

Executive Director: Raun J. Rasmussen

Chief Operating Officer: Alexander Horwitz

Chief Financial Officer: Greg Klemm

Chief Human Resources & Diversity Officer: Kirsten Soberanis

Chief of Litigation & Advocacy: Christine Clarke

Brooklyn Project Director: Tanya Wong

Bronx Project Director: Marie Richardson

Manhattan Project Director: Peggy Earisman

Queens Project Director: Michelle Burrell

Staten Island Project Director: Nadia Hernandez

Raun J. Rasmussen



Mr. Rasmussen was named Executive Director of Legal Services NYC in June 2011. He has been a member of the LSNYC family for over 30 years, serving as LSNYC's Chief of Litigation and Advocacy since 2003. He began his career as a housing attorney at South Brooklyn Legal Services and later became SBLS's Director of Litigation, supporting the development of affirmative litigation, helping to create one of the first foreclosure prevention projects in the country, and developing the Child Care Network Support Project, which provides legal services and training to home-based child care providers.

Mr. Rasmussen has written numerous articles on residential displacement, foreclosure, ethics, affirmative litigation and child care work, and has received several awards for his public service. He is a member of the Permanent Commission on Access to Justice and the Board of Directors of the New Economy Project. He holds a B.A. from Amherst College and a J.D. from Harvard Law School.

Alexander horwitz

Alexander Horwitz is LSNYC's Chief Operating Officer and brings to the organization 15 years of leadership, operations, and corporate governance experience. Prior to joining LSNYC, Alexander was the Executive Director of New Yorkers United for Justice, a criminal legal reform advocacy coalition comprised of local and national civil rights leaders and organizations. Earlier in his career, Alexander was the Chief of Staff and Corporate Secretary at The Doe Fund, one of the largest and best-known homeless services and workforce development organizations in the United States.

He has been recognized for his work with the Mutual of America Community Partnership Award and by Crain's New York Business, City & State Magazine, and New York Nonprofit Media. He sits on the boards of several nonprofit organizations including The Liberty Fund, a pretrial services organization and charitable bail fund he helped found in 2017, and has lectured at Baruch College, New York University, and Fordham University. He is a graduate of the University of Chicago.

Greg Klemm

Greg Klemm joined Legal Services NYC as Chief Financial Officer in September 2023. As CFO, he oversees LSNYC's financial duties and strategies, including compliance for government (federal, state, and city) contracts and private grants, yearly budget planning and implementation, overseeing all accounts, ledgers, and reporting systems, and managing the overall financial health of the organization. Klemm joins Legal Services NYC with nearly 20 years of financial leadership and experience.

Prior to LSNYC, Klemm served as Chief Financial and Operating Officer at the Vera Institute of Justice where he led the Institute's business and operations functions. Notably, he developed a financial infrastructure to support the Vera Institute's budget growth from \$67M in 2016 to over \$240M and moved the organization to a more cost-effective banking partner, increased its line of credit, and helped the organization transition to a mission-aligned investment strategy. Klemm holds a BBA in accounting and an MBA from Cleveland State University.

Kirsten Soberanis

Kirsten Soberanis is the Chief Human Resources and Diversity Officer at Legal Services NYC. She is a Human Resources professional with more than thirty years of experience in the field. Prior to joining Legal Services NYC, she worked as the Managing Director of Human Resources at Changing Our World, a subsidiary of The Omnicom Group. Ms. Soberanis also worked with Greenwich House, Boys and Girls Harbor and Thypin Steel Co, as a Human Resources professional responsible for the managing and directing of all functions of Human Resources.

Ms. Soberanis received her B.A in Business Management from Bernard Baruch College, City University of New York and her MPA in Personnel Administration and Labor Relations at New York University.

Christine Clarke

Christine Clarke is Chief of Litigation and Advocacy at Legal Services NYC. In this role, she leads LSNYC's strategic advocacy on behalf of low-income New Yorkers, including by initiating and overseeing high impact and complex civil litigation and working closely with advocates and community groups to engage in thoughtful and cutting-edge policy advocacy.

