Effective legal advocacy with respect to re-entry is essential to assist individuals after a conviction or period of incarceration. Re-entry services assist individuals with criminal records to overcome civil legal barriers that serve as obstacles to their re-entry to society. Services such as driver’s license restoration, expungement, and child support modification can help individuals to become gainfully employed and contribute to their families and communities after a period of incarceration or a conviction.

A panel of experts on re-entry will provide strategies and tools for effective legal advocacy in this area, including policy, legal advocacy strategies, and the skills needed to assist individuals with their re-entry into society. The program will provide an in-depth look at legal challenges faced by individuals with criminal records, existing legal services and areas of need, and the skills that legal practitioners need to address these pressing issues.

Speakers:

**Hon. Patricia K. Costello** was in private practice at McAlevy & Costello, attaining certified criminal trial attorney status in 1986 before being appointed to the bench in 1989 by Gov. Thomas Kean. She served initially in Hudson County in the Criminal Division where she became Presiding Judge, then in the Civil Division where she directly supervised the Special Civil Part, and in the Family Division where she also became Presiding Judge. In August 2004, Judge Costello was appointed Assignment Judge of Essex County, the largest vicinage in the State. She has served on, and been chair of, numerous Supreme Court committees from 1985 to the present and is currently the Vice Chair of the Judicial Education Committee.

**Gina DeVito, Esq.** has served as a Maricopa County Arizona Deputy County Attorney, an Assistant Attorney General with the Arizona Attorney General’s Office, and is a Rutgers School of Law-Newark alumnus.

**Taja-Nia Y. Henderson** came to the Law School from the litigation practice group of Arnold & Porter LLP in New York, where she focused her practice on complex commercial litigation. She clerked for Hon. Consuelo B. Marshall, U.S. District Court, Central District of California. Among her research interests are mass incarceration and prisoner re-entry.
Todd A. Berger, Esq., managing attorney of the Federal Prisoner Reentry Project a Rutgers School of Law-Camden, served as an assistant public defender with the Defender Association of Philadelphia, as a Lecturer in Law at the University of Pennsylvania School of Law and received both a J.D. and an L.L.M. in trial advocacy from Temple University.

Ingrid D. Johnson, Esq, is Chair of Newark’s Reentry Initiatives, overseeing the City’s Office of Reentry, which has placed more than 800 formerly incarcerated individuals in long-term jobs. The program won the 2010 “Innovation in Governance” Award from the New Jersey League of Municipalities. Prior to working for the City, Johnson was a Supervising Attorney for Legal Services of New Jersey, where she managed the Prisoner Reentry and Workers’ Legal Rights Projects. She also sits on the Institutional Review Board for Rutgers University and is Chairperson for the non-profit, Redeem-Her, which is dedicated to helping women returning from prison.

Akil Roper, is Supervising Attorney, Legal services of New Jersey, Prisoner Reentry Project (PREP) and Racial and Ethnic Justice Initiative (REJI).

**CLE Credit:**
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