

Discussion of race in Chicago draws large crowd to DePaul

By Amanda Graham ('12) and David Zwaska ('12)

Given that a 2012 census data study conducted by the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research named Chicago the most racially segregated city in the United States, organizers from the Center for Public Interest Law (CPIL) chose a timely topic for the annual Vincentian Public Interest Law Symposium: race in Chicago. In an effort to narrow such an incredibly complex issue, organizers focused on three important manifestations of segregation, titling the event "Neighborhoods and the Legacy of Segregation in Chicago: A Discussion About Historical and Present Racism in Housing, Education, and Incarceration."

During the question and answer portion of the event, attendees emphasized that these discussions are critical to progress for people of color in Chicago, echoing Adams' sentiments.

The event continued on March 1 with three panel discussions that focused on the issues of race in housing, education and incarceration. Symposium organizers hoped to connect participants with activists and lawyers in the field, and to offer practical opportunities to combat racism.



A symposium attendee participates in the discussion with panelists and community members.

More than 100 lawyers, law students and activists attended the symposium, which began with a keynote address and discussion the evening of February 29 at Holland & Knight. The discussion took on the complex racial history of the city and featured Dr. Timuel Black, activist, community leader and oral historian; Virginia Martinez ('75), Chicago attorney and activist; and Adam Green, University of Chicago professor of American history. The speakers emphasized the importance of understanding Chicago's racial history in order to fight for racial justice now and in the future. Martinez and Black shared their personal experiences growing up in Chicago's segregated neighborhoods, and all three speakers inspired audience members with stories of their continuing fight for racial justice.

"It was nice that CPIL could connect students like me with living legends like Dr. Black. What struck me most was Dr. Black's discussion of the wealth gap within the black community . . . Dr. Black argued that the loss of social networks, generational knowledge and financial resources can be linked to the increased rates of incarceration, crime and other ailments of inner city black communities," says attendee Heather Adams ('12).

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The housing panel connected the historical struggle for public housing in Chicago to the current focus on Lathrop Homes, a public housing complex set for "transformation" by the Chicago Housing Authority. The panel featured a Lathrop Homes resident, Cynthia Scott, and three prominent voices in Chicago's housing rights community: Kate Walz, senior attorney, Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law; Sharon Legenza, executive director, Housing Action Illinois; and John McDermott, housing and land use director, Logan Square Neighborhood Association. Scott spoke about how her community is full of families who wish to continue living there, yet fear the city's plans for possible closure.

A graphic of three spotlights shining from the top left corner onto the text below.

Alumna Spotlight:

Francine Stewart Soliunas returns to DePaul

By Nickole Miller ('12)

Francine Stewart Soliunas has returned to the place she calls home. She earned both her undergraduate ('70) and law degrees ('73) from DePaul University. After graduating from law school, she worked as an assistant state's attorney for Cook County, an appellate defender for the state of Illinois' Prison Legal Services Project, a supervisory trial attorney for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, in-house counsel for the Bell System, and as assistant dean for student professional development at Chicago-Kent College of Law. This past winter marked her long-awaited return to DePaul, where she assumed the post of dean for strategic and community alliances at the College of Law.

Dean Soliunas' long love affair with DePaul began as an undergraduate student where she was an active participant and leader in campus life and public service. It was at a student government meeting where she met her lifelong friend and mentor, DePaul law professor Arthur Scheller, who encouraged her to apply to law school. "[Professor Scheller] saw something in me that I had not seen in myself," says Soliunas. "He helped me nurture a dream, a life and a passion."

In her new role at the College of Law, Dean Soliunas mentors, inspires and nurtures a new generation of DePaul students. She hopes to give law students, and students of color in particular, the tools to make connections, to develop legal and interpersonal skills, and to gain confidence so that they can become successful professionals. "My goal is to instill a belief in students that when they walk out of DePaul, they can walk away and compete with anyone," says Dean Soliunas. To that end, she has been reaching out to students and DePaul's diverse student organizations so they know she is here to help and eager to share her wisdom.



