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Janet Benshoof to be honored with Edith I. Spivack Award

by Allison Slotnick

Janet Benshoof, President and Founder of the Global Justice Center and Founder of the Center for Reproductive Rights, will be presented with the Edith I. Spivack Award by NYCLA's Women's Rights Committee at a reception on March 26 at 6:00 PM at the NYCLA Home of Law. In her acceptance remarks, she will speak about the global impact of U.S. policies on reproductive rights.

Ms. Benshoof, an internationally known human rights lawyer, has devoted her career to safeguarding women's rights. She has litigated cases across the nation as well as in the U.S. Supreme Court. As President of the Global Justice Center, an organization that seeks to use litigation strategies for securing women's rights, Ms. Benshoof works with female leaders of transitional democracies. In August, the Center trained Judges of the Iraqi High Tribunal on international law and gender rights.

In 1992, Ms. Benshoof founded the Center for Reproductive Rights (formerly known as the Center for Reproductive Law and Policy), the first international human rights organization focused on protecting reproductive rights. The advocacy group quickly gained a worldwide reputation, as it obtained consultative status to the United Nations and launched legal projects in over 40 countries. Ms. Benshoof retired from the organization in 2001 and is now President Emeritus.

Prior to founding the Center for Reproductive Rights, Ms. Benshoof served as the Director of the American Civil Liberties Union Reproductive Freedom

Project for 15 years. She led national legal movements to protect gender equality and reproductive choices.

For her internationally recognized work, Ms. Benshoof has received a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship and been named as one the "100 Most Influential Lawyers in America" several times by the *National Law Journal*. She taught international human rights law at her alma mater, Harvard Law School, as well as at Bard College and in Burma, Thailand and Iraq. As a student at Harvard, she founded a women's law association.



Janet Benshoof

The Edith I. Spivack Award was established in 1997 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of NYCLA's Women's Rights Committee and named in honor of its founding chair. In 2005, Ms. Spivack was presented with the Award. The first award was presented to New York State Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye. Other past honorees have been: Hon. Betty Weinberg Ellerin, Appellate Division, First Department; Susan B.

Lindenauer, former Counsel to the President and Attorney-in-Chief, The Legal Aid Society; Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney; Hon. Karla Moskowitz, New York State Supreme Court, First Judicial District; Kay Crawford Murray, former General Counsel of the New York City Department of Juvenile Justice; Kathy Rodgers, President, Legal Momentum; and Judith Vladeck, founder of Vladeck Waldman Elias & Engelhard, PC.

Ms. Slotnick is the Communications Assistant at the New York County Lawyers' Association.