing her son, with the recent program on her life and the importance of preserving court records in partnership with the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, NYPL (October 2022). Photos courtesy of Bob Gore for the Schomburg Center



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# Oral Histories: Informing Future Generations

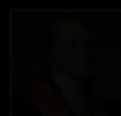


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With over 30 interviews, including three of the four most recently sitting Chief Judges, the Society's Oral History Project captures the personal recollections of legal luminaries of the Bench and Bar, providing future generations firsthand insights into how the legal process works. Pictured here: Hon. Judith S. Kaye and Hon. Jonathan Lippman with their interviewers, former clerk Anne C. Reddy and former counsel Antonio Galvao



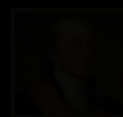
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With over 30 interviews, including three of the four most recently sitting Chief Judges, the Society's Oral History Project captures the personal recollections of legal luminaries of the Bench and Bar, providing future generations firsthand insights into how the legal process works. Pictured here: Hon Richard D. Simons in discussion about the creation of the Oneida Indian Nation Court with Hon. Albert M. Rosenblatt and Helaine M. Barnett with interviewer Hyon Kim

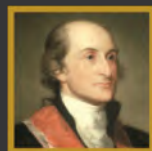


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# Society Publications



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 Judith S. Kaye  
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## The Historical Society of the Courts of the State of New York

### Why a Historical Society? by Judith S. Kaye and Albert M. Rosenblatt

Computers whizzes are fond of saying that computers aren't really all that smart. They know only what you tell them. Same with a camera. It has very little imagination and no soul. In this respect, humans have it all over their computers and cameras. But humans have a serious shortcoming. When the heart stops beating, the mind's memory bank is lost forever. There are no film negatives and no floppy discs. It's all gone. Herodotus, Thucydides, Plutarch, Josephus, the Venerable Bede and James Boswell each had an extraordinary talent and a capacity for detail and perspective. But there is one thing they have in common—an achievement so memorable that we are forever in their debt. They wrote things down.

Without their writings we would have no permanent record of events. An oral history—passed on from generation to generation—is worth something, but one suspects that it is a bit like playing "telephone." And the first thing we want to do is capture that history and commit it to paper. Better frozen than clouded with layers of mythology, exaggeration and omission.

It is never too late to start preserving court history, or to form a historical society that does so. Centuries or even decades from now, our successors will want to know what life and law were like up through the dawning of this

millennium. We should not disappoint them. Perhaps if we help them understand us and our forebears, they can improve on what we have done. So let's save what is about to be lost, assemble what we have and make a tabularum for the future.

Already we have great riches. The New York State Supreme Court was established in 1691, and a minute book survives, at a library in Flushing. The blueprints of the New York City Hall (completed in 1703 and the site of the Zenger trial) are still intact, as is the roll of New York lawyers that bears the signature of Alexander Hamilton.

There are also the riches that we have yet to discover—the documents and relics in attics and basements that will turn up once we cast the net.

Our mission is clear: to preserve and collect, and to have fun doing it. We want to be inclusive because we know there are many readers who share our passion. We have a sign-up sheet for your convenience. So come join us, won't you?



Reproduced portrait of Benjamin Cardozo, Chief Justice of the State of New York, courtesy of New York State Library—Manuscripts & Special Collections

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## JUDICIAL NOTICE

ISSUE 6 JANUARY 2009



Featured Biography: Benjamin Cardozo by Judith S. Kaye  
 The Election of Chief Judge Irving Lehman by Henry M. Greenberg  
 The Impeachment of Governor William Sulzer by John Dunne



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE COURTS OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

A PERIODICAL OF NEW YORK COURT HISTORY

## JUDICIAL NOTICE

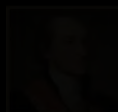
ISSUE 11 JANUARY 2016



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY of the NEW YORK COURTS

Kaye on Jay: Revisited by Judith S. Kaye Asian-Americans and the Law by Denny Chin & Kathy Hirata Chin  
 People v. Gillette by Susan N. Herman Jacobin Winds by Craig A. Landy New York's Commercial Division by Mark H. Akcott

