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SIDNEY SHAINWALD  
PUBLIC INTEREST LECTURE

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New York Law School  
March 14, 2016

THE HONORABLE GEORGE J. MITCHELL  
FORMER SENATE MAJORITY LEADER AND  
U.S. SPECIAL ENVOY FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE

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## PROGRAM

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ANTHONY W. CROWELL  
DEAN AND PRESIDENT  
*Welcome*

SYBIL SHAINWALD, ESQ.  
*Introductory Remarks*

CONGRESSWOMAN CAROLYN B. MALONEY  
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FOR NEW YORK'S  
14TH DISTRICT  
*Introduction*

THE HONORABLE JACK B. WEINSTEIN  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT,  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK  
*Introduction of Senator George J. Mitchell*

**THE HONORABLE GEORGE J. MITCHELL**  
FORMER SENATE MAJORITY LEADER AND  
U.S. SPECIAL ENVOY FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE

ARTHUR N. ABBEY  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
*Closing Remarks*

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For Sybil Shainwald, endowing the Sidney Shainwald Public Interest Lecture Series is a meaningful way to pay homage to the extraordinary life and career of her husband. For New York Law School, it is an opportunity to further Sidney's efforts and to honor a man who was invaluable in both his life and work.

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## GEORGE J. MITCHELL

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George Mitchell served as US Special Envoy for Middle East Peace from January 2009 to May 2011.

Prior to that he had a distinguished career in public service. He was appointed to the United States Senate in 1980 to complete the unexpired term of Senator Edmund S. Muskie, who resigned to become Secretary of State. He was elected to a full term in the Senate in 1982 in a stunning come-from-behind victory. After trailing in public opinion polls by 36 points, Senator Mitchell rallied to win the election, receiving 61 percent of the votes cast. Senator Mitchell went on to an illustrious career in the Senate spanning 15 years.

In 1988, he was reelected with 81 percent of the vote, the largest margin in Maine history. He left the Senate in 1995 as the Senate majority leader, a position he had held since January 1989.

Senator Mitchell enjoyed bipartisan respect during his tenure. It has been said "there is not a man, woman or child in the Capitol who does not trust George Mitchell." For six consecutive years he was voted "the most respected member" of the Senate by a bipartisan group of senior congressional aides.

While in the Senate, Senator Mitchell served on the Finance, Veterans Affairs, and Environment and Public Works Committees. He led the successful 1990 reauthorization of the Clean Air Act, including new controls on acid rain toxins. He was the author of the first national oil spill prevention and cleanup law. Senator Mitchell led the Senate to passage of the nation's first child care bill and was principal author of the low-income housing tax credit program. He was instrumental in the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, landmark legislation extending civil rights protections to the disabled. Senator Mitchell's efforts led to the passage of a higher education bill that expanded opportunities for millions of Americans. He was a leader in opening markets to trade and led the Senate to ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement and creation of the World Trade Organization.

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## GEORGE J. MITCHELL (CONTINUED)

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Senator Mitchell received an undergraduate degree from Bowdoin College and a law degree from the Georgetown University Law Center. He served in Berlin, Germany, as an officer in the US Army Counter-Intelligence Corps from 1954 to 1956. From 1960 to 1962 he was a trial lawyer in the Justice Department in Washington, DC. From 1962 to 1965 he served as executive assistant to Senator Edmund S. Muskie. In 1965 he returned to Maine where he engaged in the private practice of law in Portland until 1977. He was then appointed US attorney for Maine, a position he held until 1979, when he was appointed US District Judge for Maine. He resigned that position in 1980 to accept appointment to the US Senate.

In 1995, he served as a Special Advisor to President William J. Clinton on Ireland, and from 1996 to 2000 he served as the Independent Chairman of the Northern Ireland Peace Talks. Under his leadership, the Good Friday Agreement, an historic accord ending decades of conflict, was agreed to by the governments of Ireland and the United Kingdom and the political parties of Northern Ireland. For his service in Northern Ireland Senator Mitchell received numerous awards and honors, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor given by the US government; the Philadelphia Liberty Medal; the Truman Institute Peace Prize; and the United Nations (UNESCO) Peace Prize.

