

Pro Bono News

SUMMER 2024

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Aaron Frankel
Co-Chairs

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Director of Professional Development and Pro Bono Programs

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Chief Legal Talent Officer

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Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer

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Pamela Badolato
Michelle Ben-David
Barry Berke
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Daniela Manzi
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Laurence Pettit
Andrew Pollack
Natali Rey
Jacqueline Ryu
Robert Schmidt
Norman Simon
Jonaki Singh
Jeff Trachtman

New Pro Bono Committee Members

Please join us in welcoming the following individuals to our Pro Bono Committee!

Pamela Badolato



Pamela is a Litigation paralegal who has worked at the firm for 20 years. She has worked on **Her Justice** matters, veterans' rights and Freedom of Information Law matters, where she assisted the attorneys with cite-checking briefs and filling out forms to help clients. Pamela works with attorneys to prepare clients for trial for child custody matters. She has worked with **Jamie Porco** and the pro bono team to set up in-person legal clinics and meet the clinics' clients. She has also assisted in putting together the Marvin Frankel Awards Ceremony and Pro Bono Fair. Pamela received a Marvin Frankel Award for Outstanding Pro Bono Contributions in 2020 and in 2024 for her work related to a family court matter and her work on the gun safety team.

Chloe Bootstaylor



Chloe is an associate in the Litigation group at Kramer Levin. Since joining the firm, she has maintained a robust pro bono practice, demonstrating her commitment to justice and the community. In partnership with the **ACLU**, Chloe filed an amicus brief supporting the appeal of a Native woman residing on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation, challenging an order by the Federal District Court of Montana that granted the U.S. government summary judgment and dismissed her claim under the Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA). Additionally, she is collaborating with Everytown for Gun Safety on a case against three gun shops involved in illegal gun trafficking and straw transactions, which have significantly contributed to the surge in gun violence and harm to the city of Philadelphia and its residents. Also, Chloe represents Stephen Richer, the elected recorder of Maricopa County, AZ, in a case with Protect Democracy against Kari Lake, the Kari Lake for Governor Campaign and Ms. Lake's fundraising organization for their defamatory statements accusing Richer of tampering with and sabotaging the 2022 gubernatorial election.

New Pro Bono Committee Members (Cont.)

Jessica Christy



Jessica is an associate in the Land Use group. She participated in Kramer Levin's summer associate program in 2020, then returned to the firm after clerking in the Western District of Texas, El Paso Division. She now works on a variety of discretionary Uniform Land Use Review Procedure approvals, land use diligence, development rights transactions and real estate/land use litigation. Jessica's pro bono work has included successfully defending a long-running asylum case, contributing to and finding clergy signatories for an amicus brief in collaboration with Everytown for Gun Safety (where Jessica interned as a law student) in support of New York's restrictions on firearms in houses of worship, and helping community groups in Staten Island and Queens navigate the permitting process for hosting events and installing art pieces in New York City parks.

Santo Cipolla



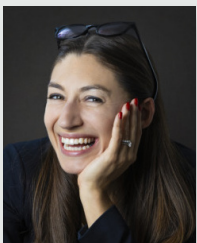
Santo is a Litigation paralegal and is the paralegal overseeing the asylum program. He works with the asylum group to ensure that I-589 and I-765 applications are filed in a timely manner. He has worked on veterans' affairs, asylum cases and many other pro bono matters. Recently, he has assisted with filing mandamus complaints for clients who have been waiting many years for an asylum interview. Apart from one pending case, all cases where a mandamus complaint has been filed resulted in our client receiving an interview date.

Ines Dominguez



Ines is a Corporate and Litigation legal assistant who has worked at the firm for 18 years on a variety of immigration cases, including asylum, Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), Special Immigrant Juvenile (SIJ) and U visa matters, providing translation and interpretation services, assisting attorneys with immigration forms, and providing support before and during hearings. In addition, she has volunteered her time at our on-site clinics. Ines has been recognized with the Marvin Frankel Award for Outstanding Pro Bono Contributions in both 2020 and 2023.

