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2009-2010 Wasserstein Public Interest Fellows Announced

The 2009-2010 Wasserstein Fellows have been announced by the Bernard Koteen Office of Public Interest Advising at Harvard Law School.

The Wasserstein Public Interest Fellows Program brings prominent attorneys from across the country to the Harvard Law School campus to mentor and connect with current students. The Fellows participate in one-on-one advising sessions and in career events sponsored by HLS.

Wasserstein Fellows are selected by faculty and staff at HLS and their selection is based on the breadth and diversity of their public interest experiences, their areas of expertise, their demonstrated ability to mentor, and their dedication to public service. The selection process is rigorous and the pool of applicants has expanded every year since the program began in 1990. This year's applicant pool was extremely competitive, as there were fewer spots awarded than in previous years. To read more about the selected Fellows, please see their mini biographies below.

For more information on the Wasserstein Fellowship, and this year's group of Fellows, visit <http://www.law.harvard.edu/current/careers/opia/events/wasserstein-fellows-program/index.html>

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2009-2010 Wasserstein Fellows

Clifton M. Johnson – Assistant Legal Adviser, Office of Law Enforcement and Intelligence, Department of State Washington, DC

Clifton Johnson is the Department of State's Assistant Legal Adviser for Law Enforcement and Intelligence and a member of the Senior Executive Service. He previously served as Legal Counselor at U.S. Embassy The Hague and Agent to the Iran-U.S. Claims Tribunal – positions he held from July 2001 to July 2006. As Legal Counselor he represented the interests of the United States before various international tribunals, including the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Court, and the Permanent Court of Arbitration. Prior to his assignment to The Hague, Mr. Johnson was the Deputy Assistant Legal Adviser for International Claims and Investment Disputes. Mr. Johnson has also served as the Department's primary lawyer for counterterrorism and for missile, chemical, and biological weapons nonproliferation. He was detailed to the Under Secretary for International Security Affairs for two years where he served as a Special Assistant, coordinating policy on such matters as the establishment of the Wassenaar Arrangement and conventional weapons nonproliferation. Prior to joining the State Department in 1990, Mr. Johnson was a judicial law clerk for Judge Kravitch on the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals. He graduated from NYU School of Law *cum laude* where he served as a Book Review Editor for the NYU Law Review and was member of the Order of the Coif.

James A. Goldston '87 – Executive Director, Open Society Justice Initiative New York, NY

Jim Goldston is the Executive Director of the Open Society Justice Initiative, an operational program of the Open Society Institute that promotes rights-based law reform and the development of legal capacity worldwide. In 2007-08, while on leave from OSI, Mr. Goldston served as Coordinator of Prosecutions and Senior Trial Attorney at the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in The Hague. Previously, as Legal Director of the Budapest-based European Roma Rights Center, he spearheaded the development of groundbreaking civil rights litigation before the European Court of Human Rights, United Nations treaty bodies, and domestic courts in 15 European countries. In 1996, he served as Director General for Human Rights of the Mission to Bosnia-Herzegovina of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, where he oversaw monitoring, reporting, and individual protection activities nationwide. For five years, he was a prosecutor in the office of the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, where he specialized in the prosecution of organized crime. He previously worked for Human Rights Watch. A graduate of Columbia College and Harvard Law School, he has written widely on issues of human rights and racial discrimination. He has engaged in law reform fieldwork and investigated rights abuses in more than 30 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America.

