

## Center for Judicial Accountability

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**From:** Center for Judicial Accountability <elena@judgewatch.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 01, 2013 1:09 PM  
**To:** gwitkin@publicintegrity.org  
**Cc:** Nicholas Kusnetz (nkusnetz@publicintegrity.org); Bill Buzenberg (bbuzenberg@publicintegrity.org); David Howard King (dking@gothamgazette.com); 'davidhowardking@gmail.com'  
**Subject:** #2: Building a Roster of Journalists & Would-Be Journalists for Corruption Stories in Search of Writers, Etc.

Dear Gordon:

Here's my yesterday's e-mail. I look forward to working with you on this – so that we can achieve our common agenda: essential public-integrity, good-government reforms.

Elena

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**From:** Center for Judicial Accountability [mailto:elena@judgewatch.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2013 3:52 PM  
**To:** 'Kusnetz, Nicholas'  
**Cc:** 'bbuzenberg@publicintegrity.org'; David Howard King (dking@gothamgazette.com); 'davidhowardking@gmail.com'  
**Subject:** Follow-up

Dear Mr. Kusnetz,

Thank you for forwarding the e-mail you had sent me, as I had requested you to do. However, I had received it initially – and it is nothing more than an acknowledgment of your receipt of my resending you my April 2<sup>nd</sup> e-mail. Your acknowledgment was at 9:35 am on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Presumably, you were then writing your article *“Corruption case further sullies Albany’s reputation: Allegations involving legislator reinforce New York’s low grade from State Integrity Investigation”*, about U.S. Attorney Bharara’s indictment of Senator Smith & others, which would be posted on the Center for Public Integrity’s website more than six hours later.

**What was the result of your “tak[ing] a look” at my April 2<sup>nd</sup> e-mail? -- which is what your April 3<sup>rd</sup> e-mail acknowledgment said you would do. It’s now nearly a month later. Where are your answers?**

I have already left a voice message for Center for Public Integrity Executive Director Buzenberg, as it is simply UNBELIEVABLE that with the thousands of journalists in this country – including freelancers hungry for juicy stories that could enable them to make a difference, while making a name for themselves – the State Integrity Investigation Project has not developed a ROSTER of journalists to which it can feed stories for investigation of public integrity issues at the state level (or, for that matter, at the national level). The State Integrity Investigation Project started out with \$1.5 million. Did it not develop a message board or e-mail list, etc. of journalists to whom in-the-trenches citizen organizations and activists can furnish tips, leads, etc? Did the State Integrity Investigation Project not understand that without lots of journalists writing about state integrity issues – and doing so constantly – nothing was going to change? Does it have NO contacts – relying, instead, only on you writing an article when you are able to get around to it?

As for David Howard King – who used me in 2011 for the State Integrity Investigation’s compilation about “judicial accountability” for New York – I managed to reach him by phone yesterday for the first time in almost a year and a half. The call from my cellphone dropped – and he has not returned the voice message I left for him

immediately thereafter. Certainly, he was no good-government, muckraking, investigative journalist then – or since. Indeed, then, as now, he works for Citizens Union, which is run by establishment interests and is part of the corruption problem, especially on judicial accountability issues. Had Mr. King simply followed up on his article “*Who Judges the Judges?*” <http://old.gothamgazette.com/article/Albany/20111114/204/3636>, as he promised me he would be doing when I furnished him the story from which he crafted his article, he could have SINGLE-HANDEDLY brought down the power structure. He could do so now, even more resoundingly – and end New York’s public corruption blight once and for all. Can the Center for Public Integrity’s State Integrity Investigation Project not help locate a single journalist to follow up on Mr. King’s “*Who Judges the Judges*” article?

The situation in New York, with respect to public corruption, is DIRE. Here’s the link to the webpage of our website containing our April 15<sup>th</sup> corruption complaint to U.S. Attorney Bharara: <http://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/judicial-compensation/grand-larceny-of-public-fisc.htm> , which I tried to tell you about in our brief conversation before I called Mr. Buzenberg.

