



NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD

2017 SOUTHERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW, Room LS 405
526 Pine Street, New Orleans, LA 70118

Friday, March 24, 2017

2:00-4:00 p.m. **Louisiana's Non-Unanimous Jury Law**

Louisiana is one of only two states where criminal defendants may be convicted by a non-unanimous jury. This law has its roots in the convict lease system, and was used to funnel newly freed slaves into the prison system for unpaid labor. Still today, the non-unanimous jury system contributes to wrongful convictions and seriously undermines the protections of the Sixth Amendment. Presenters will include the formerly incarcerated, public defenders, prosecutors, and academics.

Professor Angela A. Allen-Bell is the B.K. Agnihotri Endowed Associate Professor of Legal Analysis & Writing at Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She is a native of New Orleans, Louisiana and a 1998 graduate of the Southern University Law Center. Prior to entering law school, Bell served as a Program Director for the National Council of Negro Women of Greater New Orleans. After law school, she spent ten years working at an appellate court and, in this capacity, gained an expertise in appellate law. In 2008, she left the judiciary and began her career in academia as a law professor. Professor Bell is a committed public servant who frequently lends her time to causes involving social and/or restorative justice, criminal justice reform and prisoner reentry. Additionally, Professor Bell engages in advocacy work and is regular speaker in her community, as well as for professional organizations. Her topics range from motivational messages to diversity and cultural competency talks to presentations about social, restorative or criminal justice and/or constitutional, civil or human rights issues. She has made many media appearances and participated in countless local, national and international media collaborations to discuss her scholarship and her advocacy work, including *La Presse* (France), *Le Nouvel Observateur* (France), MSNBC (News Nation with Tamron Hall), NBC Nightly News, National Public Radio (All Things Considered).

Marjorie R. Esman has been Executive Director of the ACLU of Louisiana since September 2007, after twenty years in the private practice of law. Her law practice focused on copyright and trademark issues, as well as First Amendment litigation concerning the freedom of speech and religion. She served as President of the LSBA Intellectual Property Law Section from 2002 to 2003, and served as an adjunct faculty member at Tulane Law School from 1997 to 2007. She was a member of the ACLU of Louisiana board of directors from 1995 and the ACLU National Board from 1997, until she resigned both positions to become Executive Director. In addition to her law degree (Tulane 1987), Esman holds a Ph.D. in Anthropology from Tulane University (1981) and has taught at

Tulane, LSU, and the University of Southwestern Louisiana (now the University of Louisiana at Lafayette). She has served on the boards of RHINO Contemporary Crafts, Parkway Partners, and now NOSIDA, an organization dedicated to the eradication of the stigma associated with HIV.

Will Snowden, a public defender in New Orleans, will share the personal challenges this law presents to the defense bar.

4:30-5:30 p.m. Keynote Speaker: Calvin Duncan

Calvin Duncan is program director of The Light of Justice Program, whose goal is to assist incarcerated individuals in gaining access to the courts. In January 2011, the Innocence Project of New Orleans secured Duncan's release from prison after he served 28½ years. While in prison, Duncan worked as an inmate lawyer for 23 years, providing legal assistance to individuals sentenced to death on Louisiana's Death Row for 19 years, and teaching law classes to other incarcerated individuals for 15 years. Duncan won a 2013 Soros Justice Fellowship from the Open Society Foundation to assist incarcerated individuals overcome procedural bars that hinder access to the courts, and he is currently pursuing a B.A. in paralegal studies at Tulane University School of Continuing Studies.

6:30 p.m. Happy Hour at Second Vine Wine

1027 Touro Street, corner of St. Claude Ave. 70116

Come hang out with members from across the Southern Region and meet our Executive Director, Pooja Gehi. Delicious lenten and surf'n'turf plates by Chef Chocolate for purchase.