In 2000 and 2001, at the request of President Clinton, Prime Minister Ehud Barak, and Chairman Yasser Arafat, Senator Mitchell served as Chairman of an International Fact-Finding Committee on violence in the Middle East. The Committee's recommendation, widely known as The Mitchell Report, was endorsed by the Bush Administration, the European Union and by many other governments.

In 2006 and 2007 he led the investigation into the use of performance-enhancing drugs in Major League Baseball. He also served as Chairman of the Special Commission Investigating Allegations of Impropriety in the Bidding Process for the Olympic Games and was the Independent Overseer of the American Red Cross Liberty Fund, which provided relief for September 11 attack victims and their families.

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## GEORGE J. MITCHELL (CONTINUED)

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Senator Mitchell served as Chairman of the global board of the law firm DLA Piper and is now Chairman Emeritus; Chairman of the board of directors of The Walt Disney Company; a member of the board of the Boston Red Sox; and a director of several companies, including Federal Express, Xerox, Staples, Unilever and Starwood Hotels and Resorts. He also served for ten years as the Chancellor of Queen's University of Northern Ireland; as President of the Economic Club of Washington; and as Chairman of the International Crisis Group.

Senator Mitchell is the author of five books. The most recent, a memoir entitled *The Negotiator: Reflections on an American Life*, was published in May 2015. With his colleague, Sen. Bill Cohen of Maine, he wrote *Men of Zeal*, describing the Iran-Contra investigation. In 1990, Senator Mitchell wrote *World on Fire*, describing the threat of the greenhouse effect and recommending steps to curb it. His next book, published in 1997, was *Not For America Alone: The Triumph of Democracy and The Fall of Communism*. In 1999, Senator Mitchell wrote *Making Peace*, an account of his experience in Northern Ireland.

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## EXCERPTS FROM *THE NEGOTIATOR* BY GEORGE J. MITCHELL

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Although he's regularly asked to do so, God does not take sides in American politics.

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My parents knew little of history or political science, but they understood the meaning of America because they valued freedom and opportunity. They conveyed their values to their children by example more than words. Though it was not often expressed aloud, their message was clear. Their values were simple, universal in reach and enduring in strength: faith, family, work, country.

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Those who know me know that my mother, my father and Edmund Muskie were three of the most influential persons in my life. Few know who the fourth person was.....Elvira Whitten, who taught English at Waterville High School. My early failure to comprehend and thank her for her role in my life is consistent with our society's failure to properly recognize and value the contributions made daily by thousands of Elvira Whittens. All across America, extraordinary and devoted men and women teach, and also shape and inspire our children. We should do much more to raise their status and compensation. We all benefit if in our society as many young Americans as possible reach their full potential.

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I believe that our country is truly exceptional. It is a place of opportunity and, contrary to many assertions, the American Dream is not dead. I grew up in my parents home and witnessed their lives of struggle, all of it lived on the abyss of failure. My mother worked for fifty years on the night shift in textile mills while raising five children. My father was a janitor in a local school. My mother could not read or write. My father had little education. They died penniless. In their minds, though, by their standards, they were very successful, because their dream was for their children to get an education and live better lives. Because of them, and because of the openness of American society each of us did. That said, I think that a young boy today, born into the same circumstances that I was born and raised in, has less chance for upward mobility than I had. It's a failure of our society. In this we have regressed.

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EXCERPTS FROM *THE NEGOTIATOR*  
BY GEORGE J. MITCHELL (CONTINUED)

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Another practice I adopted was to have my staff select each day several of the most negative letters I'd received from Maine. I read each letter carefully, then from my office in the evening I telephoned each of the letter writers. Almost everyone I reached was surprised and many doubted that it really was their senator calling. Once I was able to convince them that the call was genuine, I told them that I had read their letter, that while we disagreed I welcomed their views and appreciated that they had taken the time to write me.