By the way, if you are unaware of what U.S. Attorney Bharara said about the press’ role in tackling corruption in his April 22<sup>nd</sup> speech – which surely applies to your April 3<sup>rd</sup> article “*Corruption case further sullies Albany’s reputation*”, an article that was essentially an excuse to promote the State Integrity Investigation’s March 2012 report on New York -- the speech is posted on our above webpage. Suffice to say it concludes

“Rather than just covering cases that my office and others are already bringing, figure out ways to break new ground, to cover new stories. Ground breaking corruption coverage, by the way, is not just good copy; it is a path to good government.” (at p. 11).

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director  
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)  
914-455-4373  
[www.judgewatch.org](http://www.judgewatch.org)

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**From:** Kusnetz, Nicholas [<mailto:nkusnetz@publicintegrity.org>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2013 1:45 PM  
**To:** Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)  
**Subject:** FW: Follow-up to my phone call to you yesterday about David Howard King & other NYS reporters

Here is the note

Nicholas Kusnetz  
Reporter, [State Integrity Investigation](#)  
[Center for Public Integrity](#)  
917-719-0671  
[@nkus](#) | [@stateintegrity](#)

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**From:** Kusnetz, Nicholas  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 03, 2013 9:35 AM  
**To:** Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)  
**Subject:** RE: Follow-up to my phone call to you yesterday about David Howard King & other NYS reporters

Elena,  
Not sure what happened, but it's come through now. I'll take a look

Thanks

Nicholas Kusnetz  
Reporter, [State Integrity Investigation](#)  
[Center for Public Integrity](#)  
917-719-0671  
[@nkus](#) | [@stateintegrity](#)

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**From:** Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 03, 2013 12:38 AM  
**To:** Kusnetz, Nicholas  
**Subject:** FW: Follow-up to my phone call to you yesterday about David Howard King & other NYS reporters

 This was returned as undeliverable because of an "invalid recipient" – which I don't understand, as the address is correct.

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**From:** Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) [<mailto:elena@judgewatch.org>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 02, 2013 1:28 AM  
**To:** 'nkusnetz@publicintegrity.org.'  
**Cc:** 'davidhowardking@gmail.com'  
**Subject:** Follow-up to my phone call to you yesterday about David Howard King & other NYS reporters

TO: [Nick Kusnetz/Center for Public Integrity](#)

As discussed, where is the Center for Public Integrity's roster of journalists to whom our nonpartisan, nonprofit citizens' organization can turn with the MAJOR story, "*Who Judges the Judges?*" -- <http://old.gothamgazette.com/article/Albany/20111114/204/3636> -- initially reported on November 14, 2011 by David Howard King, the reporter upon whom the Center relied for its "State Integrity Investigation" of New York State and who used us a source for the information contained in its "judicial accountability" category. It was based on Mr. King's research that the "State Integrity Investigation" gave New York State an "overall D" – with a "D", as well, for "judicial accountability".

The below e-mail – to which Mr. King was an indicated recipient -- is what I sent to the reporters of the "Capital Press Room: New York State Legislative Correspondents Association" – on the day his November 14, 2011 article appeared. Not a single one of these reporters – or any others -- followed up. Nor did Mr. King follow-up on his own article.

Attached are the three subsequent press releases I sent to Mr. King and the state legislative correspondents – the most recent sent the day before yesterday. .

