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NYCLU NEWS

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NYCLU

NEW YORK CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

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Maintaining the Momentum

“We’ll never get used to this and we’ll never accept it.” That’s the gist of the promise we made as an organization when Trump embarked on his divisive mission to make America even more exclusionary. We all identify as targets of Trump in some way due to the color of our skin, where we were born, whom we love, or just because we believe in democracy or weren’t born into the 1%. Yes, this fight is personal for us.

The Trump regime has already harmed too many people, in too many ways. With the help of his allies who control Congress, our democracy has suffered from an endless barrage of attacks on values and institutions we thought were sacrosanct: the right to protest and a free press; the right to a free, secular public education; women’s equality; due process. We’ve even seen an erosion of ethics and values that reject government corruption. The NYCLU stands ready to protect our communities and our values in the courts, in the legislatures and in the streets. We continue to work side-by-side with impacted communities and amplify our voices to make sure that our elected officials are held accountable to the principles that are the cornerstone of our democracy.

In the following pages, you’ll read about how we’re fulfilling our commitment to preserve and expand New Yorkers’ fundamental rights. You’ll see how we’re relentlessly fighting against Trump’s ruthless deportation machine that shows no mercy to children or families, how we are pushing forward to bring much needed reform to our discriminatory justice system, and why we’re working to keep children in public schools and police officers out. And if you go to nyclu.org you’ll see even more of what we’re doing.

Many people are counting on the midterm elections—and counting the days until the one in 2020—to put a halt to these attacks and restore our democracy. The ACLU is non-partisan, but we will work hard to make one-person-one-vote a reality, to end political gerrymandering and resist the dirty tricks that undermine free and fair elections so that Americans truly can vote their values.

In the meantime, we know we must stand strong and push back strategically to protect our democracy. We are heartened by our many victories and emboldened by the outpouring of support.

Thank you for standing with the ACLU and the NYCLU in this fight.



Founded in 1951 as the New York affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), we are a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with nine offices and nearly 200,000 supporters. Through legislative advocacy, impact litigation and public education, the NYCLU leads freedom forward across the state.

Presumed Innocent

Activists and affected individuals alike have long condemned bail practices in America for creating a two-tiered justice system that discriminates by race and class. Despite being a “progressive” state, New York’s system tramples on the constitutional principle that promises innocence until one is proven guilty.

New York’s bail system has perpetuated a ruthless cycle of poverty and incarceration. Many people spend days, months and even years in jail *before* their trial begins, all because they can’t afford to pay their bail. Because of this, the NYCLU has been advocating for bail reform to ensure that justice isn’t dependent on one’s financial circumstances.

We’re pushing Governor Cuomo and elected officials to pass legislation that permanently fixes our flawed system. Our recently released report “Presumed Innocent for a Price”

uses data from a sample of eight small, medium and large counties to give the public a glimpse of how unfair the bail system is.

And, in early 2018, we won a case in Dutchess County challenging a judge’s failure to consider one’s ability to pay for bail, and alternatives to bail, when setting release conditions for people facing criminal charges. Though we are proud to say that the ruling is the first of its kind in New York, we know that there is still much progress to be made.

Extended time in jail can result in a person losing their job, home and custody of children. New Yorkers have been punished for poverty for far too long. It’s time to fix our broken system.

For the full report, see: bit.ly/2FLvt6H

Bringing Our Children Home

Working to Block the School to Deportation Pipeline

Imagine you are at home with your child, eating dinner, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents knock on the door. They accuse your child of being in a gang and take him across the country to be housed in a detention center where he is at risk of deportation. You have no idea if he is being taken care of or when he can get out. This is the excruciating experience many immigrant families in Long Island are dealing with right now.

Shortly after the presidential election, the Trump administration launched “Operation Matador”—an attack on all immigrants from Central America under the pretext of cracking down on the MS-13 street gang. Since then, the NYCLU has received a sharp uptick in reports of law enforcement roundups of young immigrants based on spurious accusations of MS-13 gang affiliation.