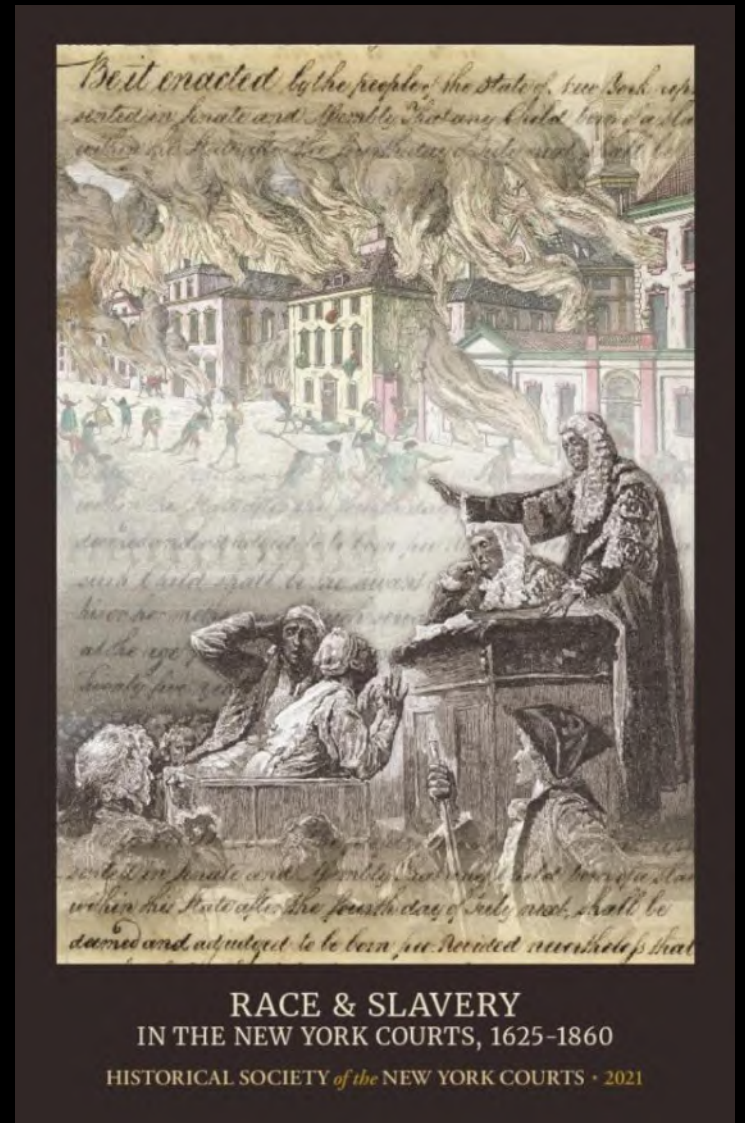
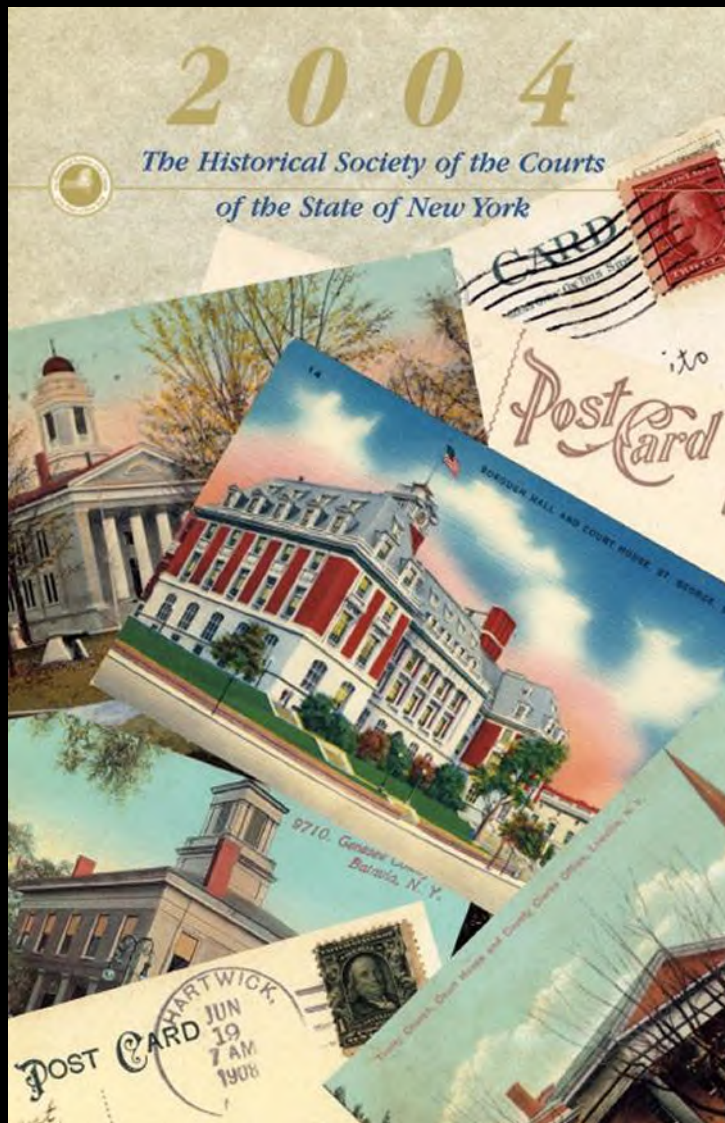
The Society's dedication to scholarship began with a humble newsletter that became over time a full-fledged journal, *Judicial Notice*