Melissa Drennan



Melissa is an associate in the Immigration department who has worked with the firm for over 10 years, first as a paralegal and now as an attorney. Melissa is dedicated to providing pro bono services, including for SIJ, asylum, T visa, U visa, VAWA, naturalization and uncontested divorce cases, collaborating with organizations such as Her Justice, City Bar Justice Center and Legal Services NYC. Melissa has also participated in naturalization clinics at the firm. Previously, while with Seton Hall University School of Law's Family Law Clinic, she provided pro bono services for adoption cases and won a Hague Convention international custody case. This year, Melissa was invited to serve as a member of the Legal Services NYC Pro Bono Associate Advisory Board.

New Pro Bono Committee Members (Cont.)

Sabah Khokhar



Sabah is an associate in the Patent Litigation group in the Silicon Valley office at Kramer Levin. The daughter of an Afghan refugee who came to the U.S. with asylum, asylum pro bono work has been a meaningful and important part of her career. Since joining the firm, she has worked in collaboration with the Tahirih Justice Center to help an Afghan student receive asylum. Currently, she is working on a defensive asylum application for a Peruvian transgender woman in collaboration with The Legal Aid Society, and a Colombian sexual assault survivor in collaboration with the City Bar Justice Center. She is also working on a mandamus complaint for a Jamaican bisexual man seeking asylum. Outside of asylum work, Sabah has also participated in the Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts (VLA) virtual pro bono legal clinic to screen artists and small business owners regarding legal issues in order to assist VLA in placing them with pro bono counsel.

Natali Rey



Natali is a first-year associate in the Litigation department, where she practices both civil and criminal litigation. She is heavily involved in pro bono work at Kramer Levin, having represented clients in asylum and SIJ cases, as well as in divorce and other family law matters. Additionally, Natali has served as a Spanish language interpreter for other pro bono matters and clinics. She is currently the firm's family law extern at Brooklyn Legal Services, where she counsels survivors of domestic violence in divorce, custody, child support and family offense proceedings.

Jonaki Singh



Jonaki is an associate in the firm's Litigation department. Since joining the firm in 2017, Jonaki has worked on a variety of pro bono matters, including affirmative and defensive asylum cases, New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG)'s pro se clinic, Brooklyn Defender Services' Bail Reform Project, "Know Your Rights" trainings with the Legal Aid Society, uncontested divorce cases with Her Justice, and veterans'/homeowners' rights matters with the City Bar Justice Center. She has also helped draft pro bono amicus briefs submitted to the U.S. Supreme Court and the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals. For the past two years, Jonaki has served as one of the coordinators for the firm's Asylum Program. Earlier this year, Jonaki received the New York State Bar Association's "Outstanding Young Lawyer of the Year" award in recognition of her pro bono work and commitment.

Recognition

Kramer Levin Ranks in the Top 30 on the 2024 Am Law Pro Bono Scorecard

Kramer Levin ranked in the top 30 on *The American Lawyer's* national 2024 Pro Bono Scorecard. The rankings, which survey the Am Law 200, are based on the amount of pro bono work performed by firms and are part of Am Law's annual report on the legal industry's pro bono commitment. Half the score comes from the average number of pro bono hours per lawyer in 2023, and the other half represents the percentage of lawyers who performed more than 20 hours of pro bono service. Thanks to all of our pro bono contributors for helping us achieve this impressive ranking!

Recognition (Cont.)

DC Office Honored at the “40 at 50” Judicial Pro Bono Recognition Breakfast

Kramer Levin’s Washington, DC, office was recognized by the District of Columbia Circuit Judicial Conference Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services at its “40 at 50” Judicial Pro Bono Recognition Breakfast. The breakfast honors firms where at least 40% of lawyers contributed a minimum of 50 hours of pro bono legal services in 2023. Litigation partner Jennifer Windom represented Kramer Levin at the event.



Jennifer Windom
(left) with
Veronica Renzi of
Foley Hoag.

David Berg Recognized for Board Service to Reading Partners

Reading Partners New York City hosted their annual benefit, The Next Chapter, honoring the organization’s founding board members. Corporate partner David Berg was among the esteemed group of advisory board members recognized for their dedication and service over the past 10 years.

Kramer Levin was a sponsor of the event, and a number of our partners attended, including Corporate partner John Bessonette, Banking and Finance partners Gilbert Liu and Laurence Pettit, and Executive Compensation and Employee Benefits partner Marissa Holob.



