



NEW YORK ASSOCIATION OF

Collaborative Professionals

Ellen Jancko-Baken

NYACP, PRESIDENT

As the temperatures hover in the single digits, I am none the less warmed by the opportunity to serve as your new NYACP President. I must begin by thanking Melissa Goodstein for her dedicated service as our president these past two years and for her constant guidance in ensuring the NYACP continues to thrive. I welcome Vice President Marcos Fernandez, Treasurer Nancy Kaye, and Secretary Meg Sussman, as well as our hard-working board members Ivan Alter, Catherine Canade, Jackie Caputo, Kathleen Donelli, Randy Heller, Michelle Lewis, Stephen Linker, Anthony Markus, and our newest board member, Kristen Lyndaker.

I hope everyone has had the chance to meet our new Executive Director Sarah Sheehan. If not, I am certain you will have an opportunity to do so at our many events. Sarah started this past November after Abby Curro retired. We wish Abby well in her retirement and look forward to working with Sarah.

NYACP continues to stand as a beacon of support and professional growth for its members. Our mission is to empower you with the tools, knowledge, and connections needed to achieve excellence in Collaborative Practice.

This is an especially exciting year for us as we gear up to celebrate our 25th anniversary and honor all those who have made this organization what it is today. We are a strong and dedicated Collaborative community made up of individuals of different disciplines that have a meaningful impact on the lives of families during challenging times. We will be honoring this anniversary with a Gala on December 4, 2025. You will hear more about the Gala throughout the year. We hope you will join us.

Personally, I am so grateful for the relationships I have built working side-by-side with so many incredibly talented and passionate individuals to strengthen the Collaborative process. It is my goal to widen the knowledge of Collaborative divorce as I believe from my very core that this process serves families in a way that no other can.

Membership in the NYACP provides a wealth of opportunities, including trainings, a robust library of resources, networking events, and tools such as the NYACP Video Library. These benefits are designed to enhance your skills, deepen your connections with like-minded professionals, and build relationships with colleagues and clients.

The success of our organization would not be possible without the unwavering dedication and support of our committees. I hope you will get more involved in committee work, if you are not already. The

following is a brief description of our committees.

- **Training and Education Committee:** Co-chaired by Tony Markus and Melissa Goodstein. This committee plans and delivers a wide range of training opportunities, from introductory sessions to advanced programs, many of which are free of charge for our members.
- **Social Media Committee:** Chaired by Nora Marcus. This is a fairly new committee. Its goal is to help increase public awareness of Collaborative Law and strengthen referral networks.
- **Membership Committee:** Chaired by Marcos Fernandez. There are several working groups within this committee, including: 1) Events working group which organizes social and networking events to deepen the relationships of our members; 2) Growing the Collaborative Circle working group which focuses on building relationships with other organizations outside of our membership (please don't miss the mixer on February 6 at the Brazen Fox at 5:30 with the Westchester Women's Bar Association); 3) our Mentor Program which connects more experienced members to mentor new members; and 4) our Lunch working group which organizes regional lunches for members to get to know one another better.
- **Newsletter Committee:** Chaired by Randy Heller. The newsletter is shared every other month and provides important updates, articles, and highlights member accomplishments.
- **Bylaws and Protocols Committee:** Chaired by Tony Markus. This committee updates our bylaws, and develops and streamlines ethical and procedural standards to guide Collaborative practitioners.
- **Racial Equity Committee:** Chaired by Jessica Rothberg. This committee supports NYACP members in understanding the personal and professional impacts of systemic racism through self-reflection and education. The committee offers programs which promote inclusivity and equip members to better collaborate with historically excluded individuals. The goal is to build a safer community and create a membership that reflects the diversity of the greater New York area.
- **2025 Gala Committee:** Chaired by Melissa Goodstein. This committee is planning and coordinating our 25th Anniversary Gala event on December 4, 2025, to honor NYACP's legacy, engage its membership, and highlight the organization's achievements.

In addition to our many committees, each region has a Pod group which meets regularly on Zoom. The New York City Pod is chaired by Judy Stein, the Long Island Pod is chaired by Nancy Kaye and the Northern Westchester Pod is chaired by Melissa Goodstein. All members are welcome to participate in all regional Pod presentations. In addition to learning from these sessions, they enable you to meet the members of the NYACP with whom you may not regularly interact.

I look forward to a busy 2025 and hope you will join in as many events, trainings and educational opportunities as you can. I am excited about our work together and getting the word out about the invaluable benefits of using the Collaborative process to help families manage some of the more difficult challenges they face.

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