Saturday, March 25, 2017

8:30-9:00 a.m. Registration

9:00-9:15 a.m. Welcome and Introduction

9:15-10:45 a.m. Environmental Justice in the Gulf South

The fight in Standing Rock brought the nation's attention to the urgency of the struggle for environmental justice. The Gulf Coast, long been a sacrifice zone for the country's energy needs, is likely to see an intensifying struggle under Trump. This panel will address environmental justice strategies in the Gulf South, their connection to other movements, and ways to get involved.

Cherri Foytlin is an indigenous writer, organizer, speaker, and mother of six, who lives in South Louisiana - an area inundated with industrial pollution and devastated by the effects of climate change. She is also the author of "Spill It! The Truth About the Deep Water Horizon Oil Rig Explosion," and administrator to BridgetheGulfProject.org, a media platform for Gulf Coast communities to share in their own voice topics around social and environmental justice issues within the

region. In the Spring of 2011, she walked to Washington D.C. from New Orleans (1,243 miles) to call for action to stop the BP Deep Water Drilling Disaster, and has been a constant voice speaking out for the health and ecosystem of Gulf Coast communities. She now works with Bold Louisiana which works to confront the oil and gas industry through bold action and unlikely alliances.

Ramsey Sprague was born in Houma, Louisiana, raised in Arlington, Texas, and lives in Mobile, Alabama with family and friends throughout the Deep and Gulf South. He is a musician who has served as a grassroots community organizer since graduating high school and has held collaborative and campaign direction roles in peace, justice, environmental, climate action, and electoral reform groups fighting for public health and political transparency. As President of Mobile Environmental Justice Action Coalition and an enrolled tribal member of the Biloxi- Chitimacha Confederation of Muskogee, Ramsey sees the environmental and climate justice movements within a just transition framework as timely catalysts of a new consensus among systematically disenfranchised communities throughout the continent and beyond of both the necessary steps ahead and the processes through which communities may organically and sustainably align with others in similar circumstance and mutual interest.

Perry T. Graham is an organizer, facilitator, and law student at Loyola. They are a member of the Radical Arts & Healing Collective and an experienced direct action activist in the environmental justice movement. Perry grew up in Maryland, but now considers the Gulf Coast their home.

11:00 a.m. -12:30 p.m. **Anti-Racism Training**

Facilitated by Tyrone Edwards and Diana Dunn of the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond (PISAB), a national and international collective of anti-racist, multicultural community organizers and educators dedicated to building an effective movement for social transformation. PISAB believes that racism is the primary barrier preventing communities from building effective coalitions and overcoming institutionalized oppression and inequities. Through Undoing Racism®/Community Organizing Workshops, technical assistance and consultations, PISAB helps individuals, communities, organizations and institutions move beyond addressing the symptoms of racism to undoing the causes of racism so as to create a more just and equitable society. Founded in 1980 by long-time community organizers Ronald Chisom of New Orleans, and Dr. Jim Dunn of Yellow Springs, Ohio, PISAB has impacted the lives of nearly 500,000 people both nationally and internationally. Through this process, it supports a cadre of anti-racist organizers who build leadership and accountability in the communities where they are organizing. Today, PISAB is recognized as one of the foremost anti-racism training and organizing institutions in the nation. In a 2002 Aspen Institute survey of eleven top racial justice organizations, five credited The People's Institute with having the most effective anti-racist analysis.

12:30-1:15 p.m. **Lunch** (provided)

1:15-2:45 p.m.

Mass Incarceration Reform in the Confederate South

This panel will explore legislative efforts afoot in the Southern region to reverse mass incarceration and collateral consequences. Panelists will provide an overview of the historical origins and scope of the current problem, and will analyze legislative efforts to reduce prison populations in Southern states and to minimize collateral consequences of criminal convictions.

Will Harrell is currently the Southern Regional Director of the ACLU Campaign for Smart Justice. In that capacity he currently works to end mass incarceration in 8 Southern states. He's a graduate of the University of Texas and the American University Washington College of Law. He joined the Guild during his first week of law school in 1987 and later served as National Vice President in 1997 and became the founding Executive Director of National Police Accountability Project in 1998. He lives in New Orleans with his wife Simone Levine who he met at the Center for Constitutional Rights and their two sons Elan 3 and Ezra 1.