Some school districts in Long Island are also working with law enforcement to target their own students. At Bellport High School in Suffolk County, for example, several students were suspended based on unsubstantiated claims of gang affiliation by the Suffolk County Police Department (SCPD). Many of the same students were also rounded up in immigration raids and sent to detention facilities run by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) in California and Virginia, without their parents or lawyers being notified.

In July 2017, we warned the SCPD and ORR against this. In August, we worked with Latino Justice to file public records requests with the South Country Central School District and SCPD for information regarding their roles in creating a School to Deportation Pipeline. We also assisted the ACLU and the ACLU of Northern California with a class-action lawsuit that recently won a federal court ruling prohibiting the government from detaining juveniles without cause. In December, we filed a federal lawsuit seeking the release of a 16-year-old boy, J.M.R.M., who was detained even after an immigration judge had ordered his release. As a result of coordinated ACLU and NYCLU lawsuits, and the collaboration with immigrants’ rights groups, many of these children are now home with loved ones, including our client J.M.R.M.

As a result of multiple class action lawsuits, the NYCLU has successfully reunited 80 immigrant children with their loved ones as of April 24.



Designed by Sy Abudu

Last year, ORR adopted a new rule requiring that the Trump-appointed director must personally approve the release of any child who at any time has been placed in a restrictive ORR setting. That new policy has meant that the release of children has ground to a virtual halt, regardless of whether ORR itself determines that the child does not pose a danger, is not gang-affiliated and that they should be released to a safe and appropriate placement. In February 2018, we filed a class action lawsuit on behalf of at least 40 children in New York caught in this situation. Our lead plaintiff, L.V.M., was released shortly after we sued. We recently asked a judge to put an end to ORR’s new rule as hundreds of children have been subject to the policy since 2017.

The NYCLU is trying to shine a light on the SCPD’s role in the roundups. In April 2018 we sued the department under the state Freedom of Information Law to compel them to come clean about their collaboration with the local school district and with ICE to target students. We are also working to prevent the schools from opening up the School to Deportation Pipeline by improperly turning student information over to the police, which is then shared with ICE. Protecting the rights of immigrant children remains one of our top priorities, and we continue to work with families in Long Island to address their needs through these perilous times.

Because of Sex

Zarda v. Altitude Express, Inc.

In a landmark ruling for the LGBTQ community, a federal appeals court became just the second in the nation to find that discrimination based on sexual orientation is indeed sex discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, which outlaws discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex and national origin. The February ruling by the Second Circuit came after Donald Zarda, a now deceased skydiving instructor from Long Island, was fired by his employer after he told one of his female students that he was “100 percent gay.”

Though Zarda made the comment to give his student peace of mind in advance of a tandem skydive where they would be tightly strapped together, his employer, Altitude Express, fired him after the student’s boyfriend complained. Zarda filed suit against Altitude Express, citing his rights under Title VII.

In 2014, the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) found that sexual orientation should be protected by the law in an unrelated case. But the legal landscape made a 180-degree turn with the election of Donald Trump just a few years later. In July 2017, Trump’s Department of Justice, led by Jeff Sessions, filed an amicus (friend-of-the-court) brief in *Zarda*, discrediting the EEOC’s 2014 decision and arguing that Title VII does not protect individuals from discrimination based on their sexual orientation.



Photo: David Moriya

Known for our staunch defense of LGBT rights, the ACLU served as a grand marshal in the New York City LGBT Pride March on June 25, 2017.

We are fighting back against these anti-LGBT efforts. We’ve been involved in the Zarda case since before the election and submitted a joint amicus brief in partnership with the ACLU LGBT Rights and Women’s Rights Projects along with many other women’s rights organizations and partners. Our brief contextualized the history of courts interpreting the phrase “because of sex” in Title VII and how certain actions constitute discrimination because of sex.

This decision makes it clear that discrimination based on sexual orientation is in fact discrimination based on sex and there is no room for it in the workplace.



Join us on June 14 at 6:30 p.m. as we honor Tegan and Sara at our LGBT Project’s Annual Cocktail Reception. Visit NYCLU.org/events to purchase a ticket today!