Francine Stewart Soliunas, Dean for Strategic and Community Alliances

In addition to mentoring and serving DePaul law students and student organizations, Dean Soliunas aims to better connect DePaul with the broader, diverse legal community. "I'm all about building relationships," she says. Dean Soliunas is working to build strategic alliances with other schools, organizations, and key players and firms in the legal profession in order to further enhance the name and reputation of DePaul. She sees DePaul as remarkable in both its quality of education and its dedication to the service of the poor and the marginalized. "I want people to understand that DePaul is a special place."

Dean Soliunas' office is located at 25 E. Jackson Blvd., O'Malley 943. She encourages students and alumni to stop by and say hello.

Legal Observer Program: *For lawyers, law students and legal workers*

The National Lawyers Guild Legal Observers, with their ubiquitous neon green hats, have been a fixture at marches and demonstrations in Chicago and nationwide for years. Please join in safeguarding the rights to free speech and public assembly by becoming a legal observer.

The legal observer program is working to ensure we have trained Legal Observers on the ground for the upcoming actions in May. The NLG Legal Observer Program is part of a comprehensive system of legal support coordinated by the guild to enable people to express their political views as fully as possible, without unconstitutional disruption or interference by the government, and with the least onerous consequences from the criminal justice system.

Please email NLG Chicago so we can let you know when the next legal observer training will be held. Trainings are short (about an hour) and are offered throughout the week and over the weekends. In addition, we can come to your organization to conduct the training if there are 10 or more trainees.

We need you to help us protect free speech and progressive activism. Join us!

Contact: chicago.lo.program@gmail.com

Norman Amaker retreat prepares next generation of public interest attorneys

By Erin Grotheer ('13)

"The legal system can force open doors and sometimes even knock down walls. But it cannot build bridges. That job belongs to you and me." This quote from Justice Thurgood Marshall inspired the 2012 Norman Amaker Public Interest Law & Social Justice Retreat theme: "Breaking Barriers and Building Bridges: Public Interest Initiatives for a Better Tomorrow."

Five DePaul law students attended this year's Amaker retreat in February at the Loyola University Chicago Retreat Campus in Woodstock, Illinois. The students, Megan Davis ('14), Erin Grotheer ('13), Samuel Keen ('14), Jordan Sartell ('12) and David Zwaska ('12), were able to attend the retreat thanks to generous funding from Dean Gregory Mark.

The retreat's namesake, the late Professor Norman Amaker, dedicated his legal career and life to issues of social justice and racial inequality. As a law professor at Loyola from 1976 until his passing in 2000, Professor Amaker encouraged the next generation of attorneys to fight for what they believe.

The retreat included two days of keynote speakers, issue-specific panels of professors and practitioners, and a student impact panel, as well as time for student discussion and networking. Although the specific topics ranged from immigration to the criminal justice

system to race relations, every speaker addressed the same central theme: "How do we, as law students, build bridges in the public interest legal world?" With more than 70 law students from across the Midwest in attendance, the mutual passion for public interest work was palpable. However, the shared concern over how to make a public interest career a realistic option was just as present.

The introductory speaker shattered any feelings of apprehension students may have felt. Heather Booth, founder and president of Midwest Academy, has been a resilient protestor and organizer since the 1960s. She exuded the kind of confident certainty in her convictions that public interest law students hope to one day possess.

A retreat attendee asked Booth how, in a world with so many problems, should someone decide which issue to tackle? She responded, "When you see an opening for justice, get the largest number of people through it that you can." Speakers like Booth ensured that the retreat's effects would be felt long after its conclusion, as students gained direction for their zeal and a practical outlet for their principles. Retreat participants gained substantive information about pressing legal issues and realistic tips on how to find a job after law school. Moreover, attendees left inspired. Retreat



Heather Booth answers law students' questions after speaking about activism and the importance of organizing.

attendee Megan Davis reflected: "The weekend was very empowering and it reinforced my desire to be a passionate advocate. I left on Sunday feeling like I had regained my perspective on why I chose law school."

The dozens of speakers offered students guidance, encouragement and hope. Attendees found comfort in hearing from so many successful social justice attorneys and activists who grappled with the same doubt and anxiety many law students feel. All speakers said the same thing: The fight is worth it in the end.

