

Cuomo Announces Top Aides

By **NICHOLAS CONFESSORE**

Governor-elect Andrew M. Cuomo announced on Thursday the first senior appointments in his incoming administration, drawing largely on a mix of trusted old hands from the attorney general's office and alumni of his father's administration, along with a few new faces, to assemble his administration.

The most senior job in state government, the secretary to the governor, will be filled by Steven M. Cohen, a former federal prosecutor who has held a similar position — counselor and chief of staff — in Mr. Cuomo's attorney general office. Another senior job, counsel to the governor will be filled by Mylan L. Denerstein, a former senior prosecutor for Mr. Cuomo.

Benjamin Lawskey, a special assistant and deputy counselor to Mr. Cuomo in the attorney general's office, will serve as chief of staff in the new administration, and Howard B. Glaser, a former top aide to Mr. Cuomo at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, will be the director of state operations, supervising the Albany's sprawl of state agencies and departments.

Mr. Cuomo's campaign pollster, Andrew Zambelli, will serve in the new position of counselor to the governor. Mr. Zambelli, a veteran of the administration of former governor Mario M. Cuomo, will "be responsible for the oversight and strategic integration of the communications, inter-governmental, legislative and constituency efforts" of Mr. Cuomo's administration.

"I am privileged to welcome such a diverse group of extraordinary talent to help our Administration take on the challenge of restoring our state government and making it work for the people once again," Mr. Cuomo said in a statement. "I want to thank these fine men and women, and all the people who will take up the task of public service in our administration, for their hard work and sacrifice on behalf of the people of the state of New York."

A portion of Mr. Cuomo's press release follows:

Governor-elect Cuomo announced the following appointments:

- Steven M. Cohen will serve as Secretary to the Governor. Mr. Cohen served as Counselor & Chief of Staff to New York State Attorney General Andrew M. Cuomo. Prior to joining the New York State Attorney General's Office, Mr. Cohen was a partner at Cooley Godward Kronish LLP, where he was a member of the firm's Litigation Department. Mr. Cohen also served for a decade as an adjunct professor at Columbia Law School teaching a course in federal criminal prosecutions and served as the Chair of The Mayor's Committee on New York City Marshals. Before entering private practice, from 1991 to 1998, Mr. Cohen was an Assistant United States Attorney in the Southern District of New York, where he served as Chief of the Violent Gangs Unit. Before joining the U.S. Attorney's Office, Mr. Cohen served as a law clerk to the Honorable Stanely Sporkin, U.S. District Judge and then the Honorable Frank X. Altamari, U.S. Appellate Judge.

- Mylan L. Denerstein will serve as Counsel to the Governor. Ms. Denerstein has served as the Executive Deputy Attorney General for Social Justice from January 2007 to the present managing almost 100 attorneys statewide in the areas of Charities, Civil Rights, Environmental Protection, Health Care, Labor, and Tobacco Compliance. Prior to her current appointment, Ms. Denerstein served as the Deputy Fire Commissioner for Legal Affairs for the New York City Fire Department, the largest municipal fire department in the country. From 1996 – 2005, Ms. Denerstein served in the United States Attorney's Office, Southern District, first as an Assistant United States Attorney, prosecuting complex securities and insurance fraud, money laundering and organized crime. She later became Deputy Chief of the Criminal Division where she assisted in managing the Criminal Division with over 100 Assistant United States Attorneys.

- Yrthya A. Dinzey-Flores will serve as the Chief Diversity Officer. Ms. Dinzey-Flores previously served as Manager at the Toyota USA Foundation and Program Officer for National Philanthropy Programs at Toyota Motor North America. She also served as a community relations and philanthropic consultant for the Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation. Prior to that she was Director of the Office of School CBO Partnerships at the New York City Department of Education, managing relationships and providing support to more than 350 community-based organizations. The Chief Diversity Officer is one of three statutorily required positions within the executive chamber, along with the Secretary and the Counsel. The Chief Diversity Officer's task is to

reform and strengthen the State's programs and efforts encouraging the growth of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises within the state government and in the private sector.

