

District Leader Report:

Civil Court Nominees and NYS Supreme Court Candidates

By Theresa Canter

Last week was very eventful in Judicial politics for both the candidates and District Leaders. The good news is that the State Legislature passed a bill adding three seats to the New York County Civil Court to be filled in the upcoming November 5 election. The strong advocacy of our **State Senator, Brad Hoylman-Sigal**, as well as **Assemblyman Alex Bores'** on the East Side, resulted in the additional seats that will strengthen our county's judiciary.

The additional Civil Court seats will help with processing the backlog of current cases we now have in Civil Court. Governor Hochul signed the [S.9839](#) bill on July 17, allowing the Executive Committee, comprised of the District Leaders of the Manhattan Democratic Party, to meet on Thursday,

July 25 to select the nominees reported out of the panel who are eligible for the three newly created New York County Civil Court vacancies. The Executive Committee selected **Harold Bahr** by acclamation, and upon a series of votes, selected **Elizabeth Shahmas**, and **Crystal Villaseñor** for the second and third seats as the Democratic nominees for the November 5, 2024 General Election. We congratulate the nominees and offer our support to our highly qualified and diverse slate of nominees.

A reception was held on Friday, July 26, for the results of the Supreme Court Independent Screening Panel as they concluded its deliberations on July 24 by reporting out as most highly qualified the following candidates: **Hon. Christopher Chin, Hon. Ashlee Crawford, Hon. Cynthia Kern** (for a second term), and **Hon. Hasa Abas Kingo**. They join the following candidates reported out of previous panels: **Hon. Suzanne Adams, Hon. Shahabuddeen Ally, Hon. Jim Clynes, Hon. Judy Kim, Hon. Gerald Lebovits**, and **Hon. Ilana Marcus**.

The Manhattan Democratic Party's 2024 Supreme Court Judicial Nominating Convention will be held on Thursday, August 8, at the New York Society for Ethical Culture. I will be supporting the **Hon. Gerald Lebovits** for the one open Supreme Court seat this year. He has been voted "most-highly qualified" by ten Independent Judicial Screening Panels. Judge Lebovits has been a Legal Aid Society lawyer, a Judge since 2001, in addition to being a law professor for 35 years at Columbia Law School, student mentor, author and President of the NYS Association of Acting Supreme Court Justices (2017 to present) and a leader of other judicial associations. He has the qualifications, experience and dedication to justice we need in a Justice of the Supreme Court.