

## CORNELL WILLIAM BROOKS, ESQ.

**Cornell William Brooks, Esq.**, is President and Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice and oversees all advocacy, policy research and workforce initiatives. Mr. Brooks directed efforts for the passing of three major reentry bills in 2010. The bills create a more level playing field for ex-offenders returning home and will enable previously incarcerated men and women to rebuild their lives as productive and responsible citizens. He has expanded policy research in the health care area, digital divide and market labor field. Mr. Brooks also brought about an innovative program, WomenBuild, which trains women in non-traditional employment.

Mr. Brooks had the honor to serve in Governor Christie's transition team in 2010 in the Committee on Homeland Security and Corrections. He currently serves as a member of the Board of the East Orange General Hospital and the NJN/Public Broadcasting Authority Board. In 2008, Mr. Brooks was given an award by Integrity House for NJISJ's reentry work.

Mr. Brooks previously worked as a Senior Counsel with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), working on legal and policy matters promoting small business and media ownership diversity and also directed the FCC's Office of Communication Business Opportunities. He led efforts to increase financing available to small, minority- and woman-owned businesses through regulatory and industry initiatives. Prior to his FCC service, as a U.S. Department of Justice trial attorney, Mr. Brooks secured the then largest government settlement for victims of housing discrimination based on testing and filed the government's first law suit against a nursing home alleging housing discrimination based on race. He has served as Executive Director of the Fair Housing Council of Greater Washington and as trial attorney with the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. As the Executive Director of the Fair Housing Council, Mr. Brooks oversaw a program of fair housing testing and public education in Washington, DC, Northern Virginia, and metropolitan Maryland that served as the basis of impact litigation. In 1998, he ran as the Democratic Nominee for U.S. Congress for the 10th District of Virginia. As a graduate of both Harvard and Yale, he campaigned as an advocate for public education, affordable healthcare, and fiscal responsibility.

A fourth-generation ordained minister, Mr. Brooks earned a BA with honors in political science from Jackson State University and a Master of Divinity from Boston University School of Theology. He earned a JD from Yale Law School, where he served as a Senior Editor of the Yale Law Journal and member of the Yale Law and Policy Review. He served a judicial clerkship with then Chief Judge Sam J. Ervin, III, on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. While studying at Boston University as a Martin Luther King Scholar, Mr. Brooks was awarded both the Oxnam-Leibman Fellowship for outstanding scholarship and promoting racial harmony and the Jefferson Fellowship for outstanding scholarship and excellence in preaching.

Mr. Brooks has spoken before congregations of diverse faiths, as well as the United Nations Subcommittee on Discrimination, business organizations, bar associations, labor unions, civil rights groups, schools, and colleges in the U.S. and Europe. As a columnist, he has written for several newspapers on contemporary politics, ethics, and faith.