Unrestrained Use-of-force



A 14-year-old in Syracuse, New York, T.H., used to dream of becoming a police officer. But after almost dying at the hands of a cop, the teen has different plans. He’s suing the Syracuse Police Department, represented by the NYCLU in a lawsuit filed in September: “I want my story to be heard. I want people to see how this impacted my life. And I don’t want this to happen to anybody else.”

A school resource officer (SRO) restrained T.H. with a chokehold during a fight involving dozens of students. T.H., who lost consciousness in the video-taped incident, had stepped in to try to break up the fighting. Last February the NYCLU also prepared a ninth-grader, J.B., for his hearing before the city’s Civilian Review Board (CRB) and made a closing argument on his behalf. The student had been

suspended from school for cutting class, and a surveillance video showed him being hit from behind by an SRO as he was leaving campus. The CRB sustained the student’s complaint of excessive force against the officer and recommended that the SRO be banned from serving in a school setting for a year.

Such strong-arm tactics by the Syracuse Police Department are especially egregious in light of its history. Despite repeated warnings from Syracuse’s CRB about the inadequacy of its use-of-force policy—which does not even mention chokeholds—the department has so far done nothing. As NYCLU staffers Yusuf Abdul-Qadir and Kevin Jason wrote in an op-ed in *The Syracuse Post-Standard*: “We expect kids to make mistakes. But from our police we expect more.”

T.H. in 2017 (Photo by Sy Abudu)

Do It Yourself!

Local Fundraisers for the NYCLU

Donald Trump's administration may have dismissed the value of the arts by attempting to slash its federal funding—but that hasn't stopped an army of arts-based and other activists from organizing Do-It-Yourself fundraisers to support the NYCLU's fight against the administration's divisive agenda. Armed with the NYCLU's Fundraiser Toolkit—a how-to manual created to answer the flood of requests since the 2016 election—resisters have been raising money for the NYCLU in record numbers with events ranging from school bake sales to star-studded entertainment events.

NYCLU fundraisers have even come from across the Atlantic: last St. Patrick's Day, Irish Labor Party Senator Aodhan O'Riordain organized an event featuring dozens of speakers and artists at Riverside Church to send the message that “the international community rejects the politics of division and fear.” Last April, the Greenwich House Pottery shop sold their works for the NYCLU as part of an artisan movement called Crafting Resistance. The same month, Aasif Mandvi, Wanda Sykes and Lewis Black were among those who sold out New York's City Winery with their comedy special, *Deportation Jamboree*.

Recently, the NYCLU was a beneficiary of volunteer performances by the Hoboken, New Jersey, based indie band, Yo La Tengo and many of their equally high profile friends. YLT, made up of frontman Ira Kaplan, his wife Georgia Hubley and James McNew, rebooted their legendary eight night Hanukkah concert series—dormant since 2013— and donated more than \$13,000 in proceeds from one night to the NYCLU. Kaplan says the choice of the NYCLU stemmed from “a lifetime of reading articles in which the ACLU is standing up for things we believe in, and wanting to support them.”

Among the mix of comedic and musical entertainers were Nick Lowe (who brought the house down with his 1979 hit *Cruel to be Kind*), Marshall Crenshaw, Jeff Tweedy of Wilco and his son, Spencer Tweedy, Sun Ra and Kiss's Ace Frehley (who kicked off a set with a spin on his song *New York Groove*, tweaked to *New York Jews*).

For all their longtime indie cred, YLT prefers not to shout out their politics too explicitly. When asked if the title of their new album, *There's A Riot Going On*, released in March 2018, references the socially critical album of the same name by Sly Stone in 1971, Kaplan confirms the reference, but won't elaborate, adding only: “There's enough there that you can read between the lines.” Instead the festive, harmony-filled response to the Trump regime was characteristic for the band. “No one among us in the band gravitates toward fighting fire with fire, so if Trump tweets something vile, it's not us to come up with a viler tweet back,” says Kaplan.

The band always ends the Hanukkah series with Kaplan's mom, Marilyn Kaplan, singing the 1960 Anita Bryant hit *In My Little Corner of the World*—and while this time was no exception, it took on a slightly different meaning for the band this time around. “It has sort of become our mission statement,” says Kaplan. “What our shows mean to me is we can be better than that. As terrifying as Trump's world is, our world can be a better one.”