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As Chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, one of my earliest and best decisions was to appoint Nancy Pelosi of San Francisco as chair of our fundraising efforts, a task at which she excelled.

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As Reagan gingerly sipped from the steaming mug he explained that for years he'd sipped on very hot water before major appearances because it relaxed his throat and lowered his voice a couple of octaves. "Frank Sinatra told me about it. He swore that it helped him get through many long performances." I've been drinking hot water before every major speech...if it's good enough for Frank Sinatra and Ronald Reagan, then I'm sure it'll be good for me.

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Although I didn't realize it at the time, when I served in the Senate I was being prepared for the Northern Ireland peace talks. There I spent hundreds of hours listening. By doing so I earned the confidence of the delegates to the talks; I learned what their concerns were; I ultimately figured out where the common ground was. The result was a peace agreement that ended a brutal long-standing conflict.

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By far the greatest risk I took in the negotiations themselves was when I established the firm and final deadline of midnight on April 10, 1998. That was regarded by some as a desperate and dangerous move. Some British civil servants opposed the deadline; they had been engaged in trying to manage the Troubles for many years, and they feared that abrupt end to the process would trigger an immediate return to violence more savage than ever. I shared their concern. But, I argued, without a final deadline the process was ultimately more likely to fail, producing the very result they feared.

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EXCERPTS FROM *THE NEGOTIATOR*  
BY GEORGE J. MITCHELL (CONTINUED)

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It is often the case that a person speaks and then thinks about his or her next statement rather than intently listening to what others are saying; that is especially true of public figures who meet, usually briefly, large numbers of people. By the time you get to shake a person's hand, your eyes and mind often are on the next person in line. Too many persons in positions of authority become accustomed to deference, develop excessive self-confidence, and are incapable of showing respect to others, especially with whom they disagree. These attitudes demean the position and lessen the person's ability to perform his or her duties.

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Learn to listen. That is the most important lesson of my political life...the only certainty I have is that I learned little while I was talking. Learning has come from listening, from reading, from observing, from doing. I also lost a lot of time because much of what I listened to was not worth the effort.

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On Israel and the Palestinians: Israel has a state; a very successful state. It is impressive and moving. But the people of Israel do not have reasonable and sustainable security. The Palestinians, on the other hand, don't have a state. And they ought to have one. Our American Declaration of Independence is quite clear on the right of people to govern themselves. But the Palestinians are not going to get a state until the people of Israel have security. Israel can't get that until the Palestinians have a state...I think ultimately, on that basis, there will be an agreement. Both societies are divided. But it is in both societies' interest to have an agreement. And so I believe that will happen.

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On the dysfunction in American politics today: Often when I am asked about it, I think of Winston Churchill. It's a common question (here in the U.S.); it's an even more common question outside of this country, where many non-Americans who admire our country are baffled by what they see as a dysfunctional political process. In answer, I quote Winston Churchill, who said that Democracy is the worst possible form of government, except for everything else that human beings have ever tried.



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## CONGRESSWOMAN CAROLYN B. MALONEY

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Carolyn B. Maloney is a national leader with an extensive record of accomplishment on financial services, national security, the economy and women's issues who has authored and passed more than 70 measures, either as stand-alone bills or as language incorporated into larger bills. Among her most significant legislative accomplishments are the Credit CARD Act, which levels the playing field between consumers and credit card companies; the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act, to provide health care and compensation to those who lost their health as a result of their exposure to toxins at the World Trade Center site – with the health coverage now made permanent thanks to legislation passed last December; and the Debbie Smith Act, called the strongest anti-rape legislation Congress has ever passed.

Maloney is a senior member of both the House Financial Services Committee (where she serves as Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Capital Markets) and the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, and the Ranking House member of the Joint Economic Committee. As a member of the Finance Services Committee, Maloney has worked to modernize banking laws and regulations, strengthen consumer protections, and improve oversight of the financial industry. Maloney helped author and pass legislation which implemented all of the 9/11 Commission's recommendations for improving intelligence gathering, described as the most influential intelligence bill in decades. Maloney also passed legislation that will lead to the creation of a National Women's History Museum on the Washington Mall.