Left to right: John Bessonette, Gilbert Liu, David Berg,
Marissa Holob and Laurence Pettit.

Jonaki Singh Receives Williams Judicial Commission’s Outstanding Young Leader’s Award



Jonaki Singh was selected as this year’s recipient of the prestigious Outstanding Young Leader’s Award by the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission. The award recognizes Jonaki’s contributions to the advancement of diversity in the legal profession and her dedication to providing outstanding pro bono legal service to vulnerable and disadvantaged communities.

The Commission is composed of judges, attorneys and court administrators appointed by the Chief Judge of the State of New York to develop strategies to make the court system more responsive to the concerns of people of color and to improve diversity in the legal profession and court system. The award will be presented to Jonaki in November at the Commission’s Diversity Awards Ceremony at the New York County Supreme Court.

Recognition (Cont.)

Kramer Levin Recognized at Legal Benchmarking Group's 2024 Social Impact Awards

Kramer Levin earned recognition in two categories at the 2024 Legal Benchmarking Group's Social Impact Awards, held on June 20. The annual awards recognize those law firms that champion inclusion within the workplace and legal industry.

We received the awards for Disability Program of the Year and for Social Impact Case of the Year for the firm's success in securing a motion for a preliminary injunction to protect the constitutional right of children and indigent adults to the effective assistance of counsel in New York City Family and Criminal Court proceedings. The team on the Right to Counsel case consisted of Litigation partner Michael Dell, special counsel Jason Moff and associate Rachel Czwartacky.



Jeffrey Trachtman Named to *City & State* Above & Beyond: Pride List



Litigation partner Jeffrey Trachtman appeared on *City & State*'s Above & Beyond: Pride list, which spotlights 50 LGBTQ+ leaders who are on the front lines in government, politics and business, fighting for equality across New York. Jeffrey's profile references his filing of amicus briefs in significant U.S. Supreme Court cases such as *Obergefell v. Hodges*, which legalized same-sex marriage, as well as his roles as co-lead counsel on a case that successfully blocked regulations that would have hurt LGBTQ+ asylum-seekers and, in the 2000s, on a case that sought to recognize same-sex marriage in New York.

Upcoming Events

In celebration of Pro Bono Week, we hope that you can join us for our Pro Bono Fair on Wednesday, Oct. 23 from 3:30-4:30 pm in the MPR. More details to come!

Danielle Moody and Yasmeen Al-Bader at our Fair in 2023



Racial Justice Initiative Scholars

In keeping with our commitment to diversity and inclusion, we offer a Racial Justice Initiative Scholars (RJI Scholars) program for 1L law students at select New York City law schools (Class of 2026). As part of the firm's Racial Justice Initiative (RJI), Kramer Levin's RJI Scholars participate in pro bono clinics and projects focused on combating racial injustice and inequality. This work helps RJI Scholars jump-start their legal careers by exposing them to the practice of law in a real-world setting where they are supervised and supported by practicing lawyers. Kramer Levin is proud to introduce our 2024 RJI Scholars:

Lulu Alryati	Fordham University School of Law
Nagnouma Camara	St. John's University School of Law
Mariama Campbell	Fordham University School of Law
Charlene Canning	New York University School of Law
Trystan Edwards	Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law
Priya Prasad	New York University School of Law
Aluk Fontaine Richardson	Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law
Sneha Sajan	Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University
Sanjana Singh	New York University School of Law
Chloé Quinn Sotomayor	Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law
Jalen Wright	Fordham University School of Law
Yanghe Zhou	Brooklyn Law School



2024 RJI Scholars with Kramer Levin Operations Team members involved in the program.

Pro Bono Events

Volunteers of Legal Service 40th Anniversary Gala

Kramer Levin co-sponsored the Volunteers of Legal Service (VOLS) 40th Anniversary gala on April 16. VOLS partners with New York City's community-based organizations, law firms and companies to provide free civil legal services to New Yorkers who have limited access to resources. We were one of the organization's founding firms, and Litigation partner Jeffrey Trachtman and former partner Tom Moreland have represented the firm on the VOLS board for its entire history.

