

Forensic Practice Work Group

The mission of the ILS Forensic Practice Work Group encompasses the following goals: (1) providing recommendations to the Director of ILS for improving forensic practices throughout New York State; (2) effectuating a primary purpose of the NACDL-Cardozo Law National Forensic College - to utilize attorneys with forensic expertise to assist public defense programs within New York State that do not currently possess developed forensic practice units with aggressively litigating forensic science issues; (3) creating a statewide resource that can elevate and coordinate forensic practices throughout the state; and (4) preventing wrongful convictions based upon poor forensic practices.

The Group's efforts will include: (1) developing a system that applies ILS statewide implementation funding to provide direct case consultation to attorneys handling cases with forensic issues; (2) providing consultation to public defense programs that are utilizing ILS funding to develop forensic practice units; (3) creating a statewide forensic resource website; (4) compiling lists of potential expert witnesses across a broad spectrum of forensic disciplines; (5) identifying statewide forensic practice training needs; (6) developing an appellate survey to identify issues encountered, preservation problems, and suggestions for improving practice; (7) developing and implementing training programs; and (8) drafting Best Practices for handling cases that involve forensic issues.

The Forensic Practice Work Group is comprised of a broad cross-section of attorneys from programs that have a dedicated forensic practice unit and that provide training for attorneys around New York State:

Matthew Alpern, Director of Quality Enhancement for Criminal Defense Trials, NYS Office of Indigent Legal Services

Jami Blair, Quality Enhancement Attorney, Hurrell-Haring Settlement Team, NYS Office of Indigent Legal Services

Natalie Brocklebank, Staff Attorney, New York State Defenders Association

Christine Cook, Hiscock Legal Aid Society

Ingrid Effman, Staff Attorney, Rensselaer County Public Defender Office

Cynthia Feathers, Director of Quality Enhancement for Appellate and Post-Conviction, NYS Office of Indigent Legal Services

Lynda Koenig, Westchester Legal Aid Society

Alicia Lilley, Deputy Forensic Practice Unit, Erie County Assigned Counsel Program

Brad Maurer, New York County Defenders

Marika Meis, Center for Appellate Litigation

Jill Paperno, First Assistant Public Defender, Monroe County Public Defender Office

Emily Prokesch, Forensic Practice Director, Bronx Defenders

Terry Rosenblatt, Supervising Attorney, DNA Unit, Legal Aid Society of New York City

Todd Smith, Forensic Resource Coordinator, Onondaga County Assigned Counsel Program

Jonathan Stroble, First Assistant Public Defender, Oneida County Public Defender Office

Evan Sugar, Discovery Bureau Chief, Legal Aid Society of Suffolk County

Elizabeth Vasquez, Special Forensic Science Counsel, Criminal Defense Practice, Brooklyn Defender Service

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