



**Press Release: Jessica Rose Named New Executive Director of Brooklyn A, Joshua Hoffman Continues as Chief Financial & Operating Officer and Shekar Krishnan Named New Director of Legal Advocacy and Strategic Partnerships**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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[Brooklyn A Announces Major Leadership Changes](#)

**Jessica Rose Selected as First Woman to Lead the Brooklyn-Based Nonprofit Legal Services Organization Beginning Summer 2018**

BROOKLYN, NY, April 30, 2018 — The Board of Directors of Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A (Brooklyn A) today announced that Jessica A. Rose will become Brooklyn A's Executive Director later this summer, succeeding Martin S. Needelman upon his transition to Chief Counsel Emeritus and Paul J. Acinapura's earlier retirement in 2017 from his role as Co-Executive Director with Mr. Needelman. Ms. Rose is currently the Director of the Community Economic Development (CED) Program at Brooklyn A, and has invested fifteen years in multiple roles at Brooklyn A.

"As we celebrate Brooklyn A's 50<sup>th</sup> year of advocating on behalf of and alongside low-income residents and community organizations in the communities we serve, this is a historic and exciting time for Brooklyn A and for Jessie," Mr. Needelman commented. "In recent years, Brooklyn A has grown to its largest size in the organization's history with over 60 staff currently, with offices in Williamsburg, Bushwick and Bedford Stuyvesant." "Brooklyn A began in 1968 as part of the Federal War Against Poverty and has since its early years combined litigation and transactional lawyering in and for the communities in which we are located, serving in a unique and ground-breaking manner. I am confident that under Jessie's leadership, Brooklyn A will continue to grow, innovate, and most importantly, be a tool of the communities we serve in their collective struggle for social and economic justice," said Mr. Acinapura.

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Thomas McC. Souther, Chair of Brooklyn A's Board of Directors and Partner at Freeh Sporkin & Sullivan, LLP, echoed Needelman and Acinapura's comments. "We are fortunate to have a person with Jessie's nonprofit skills, legal knowledge, enthusiasm, and deep commitment to Brooklyn A and its mission to take the helm. Jessie's experience as general counsel to many of Brooklyn A's non-profit CED clients and her deep knowledge of all aspects of Brooklyn A's programs and operations make her the ideal Executive Director for Brooklyn A going forward. I and the other members of the Board look forward to working closely with Jessie."

"As we enter our next 50 years as a national trail blazer in legal services and as a unique and critical safety net for thousands of low-income residents and hundreds of community organizations and small businesses in Brooklyn and throughout the City each year, I am excited to lead the charge. I look forward to partnering with the Board of Directors, management team and staff in this new capacity to continue to strengthen our relationships with private and public partners and to ensure that the organization continues to strategically and sustainably operate and expand. Our greatest assets are our staff and long-term commitment to and relationship with the communities we serve. I look forward to shining a light on the work of our staff and volunteers and am honored to continue to be in service of our clients in this new capacity," said Ms. Rose.

Ms. Rose joined Brooklyn A in 2004 as a staff attorney in the CED Program and became Director of the CED Program in 2008. Prior to coming to Brooklyn A, Ms. Rose was an associate at the public finance firm, Hawkins Delafield & Wood LLP, and prior to law school worked as a paralegal in the Civil Division of the Legal Aid Society and as a Leadership Support Specialist at Aspira of New York, Inc. Ms. Rose is a member of the NYC Bar Association's Housing and Urban Development Committee, is a member of the Advisory Committee of the Fordham Urban Law Center, and has co-authored multiple published articles on community economic development. With a commitment to building the next generation of public interest attorneys, she has frequently guest lectured at many New York City area law schools. She has received numerous awards recognizing her leadership and service from institutions including the Stein Center for Law and Ethics at Fordham University School of Law, the New York County Lawyers' Association, and New York City Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild.

Under Ms. Rose's leadership, the CED Program established an externship program with the Simpson Thatcher Bartlett LLP law firm now spanning over a decade, hosted and mentored dozens of interns and fellows, founded Brooklyn A's Green Building Law and Justice Project, and most recently expanded its services to include the Small Business Support Project. As a member of Brooklyn A's senior management team for the last decade, she helped found the Young Professionals for Justice of Brooklyn A and co-facilitated the organization's most recent strategic planning process. Ms. Rose received her law degree from Fordham University School of Law in 2001 and her B.A. with a concentration in

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Sociology and Latin American and Caribbean Area Studies from Binghamton University in 1994. Jessie is a lifetime Brooklynite and the proud mother of Isabela and aunt of fellow toddler Zachary.

