



OAD | OFFICE OF THE
APPELLATE
DEFENDER

ALUMNI DIRECTORY
1988-2018



Thirty years ago, the Office of the Appellate Defender (OAD) was founded with an ambitious and visionary mission: to be a champion for poor people convicted of felonies by providing exceptional representation, improving the quality of indigent defense in New York City, and pioneering innovative responses to emerging criminal justice issues.

Consistent with our mission, OAD committed itself to client-centered representation, and embraced a then-unique practice that included in-person client visits, the filing of reply briefs and the presentation of oral arguments in all but the most exceptional of cases. OAD

ultimately deepened the holistic nature of its representation by becoming the first appellate defender to provide on-site medical, mental health, substance abuse, housing, education, and public assistance support to its clients; and by creating a Reinvestigation Project to promptly identify and challenge likely cases of wrongful conviction.

OAD also dedicated itself to the training of lawyers and law students likely to make a significant contribution to the ongoing struggle for the fair administration of criminal justice in New York City. OAD imposed term limits on its Staff Attorney positions in order to maximize the reach of its in-depth training; OAD developed a Criminal Appellate Defender Clinic with New York University School of Law in order to ground new lawyers in an understanding of the rigors of proper indigent appellate defense representation; and OAD created a Volunteer Appellate Defender (VAD) Program in order to leverage the talent and expertise of associates at leading New York City law firms in defense of poor people seeking to appeal felony convictions.

Thirty years later, OAD has secured countless in-court victories, and its alumni play influential roles in the administration of criminal justice in New York City and across the country. As this Directory powerfully demonstrates, OAD-trained attorneys have become state and federal public defenders, scholars, policy-makers, jurists, and private practitioners. OAD's alumni hold leadership positions in national public interest organizations, large law firms, and even prosecutor offices. Former OAD staffers have relied on their experiences representing people convicted of felonies in becoming artists, writers, healers, and philanthropists.

Today, OAD stands as a national model of outstanding indigent appellate defense representation. It would not be the organization it is today were it not for the contributions made by each of the extraordinary individuals who has served our clients.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Christina Swarns', written in a cursive style.

Christina A. Swarns
President & Attorney-in-Charge
Office of the Appellate Defender

Included in this first-ever OAD Alumni Directory are former staff members' names, current place of business, and position while at OAD.

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** Current OAD Board Member*

We have tried to include information that is as comprehensive and up-to-date as possible; however, we acknowledge that there are some people whose information we do not have. If you have any edits or additions to this Directory, please contact Carolyn Norris at cnorris@oadnyc.org or (212) 402-4120.

The background features a complex, abstract design of overlapping, semi-transparent blue and white circular and curved shapes, creating a sense of depth and movement. A large, bright white circle is centered on the page, serving as a focal point for the text.

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