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## **Cardozo School of Law of Yeshiva University Announces \$15 Million Gift from Isaac and Laura Perlmutter to Create The Perlmutter**



Law school's largest-ever gift continues the success of Yeshiva University's recently launched Rise Up Campaign. The Center will train lawyers to prevent the use of junk science in court cases, fight wrongful convictions and obtain clemency for the unjustly incarcerated.

Rabbi Dr. Ari Berman, President of Yeshiva University together with Cardozo School of Law Dean Melanie Leslie announced today the creation of The Perlmutter Center for Legal Justice at Cardozo Law, supported by a \$15 million donation from Isaac and Laura Perlmutter and the Perlmutter Foundation—the largest donation in the law school's history. Isaac Perlmutter is the Chairman of Marvel Entertainment. Laura Perlmutter is a Director of the Laura and Isaac Perlmutter Foundation.

The Perlmutter Center for Legal Justice at Cardozo Law will have two components: a student field clinic called The Perlmutter Freedom Clinic at Cardozo Law that will focus on fighting wrongful convictions based on the misuse of scientific evidence and work to obtain clemency for individuals unjustly incarcerated. The second component, The Perlmutter Forensic Science Education

Program will feature an ambitious continuing legal education curriculum in scientific evidence designed for practicing attorneys. The Perlmutter Center for Legal Justice furthers the growth of the university's recently launched Rise Up Campaign and builds on the decades-long success of Cardozo's Forensic Science College.

The Perlmutter Center for Legal Justice will be led by prominent civil rights attorney and criminal justice reform advocate Josh Dubin, who will serve as Executive Director. The Deputy Director will be Derrick Hamilton, a formerly incarcerated individual who studied law in prison. Hamilton won his own exoneration after serving a 21-year sentence and led the effort to exonerate five wrongfully incarcerated inmates.

"We are committed to seeking justice, equipping students and lawyers with the tools to confront junk science, and seeking clemency for those unjustly imprisoned," said Josh Dubin, Executive Director.

The Center will support and build upon the work in which Cardozo School of Law has been engaged for over a decade as co-sponsor of the National Forensic College, with the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers. The Perlmutter Center for Legal Justice will focus on correcting the devastating consequences of junk science in the courtroom, a problem that is prevalent in the legal system and disproportionately impacts people of color. "We are tremendously grateful to Laura and Ike Perlmutter for this gift," said Rabbi Dr. Ari Berman, President of Yeshiva University. "It builds on Cardozo's proud tradition of innovation in the fight for justice, and it reaffirms Yeshiva's core values of truth, compassion and redemption, among others."

The clinical education portion of the Perlmutter Center for Legal Justice will be a new field clinic. The Perlmutter Freedom Clinic at Cardozo Law will train a group of students each semester in cases involving the use of junk science, offering pre-trial and trial assistance to attorneys litigating cases involving scientific evidence, and working on the exoneration of individuals whose convictions involved the misuse of forensic evidence. The Perlmutter Freedom Clinic will also work on clemency cases for those serving unfair sentences. Selection criteria will focus on cases that will have significant value in establishing or reinforcing the proper use of scientific evidence in the courtroom.

By training students, practicing lawyers and judges, the Center seeks to make a transformative difference in the legal system that will advance the cause of justice.

"It is essential that trial lawyers have a deep understanding of scientific evidence. The acceptance of and reliance on junk science has caused untold damage to the legitimacy of the court system and countless lives," said Melanie Leslie, Dean of

Cardozo School of Law. “The Perlmutter’s generous gift, and the new team at the Perlmutter Center for Legal Justice, will enable Cardozo to train generations of lawyers in the proper use of forensic science.”

### **About The Perlmutter Foundation**

The Laura and Isaac Perlmutter Foundation was formed with one objective: helping others. The Foundation is dedicated to improving the lives of others - with a specific focus on health care, social justice, the arts and community initiatives. For nearly 40 years, the Foundation and its founders, Laura and Isaac “Ike” Perlmutter, have supported a diverse spectrum of causes, from donations to NYU Langone Medical Center to support cancer research to universities, cultural centers and first-responder organizations. The goal of the Foundation is to help those who are selflessly helping others. The Foundation invests in organizations and causes that are compassionate, innovative and inspiring so as to fully maximize the Foundation’s philanthropic impact. To date, the Perlmutter and the Foundation have donated more than \$78,000,000. In 2014, NYU Langone Medical Center named its cancer center as the Laura and Isaac Perlmutter Cancer Center, in recognition of the Foundation's history of contributions.

### **About Cardozo School of Law**

Part of Yeshiva University, Cardozo School of Law is a leading law school in intellectual property law, alternative dispute resolution, public interest law, criminal justice and clinical education. Cardozo’s alternative dispute resolution program is ranked fourth nationally, and its intellectual property program is ranked eighth nationally in U.S. News & World Report. Cardozo’s faculty is ranked 23rd nationally for scholarly impact.

Other unique programs at Cardozo include the FAME Center for fashion, arts, media and entertainment law; the Tech Startup Clinic; the Cardozo Patent Diversity Project; the Filmmakers Legal Clinic; and the Center for Rights and Justice. Located in New York City’s Greenwich Village, Cardozo offers a diverse and inclusive community passionate to fulfill the words of Supreme Court Justice Benjamin N. Cardozo, who said, “The final cause of law is the welfare of society.”

Cardozo Law has three fundamental and mutually reinforcing goals: to provide a fully rounded and rigorous legal education that blends theoretical and practical approaches; to create and sustain a diverse campus with an intellectual environment that values and supports imaginative and groundbreaking scholarship; and to strengthen democracy and the legal profession by shaping solutions to the pressing legal problems of the day.