Norris Henderson, a former OSI Soros Justice Fellow, has had tremendous success in his work impacting public policy and public discourse about police accountability, public defense for poor and indigent people, and reforming the notorious Orleans Parish Prison (OPP). As someone who was wrongfully incarcerated for 27 years, Norris shares firsthand experience of racism and brutality of the criminal justice system with communities of Color across Louisiana. Norris is a frequent contributor to public discourse, regularly, speaking publicly in support of underprivileged communities in New Orleans, and acting as a general liaison to other community organizations in the city. Since his release in 2003, Norris has applied his 27 years of self-taught legal expertise and community organizing skills to a number of leadership positions, including Co-Director of Safe Streets/Strong Communities and Community Outreach Coordinator of the Louisiana Justice Coalition. Norris serves on a number of organizations' Board of Directors including Family & Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children, and acts as Board President of the Louisiana Center for Children's Rights.

Daphne Cross is a Texas native and a parent, community educator, civil rights activist, a member of the Justice and Beyond Coalition, and an Outreach Fellow for the Office of the Independent Police Monitor in New Orleans, Louisiana. She and her family have been directly impacted by the Juvenile Justice System in Louisiana and have challenged the injustices within the system for her own children and others' children.

Simone Levine has served as the Executive Director of Court Watch NOLA since August 2015. Simone Levine is a lawyer who has previously served as a prosecutor, a public defender and a private defense attorney before coming to Court Watch NOLA. She came to Court Watch NOLA right after serving as the Deputy Police Monitor of New Orleans in the Office of the Independent Police Monitor. Simone worked in the Office of the Independent Police Monitor for over four years before coming to Court Watch NOLA. Before coming to New Orleans, Simone also worked as criminal justice counsel to the New York state legislature for over four years.

3:00-4:30 p.m.

Immigrants and Muslims Resist in the Age of Trump

This panel will cover community-based forms of resistance to the increased repression of immigrants and Muslims under Trump. Communities are mobilizing defense committees, building rapid response networks, and expanding coalitions to fight back against the Muslim and refugee ban, the widening enforcement dragnet, and the growing prison industrial complex.

Daniel Castellanos is an organizer and founding member of the National Guestworker Alliance, which organizes guestworkers and other immigrant workers. Daniel was a leader in organizing his coworkers when they brought here on H-2B visas to work at a hotel after Katrina. He has helped hundreds of workers organize in the 10-year history of the NGA since.

Azadeh Shahshahani, Legal and Advocacy Director for Project South, has worked for a number of years in the Southeast to protect the human rights of immigrants and Muslim, Middle Eastern, and South Asian communities. She previously served as National Security/Immigrants' Rights Project Director with the ACLU of Georgia. Azadeh is a past president of the National Lawyers Guild. Through the NLG, Azadeh has participated in international delegations, including to post-revolutionary Tunisia and Egypt, a delegation focused on the situation of Palestinian political prisoners, and election monitoring delegations to Venezuela and Honduras. She has also served as a member of the jury in people's tribunals on Mexico, the Philippines, and Brazil. Azadeh also serves as Chair of Georgia Detention Watch, Co-chair of the US Human Rights Network Working Group on National Security, and on the Advisory Council of the American Association of Jurists. She is the author or editor of several human rights reports, including a 2012 report titled "Prisons of Profits: Immigrants and Detention in Georgia," as well as law review articles and book chapters focused on racial profiling, immigrants' rights, and surveillance of Muslim-Americans. Her work has also appeared in the Guardian, the Nation, MSNBC, Aljazeera, the Atlanta Journal Constitution, and the Huffington Post, among others. Azadeh received her JD from the University of Michigan Law School where she was Article Editor for The Michigan Journal of International Law. She also has a Master's in Modern Middle Eastern and North African Studies from the University of Michigan. Azadeh is the recipient of the 2016 Georgia WAND Peace and Justice Award, American Immigration Lawyers Association 2012 Advocacy Award, and the University of Georgia Law School 2009 Equal Justice Foundation Public Interest Practitioner Award. She has been recognized as one of 100 Influential Georgia Muslims. In 2016, she was chosen by the Mundo Hispanico Newspaper as an Outstanding Person of the Year for her activism on behalf of the Latino community and defending the rights of immigrants in Georgia.