Maloney has delivered roughly \$6 billion in federal transportation funding to New York City for the construction of the Second Avenue Subway and East Side Access, the replacement of the Kosciuszko Bridge and the repair of the L train, all of which run through her district. Maloney has also worked to build affordable housing, relieve overcrowding of public schools and expand park space. With her advocacy and substantial federal support, six affordable senior housing developments have been built in her district.

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## THE HONORABLE JACK B. WEINSTEIN

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Jack B. Weinstein was born in 1921 in Wichita, Kansas. He attended Brooklyn College at night while working for a trucking firm during the day, receiving a bachelor's degree in 1943. After serving as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy during World War II, he earned a law degree from Columbia University in 1947. He was a law clerk to Judge Stanley H. Fuld of the New York Court of Appeals. He then opened his own law office, though which he advised various state legislative

committees and conducted a litigation practice. He assisted in writing briefs for the NAACP in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case of the 1950s and in the "one man, one litigation" of the 1960s. He was the reporter for the committee to revise New York civil practice.

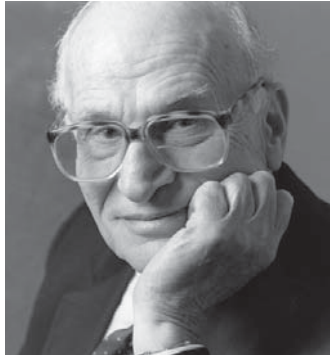
For many years, Judge Weinstein was a faculty member of Columbia Law School, and lectured at other law schools. From 1955 to 1957 he served as a county attorney for Nassau County. In 1967, President Lyndon B. Johnson nominated him to the bench in the Eastern District of New York on the recommendation of Senator Robert F. Kennedy. Formerly chief judge of the district, he conducts a full docket as a senior judge.

Managing each case with equality and efficiency in mind, Judge Weinstein appears in business suits instead of judicial robes and often meets with parties and litigants around a conference table in open court. A pioneer in the area of mass torts, he has handled and streamlined complex class actions and multi-district litigations related to Agent Orange, asbestos, DES, and Zyprexa. He has presided over numerous organized crime trials, including the prosecutions of Vincent Gigante, Louis Eppolito and Stephen Caracappa (known as the "mafia cops"), and the trial of Charles Carneglia. He has sought to humanize and reform federal sentencing and procedures. In 2003, Judge Weinstein volunteered to consider and decide 500 *habeas corpus* cases on a backlog in the Eastern District. He has authored many teaching casebooks, multi-volume treatises, and numerous articles, books and legislative reports. He published *The Role of Judges in a Government Of, By, and For the People: Notes for the Fifty-Eighth Cardozo Lecture (2008)*.

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## SIDNEY SHAINWALD

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If every man is the architect of his character, then Sidney Shainwald was a master builder: a man of great integrity, humor, intellect, charm, and kindness, with a lifelong commitment to social justice. Sidney was a rare individual – a man of many accomplishments who not only conceived and discussed ideals, but strove throughout his life to see that those ideals became realities.

Consumerism has become a household word, and CU, which has been termed a unique social invention, is now inextricably woven into the fabric of society. CU now has more than eight million subscribers to its products and services, and an annual budget of \$250 million. It is the only social reform organization born in the Depression that has survived. At the time of Sidney's retirement, the American prototype had been replicated in over 120 countries. Today IOCU, known as Consumers International, has a membership of over 240 organizations in 120 countries.

For Sidney, social justice was the desired result; Consumers Union was the mechanism through which to achieve it. It was much more than a magazine: it was a movement for change. The founders of the organization believed that product testing was a means to organize consumers to promote their welfare. CU's goal was not merely to evaluate products, but to "initiate, to cooperate with, and to aid group efforts of whatever nature – seeking to create and maintain decent living standards for ultimate consumers."

