



[Manhattan Legal Services'](#) 2016 Awards Reception will take place on Tuesday, November 15 at Studio 450. The funds raised through this event will support our efforts to provide high quality legal assistance to low income New Yorkers.

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This year, [Manhattan Legal Services \(MLS\)](#) is proud to honor **Roberta A. Kaplan, Partner at Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP** for her efforts to defend and expand civil liberties, especially for the LGBT community.

Who We Are

[MLS](#) fights poverty and seeks economic, social, and racial justice for low income residents of Manhattan by providing free legal representation, systemic advocacy, and community education. Eighty-five percent of the people served by MLS live on less than \$15,000 a year, and face such daunting crises as loss of housing, denial of essential government benefits, barriers to employment, illegal debt collection, and precarious immigration status. In addition to living in poverty, the people served by MLS belong to Manhattan's most disadvantaged populations including people living with HIV, individuals with disabilities, the elderly, survivors of domestic violence, immigrants, and the unemployed. By working with community residents and providers to identify the pressing issues that impact their communities and finding systemic solutions, MLS advocates bring about lasting change for Manhattan's most vulnerable residents.

Our Honoree



Roberta A. Kaplan, partner at Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP, is widely regarded as a powerhouse litigator and a civil rights champion. Most notably, Robbie successfully argued before the United States Supreme Court on behalf of her client Edith Windsor in *United States v. Windsor*, the landmark Supreme Court case. In *Windsor*, the nation's highest court ruled that a key provision of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) violated the U.S. Constitution by barring legally married same-sex couples from enjoying the wide-ranging benefits of marriage conferred under federal law. Her firsthand account of this historical case, *Then Comes Marriage: United States v. Windsor and the Defeat of DOMA*, was published by WW Norton in October 2015.

Since *Windsor*, Robbie has continued her work to defend and expand civil liberties. She won a case seeking marriage equality in the State of Mississippi, and has filed another case challenging Mississippi's gay adoption ban. For her outstanding career as a litigator, Robbie has been recognized with a Lifetime Achievement Award from *The New York Law Journal*. Robbie has also been selected by *The National Law Journal* as one of "The 100 Most Influential Lawyers" in the United States, as "Litigator of the Year" by *The American Lawyer*, as "Lawyer of the Year" by Above the Law, and as the "Most Innovative Lawyer of The Year" by *The Financial Times*.

In New York, Robbie shares her experience and litigation expertise with progressive organizations as well as a new generation of attorneys. She currently serves as the co-chair of the Board of Directors of GMHC and is on the Board of Eye to Eye, whose mission is to develop a coalition of mentoring programs for students with learning differences. She also is an adjunct professor of law at Columbia Law School, where she teaches a course on Advanced Civil Procedure.

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