

**WESTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK *PRO BONO* COUNSEL TRAINING:
A PRIMER FOR EFFECTIVE *PRO BONO* REPRESENTATION IN
SECTION 1983 CIVIL RIGHTS LITIGATION**

**Co-Sponsored by the United States District Court for the Western District of New York,
Volunteer Legal Services of Monroe County, Inc. (“VLSP”)
and the Erie County Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project, Inc. (“VLP”)**

October 21, 2020 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Via Zoom for Government

**3.5 CLE Credits: 2.0 Areas of Professional Practice; .5 Ethics; and 1.0 Diversity, Inclusion
and Elimination of Bias.**

8:30 - 8:45 a.m.: Welcome, Introductions, and Overview of the Court’s New *Pro Bono* Plan

Hon. Elizabeth A. Wolford; Kristin Johnson, Esq., VLSP Staff Attorney; and Robert M. Elardo, Esq., VLP Executive Director / CEO

8:45 - 9:45 a.m.: Overview of Section 1983 Civil Rights

Karen M. Blum, Professor Emerita and Research Professor of Law, Suffolk University Law School

9:45 - 10:15 a.m.: Ethical Considerations in *Pro Bono* Representation

Cydney A. Kelly, Esq., Principal Counsel, Attorney Grievance Committee, Fourth Judicial Dept.

- 10-minute break -

**10:25 - 11:25 a.m.: Understanding, Identifying, and Mitigating Implicit Biases: Practice
Pointers for *Pro Bono* Advocacy in Section 1983 Civil Rights Litigation**

Dr. Ursuline R. Bankhead, PhD., Interim Chief Psychologist at the Buffalo VA Medical Center
and Expert on Implicit Bias

**11:25 - 12:30 p.m.: *Pro Bono* Panel Q&A with Members of the Bench and Bar on Practical
Tips for Handling Section 1983 *Pro Bono* Cases in this District**

Moderator: Tim Graber, Esq., Gibson, McAskill & Crosby, LLP

Panelists: Hon. Elizabeth A. Wolford; Hon. Jeremiah J. McCarthy; Maria Pagano, Esq., Managing
Attorney of the Buffalo Office of Prisoners’ Legal Services of New York; Michael J. Russo, Esq.,
Attorney-in-Charge of the NYS Attorney General’s Buffalo Regional Office; Sheldon Smith, Esq.,
Harter Secrest & Emery LLP; Abby Giarusso, Esq., Littler Mendelson P.C.; and Brendon Fleming,
Esq., Monroe County Law Department.