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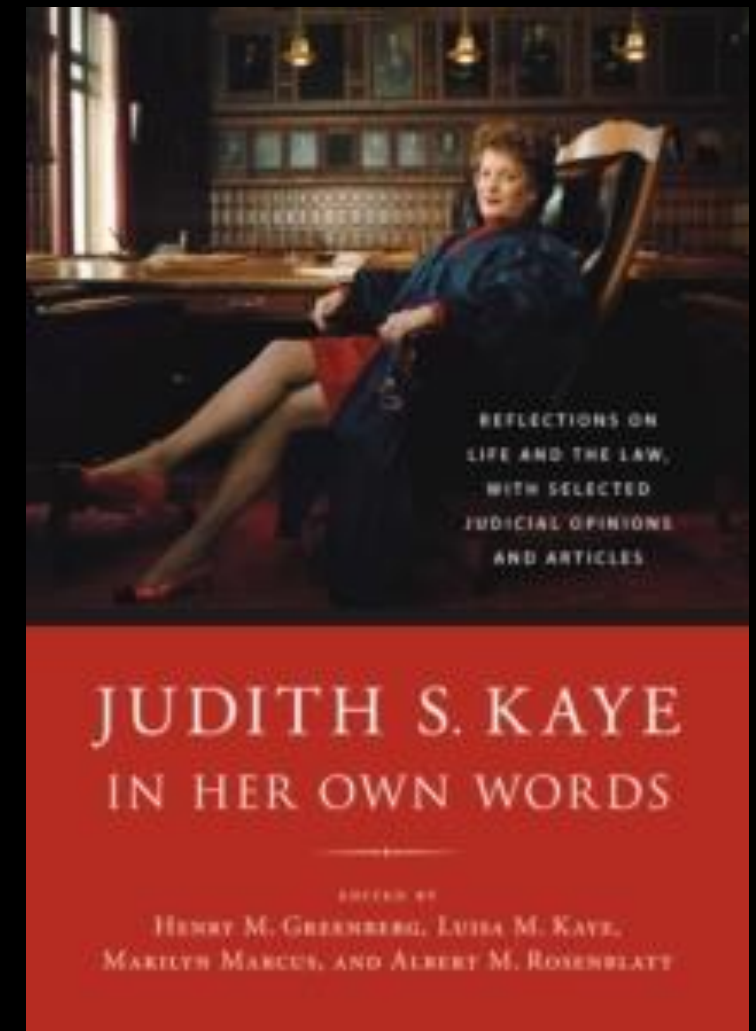
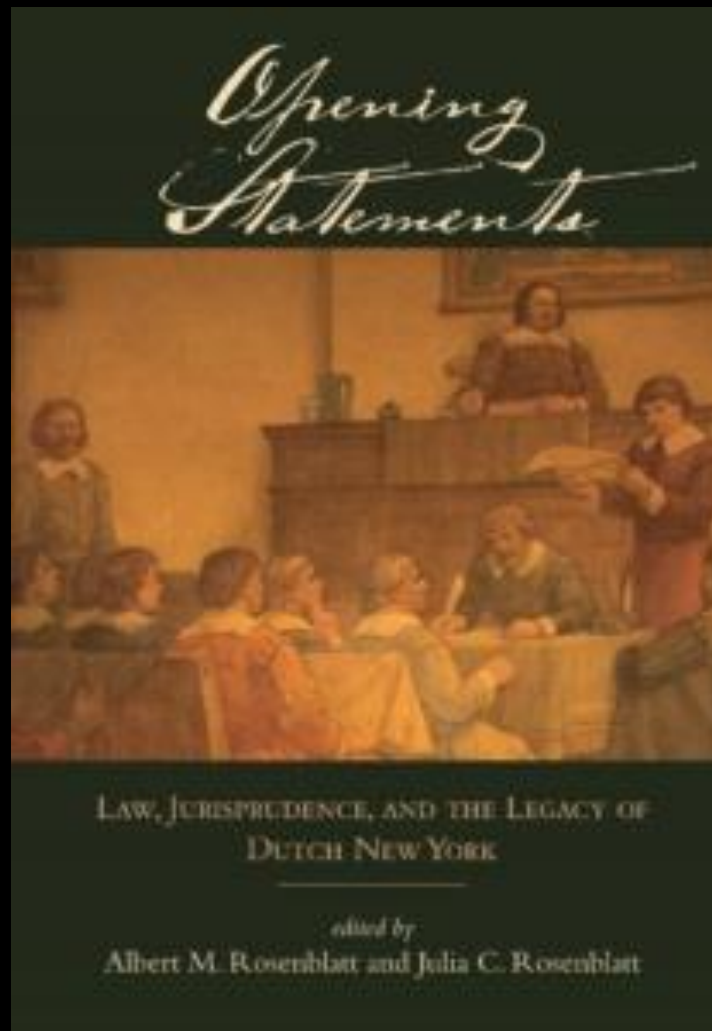
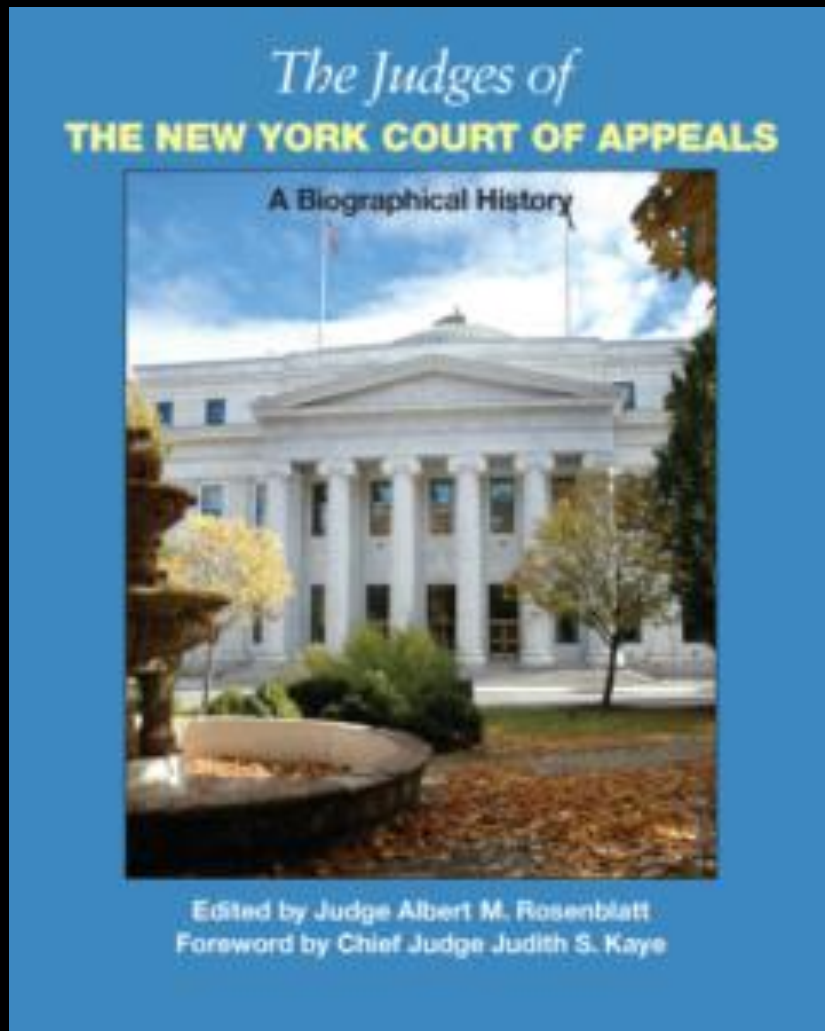
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The Society's annual calendar features vignettes from NYS legal history to the delight of its members