Christine comes most recently from Planned Parenthood Federation of America's Public Policy Litigation & Law Department, where she represented Planned Parenthood affiliates in litigation around the country challenging abortion bans and other threats to reproductive healthcare access, fighting for the right of all people to make their own decisions about their bodies, lives, and futures. She also previously served as LSNYC's Director of the Civil Rights Justice Initiative, where she spearheaded LSNYC's citywide civil rights litigation and advocacy on behalf of low-income New Yorkers, including by working with community-based organizations and other LSNYC advocates on lawsuits against, inter alia, the New York City Police Department, NYC's Human Resource Administration and the NYC Housing Authority, which resulted in critical changes to policies and procedures. She has previously worked in private practice as an employee-side employment lawyer working on wage and hour and anti-discrimination litigation. She is a graduate of Oberlin College and Yale Law School.

Peggy Earisman

Peggy Earisman is a poverty lawyer with thirty-five years' experience advocating for low-income people. After graduation from Columbia Law School, Ms. Earisman started her career in the housing unit in Passaic County Legal Aid in New Jersey, where she litigated significant housing cases, including the first federal circuit court decision on the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, and *Haddock v. City of Passaic*, establishing the right to relocation assistance for NJ tenants displaced by code enforcement activities. Committed to community lawyering, Ms. Earisman helped organize community-based organizations working to empower low income residents of Passaic County, including Paterson Coalition for Housing and Right to Housing.

Ms. Earisman became a managing attorney at MFY Legal Services in 1992, leading efforts and partnering with community groups to preserve affordable housing in Clinton and on the Lower East Side. Since 2003, she has run Manhattan Legal Services, where she has led the effort to deliver the highest quality legal services in Manhattan.

Tanya Wong

Tanya Wong is the Project Director at Brooklyn Services. She is an accomplished Public Interest attorney with over 20 years of direct client representation and managerial experience at LSNYC. She is a leading expert and policy advocate in New York State in the area of Government Benefits, specializing in welfare rights and other anti-poverty/anti-hunger programs, such as SNAP and WIC. Ms. Wong is a graduate of Harvard University and Northeastern University School of Law.

Marie A. Richardson

Marie Richardson is the Project Director for Bronx Legal Services. With more than 30 years of legal advocacy experience, Richardson has served in a variety of managerial and supervisory roles, most recently at the Legal Aid Society where provided advice and counsel to attorneys in a variety of areas, including bankruptcy, employment, consumer affairs, immigration, family, housing, health and public benefits. Prior to the Legal Aid Society, Ms. Richardson worked at the New York City Human Resources Administration's Adult Services Litigation Division where she counseled the agency on legal issues involving homeless individuals and families. Ms. Richardson is a proud graduate of Lehman College, CUNY and New York Law School.

Michelle Burrell

Michelle Burrell began her career as a Staff Attorney at the Brooklyn Family Defense Practice, then an office of Legal Services NYC. She then became a staff attorney in the Matrimonial & Family Law Unit at New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG) where she represented litigants in matrimonial, custody, visitation and family offense cases. She comes back to Legal Services NYC from the Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem (NDS) where she was the Managing Attorney of the

Family Defense Practice. In that role, she managed a staff of attorneys, social workers, parent advocates and paralegals that provide legal representation to indigent parents and family caregivers who have been accused of abuse and neglect in the Harlem neighborhood of New York City. She is a graduate of CUNY Law School where she was a member of the Black Law Students Association and a member of the Law Review. She received her BA at the University of Ottawa, where she concentrated her studies in Communications and Philosophy. She was born and raised in Toronto, Canada.

Nadia Hernandez

Nadia K. Hernandez is the Project Director for Staten Island Legal Services. Ms. Hernandez has nearly 10 years of experience as a public interest lawyer. She joined Staten Island Legal Services in March 2017 as the Director of the Family Law and Domestic Violence Unit. She continues to supervise the interdisciplinary practice team responsible for providing comprehensive legal assistance to domestic violence survivors in matrimonial and family law proceedings. Prior to Staten Island Legal Services, Ms. Hernandez worked at the New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG) providing direct representation to domestic violence survivors in a wide range of family law matters, including contested divorces, and immigration related matters. At The Door's Legal Services Center represented unaccompanied minors in expedited removal proceedings. Ms. Hernandez graduated from Saint Peter's College and New York Law School. She is an attorney mentor for Legal Outreach.