As Sidney later wrote:

The CU then is not to be confused with the CU of today. There were 148 subscribers, 10 staff members whose weekly salary totaled \$100, 350 square feet of office space, and a devoted Board of Directors. From its inception, CU's Board and staff were composed of idealists and iconoclasts. Divisiveness was exacerbated by financial difficulties, necessitating a constant interplay among the Board, the management, and staff on daily policy matters.

In 1939, at age twenty-two, Sidney wrote his thesis – the first on the subject – “Consumer Product Testing: A Comparative Analysis.” He noted:

A subscription to Consumers Union Reports costs three dollars, for which the subscriber is entitled to membership in the organization, which includes one vote in the annual election of directions and in the determination of the future policies of CU, twelve copies of the monthly Reports, and one copy of the Annual Buying Guide. The Annual Buying Guide is a booklet of some 300 pages, which lists the ratings of products which were tested and about which reports appeared in the magazine. The Buying Guide is a compact little booklet of pocket size designed to aid the consumer while performing his or her shopping. The CU Reports may be shown to anyone, but the Buying Guide is confidential and is intended to be used by no one but the subscriber.

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CU feels that it has a definite responsibility in reporting on the conditions under which the products are made, since it is the workers who comprise more than 90 percent of the consumers. CU feels that it is not enough to provide consumers with information which enables them to save money by buying one brand of a commodity rather than another; it also wants to help them materially in their struggle as workers, to obtain an honest wage. CU does this by letting consumers know what products are manufactured under good labor conditions so that, when possible, they can favor them in their purchases, and by letting them know what products are produced under unfair conditions, so that consumers can avoid such products. These labor reports supplement the actual ratings as to “Best Buy,” “Also Acceptable,” and “Not Acceptable,” but in no way influence the ratings.

After serving in the South Pacific, Sidney became a partner in a public accounting firm – sharing his desk and political views with I.F. Stone, a fellow radical. He was also deeply committed to the arts, and represented some of the greatest artists and entertainers of the twentieth century, including Marc Chagall, Jacques Lipschitz, Naum Gabo, George Grosz, Peggy Guggenheim, Mike Todd, Zero Mostel, David Merrick, Albert and Mary Lasker, Josh Logan, Dinah Shore, Eddie Albert, London Film Productions, Tricolor Films Ltd., Magnum Photos, and the Palestine Economic Corp. He was also the accountant for, and astute investor in, several shows and movies, including *Fanny*, *The Bells are Ringing*, and *Around the World in Eighty Days*.

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## SIDNEY SHAINWALD (CONTINUED)

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When CU asked Sidney to work full-time, he left his practice and eventually became the Interim Executive Director, Associate Director, an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors, CU's liaison to the Consumer Association of Canada, representative to the Consumer Federation of America and a delegate to the International Organization of Consumers. From Holland to Hong Kong, he gave speeches and presented papers to budding and burgeoning consumer organizations which he visited worldwide. As CU continued to grow through the years, the *Chicago Tribune* noted that "Sidney Shainwald was CU's financial brains since the year after its founding". During Sidney's tenure, CU established three advocacy offices, became involved in the environmental movement, launched *Penny Power*, a magazine for children, fostered educational efforts, and was instrumental in launching the American Council on Consumer Interests. The organization also continued to expand its interest and considerable resources on vital economic, social, and health issues.

In 1980, Sidney paid tribute to the founding president of CU, with whom he worked for more than forty years. He spoke on behalf of the staff: "If Consumers Reports were to make a product evaluation of Colston Warne, it might read something like this: A unique model, a once-in-a-lifetime production, exceedingly efficient...Definitely top-rated and the best buy ever." The same can be said for Sidney Shainwald.

It is a great privilege to have Senator George J. Mitchell as the 2016 Sidney Shainwald Public Interest Lecturer.

