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Founder and Executive Director of the Center for Law and Social Justice,
Medgar Evers College, CUNY to Receive Bar Association Award Celebrating Black History
Esmeralda Simmons to receive 14th Annual Ida B. Wells-Barnett Justice Award

New York, NY – January 13, 2016 – On Tuesday, February 2 at 6 p.m., The New York County Lawyers' Association and the Metropolitan Black Bar Association will present the 14th annual Ida B. Wells-Barnett Justice Award to Esmeralda Simmons, founder and executive director of the Center for Law and Social Justice at Medgar Evers College, CUNY. Visit nycla.org for more information on this event taking place at the NYCLA Home of Law, 14 Vesey Street in Manhattan.

Named for Ms. Wells-Barnett, one of the first African American women to run for public office in the United States, each year the award is presented to a woman of color whose life reflects Ms. Wells-Barnett's spirit and courageousness by distinguishing herself in the right for racial and gender equality.

"Esmeralda Simmons was selected to receive this year's Ida B. Wells-Barnett Justice Award for the many accomplishments she has made as a minority woman," says Hon. Pam Jackman Brown, Justice of the Supreme Court and Chair of the Ida B. Wells-Barnett Justice Award Committee. "She is a fine example for young minority women and men building their careers in the legal field and the New York County Lawyers' Association along with the Metropolitan Black Bar Association is honored to present this year's award to Ms. Simmons at the February 2nd Awards Reception at the Home of Law."

Esmeralda has had an accomplished career as: the First Deputy Commissioner for Human Rights for New York State, and as a Civil Rights Attorney for the US Department of Education, a New York State Assistant Attorney General, and a New York City Assistant Corporation Counsel. She has also served as a law clerk to a federal judge. An activist and a leader, Esmeralda has been involved in the community empowerment movement in Central Brooklyn and in progressive political causes for over thirty-five years.

About the New York County Lawyers' Association

The New York County Lawyers' Association (www.nycla.org) was founded in 1908 as one of the first major bar association in the country that admitted members without regard to race, ethnicity, religion or gender. Since its inception, it has pioneered some of the most far-reaching and tangible reforms in American jurisprudence and has continuously played an active role in legal developments and public policy.

About the Metropolitan Black Bar Association

For more than twenty-eight years, the Metropolitan Black Bar Association (www.mbbanyc.org) has committed to advance equality and excellence in the pursuit of justice and to aid the progress of African-American and other attorneys of color by encouraging the personal and professional development of our members.

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