

# AAPIs in Government Service: Speaking Out About Bias & Discrimination

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## AGENDA

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**Wednesday, May 17, 2023**

**Webinar | 6:30pm to 8:30pm**

### Opening Remarks

**Sundeep Iyer**, Director - NJ Division on Civil Rights

### Moderator

**Fannie Chan Jarvis**, Community Relations Specialist - NJ Division on Civil Rights

### Panelists

- **Gezim Bajrami**, Deputy Attorney General - NJ Division of Criminal Justice
- **Angela Cai**, Deputy Solicitor - NJ Office of the Attorney General
- **Mayur Saxena**, Assistant Attorney General - NJ Division of Law
- **Lubna Qazi-Chowdhry**, Legal Specialist - NJ Division on Civil Rights

### NJBIAS Overview

**Patricia D. Williamson**, Community Relations Specialist - NJ Division on Civil Rights

### Questions and Answers

### Closing Remarks

**Yolanda Melville**, Senior Counsel to the Attorney General &  
Director of Community Engagement –  
NJ Office of the Attorney General

# Speakers & Panelists



## Sundeep Iyer

*Director*

*NJ Division on Civil Rights*

*NJ Office of the Attorney General*

**Sundeep Iyer** is the Director of the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights. He leads the state agency charged with enforcing New Jersey's civil rights laws.

He previously served as Assistant Attorney General and Senior Counsel to Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin. In that capacity, he was the Attorney General's principal advisor on civil rights matters and coordinated department-wide civil rights initiatives. He also worked with the Office of the Solicitor General on appeals involving matters of constitutional law, statutory interpretation, civil rights, and criminal law.

Prior to joining the Office of the Attorney General, Iyer was a senior associate at Hogan Lovells US LLP. During his time at the firm, he served as a special attorney for the State of Minnesota in the prosecution of the four former police officers charged in connection with the death of George Floyd. He was part of the legal team that obtained a conviction of Derek Chauvin on charges of second-degree murder, third-degree murder, and second-degree manslaughter, and he briefed, argued, and won key legal motions for the State at trial.

Iyer was also part of the litigation team that obtained an injunction against President Trump's travel ban and defended that injunction before the U.S. Supreme Court. He represented federal death-row inmates in a challenge to the Trump Administration's federal lethal injection protocol. And he was one of the lead attorneys for a group of eight plaintiff organizations challenging President Trump's rescission of the Bears Ears National Monument in Utah.

Iyer previously clerked for U.S. Supreme Court Justices David H. Souter and Stephen G. Breyer, as well as for then-Judge Brett M. Kavanaugh on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. He received his A.B. from Harvard College and J.D. from Yale Law School. Prior to graduating law school, Sundeep was the Principal Quantitative Analyst at the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law, where he directed statistical research on voting rights, campaign finance, and redistricting issues.



# Gezim Bajrami

*Deputy Attorney General  
Division of Criminal Justice, Specialized Crimes Bureau  
NJ Office of the Attorney General*

**Gezim Bajrami**, a first generation American and Houston, Texas native, graduated from Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas with a Bachelor of Arts in government in 2009. From there, he went on to attend Seton Hall Law School, in Newark, New Jersey, earning his Juris Doctorate in 2013.

He served as an intern to the New York City Council and the Honorable Michael L. Ravin, J.S.C. (Essex County), and is now a Deputy Attorney General (“DAG”) in the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General.

From 2013 through 2016, DAG Bajrami oversaw investigations and civil administrative prosecutions related to licensed medical professionals with a focus on eradicating the indiscriminate prescribing of controlled dangerous substances. Since October 2016, DAG Bajrami has been assigned to the Office of the Attorney General’s Division of Criminal Justice, where he leads confidential investigations, conducts settlement negotiations, and represents the State of New Jersey in the prosecution of felony-level crimes throughout the State of New Jersey.



# Angela Cai

*Deputy Solicitor*

*NJ Office of the Attorney General*

**Angela Cai** is Deputy Solicitor General in the Office of the New Jersey Attorney General, where she focuses on appellate and constitutional litigation on behalf of the State of New Jersey.

Before joining the Office of the Attorney General, she was an associate at Wilkinson Stekloff LLP in New York and Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison in Washington, D.C. She clerked for Judge Michael Chagares of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit and Judge Katherine B. Forrest of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. She is a graduate of Princeton University and Yale Law School.



