

**REMARKS OF CAROL A. SIGMOND PRESIDENT, NEW YORK COUNTY LAWYERS ASSOCIATION AT NYCLA
2016 ANNUAL LAW DAY LUNCHEON**

Home of Law
14 Vesey Street
New York, New York
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Good Afternoon,

Welcome to the New York County Lawyers Association's annual Law Day Luncheon. In a nation where the rule of law is paramount, every day is a 'law day'. But today, we collectively take a moment to reflect on who, what and where we are as a profession.

It is fitting that the American Bar Association declared the theme of Law Day 2016 to be the 50th anniversary of *Miranda v. Arizona*. Television and pop culture have somewhat trivialized *Miranda* by reducing it to a formula recited in fictional scenarios removed from the real world, where warnings against self-incrimination and the right to counsel are crucial rights of the accused.

But *Miranda* is also more than that; 50 years ago I believe that the Supreme Court was speaking to more than just Ernesto Miranda's own interrogation by the authorities in Arizona. *Miranda*, when put into the larger context of rights of the accused and liberty of our citizenry, became part of a broader movement that lawlessness in law enforcement and other abuses by government were not acceptable in a democratic society.

We have not yet rid law enforcement of unethical conduct--the examples are all around us: Freddie Gray, Sandra Bland, Walter Scott, Jonathan Ferrell, Eric Harris, and Eric Garner, to name a few. Just as important, we have not rid government of leadership that tolerates unlawful conduct by government officials.

However, there are leaders among us that speak to this cause. Our speaker today, the Honorable Preet Bharara, United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, caused his office to join with the Legal Aid Society in litigating to improve conditions on Rikers Island, including preventing assaults on prisoners by guards. Moreover, Hon. Bharara and his team have been working hard to drive lawless and unethical conduct out of the state legislature. Cleaning up Albany and cleaning up Rikers are both daunting challenges, and with Hon. Bharara's experience and persistence, they can be overcome.

Here at the New York County Lawyers Association, Law Day is also a time to remember Louis J. Capozzoli: Italian Immigrant, Manhattan District Attorney, New York State Assemblyman, United States Congressman, Member of the Attorney General's Advisory Committee on Ethical Standards for New York State Attorney General Louis Lefkowitz and Judge in the New York City Court, the Court of General Sessions and the New York State Supreme Court. Our honoree, Associate Justice of the New York Supreme Court, Appellate Division, Rosalyn Richter exemplifies the attributes that made Hon. Louis

Capozzoli so revered and respected. Her commitment to improving the administration of justice and dedication to the proposition of justice for each litigant—irrespective of their status, religion, gender, race, or orientation—are just two noteworthy examples of her efforts that have shone throughout her career as with the District Attorney’s Office, as an administrative law judge and as a judge in both the New York City and Bronx Criminal Courts.

Thank you for joining us today to welcome our honorees and reflect on how far we have come and to consider what—as a profession—we can still do.