Over the years, certain worthwhile topics have developed into books. The Society has compiled biographies of all Judges who sat on the Court of Appeals through 2007, looked at courthouses across the State, returned to our Dutch roots for the beginnings of NYS jurisprudence, and published the memoir of Former Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye, with highlights of her opinions, articles and speeches



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# Recording History as It Unfolds



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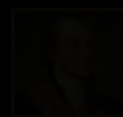


In 2020, the New York State court system, with over 300 courthouses, rapidly converted from an in-person operating model to an online platform to ensure that the courthouses never closed. Two Society projects tell this story, creating a contemporaneous record of what the legal community experienced and how they responded to an unprecedented event





*Dispensing Justice from a Distance: Journal of the NYS Courts During the 2020-2021 Pandemic* includes nearly 40 interviews with judges and court personnel, including court clerks and court officers who deal directly with the public. The archive focuses primarily on the work of the trial courts, how the judges and staff managed to carry out their mission of serving justice. Pictured here: Former Chief Judge Janet DiFiore and Chief Administrative Judge Lawrence K. Marks provide Hon. Jonathan Lippman with their approach to managing the pandemic from the top

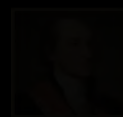


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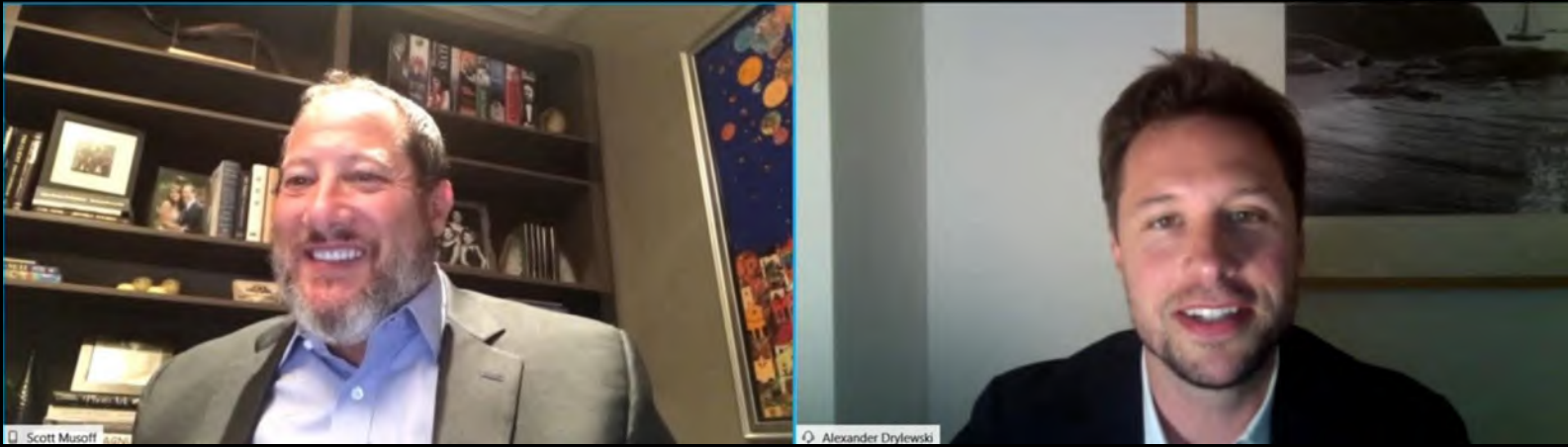


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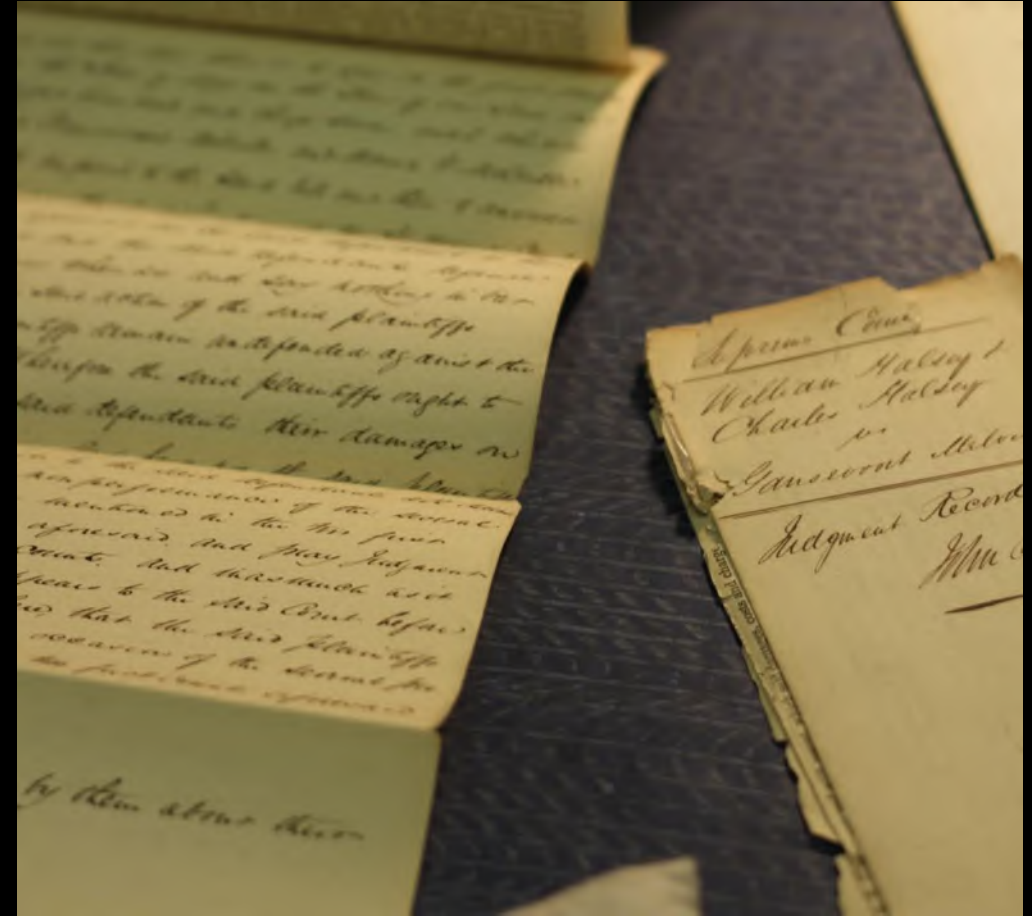
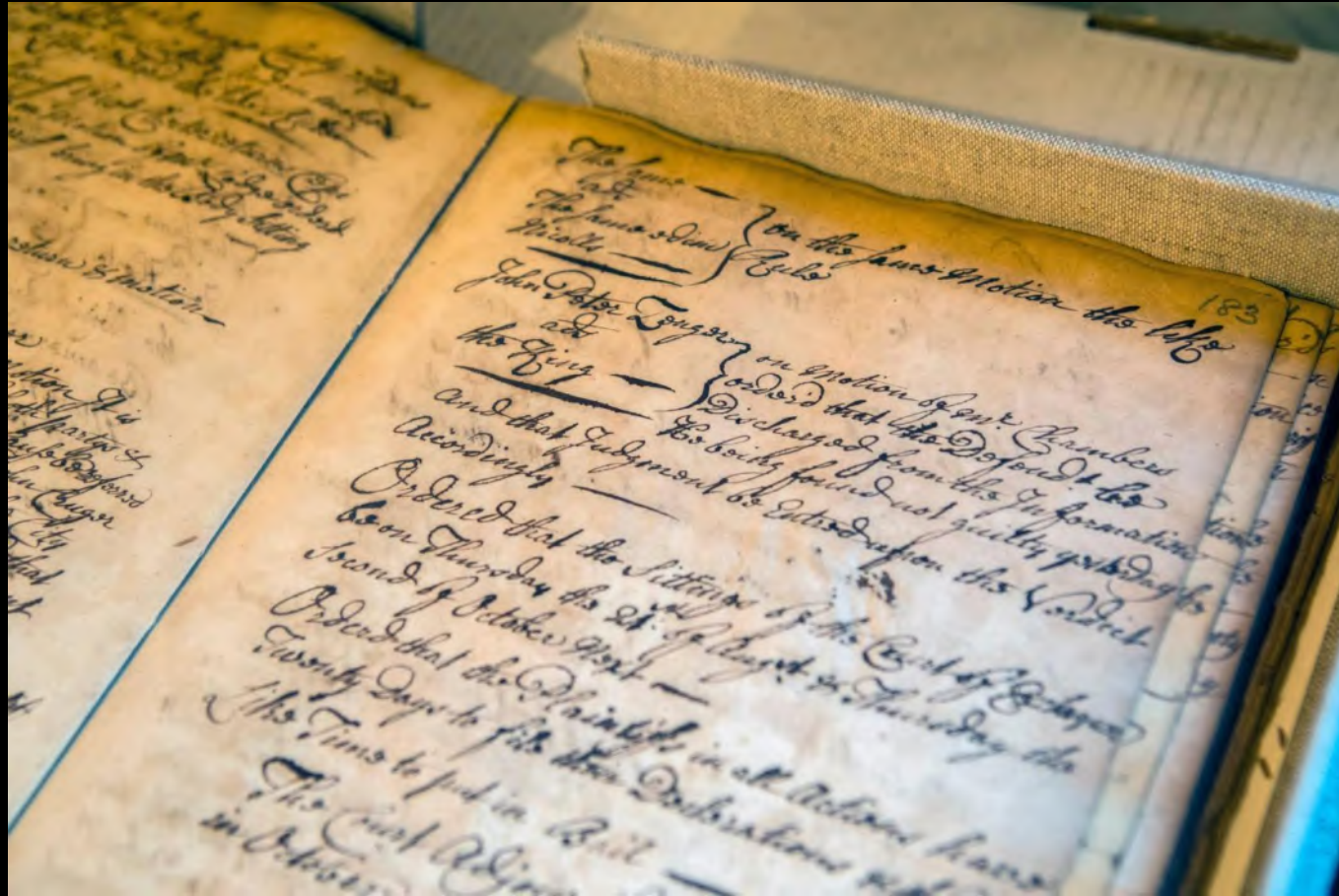