Michael Best '91 – General Counsel, New York City Department of Education New York, NY

Michael Best has been working for the City of New York for more than fifteen years. Currently, he is General Counsel of the New York City Department of Education, where he oversees legal, investigative, audit and compliance matters for the nation's largest school district and manages a staff of 250. Before his appointment

to that position, he served as General Counsel and Director of Legal Affairs at the New York City Host Committee 2004, the not-for-profit corporation formed by New York City to host the 2004 Republican National Convention. Previously, he was Deputy Counsel to the Mayor, serving as the second-ranking lawyer on Mayor Michael Bloomberg's City Hall staff. Mr. Best has also served as the Director of the Mayor's Office of Contracts, where he oversaw New York City's procurement system, and as General Counsel in the Office of the Criminal Justice Coordinator, where he advised the Mayor on public safety and the criminal justice system. After graduating from HLS *magna cum laude*, he began his career by clerking for Judge Thomas P. Griesa of the Southern District of New York, and he then spent six years as a prosecutor at the New York County District Attorney's Office.

**Jonathan Rapping – Founder and Executive Director of the Southern Public Defender Training Center (SPDTC)
Atlanta, GA**

As Founder and Executive Director of the Southern Public Defender Training Center (SPDTC), Mr. Rapping is in charge of training, recruiting and placing new public defenders in the South. In addition to his role with SPDTC, Mr. Rapping is also an Associate Professor of Law at the John Marshall Law School where he teaches criminal law and criminal procedure. Just prior to coming to SPDTC, Mr. Rapping was the Director for training and recruitment at the Orleans Public Defenders in New Orleans, LA, where he led the overhaul of the public defender's office in New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Prior to joining the Orleans Public Defenders, he was the Training Director for the Georgia Public Defender Standards Council where he designed and implemented a state-wide public defender system. Immediately after graduating law school Mr. Rapping spent the next 10 years with the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, first as a Staff Attorney, and eventually becoming the Training Director. While working for the Public Defender Service, he was an Adjunct Professor for the Georgetown University Law Center, where he taught trial advocacy to E. Barrett Prettyman Fellows. Mr. Rapping received a J.D. from the George Washington University National Law Center, a B.A. from the University of Chicago and an M.P.A. from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. Mr. Rapping is a regular visitor to HLS where he serves as a Visiting Faculty member in the Trial Advocacy Workshop.

**Steven Choi '04* – Executive Director of Empowering the Korean American Community (YKASEC)
Flushing, NY (*Young Wasserstein)**

Steve Choi is the Executive Director of YKASEC – Empowering the Korean American Community, which has grassroots organizing, advocacy, service, and education initiatives designed to empower community members. Mr. Choi previously directed the Korean Community Law Project, which provided free legal services to low-wage Korean immigrants – the first such project of its kind. Since September 2004, the Project has launched over 25 lawsuits together with the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF), representing more than 50 workers whose rights have been violated. Through litigation, the Project has helped secure nearly \$700,000 in total settlements, court victories, and awards for these workers. Mr. Choi was formerly a staff attorney at AALDEF, and his legal experience includes working for the Hale and Dorr Legal Services Center, Greater Boston Legal Services, and the Asian Pacific American Legal Center. He received his B.A. from Stanford University in History, and his J.D. from HLS. Mr. Choi has received numerous awards, including the Skirnick Public Interest Fellowship, the Skadden Fellowship, the Asian American Lawyers of Massachusetts (AALAM) Scholarship, and the HLS Asian Pacific American Alumni Award.

Reginald Shuford – Senior Staff Attorney/Attorneys of Color Recruitment & Retention Officer, ACLU New York, NY

Reggie Shuford is an attorney in the American Civil Liberties Union's Racial Justice Program, where he works in constitutional and impact litigation. In his fourteen-plus years at the ACLU, he has concentrated on racial justice and national security issues, serving as lead attorney in matters such as racial profiling, both pre- and post-9/11, the school to prison pipeline and affirmative action. Mr. Shuford is the first person to hold the position of Attorneys of Color Recruitment and Retention Officer, created in 2003 as a way to further the ACLU's commitment to a diverse legal staff. He has authored numerous petitions and briefs for cases that were presented to the U.S. Supreme Court dealing with matters of discrimination, the Equal Protection Clause and First and Fourth Amendment rights. He has published articles related to racial profiling, affirmative action, and violence in the African-American community. Prior to coming to the ACLU, Mr. Shuford worked in private practice in Raleigh, NC with the firm Richard Schwartz & Associates, specializing in education law. Just after graduating law school, he clerked with the Hon. Henry E. Frye of the Supreme Court of North Carolina. He is a graduate of the University of North Carolina School of Law, in Chapel Hill, where he was his graduating class president. In October 2009, Reggie received UNC Law's Distinguished Alumnus Award.