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## PUBLIC INTEREST AT NEW YORK LAW SCHOOL

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### **NYLS Impact Center for Public Interest Law**

*Co-Directors: Deborah N. Archer and Richard Marsico*

The Impact Center for Public Interest Law is committed to using the formidable power of law and legal education to advance social justice and to have a positive impact on the public interest, promote the practice of public interest law and expand the role of public interest law in the professional development of New York Law School students. All of the initiatives listed in these two pages are housed under the Impact Center for Public Law.

### **Center for Justice & Democracy**

*Director: Joanne Doroshow*

The Center for Justice and Democracy is the only non-profit consumer rights group in the nation that focuses exclusively on protecting plaintiffs' access to the civil courts. Our mission is to raise public awareness about attacks on the civil justice system, the value of tort law, the importance of corporate liability and accountability, and the need for independent judges and juries, including the corrupting influence of money in judicial elections. We work with Congress and state legislatures around the nation, including in New York. CJ&D's work includes legislative analysis for state and federal legislative committees, presentation of Congressional testimony, preparation of advocacy materials and policy papers, and all forms of media outreach. Issue areas include money and politics, the impact of "tort reform" on everyday Americans, product safety and environmental litigation, civil justice and human rights, employment and consumer class actions, health care and medical malpractice, federal regulations, along with the full range of cutting-edge contemporary civil justice topics. CJ&D also works closely with members of the plaintiffs' bar and their clients, whose rights may be at risk.

### **Criminal Justice Project**

*Directors: Mariana Hogan, Frank Bress, and Rebecca Roiphe*

The Criminal Justice Project focuses on current issues facing the criminal justice system. Through the project, students and faculty will work to promote criminal defense capacity building nationally and internationally. The issues facing the criminal justice system in New York City will be a particular focus of the Project. The project will also coordinate with the New York Law School Advocacy Program to train students and lawyers working in the criminal justice field.

### **Detention and the Struggle Against Terrorism**

*Director: Stephen Ellmann*

This Project grows out of a project-based learning course on Detention and the War Against Terrorism. There students developed a website called "Detained by U.S.," [www.detainedbyus.org](http://www.detainedbyus.org), whose goal is "to offer [] resources to support public understanding of U.S. detention policies in Afghanistan." Afghanistan was one instance, and a very important one, of a much broader issue: the circumstances in which the "war" against terrorism gives the U.S. authority to hold people in military detention without trial. Though we detain far fewer people in Afghanistan now than we once did, the question of when detention is lawful has not gone away. This Project will continue to follow events in Afghanistan, but also broaden its focus to offer resources for public understanding of the many questions of international and constitutional law raised by the use of detention as a response to terrorism.

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## PUBLIC INTEREST AT NEW YORK LAW SCHOOL (CONTINUED)

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### **Diane Abbey Law Institute for Children and Families**

*Director: Lisa F. Grumet*

The Institute for Children and Families provides academic and professional opportunities for NYLS students and faculty who are interested in children's and family issues, including child welfare, education, matrimonial practice, juvenile justice, elder law, domestic violence advocacy, immigration, and mental health. The goals of the Institute: to ensure that students have a strong academic foundation in their areas of interest; to facilitate children's and family law-related policy debate and scholarship; and to serve the community through the provision of legal services on behalf of children and families.

### **Law School Pipeline Project**

*Director: Richard Marsico*

The Impact Center's Law School Pipeline Project harnesses the unique skill set of law students, legal educators, and practitioners to enhance the educational and career opportunities of students from underserved communities in New York City. In addition to its many volunteer initiatives, the Law School Pipeline Project is also spearheading the creation of a Charter High School for Law and Social Justice.

### **Patient Safety Project**

*Co-Directors: Stephen Pegalis and Dr. Irwin R. Merkatz*

The Patient Safety Project will develop and maintain an electronic database of redacted medical malpractice cases recently resolved in the New York State Unified Court System. The Project is intended to promote patient safety in medical care by serving as a valuable teaching resource and starting an open dialogue among medical care providers, risk managers, physicians, medical students, insurance providers, and lawyers. This database is the first of its kind with the state's Office of Court Administration granting special permission for its creation.

