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New York Law School

**WE ARE NEW YORK'S LAW SCHOOL****Professor Ross Sandler
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New York Law School Dean and President Anthony Crowell is proud to announce that Professor **Ross Sandler**, has been appointed as the inaugural Samuel Seabury Professor of Law. Professor Sandler has been an indispensable part of the New York Law School faculty and academic community for three decades. He has made New York Law School and the Center for New York City Law a high-profile and influential voice in New York's civic, legal, political, and public integrity communities.

Recruiting Professor Sandler in 1993 from Jones Day where he was a partner, was for New York Law School, a coup that has benefited the school in countless ways. Professor Sandler's establishment of the Center for New York City Law in 1994 was a consequential moment in our school's history. The Center's publications, *CityLaw* and *CityLand*, have become must reads for lawyers and professionals who work within and with city government. The Center has provided unmatched in-depth analysis of legal and policy activity that is vital to the development and functioning of the city, and which would otherwise have been largely out-of-view for the public. The publications have also been essential learning opportunities for New York Law School students, many of whom have used the Center as a launching pad for successful careers in government at the local, state, and federal levels.

The Center for New York City Law's signature CityLaw Breakfasts have been a powerful civic forum and meeting place and have drawn the most important, high-level, and influential leaders to serve as keynote speakers. Speakers have included mayors, city commissioners from a wide selection of agencies, federal law enforcement leaders, citywide elected officials, state elected officials, and leaders from sectors that directly influence city government and its ability to serve New Yorkers.

Professor Sandler had an extraordinary career in government and legal practice. He served as a federal prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney's Office in Manhattan. As an Assistant U.S. Attorney, he was chief of the Environmental Enforcement Unit and worked on the cutting edge of newly emerging environmental law. Later, in the mid-1970s, as senior staff attorney at the Natural Resources Defense Council, he and NYLS Trustee Professor of Law Emeritus David Schoenbrod headed the Urban Environmental Unit, winning a pivotal Clean Air Act case. Professor Sandler joined New York City's government in 1981 when Mayor Edward I. Koch appointed him to the newly created position of Special Advisor to the Mayor for Public Transportation. In that position Professor Sandler's environmental law experience helped revitalize the city's mass transit system.

In 1986, at the height of the Parking Violations Bureau scandals, Mayor Edward I. Koch appointed Professor Sandler Commissioner of the Department of Transportation. As commissioner, Professor Sandler reorganized and restored integrity to the department, and established a program of maintenance and repair of the city's bridges that is still in place today.

Professor Sandler is the author of numerous publications on environmental law, transportation, and government issues. In 2003, Yale University Press released his book, *Democracy by Decree: What Happens When Courts Run Government*, written with Professor Schoenbrod. His book, *Jumpstart: Torts: Reading and Understanding Tort Cases*, was published by Wolters Kluwer in 2012. Most importantly, Professor Sandler's leadership of the Center for New York City Law reinforced New York Law School's own legacy of alumni and faculty shaping the city and state, from alumni like Samuel Seabury and the three mayors who were in its first classes, to the one third of the Class of 2023 who have entered government and public interest careers. Our reputation with government agencies as a pipeline into public service has been cemented thanks in large part to Professor Sandler's work.

Professor Sandler has also been a civic leader outside of NYLS, including serving as President of the City Club of New York. The City Club, one of the oldest civic organizations in New York, had

acted as a critical partner to Samuel Seabury's efforts to reform New York City government. This history adds another connection between Samuel Seabury's life and Professor Sandler's work.

New York Law School is proud to establish this new Professorship in honor of Samuel Seabury, an 1893 graduate. Samuel Seabury is one of our earliest and most historically influential graduates known for his relentless fight in the first half of the 20th Century against deep-rooted corruption in New York City and State government and the judiciary. Among Seabury's many distinguished and high-level roles, he served as President of the New York State Bar Association, judge on the New York State Court of Appeals, and Democratic Nominee for Governor in 1916. He was known as a progressive reformer in New York City, fighting against the corruption of Tammany Hall. In 1932 Seabury served as the legal counsel for the Hofstadter Committee, a joint state legislative initiative charged with investigating corruption in New York City. The committee exposed mass corruption throughout the city's judicial and law enforcement systems,

eventually leading to the resignation of Mayor Jimmy Walker in 1932 (himself a member of the NYLS Class of 1904). Seabury has rightfully been held up as one of the earliest and most successful reformers who had a transforming effect on local government integrity.

Professor Sandler, as the Samuel Seabury Professor of Law, will continue to teach, serve as the Founding Director of the Center for New York City Law, continue to shape strategy for the Center, host the CityLaw Breakfasts, and write scholarship and commentaries in the Center's publications. In honor of Professor Sandler and his wife Alice M. Sandler, the Center for New York City Law will establish an annual Samuel Seabury Lecture focused on public integrity. In May of 2024 Paul and Chandler Tagliabue and Arthur and Diane Abbey established the Ross Sandler and Alice M. Sandler Fellowship Fund to support current New York Law School students working for government. We are grateful for Professor Sandler's leadership and congratulate him on this well-deserved appointment.