With nearly 30 interviews, *New York State Lawyers' Response to the Pandemic* preserves the efforts made by New York lawyers to operate virtually during the pandemic, serve clients outside of their offices, and adapt to the changes in court operations that prioritized essential filings. Pictured here: Scott D. Musoff and Henry M. Greenberg interviewed by Alexander C. Drylewski and Sarah Gold

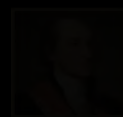




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Preserving court documents provides a window into history as it unfolded. From precedent-setting Court of Appeals cases including the Zenger trial to actions against Herman Melville's family, and everything in between, the Society is dedicated to highlighting access to our shared legal history



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# Empowering NYS Students



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Dr. Julia Rose Kraut surrounded by students in her 2016 course *Civil Rights, Civil Liberties & the Empire State*



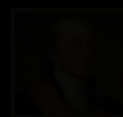
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Students in Judith S. Kaye Teaching Fellowship classes receive instruction from legal historian-educators on themes including the founding documents and New York's jurisprudence



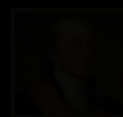
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Judith S. Kaye Teaching Fellowship classes receive enrichment with trips to the courthouses and guest speakers, who are lawyers, judges, and court personnel

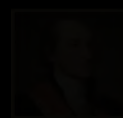


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The Society's Harlem Law Program targeted students in Harlem who benefited from a Saturday program of enrichment on the role of the courts in our democracy



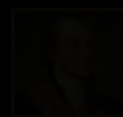
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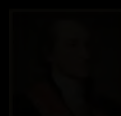


Hon. Lillian Wan, Society Trustee and Appellate Division, Second Department Justice, gives a guest lecture to a group of high school students