As Professor Florence Wagman Roisman of Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law said: "The battle is long and requires constant vigilance, but not to fight would be unpardonable."

Spring Break Border Project: At the front line of immigration law

By Colin Leicht ('12)

Instead of lounging at the beach for a week this year, five classmates spent their spring break working with immigration detainees in Harlingen, Texas. Now in its 12th year, the DePaul Spring Break Border Project assists ProBAR, one of the few public interest organizations helping immigration detainees in south Texas. During the project, three students assisted adults from Latin America and Africa seeking asylum and fighting deportation, and a team of two students helped a teenage mother from Guatemala fleeing gender-based violence.

"The best part was watching students get a case and in no time at all start advancing it towards a hearing," says Professor Linus Chan, immigration clinic instructor and faculty coordinator of the group. "They met a client and in one day were able to create a connection with a complete and total stranger and take their goals to heart."

Students also had the opportunity to tour the Harlingen border patrol station. The group observed that the office had a militaristic atmosphere, with an arsenal of about 100 shotguns and semiautomatic firearms. The station crew



From left, Jake Kanusik, Anita Gupta, Laura Horner and ProBAR Director Meredith Linsky.

explained to students that they use advanced surveillance and self-restraint protocols to ensure detainees are treated humanely, although not always comfortably.

"The part that had the biggest impact on me was the processing area," says Laura Horner ('13). In the processing area, students saw new detainees corralled into quadrants and peering out of cages. "That was the first time I really felt privileged and felt bad about it," Horner reflects.

At the end of the weeklong project, students had tackled six different cases and gained deeper insight about immigration issues at the border.

Immigration wars at the Supreme Court

By Cindy Bedrosian ('14)

Just weeks after oral arguments on the constitutionality of health care reform, the United States Supreme Court will hear *Arizona v. United States*, 11-182 (2012), one of the most publicized cases of the year. The Department of Justice is challenging four provisions of Arizona's controversial immigration law, SB 1070, under the Supremacy Clause. Parts of the statute were found to be unconstitutional by the district court, and the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed. Students, professors and administrators gathered on February 15 to hear Assistant Professor of Law Daniel I. Morales and Vice Dean and Associate Professor of Law David L. Franklin explain the issues surrounding the case and predict the potential outcome.

Professor Morales highlighted the history of migration policy in the United States. In the early 20th century, migration within the Western Hemisphere was unlimited; migrants from Central America and Mexico freely moved to the Southwest, where industries were largely dependent on seasonal labor. The migration policy of the early 20th century created an economic situation that sustains seasonal migration today.

Professor Morales argued that SB 1070 is unnecessary, as the federal government is prosecuting undocumented immigration at increasingly high rates. Between 1994 and 2004, prosecutions for undocumented immigration increased by 552 percent and between 2005 and 2010, prosecutions increased another 117 percent. According to Professor Morales, SB 1070 is likely motivated by legislators' interest in obtaining a monoculture, not by poor federal immigration enforcement. As he aptly stated: "Even if the federal government had perfect enforcement of immigration policy, the U.S. would still be multicultural. It is legally and demographically impossible to become a monoculture."

The Department of Justice is challenging SB 1070 under the doctrine of implied preemption, meaning the statute poses an obstacle to the object of federal law. The challenged provisions are section 2B, which authorizes state officials to check immigration status of a lawfully stopped person if they have reasonable suspicion that the person is undocumented; section 6, which authorizes state officials to make a warrantless arrest if probable cause exists; and section 3, which authorizes state officials to ask for immigration documents.

Although the law has not been explicitly challenged on foreign policy grounds, Dean Franklin explained that a plausible case could be made for a facial challenge on foreign policy ramifications. Many countries, including Brazil, Mexico and El Salvador, have come forth in opposition to SB 1070. The Supreme Court has overruled state statutes with similar negative foreign policy ramifications. For example, almost 12 years ago, the Supreme Court overruled a Massachusetts boycott of Myanmar products because of these policy concerns. SB 1070 is "not as overt as the Massachusetts law, but may have the same implications," he said.

