

[Manhattan Legal Services'](#) 2017 Awards Benefit was held on Wednesday, November 8 at The Roosevelt Hotel in Midtown Manhattan. The funds raised through this event will support our efforts to provide high quality legal assistance to low-income New Yorkers.

This year, Manhattan Legal Services is proud to honor **PD Villarreal, Senior Vice President and Head of Global Litigation at GlaxoSmithKline**, and community partner **New York Immigration Coalition**.

To see photos from the evening, [please click here](#).

Who We Are

Manhattan Legal Services (MLS) fights poverty and seeks racial, social, and economic justice for low-income residents of Manhattan by providing free legal representation, systemic advocacy, and community education. 85% of the people served by MLS live on less than \$15,000 a year, and face such daunting crises as loss of housing, barriers to employment, illegal debt collection, denial of essential government benefits, 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 Honorees



Elpidio ("PD") Villarreal is Senior Vice President - Global Litigation of GlaxoSmithKline. He leads a team of approximately 50 lawyers, paralegals and other professionals, and has responsibility for all of the Company's non-patent litigation. Prior to joining GSK, PD was Vice President for Litigation at Schering Plough from 2005 to 2009. From 1995 to 2005, PD was Senior Litigation Counsel for the General Electric Company. Before GE, PD was a partner at what is now the Dentons firm in Chicago. He is a 1982 graduate of Columbia University (Magna Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa) and a 1985 graduate of the Yale Law School. He clerked on the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit in Chicago for the late Honorable Luther M. Swygert.

PD has spent his entire career successfully litigating and managing high-stakes, big ticket litigations and investigations. He has been one of the nation's pioneers and authorities in the systemic application of ADR techniques and principles to the problem of conflict management. PD has had responsibility for managing many billions of dollars of potential liability and has litigated an extremely broad range of litigation matters, from hostile takeovers, to Supreme Court ERISA cases, to product liability cases, to numerous criminal investigations. He has demonstrated a track record of building high functioning teams and in managing huge, "bet-the-company" crises. He has worked closely with colleagues in Business Development, Compliance, Research and Development and other corporate functions.

PD has been a guest lecturer at the Harvard Business School, Stanford Law School and Notre Dame Business School, and he is a frequent speaker on ADR, Litigation Management and Diversity topics. He has won numerous awards for his work in ADR, Litigation Management and Diversity. He is one of only two lawyers ever to be the subject of a Harvard Business School case study. In 2012, he was named one of the 10 Most Innovative Lawyers in America by Law360. He has served, in the past, on numerous non-profit boards including the CPR Institute for Dispute Resolution, the LatinoJustice Fund and the Midwest Immigrant Rights Center. He is currently on the board of the National Book Foundation. He is a Six Sigma Green Belt and a graduate of executive education courses at GE and Wharton.



The New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC) is an umbrella policy & advocacy organization that represents nearly 200 immigrant and refugee rights groups throughout New York.

The NYIC serves one of the largest and diverse newcomer populations in the United States. The multi-racial and multi-sector NYIC membership base includes grassroots and nonprofit community organizations, religious and academic institutions, labor unions, as well as legal and socioeconomic justice organizations. The NYIC not only establishes a forum for immigrant groups to voice their concerns, but also provides a platform for collective action to drive positive social change.

Since its founding in 1987, the NYIC has evolved into a powerful voice of advocacy by spearheading innovative policies, promoting and protecting the rights of immigrant communities, improving newcomer access to services, developing

leadership and capacity, expanding civic participation, and mobilizing member groups to respond to the fluctuating needs of immigrant communities.

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