Middle school boys learn about their First Amendment rights in our video feature *Inspiring Our Future by Illuminating Our Past*, premiering this evening



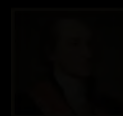
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Hon. Judith S. Kaye and Roy L. Reardon visit a Bard High School Early College classroom to meet with middle school students in an after-school enrichment program (2012)



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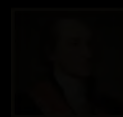


Middle school boys visit the courthouse and District Attorney's Office through the Society's Judith S. Kaye Teaching Fellowship program





The Society's David A. Garfinkel Essay Scholarship has reached community college students across the State since 2008. Students prepared essays on topics from New York legal history and have been recognized and received awards at ceremonies held at the Court of Appeals on Law Day and more recently at the Appellate Division, First Department

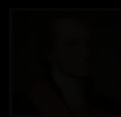


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The Society hosts teacher workshops for educators to “teach the teachers” with tools to explore the role of the courts and founding documents in our democracy and bring those principles back to their students



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# Bringing History into Courthouses

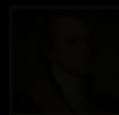


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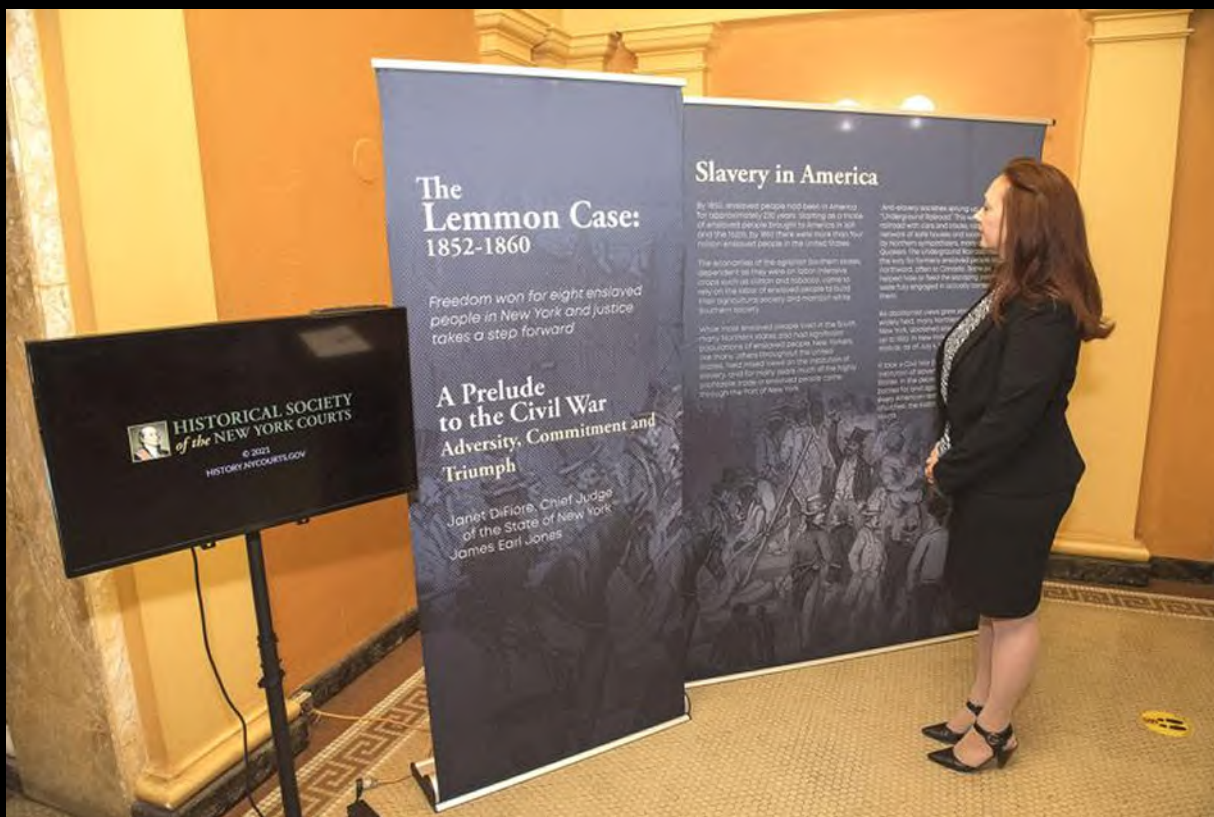
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The Lemmon Slave Case exhibit as installed in Dutchess County, features text panels and a video narration by James Earl Jones and tells the story of the heroic action of free Black people and abolitionist lawyers to bring eight enslaved young women and children before the New York courts. It is currently on tour to 45 courthouses over 90 weeks







The Lemmon Slave Case Exhibit as installed in Niagara and Yates counties, where bar associations hosted events to celebrate the important role of New York's courts in freeing enslaved people in the name of humanity when slavery was the law of the land

# Bringing Together the Bench and Bar



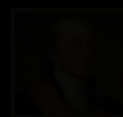
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The Society is honored to have the support of law firms, judges and lawyers to come together at its annual gala, from 2007 to 2015



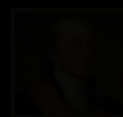
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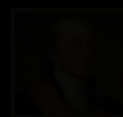


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# What Others Are Saying About the Society



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“The Historical Society really brings to life this whole idea of not only this history of the courts, but the rule of law – even most importantly, this idea of justice, and making it real and concrete for each and every one of our citizens.”