Left: Tax special counsel Rita Celebrezze D'Souza, member of the VOLS Pro Bono Advocates Council; Litigation partner Jeffrey Trachtman, Vice President of VOLS Board; and associates Katy Keane, Celeste Williams, Linda Butler and Dan Weiss.

Right: Jeffrey Trachtman with John Kiernan of Debevoise, former VOLS board Chair and former President of the City Bar.

(Photos courtesy of Reuben Kleiner)



Pro Bono Events (Cont.)

CASA-NYC 2024 Supper Club

Along with our client Euclid, Kramer Levin was a sponsor of the 2024 Supper Club event for CASA-NYC on April 30 at Tribeca Rooftop. The event raised critical funding to sustain and extend CASA-NYC's crucial role in assisting the overburdened family court system in meeting the needs of New York City's most vulnerable children.

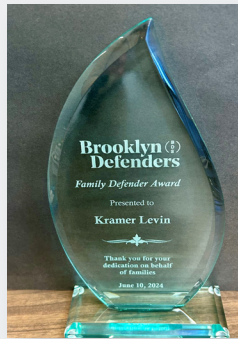


CASA, or Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children, is a New York City-based nonprofit organization serving children and youth in foster care and at a high risk of foster care placement. With the help of nearly 325 volunteers from across New York City, CASA serves more than 1,100 of the 10,000 young people in the foster care system each year.

Left: Mia Victoria Collins and Max Morris.

Right: Mia Victoria Collins, Chris Auguste and Dan Rabinowitz.

Brooklyn Defender Services 2024 Family Defense Benefit



Kramer Levin was one of the firms honored at the Brooklyn Defenders 2024 Family Defense Benefit on June 10. Litigation special counsel Karen Steinberg Kennedy and associate Drew Zagami accepted the award on the firm's behalf for their successful representation of a pro bono client in the Appellate Division, Second Department, obtaining a reversal of a summary judgment decision. The firm was also recognized for its longstanding commitment to the Brooklyn Defenders organization.

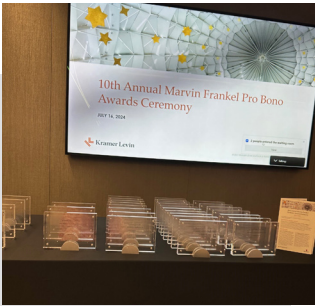


Left to right: Brooklyn Defender Services Award; special counsel Karen Kennedy receives the award; summer associates Ceci Faringer-Perez and Giulia Pines, Karen Kennedy, paralegal Angela Chan, and summer associate Anu Joy; Karen with the award.

Pro Bono Events (Cont.)

2024 Marvin Frankel Awards Ceremony

The 10th Annual Marvin Frankel Pro Bono Awards ceremony took place on July 16. The event recognized attorneys and staff for their hard work and dedication to pro bono at Kramer Levin. Congratulations to the many winners of the 2024 Marvin Frankel Award for Outstanding Pro Bono Contributions.



Racial Justice Initiative Award

The East 117 Realty LLC team (**Robert Schmidt, Joseph Shifer, Rose Bagley and Wendy Kane**) for securing a settlement for nine low-income tenants with their bankrupt landlord, ending the yearslong litigation. The settlement contained provisions in favor of the tenants forgiving tens of thousands of dollars of outstanding rent, securing go-forward lease agreements with rent amounts in accordance with applicable law, providing the tenants with thousands of dollars in future cash or rent credits, and ensuring the landlord completed all outstanding repairs.

Team Awards

The **S.I. team** (**Jonathan Wagner, Boaz Cohen, Phil King** and former associate Daria Schieferstein) for securing an appellate victory for their client, who had been seeking a religious divorce from her husband for nearly five years. Despite a binding arbitration award issued by a rabbi, the husband refused to provide his wife with a *get* (a formal divorce document), preventing her from divorcing him under traditional Jewish law. The decision is the first by New Jersey courts directly addressing the enforceability of an arbitration award ordering a party to grant a religious divorce.