In 2017, volunteers raised \$600,000+ for the NYCLU through 68 events!

You don't need to be an expert on our work to hold a fundraiser on our behalf. Visit nyclu.org/fundraiser-toolkit for tips on hosting a successful event!



Yo La Tengo. From left: Georgia Hubley, Ira Kaplan and James McNew. (Photo by GODLIS)

Election 2018: Biographies of Candidates

NYCLU Board of Directors

WHO MAY VOTE

To be a member, you must have made a non-tax-deductible contribution to the NYCLU or ACLU—notwithstanding any tax-deductible donations to the NYCLU Foundation or to the ACLU Foundation—since February 1, 2017 and no later than June 13, 2018, or you must be a lifetime member. If you have any questions about your membership status, please call the NYCLU at 212.607.3364 or email kkole@nyclu.org. There is still time to become a member and vote: Go to nyclu.org/join.

CANDIDATES

Each year, the NYCLU Board of Directors elects a Nominating Committee, including current and non-board members from across the state, to assemble a slate that will strengthen the Board of Directors by increasing diversity and representation of the state's residents and assuring that the Board has the full range of skills and experience necessary to fulfill our responsibilities. Candidates recommended by this year's Committee were interviewed and carefully considered under a number of key criteria, including but not limited to the need for regional balance, leadership, representation of diverse constituencies and communities, professional backgrounds and expertise, understanding of the NYCLU's mission and personal initiative on NYCLU priority issues. The Committee believes that our recommended slate represents a wide range of perspectives and has the ability to provide deep expertise on a number of civil liberties issues to the Board.

The annual meeting of the members of the NYCLU will be held on June 20th, 2018 at the NYCLU offices at 125 Broad Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY, for the purposes of electing directors and receiving the annual report. There are 14 candidates and 13 vacancies. If elected, candidates will serve full three-year terms. In accordance with the NYCLU bylaws, the NYCLU Nominating Committee nominated 13 people (as indicated in their biographical statements), the exact number of people to be elected. In addition, the Capital Region Chapter nominated a candidate. The nominee who receives the fewest votes will not be elected.

The candidate biographies are set forth below in alphabetical order. To view lengthier candidate statements, to obtain contact information for individual candidates or to print out a proxy ballot (one cannot vote electronically), please visit www.nyclu.org/boardelections.

Candidate Bios

Douglas Cuthbertson

(Nominated by the Nominating Committee)

I would be honored to serve a third term on the NYCLU Board. It goes without saying that protecting civil liberties and civil rights is more important today than ever, as the current presidential regime and its allies work to dismantle years of hard-fought progress, and thwart crucial efforts to dismantle undemocratic power structures that foster economic inequality, racism, and division.

As a plaintiff-side attorney who fights for consumers against entrenched corporate interests, and from my past five plus years on the Board, I know personally that the work of the NYCLU is critical and effective, and carried out with dedication, focus, and skill. I have worked over my past two Board terms to ensure that the NYCLU is thriving and healthy—economically and otherwise—to guarantee that members, staff, and leadership can focus on the NYCLU's important mission, knowing that the organization's governance is in good hands.

Julie Ehrlich

(Nominated by the Nominating Committee)

Assistant Dean for Strategic Initiatives & Chief of Staff; Executive Director, Birnbaum Women's Leadership Network; Adjunct Professor of Clinical Law—NYU School of Law; former Staff Attorney/Fellow, ACLU Women's Rights Project (2008-2009).

It is an honor to be nominated for a second term as a director of the NYCLU—among the most impactful organizations statewide.

I have expertise in the NYCLU's substantive work, in organizational management and development, and in nonprofit governance. I was fortunate to

launch my legal career at the ACLU. I am now an assistant dean at NYU Law, where I co-teach a reproductive justice clinic that has partnered with the NYCLU and run a women's leadership program.

In addition to the NYCLU, I have been a director of Law Students for Reproductive Justice and the Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Village Tenants' Association. In my position at NYU, I am Secretary of the Law School's Board.