Dean Franklin predicted that the case "may end with a whimper instead of a bang." The Supreme Court may reverse and dismiss the case as premature, as the challenged provisions have yet to go into effect and the true results remain unknown. However, we can remain optimistic that the Supreme Court will affirm the 9th Circuit and strike down SB 1070.



*Vice Dean
David Franklin*



*Professor
Daniel Morales*

Rising up for human rights

By Courtney Kelleles ('13)

The National Lawyers Guild Midwest Regional Conference, held in Chicago in March, helped progressive law students, legal workers and lawyers from across the region conceptualize a broad perspective of human rights and begin to transform talk into action. The conference, titled "Now's the Time! Rising Up for Human Rights," featured two trainings, two workshops and a variety of panels on topics such as modern social movements, workers fighting back, stopping the school-to-prison pipeline and legal responses to mass political protests.

Keynote speaker, Bill Goodman, civil rights attorney with Goodman & Hurwitz PC in Detroit, reminded attendees that the National Lawyers Guild, now in its 75th year, has a long history in progressive social movements. As Goodman encouraged thoughts on the struggles ahead, he made one point abundantly clear, "Democratic rights are wedded to economic rights."

On a later panel, speakers echoed Goodman's sentiment and emphasized that economic rights are indeed human rights. Leah Fried, union organizer with UE, an independent democratic union, spoke about the successful occupations of the Republic Window and Doors factory in 2008 and 2012. Like all of the conference's panelists, Fried poignantly expressed that in order to create change we must take action.

John Phyllo, legal director of the Maurice & Jane Sugar Law Center for Economic & Social Justice, also in Detroit, encouraged attendees to remember that effective lawyering requires a balance. "As an attorney, you must have politics and skills. If you are practicing without politics, you are just a mechanic. And if you are an attorney with politics, but without skills, you are just doing it for your ego, because you like it, but you are not moving society forward."

On the conference's second day, attendees had the option to attend a legal observer training or a know-your-rights train the trainer workshop. Both had the common goal of getting lawyers, law students and legal workers prepared to help protect protesters' First Amendment rights during the NATO summit in May. Despite the G8 summit's relocation to Camp David, there is every indication that the NATO summit will involve mass demonstrations and mass arrests. NLG is dedicated to providing a legal structure to defend and educate protesters at this historic event.

If you are interested in legal observing or providing legal assistance to support First Amendment rights during the NATO summit, please contact depaul.nlg@gmail.com.

Neighborhood Legal Assistance Project launches

By Margaret Duval, Program Director

Every Saturday morning, dozens of hungry people line up outside Grace Place Episcopal Church in the South Loop. Many arrive hours before the doors open at 8:30 a.m. to ensure they are at the front of the line for the hot, healthy breakfast served by volunteers from the First United Methodist Church at the Chicago Temple. On March 17, breakfast guests had a new reason to queue up early: the launch of the Neighborhood Legal Assistance Project (NLAP). The program is a collaboration between DePaul's Pro Bono & Community Service Initiative (PBCSI) and Center for Public Interest Law (CPIL) to provide legal assistance with issues related to criminal records and state identification, common problems for many of the breakfast guests.

After months of preparation, CPIL Director Shaye Loughlin, PBCSI Director Cheryl Price and I were eager to see our plans put into action. NLAP, says Price, "is an effort to bring the law school's resources to bear on the needs of people who are quite literally our neighbors." Most of the breakfast guests (there are more than 150 on an average Saturday morning) live at the nearby Pacific Garden Mission or on the streets near the law school. For many, their criminal records or lack of state IDs pose significant barriers to finding stable housing and employment. Happily, DePaul law students responded enthusiastically to our call for assistance. More than 30 attended the required training on a recent Saturday morning and seven turned out before 8:00 a.m. on the first day of their spring break to work their assigned shift on the day of the launch.