Jessica Vosburgh is Director of Adelante Alabama Worker Center. She moved to Birmingham in 2013 to help launch Adelante with the support of the National Day Laborer Organizing Network. In addition to her work in Alabama, Jessica also litigates on behalf of community organizations and immigrant workers around the country seeking to hold government actors, employers, and other authorities accountable for unjust practices. Jessica received her JD from Yale Law School in 2013, where she represented clients in removal defense cases, wage claims and civil rights litigation, and coordinated a conversation group in a maximum security prison. Before law school,

Jessica was the curator of a café and arts venue in Uptown Manhattan. She is licensed to practice law in Alabama and California.

Cesar Mata is an activist and member of Adelante Alabama Worker Center. He co-founded the Immigrant Alabama Movement to combat HB56, Alabama's anti-immigrant law, and is a member of the steering committee of the Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice.

Laura Rivera is a queer, Puerto Rican feminist. As a law fellow with the Immigrant Justice Program of the Southern Poverty Law Center, she represents immigrants in labor disputes, access to education issues, and state abuses of power. Also, she is a team member on the Southeast Immigrant Freedom Initiative, which aims to provide *pro bono* representation to detained immigrants in the Southeast. She has represented farmworkers and previously worked as a reporter for many years. She and her wife live in Atlanta with their beloved dogs and lots of other family.

4:45-6:45 p.m. **Secure Technologies**

In this era of mass surveillance, leaks, and corporate/government collaboration, it's critical that activists learn how to use secure communications and storage on their computers and phones. Come learn best practices for the basics of computer and communications security. Bring your computer and phone.

Marvin Arnold is originally from Silver Springs, Maryland but has been loving New Orleans for over two years. He is working on a variety of projects at the intersection of society and technology including abortion access, cryptocurrencies, community internet, and police accountability. Marvin earned his MBA from the Instituto de Empresa as a Fulbright Scholar and he holds a Bachelor's in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science from MIT. Since moving to New Orleans, Marvin has won the UN's ITU World Telecom Young Innovator Award and has been selected as a Fellow at the American Registry of Internet Numbers.

Shaena Johnson was born and raised in Louisiana. Shaena has over 10 years of organizing and advocacy experience through work in the community focusing on issues facing LGBTQ youth in the juvenile justice system. At the Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana and the Louisiana Center for Children's Rights, Shaena investigated conditions of confinement for incarcerated youth and supported defense attorneys with zealous advocacy and investigation for court-involved youth in New Orleans.

Jordi Figueras is originally from Vidreres, a small town North of Barcelona, Spain. He attended the University Politecnica de Catalunya and graduated as a Telecommunication Engineer. He is located in New Orleans for the last 7 years, and his primary skill-set is in Ruby on Rails development, but he also enjoys seeking out and trying new languages and frameworks. In his free time, you can find him at music shows, traveling around the world or sailing at the Ponchartrain lake.

Sunday, March 26, 2017

10:00 a.m.-12 p.m. **Walking Tour: African Resistance in the French Quarter**

Customized for NLG by historian **Leon Waters** of **Hidden History Tours**, this tour highlights the struggles of Africans and African Americans for complete emancipation from colonial times to today. The tour acquaints the guests with the social conditions of the enslaved, the Catholic Church's involvement in the slave commerce, the forms of resistance, the counterrevolutionary period of Reconstruction, the legal champions of resistance - attorneys Louis Martinet and Alexander P. Tureaud - and the struggles today. Sign up [here](#). Special price of \$30 per person plus 9 percent tax.

**Meet in front of Cayenne Gallery (Shakor's Art) at 702 Decatur St. (next to Café du Monde), across from Jackson Square.

Hosted by the Louisiana Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild and the Loyola University New Orleans College of Law Gillis Long Poverty Law Center