

Connecticut Special Education Due Process Hearing Officers **as of September 1, 2013**

Attorney Ann F. Bird received her B.A. in English and Economics from the University of California at Berkeley in 1979 and her J.D. from the University of California at Davis in 1982. She practiced law in private firms in California and Connecticut until 1994 when she joined the Hartford Corporation Counsel's Office, where she was assigned to represent the Hartford Public Schools. As Assistant and then Senior Assistant Corporation Counsel, Attorney Bird handled all school matters, including special education mediation and due process issues until her retirement in 2008. She has served as an Impartial Hearing Panel for the State Department of Education for expulsion hearings for the Connecticut Technical High School System, school accommodations, residency and transportation hearings and teacher revocation hearings since 2009.

Attorney Brette H. Fitton received a B.A. and B.S. from Southern Connecticut State University and a J.D. from the University of Connecticut School Of Law, where she received the Honorable Herbert Barall Family Law Award, the Connecticut Bar Association Real Property Section Award, and the Advanced Asylum Clinic Award for her advocacy in Federal Immigration Court. Attorney Fitton has a private law practice in Essex, Connecticut where she focuses on family law. An active member of the Young Lawyers Section of the Connecticut Bar Association, Attorney Fitton served as co-chair of the Family Law Committee from 2007-2010. She currently serves as the Section's Public Service Director for which she received the Young Lawyer Section Leadership Award.

Attorney Sylvia Ho received a BA cum laude and with Special Honors from Tufts University in 1983 and a JD from Boston College Law School in 1987. After graduating from law school, she served as Law Clerk to the Justices of the New Hampshire Superior Court where she assisted the judges in legal analysis and drafting of legal decisions regarding motions and trials. She has had extensive litigation experience before Connecticut state and federal trial courts and state and federal administrative agencies. She has also represented clients before Connecticut state and federal Circuit Courts of Appeals. Her practice has primarily involved administrative law, commercial litigation, employment discrimination and civil rights litigation. She is a member of the Connecticut Asian and Pacific Lawyers Association and is proficient in Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin). She is a member of the Connecticut state and federal Bars and the Bar of the First and Second Federal Courts of Appeals.

Attorney Janis C. Jerman received a B.A. in psychology from Purdue University in 1987 and a J.D. from the University of Connecticut School of Law in 1993. Attorney Jerman is admitted to practice law in Connecticut and in the United States District Court for the District of Connecticut. Attorney Jerman is an impartial hearing officer handling a variety of matters for the State Department of Education including special education due process hearings (since 2006); expulsion hearings for the Connecticut Technical High School System; school accommodation, residency, and transportation hearings; petitions for school bargaining unit clarification; and teacher license revocation hearings. She also serves as an arbitrator and fact-finder for the Hartford and New Britain Superior Courts and is on the arbitration and mediation panels of American Dispute Resolution Center, Inc.

Attorney Mary Elizabeth Oppenheim received a B.A. from the University of Wisconsin – Madison, and a J.D. with honors from the University of Connecticut School of Law. She has served as a Special Education Due Process Hearing Officer for the Connecticut Department of Education since February 2000. In addition to her work as a due process hearing officer, she has been appointed as a factfinder and arbitrator for the State of Connecticut Superior Courts since 1999, a public arbitrator for the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, a mediator/hearing officer for the Connecticut Birth to Three System and has been an adjunct professor of law and business at Manchester Community College. She has also worked as a Section 504 hearing officer and as a contract writer for the U.S. Department of Labor, Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals to draft permanent alien labor certification decisions. Attorney Oppenheim has litigated civil, family and criminal matters in state and federal courts, as well as in administrative proceedings. She is admitted to practice in Connecticut; the United States District Court, District of Connecticut; and the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

Attorney Justino Rosado received a Bachelor of Science Degree from Sacred Heart University and a J.D. from the University of Bridgeport School of Law. In his private law practice, from which he is now retired, Attorney Rosado concentrated in the areas of Family Law, Juvenile Law and Civil Rights. He has served as a Special Education Due Process Hearing Officer in Connecticut since 1996. Attorney Rosado is a founding member of the Connecticut Hispanic Bar and was the 2003 recipient of the HPN Award for Community Service and 2004 recipient of the Children in Placement, Judge John T. Downey Award. Attorney Rosado is fluent in Spanish.

Attorney Robert L. Skelley is a graduate of Southern Connecticut State University with a B.A. in Psychology and an M.A. in Clinical Psychology. He received his J.D. from Suffolk Law School. He is admitted to the state and federal bar in Connecticut and Massachusetts. In his private practice his concentration was in juvenile law, both care and protection issues and delinquency issues. He also worked in the areas of family law, criminal law, housing, civil litigation and special education/education law. He practiced as an adolescent/pediatric therapist for 18 years, with concentrations in trauma based issues, dual diagnosis, and behavioral diagnosis. He is the 2010 recipient of the First Justices' Award for Pro Bono Publico Excellence for Southeastern Massachusetts.