Led by Damon Ritenhouse ('11), the project's supervising attorney, the students interviewed and assisted nine guests. At the end of the day, three were well on their way to receiving their state IDs. One guest appeared to be eligible for criminal record expungement, and student volunteers will research his complete criminal record. If he is eligible, student volunteers also will draft the petition. However, of the guests seeking assistance with expungement or sealing of their criminal record, most were ineligible. The students were philosophical, noting that just giving the guests that information is a service. Of course, many were ready to plan the project's next steps. "I'm thinking we should look into adding services related to clemency petitions," mused Ritenhouse.

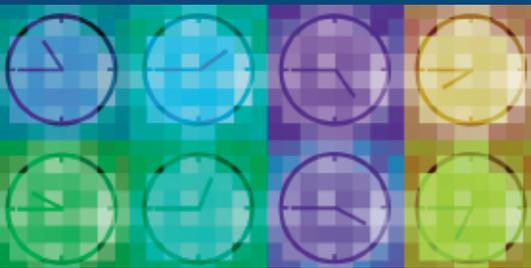


Brandon Clark and Jack Williams speak with an NLAP guest.

Student volunteer Sam Keen ('14) had only positive things to say about the new project. "This is the most excited I've been about anything since I started law school. It's great to be able to listen to the complicated and tragic problems these men and women are facing, and to be able to offer solutions, however minimal, to their difficult legal problems. NLAP is great for the volunteers as well, because it allows us to witness how energized and empowered people feel when given even just some representation in our legal system."

Given the level of support and enthusiasm from student volunteers and partners such as DePaul's Loop University Ministry, the Chicago Temple, Cabrini Green Legal Aid and the Franciscan Outreach Association, it is likely that NLAP will grow. Its current funding, from a combination of generous sources, including the law school, the Vincentian Endowment Fund, the Chicago Temple and private donors, will keep the legal help desk running through May 2013. If student volunteers and the hungry guests at Grace Place have their way, NLAP will be a permanent addition to the neighborhood.

For more information about the project, contact Cheryl Price at cprice13@depaul.edu or Margaret Duval at mduvall@depaul.edu.



Working double shifts for child protection

By Margaret Duval, Program Director



Rocío Armendariz ('07) didn't get to celebrate her birthday this year. The 28-year-old public defender was working at her part-time job as a babysitter. Five years after she graduated from law school, Armendariz barely makes enough money to pay her bills each month and supplements her salary with all of the babysitting jobs she can handle. Student loan payments consume almost half of her paycheck; rent, utilities and groceries take the other half. Armendariz cuts costs by biking to work and eating "glorified Ramen noodles" for lunch, while her babysitting work allows for a few luxuries. She loves to cook, and good ingredients can get expensive.

The double shifts make for some long days, though. If parents are out late, she might not have time for much rest before she has to be in court the next morning.

According to Armendariz, it's worth it. Although she thinks about her financial situation every single day, she never considers leaving her work in the Child Protection Division. Having worked in the private sector while applying for public interest jobs, Armendariz is confident that she's in the right line of work. "I'm finally where I need to be, want to be, and where I can do the most good."

Colleagues and clients alike value her commitment. Robert Swartz, an assistant public defender who works with her, says, "From day one [Armendariz] has answered the challenge and interacted with the clients in a way that goes beyond just meeting their legal needs."

"The community I serve needs an advocate," Armendariz notes, "and I'm just thankful I get to be one."

Journal for Social Justice takes a look at Occupy

By Adrian Bleifuss ('12)

The *Journal for Social Justice's* tradition of an annual symposium continued in March with "New Battlefronts: Struggles for Economic Justice in the Year of Upheavals." Over the past year, hundreds of thousands of Americans have taken to the streets, squares and parks of their cities from Madison to Manhattan and beyond, clamoring against economic inequality, home foreclosures, the erosion of workers' rights and the seeming indifference of an unaccountable elite. This year's symposium featured a range of lawyers, activists and organizers, and addressed the social and economic grievances that produced Occupy Wall Street and other popular mobilizations.



Occupiers gather for a general assembly in Grant Park.