# Mayur Saxena

*Assistant Attorney General*

*NJ Division of Law*

*NJ Office of the Attorney General*

**Mayur Saxena** is an Assistant Attorney General in the Division of Law of the New Jersey Attorney General's Office.

Mayur oversees the work of three sections: the Civil Rights Section, focusing on enforcement of anti-discrimination laws; the Labor Enforcement Section, focusing on enforcement of worker protection laws; and the Special Litigation Section, focusing on litigation to curb unlawful action by the federal government and in furtherance of gun safety in the State of New Jersey.

Prior to joining the Division of Law, Mayur was an Assistant Attorney General at the New York Attorney General's Office, where he served in the Civil Rights Bureau and in the Labor Bureau as Civil Enforcement Section Chief. Prior to that, Mayur was a litigation associate at a large law firm in New York City, and he served as a law clerk the Hon. Eduardo C. Robreno in federal district court in Philadelphia.

Mayur obtained his J.D. degree from The George Washington Law School, and his A.B. degree in Government from Harvard University.



## Lubna Qazi-Chowdhry

*Legal Specialist*

*Strategic Initiatives and Enforcement Unit*

*NJ Division on Civil Rights*

**Lubna Qazi-Chowdhry** (pronouns, she/her/hers) is a legal specialist with the Strategic Initiatives, and Enforcement Unit (SIE) Unit at the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights (DCR). She currently leads on the topics of religious discrimination, and immigrant communities, and co-leads on health equity, and justice.

Prior to DCR, she served as the Ethics Liaison Officer at the New Jersey Department of Health. Prior to state service, she worked in the private sector as an attorney handling matrimonial matters, primarily in minority communities, and served as a municipal public defender. Lubna helped draft regulations on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) as part of her appointment to the NJ Supreme Court Committee on ADR.

At DCR, she works on proactive ways to help New Jerseyans learn about their rights under the Law Against Discrimination (LAD). She assists in investigations alleging LAD violations, drafts public-facing educational materials, as well as regulations.

She has also worked with DCR's Community Relations Unit (CRU) in delivering Know Your Rights presentations to minority communities. Lubna has always been active in affinity attorney organizations and continues to help minority communities in accessing their civil rights.

Lubna migrated from Kuwait, and currently resides by the Jersey Shore with her family.



# Patricia D. Williamson

*Community Relations Specialist  
NJ Division on Civil Rights  
NJ Office of the Attorney General*

**Patricia D. Williamson** is a Community Relations Specialist in the new unit under the Division on Civil Rights, in the NJ Department of Law and Public Safety.

Prior to this position, Patricia was the New Jersey Counts Project Director at the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, where she led the work to ensure a complete and accurate count of New Jersey's urban communities in the 2020 Census.

Patricia worked for over 20 years in the telecommunications arena as a systems engineer in the optical networking area. She is also an adjunct professor at Bloomfield College.

Patricia earned a BA in Mathematics from Hampton University, an MS in Computer Science from Howard University, and an MA in Education and Human Development in the Educational Technology Leadership Program at The George Washington University.



## Fannie Chan Jarvis

*Community Relations Specialist  
NJ Division on Civil Rights  
NJ Office of the Attorney General*

**Fannie Chan Jarvis** recently joined NJDCR's Community Relations Unit and serves as the primary liaison to the AAPI communities.

She received both her Bachelor of Arts and Master of Public Administration from New York University. Originally from NYC's Chinatown, she proudly identifies as the descendant of immigrants, laborers, American veterans, and community advocates. Carrying on the family tradition of activism and public service, Fannie has a professional background in education and government where she worked on public policy, community relations, and project management.

Since moving to NJ about 10 years ago with her family, Fannie has been invested in local advocacy and community-building efforts. She also believes in the transformative power of sharing podcasts, books, and bowls of spicy ramen.





## Yolanda Melville

*Senior Counsel to the Attorney General  
Director of Community Engagement  
NJ Office of the Attorney General*

**Yolanda N. Melville** serves as Senior Counsel and Director of Community Engagement, the position charged with serving as a liaison to stakeholders across the state to connect them with the Office's initiatives.

Melville was previously a Partner at Cooper Levenson, P.A., where she represented municipal and corporate entities as solicitor/general counsel, handled litigation in the federal and state courts, and led the firm's Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Melville clerked for the Honorable Susan F. Maven in the Superior Court of New Jersey, Appellate Division. She received her B.A. in English and Government from the College of William and Mary, M.S. in Criminal Justice from Virginia Commonwealth University and J.D. from Howard University Law School, where she was the managing editor of the Human Rights and Globalization Law Review.