

# LOOK WITHIN AND ACCELERATE CHANGE

## 15th Annual Conclave on Diversity in the Legal Profession

Friday, August 11, 2023 · Four Seasons New Orleans Hotel · 2 Canal Street, New Orleans, LA

### PLENARY SESSION THREE

#### Criminal Law



**Daniel L. "Danny" Engelberg**  
Chief Defender, Orleans Public Defenders  
*New Orleans, LA*

Danny Engelberg is the Chief Defender of the Orleans Public Defenders (OPD). Prior to his appointment as Chief Defender, Engelberg served as the Deputy Chief Defender and previously the Chief of Trials. He has been integral in the evolution of OPD post-Katrina and the elevation of public defense in New Orleans over the last almost two decades, and has dedicated his career to public interest, having joined OPD in 2007 as a Staff Attorney, followed by Felony Attorney Supervisor, Training Supervisor and Deputy Chief of Trials over the years. OPD has since grown from an office of a few attorneys and administrators, to one that is a full visualization of a community-based, client-centered public defender office. Through the work of countless people on the ground, in the courts, or in front of stakeholders and decisionmakers, OPD continues to fulfill our mission and vision of fighting for the rights of our clients and community, and increase the level of representation for low income New Orleanians. Throughout his tenure at OPD, Engelberg has been part of innovative programming. Additionally, Engelberg has been integral in securing funding equity between OPD and the district attorney, which guarantees 85% the appropriation allocated to the DA be given to OPD. Realizing funding parity was the result of more than a decade of collective advocacy, and now is allowing us to more fully and adequately represent our clients by hiring more attorneys, and supporting them outside the court with additional social workers and peer and client advocates, instead of operating within continuous fiscal crises.