It has been a tremendous privilege to bring these experiences to bear in service of the NYCLU over the past three years. With your support, I hope to continue to do so.

Kevin Finnegan

(Nominated by the Nominating Committee)

I have decided to run for the NYCLU Board because I think I would be an asset to the Board and organization and I care deeply about its mission. I have been a member of the ACLU since 1982, essentially my entire adult life. I have signed the petitions, made the phone calls and showed up at numerous demonstrations. I have also worked closely with Donna Lieberman and her team, most notably on police reform issues in NYC and marriage equality and criminal defense issues in Albany.

I have been working in New York since graduating law school in 1986. I have represented progressive organizations and individuals in civil rights litigation. I was a partner in a small labor law firm for ten years and was until recently the Political Director for 1199 SEIU, representing 300,000 healthcare workers in five states. I would very much appreciate the opportunity to serve.

Kelly Haley

(Nominated by the Nominating Committee)

Having served on the Board of Directors for four years, I've seen firsthand the tenacity, intelligence and leadership it takes to protect our civil liberties—both in court and on the ground through strategic advocacy efforts. It is humbling and inspiring. That's why I'm committed to the work of the NYCLU, both internally and externally, to ensure that we're able to withstand future challenges to the rights of all New Yorkers. While Donna and her team are on the frontlines, board members like me are behind the scenes, but just as passionately working to keep the infrastructure of this affiliate strong.

My name is Kelly Haley (Brooklyn, NY) and I ask for your vote to continue to uphold the mission of the New York Civil Liberties Union. I work at a community-based nonprofit focused on quality education for our youngest citizens. NYCLU's work impacts mine on a daily basis.

Mary Hedahl

(Nominated by the Nominating Committee)

I have 20 years of experience fundraising for civil liberties, social justice, human rights, the environment and the arts. From 2006 – 2011, I was the Development Director at the NYCLU where I experienced first-hand the commitment and integrity of the NYCLU staff and effectiveness and necessity of its mission.

In this current national political climate, I feel the urgency of the work of the ACLU and the NYCLU is more critical than ever. In my position as Senior Advisor to MCE Social Capital, an international microcredit financial organization, I travel to countries where civil liberties are severely limited. I am constantly reminded how we in the US must remain vigilant to ensure that our rights are not eroded or corrupted.

I know of no other organization that works harder to fight for equality, social justice and civil liberties. I would be honored to be a member of the NYCLU leadership.

Mondaire Jones

(Nominated by the Nominating Committee)

With great humility, I run for a seat on the NYCLU board. Since reactivating my local NAACP youth council as a teenager, I have been committed to securing justice and the full panoply of civil rights and liberties for our nation's vulnerable populations. In this dire sociopolitical climate, I would bring a useful perspective as a young, black male who grew up with limited means in the East Ramapo Central School District. I graduated Stanford University in 2009 and Harvard Law School in 2013. I clerked for a federal judge in Manhattan and was a litigator for three years at Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP, where my work included pro bono matters. I now practice and reside in Westchester. Previously, I chaired a committee on the NAACP's National Board of Directors and I am a founding board member of Rising Leaders, which teaches professional development skills to underserved middle-school students.

Justin Krebs

(Nominated by the Nominating Committee)

I am excited to be considered to continue my service on the NYCLU Board. This is a particularly difficult political moment and the work of the NYCLU is critical.

As Director of Campaigns at MoveOn.org, I work on national issues that confront the right-wing agenda in Washington and rebuild progressive power. My work with the NYCLU allows me to bring my experience closer to home.

Additionally, I am a founder of Living Liberally, the national network of progressive social clubs, with over 200 chapters around the country. I am also a founding Board member of The Tank, a non-profit home for performing arts and public affairs in Manhattan. A culture that defends civil liberties needs democratic spaces where free speech thrives. In both Living Liberally and The Tank, I have tried to create such non-commercial places to connect around ideas and values, where all are welcome.

Joanna Palladino

(Nominated by the NYCLU's Capital Region Chapter)

Over the past 18 years I have been an active and consistent board member of the NYCLU's Capital Region Chapter. I have worked with fellow board members to: develop and deliver large scale activism training for the Women's March in Washington, leveraging social media to reach a larger audience; engage community artists, poets, actors and activists to participate in annual Banned Books events throughout the Capital District; and support the freedom to assemble by becoming a trained legal observer and attend protests and/or assemblies in the community.

