



Suffolk County LGBTQ Pride Month, June 2017

## The Richard C. Failla LGBTQ Commission

*In June 2017, Hon. Paul G. Feinman became the first openly gay judge in the 170-year history of the Court of Appeals.*

Chief Judge DiFiore and Chief Administrative Judge Marks first announced a new commission to highlight and address issues of concern to the LGBTQ community in late 2016. Under the leadership of Justices Marcy Kahn of the Appellate Division, First Department, and Elizabeth Garry of the Appellate Division, Third Department, the new Richard C. Failla LGBTQ Commission was established. The Commission is dedicated to promoting equal participation and access throughout the court system by all persons regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. In furtherance of that mission, the Commission in 2017:

- Organized educational LGBTQ Pride Month events in Manhattan, Central Islip, Ithaca, Utica, Rochester, Buffalo, and Batavia
- Presented plenary session on family law and transgender issues at 2017 New York State Judicial Institute



- Proposed amendments to the various court system non-discrimination rules to expressly prohibit discrimination based on gender identity and gender expression. Those amendments are under review by the Administrative Board of the Courts
- Began an initiative to ensure full access by transgender employees, attorneys and members of the public to court system facilities

In addition, Commission Member Paul G. Feinman was nominated by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and confirmed as the first openly gay judge in the history of the New York Court of Appeals in June 2017.