The **Everytown for Gun Safety team** (led by **Michael Dell**, the full team listed below) for their critical efforts in advancing gun safety over the past several years. The most recent work included filing an amicus brief supporting the federal prohibition of bump stocks, supporting claims of families of Sandy Hook victims against makers and sellers of AR-15 military assault rifles, and filing a lawsuit against several gun shop owners in Philadelphia that engage in illegal gun trafficking and straw transactions.

Larry Williams Staff Awards

Lily Suris in the Managing Attorney’s Office for her valuable support in a broad range of pro bono matters, especially with regard to pro bono uncontested divorces. Lily has been working on these cases for more than a decade and knows better than anyone else the ins and outs of the paperwork, the filing procedures and the personalities of the clerks where the cases are filed. She is a critical member of the teams handling Her Justice matters, offering sound

judgment and compassion for clients.

Team Award: The Spanish-language interpreter team (**Marisol Casilla, Ines Dominguez, Veronica Ortiz, Celia Reyes, Gisselle Sabala and Rachel Torres**) for always pitching in when pro bono teams are in need of a translator. We could not do the breadth of pro bono work that we do without their critical support and ability to connect with clients.

Everytown for Gun Safety Team

David Alexander	Paul Brzyski	Catherine Engelmamm	Daniel Ketani	Kate Miller	Hannah Sosland
Pam Badolato	Angela Chan	Jordan Estes	Darren LaVerne	Gary Orseck	Jeffrey Trachtman
Abigail Badway	Jessica Christy	Zachary Ferguson	Zachary Levine	Denise Reid	Ashish Virmani
Chloe Bootstaylor	Michael Dell	Karen Kennedy	Daniela Manzi	Marjorie Sheldon	Drew Zagami

Pro Bono Highlights

Kramer Levin Files Amicus Brief in Support of Federal Regulations on Ghost Guns

On July 2, Kramer Levin filed an amicus brief in the U.S. Supreme Court on behalf of multiple medical associations. The brief, filed in *Garland v. VanDerStok*, supports the reversal of a Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals decision that portions of the rule of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) that address unregistered firearms commonly referred to as “ghost guns,” codified at 27 CFR §§ 478.11 and 478.12(c), should be struck down.

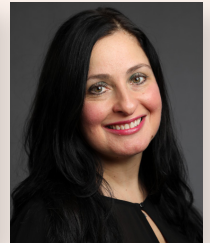
The rule is intended to effectuate the legislative purpose of the Gun Control Act of 1968, which was enacted to address firearm violence by regulating the firearms market. The rule requires manufacturers of ghost gun firearm kits to obtain federal firearm licenses, mark their products with serial numbers, conduct background checks and keep transfer records. It is designed to keep ghost guns out of the hands of dangerous criminals and to assist law enforcement in the investigation of serious crimes involving such weapons.

The brief explains that firearm violence was a healthcare crisis in the 1960s when the Act was enacted, and it continues to be an even greater crisis today. As firearm violence continues at untenable levels, the sale of ghost guns has deadly consequences.

Kramer Levin Obtains Successful Outcome for Uncontested Divorce

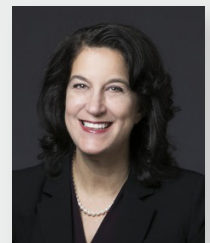
Kramer Levin, together with Her Justice, obtained a judgment of divorce for a pro bono client. The client, a Chinese national with one child, was in an abusive relationship with her now ex-husband, who is incarcerated. The client appreciates the firm’s hard work, which will give her the opportunity for a fresh start.

The Kramer Levin team consisted of Corporate partner Shari Krouner, former associate Matthew Doyle, paralegals **Pamela Badolato** and **Angela Chan**, and managing clerk **Liliya Suris**.



Kramer Levin Wins Hearing for Father Placed on NYS Central Register of Child Abuse and Neglect

Litigation special counsel Karen Kennedy and former summer associate Ceci Faringer-Perez, working with Brooklyn Defender Services, won a decision after a hearing finding that the inclusion of their client, a father on the New York State Central Register of Child Abuse and Neglect, was “not relevant and not related to employment” and may not be disclosed to agencies making inquiry. They represented the client at the hearing, eliciting testimony and submitting exhibits showing that the client had taken “affirmative steps to address his behavior.” After the hearing, the administrative law judge issued a 10-page decision, noting that the client testified “candidly and to the best of his recollection.”



