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MAYOR ADAMS APPOINTS NINE NEW COMMISSIONERS, REAPPOINTS 15 COMMISSIONERS TO COMMISSION ON GENDER EQUITY

Commissioners Are Tasked With Advising on Gender Issues to Improve Equity Across NYC

Mayor Reappoints Jacqueline M. Ebanks as Executive Director, Silda Palerm as Chair

NEW YORK – New York City Mayor Eric Adams today announced the appointments and reappointments of 24 commissioners to the New York City Commission on Gender Equity (CGE). The commissioners will advise CGE on dismantling institutional and societal discrimination and inequities for girls, women, intersex, transgender, and gender non-conforming and non-binary persons regardless of age, ability, ethnicity/race, faith, gender expression, immigration status, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.

“The Commission on Gender Equity is transforming lives by educating New Yorkers about economic mobility, safeguarding health and reproductive rights, and ensuring safety in our communities. Today, I’m proud to announce the reappointments of Jacqueline Ebanks as the executive director of the Commission on Gender Equity and Silda Palerm as chair, as well as announce our full slate of commissioners,” said **Mayor Adams**. “I look forward to the continued collaboration across our agencies to reinforce equity and dismantle institutionalized practices that have been unfair for too long to people across our city.”

CGE commissioners are community leaders, advocates, and founders of nonprofits and other organizations that break down gendered barriers across New York City and will be a significant driving force as ambassadors to achieve CGE’s strategic planning goals. These commissioners will also work toward broader gender equity efforts in the Adams administration and for the people of New York City.

The nine newly appointed commissioners are:

- **Damian Ashton**, director of communications, Equimundo: Center for Masculinities and Social Justice
- **Jennifer Barnes-Balenciaga**, director, Crystal La’Beija Organizing Fellowship
- **Carol Bullock**, executive director, Pride Center of Staten Island

- **Callie Chamberlain**, director of Social Responsibility, Optum
- **Miriam F. Clark**, partner, Ritz Clark & Ben-Asher LLP
- **Anne Marie Goetz**, clinical professor, New York University
- **Seher Khawaja**, senior attorney for economic empowerment, Legal Momentum, The Women’s Legal Defense and Education Fund
- **Emily Miles**, executive director, New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault
- **Jason Tan de Bibiana**, research and evaluation director, Next Gen Men

The 15 reappointed commissioners are:

- **Shahara Ahmad-Llewellyn**, president, Shahara Ahmad-Llewellyn Family Foundation
- **Sasha Ahuja**, national director of strategic partnerships, Planned Parenthood Federation of America
- **Taina Bien-Aimé**, executive director, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women
- **Beverly Cooper Neufeld**, president and founder, PowHer New York
- **Andrea Hagelgans**, managing director, U.S. social issues engagement, Edelman
- **Imara Jones**, founder and CEO, TransLash Media
- **Sherry Leiwant**, co-president and co-founder, A Better Balance
- **Robina Niaz**, founder and executive director, Turning Point for Women and Families
- **Sonia Ossorio**, president, National Organization for Women – New York City
- **Silda Palerm**, partner, Vestry Laight, LLC; and chair, Commission on Gender Equity
- **Chanel Porchia-Albert**, founder and CEO, Ancient Song Doula Services
- **Kiara Saint James**, executive director, New York Transgender Advocacy Group
- **Celeste Smith**, managing director, Mosaic Genius
- **Beverly Tillery**, executive director, New York City Anti-Violence Project
- **Shyama Venkateswar**, senior director, Learning at Seramount/EAB

CGE continues to make great strides toward gender equity by advancing the Adams administration’s plans to support programming, policy, and budgets that address key issues such as maternal health, abortion rights, child care access, and expanded services for LGBTQ+ New Yorkers. The re-constitution of CGE will help preserve these gains and deepen the city’s commitment to “Getting Stuff Done” for all New Yorkers, regardless of gender identity, gender expression, or background.

“The Commission on Gender Equity’s education and engagement across city agencies and the broader public will have a resounding legacy on our city,” said **Deputy Mayor of Strategic Initiatives Sheena Wright**. “The expertise of the commission’s incoming and returning members will create change across New York City, shifting the scales of justice towards true fairness and equity. I applaud their efforts and dynamism to transform our city for the better.”