As Chief Counsel Emeritus, Mr. Needelman will continue providing legal services to low-income tenant coop housing development fund corporations and community coalitions primarily based in Williamsburg and will be supporting the organization at large. He joined Brooklyn A over 45 years ago and led Brooklyn A alongside Mr. Acinapura for the past 35 years.

Joshua Hoffman will continue in his leadership role in Brooklyn A as its Chief Financial & Operating Officer. Mr. Hoffman joined Brooklyn A in 2007 as its Director of Finance and Administration and has served as its Chief Financial Operating Officer since 2015. Mr. Hoffman was admitted to both New York and New Jersey's State Bars following his graduation from St. John's University School of Law in 2005. While at St. John's, Mr. Hoffman was honored with the Pro-Bono Service Award and the Public Interest Certificate for his community service work. In his roles at Brooklyn A, Mr. Hoffman has worked with its Co-Executive Directors on all management aspects of the organization. In addition, in 2011, Mr. Hoffman completed the We Are All Brooklyn (WAAB) Fellowship at CAUSE-NY of the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York, a fellowship designed to teach nonprofit leaders how to help communities share resources, manage dynamic tensions, and collaborate on solving communal problems. He is certified in Not-For-Profit Financial Management and Reporting from the Baruch College Executive Certificate Program and is a Certified Nonprofit Accounting Professional by the National Association of Nonprofit Accountants & Consultants. "Jessie has made major contributions towards Brooklyn A's growth and stability. We make a good team," said Mr. Hoffman.

Shekar Krishnan will become Brooklyn A's first Director of Legal Advocacy and Strategic Partnerships. In this role, Shekar will assist in the leadership of the organization by overseeing Brooklyn A's legal advocacy strategies, developing programmatic priorities, maintaining community and pro bono partnerships, and together with Ms. Rose and Mr. Hoffman, cultivating Brooklyn A's relationships with public and private supporters for the advancement of the organization's impact, profile and voice. From 2009-2010, Mr. Krishnan worked as a staff attorney at Brooklyn A while on deferral from the law firm of Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP, helping to lead its Broadway Triangle fair housing case against the City of New York. From 2011-2014, he was an associate at Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP and Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler LLP, and served as a law clerk for the Honorable Jack B. Weinstein, Senior U.S. District Judge, Eastern District of New York. During that period, he also served as a member of the Board of Directors of Brooklyn A. In 2014, Mr. Krishnan became the Director of Brooklyn A's Group Representation Unit in the Preserving Affordable Housing Program, managing the Unit's fair housing litigation and community-based advocacy on behalf of tenant and neighborhood groups in North and East Brooklyn.

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He received his law degree from the University of Michigan Law School, where he was a Clarence Darrow Scholar and contributing editor of the Michigan Law Review, and his B.S in Engineering from the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the New York Foundation and Citizens Union. He has published articles on tenant advocacy and fair housing, receiving City Council Citations as an Outstanding Citizen in 2010 and 2014 for his civil rights work at Brooklyn A. Mr. Krishnan resides in Jackson Heights with his partner Zoe and their 2-year old son Vikram. “Brooklyn A has afforded me the opportunity to fight for justice for low-income tenants caught squarely in the cross-hairs of gentrification, residential segregation, and displacement. I look forward to this next chapter of our collective work for the neighborhoods we serve under Jessie’s leadership. Having worked closely with her for many years, I know how bright the future is for Brooklyn A with Jessie at the helm,” Mr. Krishnan said.

“The Board of Directors has tremendous confidence in our new leadership team. Josh has already played a pivotal leadership role during his tenure at Brooklyn A and we are excited to see Shekar assume this newly created role in the organization. We could not be more thrilled as Brooklyn A steps towards the future under the leadership of Jessie, Josh and Shekar,” said James H.R. Windels, former Chair and current member of the Board of Directors of Brooklyn A and Partner at Davis Polk & Wardwell, LLP.

### **About Brooklyn A**

Brooklyn A’s mission is to advance social and economic justice by empowering communities through innovative, collaborative, neighborhood-based legal representation and advocacy. For 50 years, we have provided high-quality legal assistance to individuals, families, not-for-profit community-based organizations (CBOs), community development corporations (CDCs), coalitions, and more recently small businesses interested in developing and sustaining vibrant, healthy communities. Brooklyn A has three core programs—Preserving Affordable Housing (PAH) Program, Consumer & Economic Advocacy (CEA) Program, and Community & Economic Development (CED) Program—each of which has unique initiatives and plays an important community role to ensure basic needs are met, fundamental rights affirmed and local neighborhood based and controlled groups are supported and empowered. To learn more, visit [www.bka.org](http://www.bka.org), or call us at 718-487-2300.

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