### **Racial Justice Project**

*Director: Deborah Archer*

The Racial Justice Project is a legal advocacy organization dedicated to protecting the constitutional and civil rights of people who have been denied those rights on the basis of race and to increase public awareness of racism and racial injustice in the areas of education, employment, political participation, and criminal justice. The Racial Justice Project's advocacy includes litigation, training, and public education.

### **Right to Counsel Project**

*Director: Andrew Scherer*

The Right to Counsel Project is currently providing academic support for advocacy related to pending City Council legislation seeking to secure a right to counsel for tenants facing eviction in New York City. This project is responsible for the Impact Center's involvement in the citywide coalition that is advocating for this right. The Right to Counsel Project works independently as well as in consultation and collaboration with academics, legal services providers, community members and others to research and obtain the most up-to-date data and information to help inform advocacy and the city legislative process by seeking to make research and data available to the public on the need for a right to counsel for tenants facing eviction in New York City.

**Safe Passage Project**

*Director: Leni Benson*

Each year, thousands of children enter the United States alone, seeking refuge from abuse and maltreatment. Others migrate to the United States with parents who are unable or unwilling to care for them, and end up in foster care. None are entitled to immigration counsel at government expense. Many are eligible for asylum. Others may qualify for Special Immigrant Juvenile status, which allows unaccompanied minors to become permanent residents. The Safe Passage Project works with attorneys and law students to provide pro bono legal representation to these vulnerable young people, the majority of whom are in removal (deportation) proceedings in the New York Immigration Court.

**South Africa and the Rule of Law**

*Director: Stephen Ellmann*

The South Africa and the Rule of Law Project focuses on the achievements of constitutional law in South Africa, and the challenges that South Africa faces in building a rule of constitutional law that will endure into the future. The achievements are many—beginning, crucially, with the end of apartheid. South Africa’s post-apartheid constitution secures not only the rights enjoyed by Americans but others that U.S. constitutional law rarely considers, including guarantees of access to food, water, health care, and social security. But the challenges are sharp as well. Corruption eats at the fabric of South African democracy, and bitter power struggles may jeopardize the country’s guarantees of political liberties. This Project will aim to engage New York Law School students in South Africa’s ongoing development of constitutional law—because South African constitutionalism is important in itself and because in the end the issues South Africa faces turn out to have many echoes here in the United States as well.

**Voting Rights & Civic Participation Project**

*Director: Erika L. Wood*

The Voting Rights & Civic Participation Project (VRCPP) will seek to address the numerous barriers that prevent poor and minority communities from having an equal voice, and an equal vote, in our country’s democratic institutions. Through research, advocacy, litigation and education, the VRCPP will both respond to the recent roll back of voting rights and increase opportunities for poor and minority communities to participate in our country’s democracy.







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SIDNEY SHAINWALD PUBLIC INTEREST LECTURERS  
(2004 TO PRESENT)

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April 22, 2004

**Kenneth R. Feinberg, Esq.**

Special Master, September 11th Victim Compensation Fund  
The Feinberg Group, LLP

June 1, 2005

**Senator Edward M. Kennedy**

Senior Senator from Massachusetts

May 2, 2006

**The Honorable Stephen G. Breyer**

Associate Justice, United States Supreme Court

October 11, 2007

**The Honorable Chuck Hagel**

Senior Senator from Nebraska

April 29, 2009

**The Honorable Jack B. Weinstein**

United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York

April 6, 2010

**The Honorable Justice Sandra Day O'Connor (Ret.)**

United States Supreme Court

March 2, 2012

**The Honorable John F. Kerry**

Senior Senator from Massachusetts

September 16, 2014

**The Honorable Nancy Pelosi**

House Democratic Leader and 60th Speaker of the House

March 14, 2016

**The Honorable George J. Mitchell**

Former Senate Majority Leader and U.S. Special Envoy for  
Middle East Peace

**The Sidney Shainwald Public Interest Lecture**

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