“Jacqueline Ebanks has been a tireless advocate for the advancement of women, girls, and other marginalized communities, with a deep commitment to social justice. With her leadership, the Commission on Gender Equity will continue tackling gender-based inequities to ensure that gender and gender identity do not limit one’s opportunity, safety, or well-being,” said **Mayor’s Office of Equity Commissioner Sideya Sherman**. “It is with profound joy that I welcome our new and returning commissioners, and I look forward to the important work ahead.”

“I am honored to continue to serve as executive director of the Commission on Gender Equity and delighted to welcome Damian, Jennifer, Carol, Callie, Miriam, Anne Marie, Seher, Emily, and Jason to the commission. I am most appreciative of our returning commissioners and grateful for their leadership over the past five years,” said **CGE Executive Director Jacqueline M. Ebanks**. “Together, CGE will continue to meet its mandate to make gender equity a top priority across city government so that girls, women, intersex, transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary individuals have equitable access, opportunities, and treatment. I welcome the commissioners’ expertise and experience and look forward to presenting our achievements to all New Yorkers. CGE aims to be an equity model not only for the city but also across the nation and the world to show that barriers can be taken down and institutional practices changed.”

“It is a privilege to be able to continue to serve New York City and champion the rights of women, girls, and New Yorkers of all gender expressions”, said **Silda Palerm, chair, Commission on Gender Equity**. “As leaders in the gender equity space, CGE and its commissioners will carry on the work of promoting policies and best practices designed to dismantle institutional barriers and promote opportunities for all as we strive to make New York a better, safer, more equitable city.”

The Commission on Gender Equity will continue to meet its mandate by leveraging policy and legislative advocacy, interagency and cross-sector collaborations, research and publications, and community outreach and engagement. CGE will advise and make recommendations for institutional change through an intersectional gender lens in its three areas of focus: economic mobility and opportunity, health and reproductive justice, and safety. CGE will also work across city agencies to develop and implement gender equitable policies and programs for the city’s workforce and residents and will monitor and evaluate progress towards building and maintaining a gender equitable New York City. Biographies for commissioners can be found on the [Commission on Gender Equity’s website](#).

About Jacqueline M. Ebanks

An innovative manager and policymaker with extensive experience in philanthropy and the nonprofit sector, Jacqueline M. Ebanks has worked for over three decades to promote economic and social justice for women, girls, and marginalized communities.

Prior to joining city government, Ebanks was the executive director of the Women’s City Club of New York, where she guided the civic engagement organization into its second century of activism. Previously, Ebanks served as the vice president of programs at the New York Women’s Foundation and worked at Citigroup as vice president and director of U.S. partnerships and program development for the Global Community Relations Division and then as regional community relations director for the Northeast and Puerto Rico.

Prior to Citigroup, Ebanks served as the vice president for community investment at the United Way of New York City.

Ebanks began her career at citywide and community-based service organizations in New York City. She served as a child welfare policy analyst at the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies and as the director of staff development and human resource management initiatives at United Neighborhood Houses. She also served as director of program development and quality assurance at the Society for Seamen's Children and director of development at Harlem United Community AIDS Centers.

Ebanks holds an M.S. in Policy Analysis and Public Management from the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

Ebanks will report to Mayor's Office of Equity Commissioner Sideya Sherman.

About Silda Palerm

Silda Palerm is a founding partner and the general counsel of Vestry Laight, a women-owned boutique consulting firm that advises public and private institutions on high-stakes cases of workplace misconduct by providing solutions that improve culture and create a more diverse and respectful workplace.

Palerm is a seasoned corporate litigator and a leading advocate in women's issues. She was head of litigation at Warner Music Group for 13 years. She was also an assistant U.S. attorney in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York and a legal director at Legal Momentum. Additionally, Palerm previously worked as an associate at Cahill Gordon & Reindel.

Palerm clerked in the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico for the Honorable Federico Hernandez Denton and in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit for the Honorable Stephen Breyer, retired justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

Palerm was born and raised in Puerto Rico and obtained her bachelor's degree from Princeton University, her J.D. from the University of Puerto Rico, and her LL.M. from Harvard Law School.

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