I am keenly aware of the value and importance of local chapters to enable a strong statewide presence of the NYCLU. Currently, I am employed by the NYSDOH AIDS Institute and am working on addressing health disparities to end the HIV epidemic in New York.

Bruce Popper

(Nominated by the Nominating Committee)

Vice-president of 1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East.

I have long held that the greatest threat to civil liberties are conditions created by vast disparities of wealth and income. I joined the NYCLU board in the wake of the Occupy movement whose actions brought the issue of economic justice to the forefront of public discourse. During my tenure on the board, NYCLU has understood the 'bigger picture'—our society fracturing along economic and racial fault lines, fueled by an aggressive Right. In addition to its other work, NYCLU has taken up economic justice issues such as the Women's Equality Agenda, paid family leave, minimum wage increases, the Fight for \$15, and protections for farmworkers; all steps to creating conditions in which civil liberties could be preserved. I served on the committees that updated NYCLU's policies on economic justice and campaign finance reform, and wish to continue to be such a voice on our board.

Nabiha Syed

(Nominated by the Nominating Committee)

In these tumultuous times, and as a Muslim woman of color, I am truly humbled to be nominated to serve on the Board of an unparalleled defender of civil liberties.

As a First Amendment and media lawyer, I am also confident that my experience will be invaluable to the NYCLU. I have worked on access and transparency issues at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; by co-founding a legal clinic at Yale Law School; with documentary filmmakers through the Sundance Institute; at *The New York Times*, at a law firm, and as a board member of MuckRock; and currently as Vice President and Associate General Counsel at BuzzFeed, where I advise reporters and handle litigation across the country.

The NYCLU fights vigilantly for rights fundamental to a just society, and it would be an honor to be in the trenches with all of you across the state. My deepest thanks for your consideration.

Olivier Sylvain

(Nominated by the Nominating Committee)

It has been an honor to be a member of the NYCLU's board at such a challenging time. In that role, I have chaired the Privacy Committee and been a member of the Executive and Development Committees.

Apart from attending board meetings and making the NYCLU my priority as a matter of financial giving, I also (1) helped to organize a major fundraiser in the immediate wake of the first "travel ban," (2) routinely have been invited to consult with senior staff attorneys at the NYCLU and ACLU, and (3) moderated a large public event that featured the legal directors of the ACLU and the NYCLU.

I would love to continue to contribute to the NYCLU. I am especially interested in helping the organization identify new priorities in the area of networked communications, particularly with an eye to protecting the civil liberties and civil rights of historically disadvantaged communities.

M.D. (Lita) Taracido

(Nominated by the Nominating Committee)

Attorney-Retired/NYCLU Emeritus Board Member; Former Board Member: Volunteers of Legal Service, the Hispanic Federation, and the United Way of New York City; and Co-Chair of the Inter-Relations Collaborative.

I have long been active in organizations that work to empower minorities and the disadvantaged. The NYCLU numbers among these organizations. I am proud of the work the NYCLU is doing to address the ongoing assault on civil rights and civil liberties that affect all New Yorkers. These are dark times—we must be ever-vigilant. Clearly, the NYCLU is needed more than ever. As a Hispanic-American woman, I'm particularly concerned about the treatment of minorities and women. It is my hope I will be given the opportunity to once again work with the Board, not only to stem the erosion of our rights, but, more importantly, to advance them.

Eve Wachtel

(Nominated by the Nominating Committee)

It has been an honor to serve on the NYCLU Board since October 2011 and as Treasurer since 2014. Over the course of my last term, the NYCLU's ever-important work has taken on increased urgency, and we have truly risen to the challenge. I have been immensely proud of our community's support and our staff's tireless effort to protect the rights of New Yorkers and set an example beyond New York for the advancement of free speech, voting and reproductive rights, and the rights of people of color, immigrants, LGBT people, and other people and communities under attack.

