



**Kenneth P. Thompson**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**KINGS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY KENNETH P. THOMPSON ANNOUNCES  
THE APPOINTMENT OF THREE INDEPENDENT ATTORNEYS TO ASSIST IN THE  
REVIEW OF CASES INVOLVING ALLEGATIONS OF UNLAWFUL CONVICTIONS**

**Brooklyn, February 21, 2014** –Kings County District Attorney Kenneth P. Thompson today announced the appointment of three attorneys to assist in evaluating the cases involving allegations of unlawful convictions. The three attorneys, Bernard W. Nussbaum, Jennifer G. Rodgers and Gary S. Villanueva, will consult with the Conviction Review Unit (“CRU”), which has recently been expanded and re-organized. More information on the CRU will be forthcoming.

District Attorney Thompson said, “I wish to thank these distinguished members of the bar for volunteering their services in this pursuit of justice. Their combined experience and uncompromising integrity will prove invaluable in my office’s efforts to meticulously examine available evidence in order to right wrongs or confirm convictions. My ultimate goal is to insure that the people of Brooklyn have faith in the fairness of our criminal justice system.”

The panel will meet on an as needed basis with the district attorney’s office and review findings of individual cases that have been investigated by the CRU. They will advise on a range of issues, including whether a conviction should stand, needs additional review or should possibly be overturned. The CRU will consist of experienced prosecutors, investigators and support staff tasked with the responsibility of conducting a thorough reinvestigation of cases identified as having a colorable claim of actual innocence or gross violations of a defendant’s constitutional rights.

Bernard W. Nussbaum has been a partner at Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz since 1966. He was counsel to President Bill Clinton from 1993-1994. In 1974, he served as a senior member of the staff of the House Judiciary Committee, which conducted the Watergate Impeachment Inquiry. He also served as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York. Mr. Nussbaum graduated Harvard Law School and received his undergraduate degree from Columbia College.

Jennifer G. Rodgers became the Executive Director Center for the Advancement of Public Integrity at Columbia Law School in November 2013. She served as an Assistant United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York Office from 2000-2013. In 2012, she was named a Deputy Chief of the Appeals Unit. Previously, she had held the positions of Chief, Co-Chief, and Deputy Chief of the Organized Crime Unit, and as Co-Chief of the General Crimes Unit. In 1996, she joined the law firm of Cravath, Swaine & Moore in New York. In addition, Ms. Rodgers was a law clerk for the Honorable Stanley A. Weigel of the United States District Court for the Northern District of California, from Oct. 1995 to Sept. 1996. Ms. Rodgers graduated the Boalt Hall School of Law at the University of California, Berkeley and received her undergraduate degree from the University of California, Los Angeles, cum laude.

Gary S. Villanueva has been a solo practitioner since 1999, specializing in State and Federal Criminal litigation. From 1990-1999 Mr. Villanueva was a partner at Ricco & Villanueva, a firm he founded with Attorney Anthony Ricco, where he also specialized in criminal law. He is a former Assistant District Attorney at the Kings County District Attorney's Office, where he served from 1982-1988, becoming Senior Trial Assistant District Attorney in the Homicide Bureau. Mr. Villanueva is a member of the Criminal Justice Act Panel for the Southern and Eastern District Courts of New York and lectures at the Legal Aid Society, Criminal Division and the New York State Capital Defender Organization. Mr. Villanueva received his Juris Doctor from University of Virginia and graduated from Fordham University in the Bronx.

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