Pro Bono Highlights (Cont.)

Kramer Levin Reaches Settlement for Low-Income Tenants



On February 5, a Kramer Levin team secured a settlement for nine low-income tenants with their bankrupt landlord, ending the yearslong litigation between the tenants and the landlord. The tenants had initiated litigation against the landlord with the assistance of Legal Aid in New York City Civil Court for abatement of and damages for hazardous, unsafe and unhygienic conditions in the building, as well as harassment claims. Before the trial was scheduled to begin, the landlord filed for bankruptcy in the Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York, thereby staying the tenants' litigation.



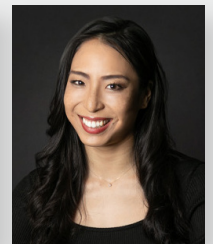
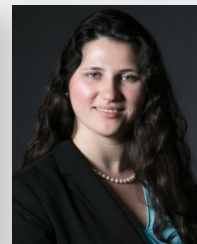
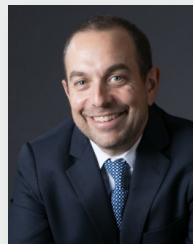
The tenants each filed a proof of claim against the landlord in the bankruptcy case on account of their litigation and ongoing building hazards. The landlord successfully objected to those claims, thereby leaving the tenants with no recourse against the landlord. After the Kramer Levin team was retained as pro bono bankruptcy counsel, the tenants filed a motion for reconsideration of their claims and initiated settlement discussions with the landlord. As a result of those

negotiations, the settlement contained provisions in favor of the tenants, forgiving tens of thousands of dollars of outstanding rent, and it secured go-forward lease agreements with rent amounts in accordance with applicable law, provided the tenants with thousands of dollars in future cash or rent credits and ensured the landlord completed all outstanding repairs.

The Kramer Levin team included Bankruptcy counsel Bob Schmidt, special counsel Joe Shifer, associate Rose Bagley and paralegal **Wendy Kane**.

Kramer Levin Assists Nonprofit With Entity Formation and Tax-Exempt Status

Kramer Levin assisted Anthill Creations Inc. in forming their U.S. entity and obtaining federal tax-exempt status. Anthill Creations Inc. is a nonprofit organization that aims to bring back play for all age groups by building sustainable playscapes, using contextual designs and localized resources and encouraging community participation. The group has successfully built over 350 such playgrounds across India.



The Kramer Levin team consisted of Bankruptcy and Restructuring special counsel Andrew Ward, Tax associate Mariya Khvatskaya and Banking and Finance associate Marie Soga.

Clinics and Trainings

Cancer Advocacy Project — Visa Extension Pro Bono Clinic

On April 17, Kramer Levin cohosted an in-person clinic with NYLAG and firm client Euclid. We assisted low-income cancer patients who are obtaining treatment in the U.S. with extending their visas. Collaborating with a NYLAG supervisor, volunteers met with clients in teams to complete the visa extension applications.



Kramer Levin volunteers from the NY & DC offices with volunteers from Euclid.

Clinics and Trainings (Cont.)

Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts Clinic



On May 16, Kramer Levin teamed up with VLA once again to screen artists and small business owners regarding legal issues in order to assist VLA in placing them with pro bono counsel. Teams of attorneys interviewed pro bono clients to obtain information and give preliminary advice on topics such as employment, intellectual property, corporate contracts and disputes.

Self-Determination for Older LGBTQ Adults Advance Planning Clinic

In honor of Pride Month, Kramer Levin hosted a Self-Determination for Older LGBTQ Adults Advance Planning Clinic on June 13 in the New York Office. During the clinic, we partnered with NYLAG to support low-income New Yorkers in completing vital life planning documents.



NYC Business Solutions Virtual Small Business Clinics

Throughout the last quarter, Kramer Levin held monthly Small Business Clinics, collaborating with the Harlem and Morningside Heights offices of **NYC Business Solutions** to help low- and lower-income entrepreneurs in Upper Manhattan and the Bronx as they restart, maintain and grow their businesses. To participate in a future small business clinic, please contact **Colin Bumby**.