It is a privilege to participate in the advancement of our cause as a member of the Board, as Treasurer, and as chair of the Investment Committee and a member of the Elections Committee and the Executive Committee. I hope very much to be elected to serve another term.

Robin Willner

(Nominated by the Nominating Committee)

I am grateful to have served on the Board of Directors of the NYCLU since 2010, including three years as President. I have led the board's efforts to strengthen the governance and financial footing of the NYCLU. I am particularly proud of our work to support the remarkable and dedicated staff as we become a more diverse organization that better represents the state with the benefit of many perspectives and experiences. Among other initiatives, the Board developed a new policy on Economic Justice, underscoring how income inequality can jeopardize one's ability to exercise civil liberties and our responsibility to consider issues of access and equity in our agenda.

I am eager to continue my service and reinvigorate my commitment to a strong board and a robust policy framework for a growing, increasingly effective organization to protect and extend civil liberties for all New Yorkers.

Introducing Dr. Danielle Moss Lee

NYCLU's New Chief of Staff

In October the New York Civil Liberties Union announced the appointment of Dr. Danielle R. Moss Lee as the organization's first ever chief of staff. A lifetime social justice advocate who has focused keenly on gender and racial equity, Moss comes from the YWCA of the City of New York, where, as president and chief executive officer, she launched and expanded programs—from STEM classes to leadership coaching to early childhood education—to provide relevant opportunities for underserved women and girls. Moss has held an array of related posts, including teaching, co-founding a school in Harlem, and serving city government as co-chair of the New York City Council's Young Women's Initiative.

For the NYCLU, Moss' extensive experience and administrative acumen come at a watershed moment. "Dr. Moss is not only passionate about the mission of the NYCLU, but she has the experience we need managing large organizations through transformational change and growth," said NYCLU Executive Director Donna Lieberman. "With the Trump regime wreaking havoc, we have to be on our game. Dr. Moss will strengthen our team in so many ways that will help the NYCLU be as effective as we can be."

That strength is critical: after the 2016 election, membership tripled to nearly 170,000. "The growth we have experienced is exciting," Moss says, "but it requires support and tending to." As chief of staff, Moss will play a key role across all NYCLU departments. She will increase collaboration and accountability, facilitate strategic thinking and develop management systems and procedures, among other duties.

For Moss, joining the NYCLU at this moment is especially exciting. "After the election I had a real sense of frustration and hopelessness, like you wanted to do something but just didn't know exactly what it was," she says. "There was something unapologetic about the

NYCLU that was incredibly attractive to me." She was particularly struck by the group's consistent voice. "I felt that with all of the players at the NYCLU, from the board to members to staff, there was alignment in support of democracy and civil liberties that was not ambiguous."

The "big plate" of pressing concerns the NYCLU addresses was also a draw, coming on the heels of her own experience with families directly affected by these issues. "I have worked with young people who have had to grapple with difficult police interactions, for example," she says. "Or when you have kids saying 'Am I going to be sent away, are my parents going to be sent away?'—to not be able to give clear answers was disconcerting." Addressing these challenges requires the NYCLU's combination of law and advocacy, she says. "You couldn't have a civil rights movement without *Brown V. Board of Education*, but you also needed Martin Luther King, Jr. mobilizing communities. If you have one without the other, you don't have much."

Among her top goals as Chief of Staff is making it easier for the NYCLU's employees to get stuff done. Part of that is streamlining and creating



Dr. Danielle R. Moss Lee

avenues of communications across all levels of the organization. She is a missionary for the benefits of a collegial culture that "allows staff to have the resources and wherewithal to do the best job they can." And her experience lifting the voices of the under-represented has heightened her interest in promoting a culture where "everyone has a seat at the table, so it's not a top down atmosphere. I want to create structures for people to feel connected, have input, share, for staff to feel like this is a place to put your stakes down and grow. I want this to be the place where the brightest minds in policy, law, and advocacy can come and grow and contribute—and really make a difference."

Yes! I will be a part of the civil liberties majority.

I stand with the NYCLU. Together, we will:

Fight the Hate | Protect Our Democracy | Defend Justice

Enclosed is my check payable to the NYCLU Foundation in the amount of:

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