Jennifer Di Toro – Legal Director, Children's Law Center Washington, DC

Jennifer Di Toro is the Legal Director for the Children's Law Center in Washington D.C. Children's Law Center provides comprehensive legal services to ensure that D.C.'s children have safe homes, a meaningful education and a healthy mind and body. Ms. Di Toro is responsible for overseeing a team of supervisors and attorneys in all aspects of the CLC's civil litigation. Prior to becoming the Legal Director at CLC, she was an attorney at the D.C. Public Defender Service where she worked in the Special Litigation Division, the Office of the General Counsel and in the General Felony Section. She spent two years at the firm Zuckerman Spaeder LLP in Washington, D.C. where she worked on white-collar criminal defense litigation as well general civil litigation. Upon graduating from Stanford University Law School, Ms. Di Toro served as a Prettyman Fellow at the Georgetown University Law Center's Criminal Justice Clinic where she represented indigent clients in D.C.'s Superior Court and taught in the Criminal Justice Clinic. In addition to her JD from Stanford, she holds Masters Degrees in literature and advocacy from The University of Oxford and Georgetown University and a BA from Wesleyan University.

Blan Holman – Senior Attorney, Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC) Charleston, South Carolina

Blan Holman is a Senior Attorney with the Southern Environmental Law Center where he has served as lead SELC attorney on a variety of major conservation litigation and policy matters. Holman's courtroom experience includes trial courts, appellate courts and the Supreme Court of the United States, where SELC won a major Clean Air Act victory in 2007. Holman's policy focus is on South Carolina, where he is point person working with allies to advance water and air quality protection initiatives and to defeat coal-fired power plants. In addition to his work with the SELC, Mr. Holman is an Adjunct Professor at the Charleston School of Law where he co-teaches an environmental law class that focuses on the National Environmental Policy and Clean Air Acts. Prior to joining the SELC, Holman worked as an attorney in the law offices of Beveridge & Diamond, P.C. in Washington, D.C. counseling clients on a range of environmental compliance matters. Holman graduated from the University of Virginia School of Law and served as judicial clerk to the Honorable

Lacy H. Thornburg, U.S. Judge for the Western District of North Carolina. As a Truman Scholar in law school, he worked in the Office of EPA Administrator on an innovative pilot program to reduce pollution on industrial sector-by-sector basis at least cost.

Nina Perales – Southwest Regional Counsel, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF)

San Antonio, Texas

Nina Perales is widely regarded as the top public interest attorney in the nation promoting voting rights and political access of Latinos. As the Southwest Regional Counsel for MALDEF she directs litigation and advocacy on behalf of Latinos in Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Kansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Mississippi. Prior to that, she was a Staff Attorney for MALDEF's Political Access Program where she worked on litigation and advocacy to promote the voting rights and political access of Latinos. Before joining MALDEF, Ms. Perales worked as Associate Counsel and then Coordinator of the Latina Rights Initiative for the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund (PRLDEF) in New York City. In this role, she directed the litigation and advocacy of PRLDEF's Latina Rights Initiative, which was created to address civil rights problems of women in the Latino community. Ms. Perales has received many awards recognizing her legal achievements, including most recently the Soaring Eagles Award from the American Association for Justice (formerly Association of Trial Lawyers of America), and being profiled as one of the "Extraordinary Women in Texas Law," in 2008. Ms. Perales is a graduate of Brown University and Columbia University School of Law.