The event opened with a panel examining the intersection between economic injustice and race. The panel included Jose Luis Gallardo, Latino Union organizer; Keeanga Taylor, tenant rights activist and researcher in the history of housing policy; and Kelli Dudley, attorney and adjunct professor of housing law at DePaul. Gallardo shared experiences of being a day laborer. Taylor gave an overview of the racialized history of housing policy in urban America, providing background on the 20th-century policies that produce the disparities today in foreclosures rates and loan servicing. Dudley spoke about the minimal procedural protections extended to homeowners facing foreclosure. She also provided compelling evidence of sinister elements in the banking sector that view housing precarity as socially desirable. "This is part of what the right has been fighting for," said Dudley.

The discussion continued with renowned labor lawyer and author Tom Geoghegan. Geoghegan is the author of such acclaimed books as *WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?* and *SEE YOU IN COURT*. His most recent work, *WERE YOU BORN ON THE WRONG CONTINENT?*, explores the social democratic features of Western European societies. During his keynote, Geoghegan proposed a legal framework in which the right to organize would be understood as a civil right, suggesting that the beleaguered labor movement might reverse its fortunes by following a pattern similar to that of the civil rights movement of decades past. Geoghegan argued that unions should more aggressively organize in the American South. He also provided a critique of traditional left-labor view that right-to-work laws make organizing impossible. Geoghegan cast the fight for economic democracy as the greatest struggle of our times, urging those in the crowd to devote themselves professionally to the cause of economic justice. "As lawyers, and as future lawyers, you should devote yourselves to attacking economic inequality in our society," said Geoghegan.

The symposium concluded with a panel focused more narrowly on the Occupy phenomenon. National Lawyers Guild attorney Jerry Boyle spoke from his experience as a regular legal observer and described the varying relationships between the police at Occupy encampments and demonstrations in different cities. James Thindwa, labor organizer working primarily among charter school teachers, suggested that Occupy has already accomplished a great deal by "changing the debate and reinserting economic inequality into the political discourse." Richard Monje, vice president of Workers United and a veteran of New Left Chicano movements of the late 1960s, provided some historical perspective and placed Occupy in the context of earlier movements for radical social change. The panelists all made it clear that the work of Occupy was very much unfinished, and they eagerly anticipate the development of this still-young movement.

Continued from cover

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The education panel discussed the history of the 1980 Chicago Public Schools desegregation consent decree and where the school system currently stands with respect to race issues. Colleen Connell, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois, discussed the briefs that her organization filed in the school desegregation litigation in Chicago. Speakers Edgar Epps, professor of educational policy and community studies, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and Andrea Kayne Kaufman, associate professor and department chair, DePaul University School of Education Leadership Language & Curriculum, made clear that much work remains to be done to ensure access to the school system for minority students.

The final panel, a discussion on mass incarceration, tied many of these concepts together. Civil rights attorney Stan Willis discussed his experiences fighting racist policing. Claudia Valenzuela ('02), associate director of litigation at the National Immigrant Justice Center, connected this racist policing with the xenophobia and racism faced by immigrant communities. David Bates, a victim of police torture under the authority of former Chicago Police Commander Jon Burge, spoke of his challenges and collateral punishments post-incarceration. At the panel's end, First Defense Legal Aid (FDLA) called attendees to action, encouraging them to get involved in FDLA's hotline, which protects arrested Chicagoans from brutal and unconstitutional post-arrest interrogations.



From left, symposium speakers Dr. Timuel Black, Professor Adam Green and Virginia Martinez.

The program concluded with Associate Dean of Clinical Programs Andrea Lyon and Clinical Professor Julie Lawton, both of whom are members of the CPIL committee and are practicing attorneys engaged in racial justice work.

Professor Lawton, who joined DePaul last fall, noted the importance of continuing discussions about race in Chicago. "The symposium is an important opportunity for an engaged debate and an exchange of ideas about our city's history and future. The participants were some of the city's most prominent thinkers and leaders. I was honored to co-host such an important and timely event."

In keeping with the symposium organizers' call to action, if you recognize racial injustice in Chicago, do something! Video footage of the symposium, materials from the event, and ways to get involved are available at tinyurl.com/DePaul2012.



Lathrop Homes, Chicago.

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