**Hon. Jonathan Lippman, President of the Society** *from the 2019 film Making Legal History Matter*



“Taking a course of this nature allows the boys to see that they are a part of their own government. There have been moments where boys have been stopped and searched, and for them, being as young as they are, their thought is that it’s very negative. They feel like the law isn’t for them, but the more that they learn, the more that they understand, the more confidence that they have, and the more they can learn to advocate for themselves.”

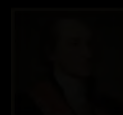
**Aisha Lloyd Williams, Former Associate Head of School, George Jackson Academy & Society Education  
Partner from the 2019 film *Making Legal History Matter***





“We did an event with Yale Law School on Judge Jane Bolin, who was the first African American woman to ascend to the bench anywhere in the United States. We had a lot of folks from the community come out. I remember there was this one family with little kids who were blown away to be in a room with African American judges.”

**David L. Goodwin, Esq., Society Trustee & Young Lawyers Committee Chair Emeritus *from the 2019 film*  
*Making Legal History Matter***



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“I have been fascinated by the work the Society does capturing oral histories of many of our esteemed judges and also some of the practicing lawyers whom we have seen go before us. Capturing these oral histories on top of the written histories is magic.”

**Lynn K. Neuner, Esq., Gala Vice-Chair *from the 2019 film Making Legal History Matter***





“This class is important because it gives us children the opportunity to know we’re entitled to rights and what rights we have.”

**Student in the Society’s lesson on the First Amendment from the 2022 film *Inspiring Our Future by Illuminating Our Past*, premiering this evening**



“We interviewed judges, administrators, thought leaders, and friends and colleagues about the way in which the New York court system responded during the COVID pandemic—from the various ways in which the courts ensured that they would remain open for business, to provide access to justice for New Yorkers who most needed it to the ways in which our New York legal community has come together and responded in resilient fashion.”

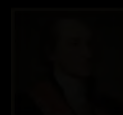
**Alexander C. Drylewski, Esq., Society Trustee from the 2022 *Why the Society? Trustees Answer* interview series**





“After being honored at Law Day, I became more confident in my abilities and what I wanted to do with my life. I realized that I am somebody who will accomplish great things. I accepted the fact that I was called to work with young people, to use my personal experiences as a platform to encourage and empower them to reimagine their futures, and to remind them they are capable of more than they could dream or imagine.”

**Elijah Fagan-Solis, Inaugural David A. Garfinkel Essay Scholarship Winner** *from his 2017 article **My Experience as the Inaugural Winner of the Garfinkel Essay Scholarship** (pictured right)*





“Documents are essential to every historical mission. Second and third hand source material produces second rate scholarship and worse yet, conjecture and surmise. Our goal is to preserve and rely on our rich documentary history.”

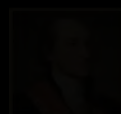
**Hon. Albert M. Rosenblatt, Co-Founder & President Emeritus** *from the 2018 podcast **Missing Court Records Means Missing History** with interviewer David L. Goodwin*





“The Society has taken on a project to teach teachers how to use these types of materials, working on teacher workshops to introduce teachers to the materials that are available through the Society, using primary sources, for example the *Lemmon Slave Case*, developing other types of materials for teachers to bring to students to talk about different eras of U.S. history through the lens of New York and the New York Courts.”

**Troy A. McKenzie, Dean of NYU Law School, Society Trustee, & Co-Chair of the Education Committee  
from the 2019 film *Making Legal History Matter***



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“One of the things that the Society is working on has been the Lemmon Slave Case. That’s a great case dealing with how efforts were made during a very bad time in American history to deal with the problem of slavery. We’re very honored to be part of helping to do this and get it out to younger people so they can understand how important equality, freedom, and all the good efforts that were made 150 years ago to make the United States a better country.”

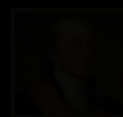
**Robert J. Giuffra, Jr., Esq., Society Trustee & Honorary Gala Chair from the 2022 *Why the Society? Trustees Answer* interview series**





“The Society is invaluable because we live in a society in which our differences are supposed to be resolved peacefully in courtrooms, and if you don’t appreciate the history that got us this far, then you don’t appreciate the value of that system.”

**Evan R. Chesler, Esq., Society Supporter *from the 2019 film Making Legal History Matter***



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