- Andrew "Drew" Zambelli will serve as Counselor to the Governor. In that capacity he will serve as senior advisor to the Governor and be responsible for the oversight and strategic integration of the communications, inter-governmental, legislative and constituency efforts of the Office of the Governor. From 1985 to 1994, he served in the administration of Governor Mario M. Cuomo including as Secretary to the Governor from 1991 to 1994. Since 1995, he has been a market strategy and research consultant to corporate, political and non-profit clients including many Fortune 500 corporations. During this period, he has been affiliated with Strategic Frameworking, Inc. of Washington and Massachusetts and Summit Strategy Group, LLC which he founded in 2007.

- Judge Leslie G. Leach will serve as Appointments Secretary. Judge Leach was appointed Executive Deputy Attorney General for the Division of State Counsel in February 2007. Prior to the appointment, he had served since 2004 as the Administrative Judge of the Eleventh Judicial District, Supreme Court, Queens County. Judge Leach was appointed as a Judge of the Criminal Court of the City of New York by Mayor David N. Dinkins in 1993, reappointed by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg in 2002, while serving as an Acting Justice of the Supreme Court, and was elected a Justice of Supreme Court in November 2003. He has taught Business Law at York College, CUNY, since 1982.

- Howard B. Glaser will serve as Director of State Operations and Senior Policy Advisor to the Governor. During the Clinton Administration, Mr. Glaser served in several senior management roles at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, including Counselor to the Secretary, Deputy General Counsel and Deputy Assistant Secretary. After leaving HUD, Mr. Glaser was Senior Vice President and General Counsel to the Mortgage Bankers Association in Washington, DC. At the state level, Mr. Glaser served at the Department of Taxation and Finance as Special Assistant to the Commissioner and in the Executive Chamber as Special Assistant to the Governor.

- Jeremy Creelan will serve as Special Counsel for Public Integrity and Ethics Reform. Mr. Creelan is currently a partner at the law firm Jenner & Block LLP. Mr. Creelan joined Jenner & Block after serving as Deputy Director of the Democracy Program at the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law. At the Brennan Center, he developed numerous high-profile

cases to reform New York's election laws to protect voters' rights and reduce corruption, advocated for democratic reforms in such areas as ethics and campaign finance, and published a comprehensive analysis of the legislative process in the New York State Assembly and Senate. In 1998-99, he clerked for the Honorable Denise L. Cote, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

- Benjamin Lawskey will serve as Chief of Staff. Mr. Lawskey was appointed Deputy Counselor and Special Assistant to the Attorney General in January 2007. In the Attorney General's Office, Mr. Lawskey led the nationwide investigation of the student loan industry and oversaw the investigations of Wall Street bonuses and the Bank of America-Merrill Lynch merger. Mr. Lawskey also served as General Counsel of the Cuomo 2010 campaign. Prior to joining the Attorney General's Office, Mr. Lawskey served from late 2001 until 2007 as an Assistant United States Attorney in the Southern District of New York, where he prosecuted securities fraud, organized crime, and terrorism cases. Prior to that, Mr. Lawskey was Chief Counsel to Senator Charles E. Schumer. From 1997 to 1999, he was a Trial Attorney in the Civil Division of the Department of Justice in Washington.

- Adam Cohen will serve as Special Policy Advisor. Mr. Cohen is a Lecturer at Yale Law School and a fellow at the Yale Information Society Project. He was a member of the New York Times Editorial Board from 2002-2010, and before that, a journalist and a lawyer, a law fellow at the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Alabama, and a law clerk on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. He is the author of *Nothing to Fear: FDR's Inner Circle* and *The Hundred Days that Created Modern America* and *The Perfect Store: Inside eBay*, and the co-author of *American Pharaoh: Richard J. Daley: His Battle for Chicago and the Nation*.