Please advise as to how good government citizen-activists, such as we, can make ANY progress in improving the scandalous absence of state integrity when there is not a single journalist verifying – or even reporting on-- the corruption of state government that we have resoundingly documented.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director  
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)  
914-455-4373

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**From:** Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) [<mailto:elena@judgewatch.org>]

**Sent:** Monday, November 14, 2011 11:50 AM

**To:** ([erin.billups@ny1news.com](mailto:erin.billups@ny1news.com)); Adam Sichko ([asichko@bizjournals.com](mailto:asichko@bizjournals.com)); Andrew Hawkins ([ahawkins@nycapitolnews.com](mailto:ahawkins@nycapitolnews.com)); Betty Flood ([EFMNEWS@aol.com](mailto:EFMNEWS@aol.com)); Bill Hammond ([whammond@nydailynews.com](mailto:whammond@nydailynews.com)); Brendan Scott ([bscott@nypost.com](mailto:bscott@nypost.com)); Cara Matthews ([clmatthe@gannett.com](mailto:clmatthe@gannett.com)); Casey Seiler ([cseiler@timesunion.com](mailto:cseiler@timesunion.com)); Chuck Custer ([news@wgy.com](mailto:news@wgy.com)); Elizabeth Benjamin ([liz.benjamin@ynn.com](mailto:liz.benjamin@ynn.com)); Fredric Dicker ([fud31@aol.com](mailto:fud31@aol.com)); Glenn Blain ([gblain@nydailynews.com](mailto:gblain@nydailynews.com)); [hakim@nytimes.com](mailto:hakim@nytimes.com); Jacob Gershman ([jacob.gershman@gmail.com](mailto:jacob.gershman@gmail.com)); Jim Odato ([jodato@timesunion.com](mailto:jodato@timesunion.com)); Jimmy Vielkind ([jvielkind@timesunion.com](mailto:jvielkind@timesunion.com)); Joe Spector ([jspector@gannett.com](mailto:jspector@gannett.com)); Joel Stashenko ([jstashenko@alm.com](mailto:jstashenko@alm.com)); Karen DeWitt ([kdewitt@wxxi.org](mailto:kdewitt@wxxi.org)); Ken Lovett ([klnews@aol.com](mailto:klnews@aol.com)); Kyle Hughes ([khughes@nysnys.com](mailto:khughes@nysnys.com)); Matt Ryan ([mryan@wmht.org](mailto:mryan@wmht.org)); Michael Gormley ([mgormley@ap.org](mailto:mgormley@ap.org)); Michael Virtanen ([mvirtanen@ap.org](mailto:mvirtanen@ap.org)); Rick Karlin ([rkarlin@timesunion.com](mailto:rkarlin@timesunion.com)); Stephen Acunto Jr. ([sacunto@cinn.com](mailto:sacunto@cinn.com)); Susan Arbetter ([susan\\_arbetter@wcnny.org](mailto:susan_arbetter@wcnny.org)); Teri Weaver ([tweaver@syracuse.com](mailto:tweaver@syracuse.com)); Tom Precious ([tprecious@buffnews.com](mailto:tprecious@buffnews.com)); Yancey Roy ([yancey.roy@newsday.com](mailto:yancey.roy@newsday.com))

**Cc:** 'David King'

**Subject: Invitation: Today's Gotham Gazette: "Who Judges the Judges?"**

**TO: Capital Press Room: New York State Legislative Correspondents Association**

David King, State Government Editor for the Gotham Gazette, leads with an article today, "*Who Judges the Judges?*", which he features as "This Month's Story...". It is the first to provide a glimmer of reporting on:

- the aborted 2009 Senate Judiciary Committee hearings on the Commission on Judicial Conduct; and
- CJA's October 27, 2011 Report on the judicial pay raise issue, delivered to Governor Cuomo, Senate Majority Leader Skelos, Assembly Speaker Silver, & Chief Judge Lippman

We have posted David's article on the "Latest News" webpage of CJA's website – from which you can easily access both the videos of the 2009 Senate Judiciary Committee hearings and CJA's October 27, 2011 Report. Here's the direct link: <http://www.judgewatch.org/web-pages/cja/latest-news.htm>

We look forward to providing you ALL possible assistance so that you can expand upon David's groundbreaking reporting of what is a MAJOR SCANDAL – propelling the long overdue, non-partisan, good-government reforms essential to safeguarding our constitution, democracy, and rule of law.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director  
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718-708-5303  
[www.judgewatch.org](http://www.judgewatch.org)