

Speaker Bios



Amy Albert
Covenant House

Amy Albert is a Staff Attorney at Covenant House NJ, where she provides legal counsel on a range of issues to the homeless young people that Covenant House serves ranging from misdemeanor legal work to advocacy for survivors of trafficking to work around identity theft. Prior to her work at Covenant House, Amy served as the Coordinator of the Brooklyn Adolescent Representation Team at Brooklyn Defender Services where she raised funds to begin the unit and served more than 1,000 young people age 16-24 charged with crimes. Amy has previously worked as a Court Attorney for Kings County Family Court Judge Daniel Turbow, a Conciliation Specialist at the US Department of Justice, and as Law Guardian for youth charged with Juvenile Delinquencies at the Legal Aid Society. In addition to her legal work, Amy serves as the Executive Director and Board Chair of Haven Adolescent Community Respite Center - a Jersey City nonprofit engaged in building resiliency, preventing youth homelessness and incarceration, when youth and their families face family conflict.



Brian Blalock
Cabinet Secretary of
the New Mexico Children, Youth,
and Families Department

Brian Blalock is the Cabinet Secretary of the New Mexico Children, Youth, and Families Department, which serves children statewide with a focus on Behavioral Healthcare, Protective Services, Juvenile Justice, and Early Childhood services. Before coming to New Mexico, Brian was the Law and Policy Director at Tipping Point Community, a non-profit in San Francisco, where he looked at systemic funding issues that create barriers to entitled services and worked collaboratively with public sector, provider, and advocate partners to foster workable solutions to complex problems related to poverty. Prior to joining Tipping Point, Brian was the founder and director of the Youth Justice Project (YJP) at Bay Area Legal Aid providing civil legal services and direct representation to youth involved in the delinquency, dependency, and homelessness systems under the age of 25. Brian has worked as a religious affairs consultant, a fight trainer, and a public school teacher in the south Bronx. He has graduate degrees from Columbia and Harvard and a law degree from Stanford Law School.

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Cierra Boughton
University of Central Florida

Cierra Boughton is a student at the University of Central Florida majoring in Sociology and earning a minor in Political Science. Cierra experienced homelessness first hand in high school as a result of her parents kicking her out. Due to her homelessness, she dropped out of school for eight months, but still managed to graduate due to the support of her teachers and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison (HEARTH program) social worker Nakita! Cierra is passionate about helping homeless youth find resources in their community, including accessible medical resources, and extending transition living programs so that all young people can access the housing and services that they need for as long as they need them! Cierra became passionate about advocacy and raising awareness during her time in high school as a volunteer and serving on student government her freshman year of college. Currently, Cierra serves on the National Network for Youth Advisory Council as well as The Homeless Task Force in central Florida.



Alex Briscoe
Alameda County Health Care
Services Agency

Alex Briscoe was appointed director of the Alameda County Health Care Services Agency in 2009 where he led one of the state's largest public health systems, overseeing health and hospital systems, public health, behavioral health, and environmental health departments with an annual budget of \$700 million and 6,200 FTE contracted and civil service staff. Before joining the county, he was the director of the Chappell Hayes Health Center at McClymonds High School in West Oakland, a satellite outpatient center of Children's Hospital and Research Center. Mr. Briscoe's work has helped design the nexus of public health and public education. He has designed and administered a number of mental health and physical health programs and services in child serving systems, including home visiting programs, programs for medically fragile children, and clinical and development programs in child welfare, juvenile justice, and early childhood settings.

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Currey Cook
Lambda Legal

Currey Cook is Counsel and Director of the Youth in Out-of-Home Care Project at Lambda Legal, the nation's oldest and largest national legal organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of LGBT people and people with HIV. Cook advocates on behalf of LGBTQ+ youth in child welfare and juvenile justice settings and on behalf of youth experiencing homelessness. He works at the state and federal level to achieve systemic reform through a mix of litigation, proactive law and policy development, and training for system professionals. Prior to joining Lambda six years ago, Cook represented children in child welfare, delinquency, and juvenile and family court cases in Alaska, New Jersey, and New York City.



Meredith Desautels
Youth Law Center

Meredith Desautels is a staff attorney at the Youth Law Center. Her work focuses on ending the criminalization of childhood and replacing youth incarceration with positive, developmentally-appropriate supports that are rooted in family and community. In partnership with the Young Women's Freedom Center, Meredith's work is grounded in movement-based legal strategies that seek to build power within directly impacted families and communities. Prior to joining the Youth Law Center, Meredith was a Leading Edge Fellow funded by the Rosenberg Foundation. As a Leading Edge Fellow, she worked at the San Francisco Public Defender's Office and Bay Area Legal Aid, representing young people impacted by the juvenile delinquency system. Prior to that, she was a Skadden Foundation fellow and then staff attorney at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area, and she served as a law clerk to the Honorable John T. Noonan on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

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Aja Ellington
Free Your Wings Online
Youth Mentoring

Aja Ellington is Saint Louis native and Indiana resident. She obtained a B.A. in Social Work from Indiana University, and is in the final stages of receiving her M.S.W. She is the proud Founder and Executive Director of Free Your Wings Online Youth Mentoring (FYWOYM) – a community-driven non-profit organization. Her organization strives to break psychological & societal barriers restricting the success and growth of young people living in poverty. FYWOYM empowers underserved families and youth through continuous support services encompassing strength-based programming and mentoring. Advocating for the people of Saint Joseph County Neighborhoods, FYWOYM officially launched in 2019 and is on the road to becoming a certified 501(C) (3) non-profit organization.



Mitchell Findley
Tipping Point Community

From ages 14 to 18, Mitch Findley was in and out of Foster Care, including three separate placements. At 17, he was recruited to become one of the Founding Members of VOICES, the nation's first youth-led community center that serves current and former foster youth in Napa, California. While working at VOICES, Mitch helped to implement and develop three additional youth-led community centers in the counties of Santa Rosa, Santa Clara, and Monterey. Mitch is now Senior Planner at Tipping Point Community, in San Francisco, overseeing the Transition-Aged Youth work of the Chronic Homelessness Initiative.

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Elliott Hinkle
Child Welfare and
LGBTQ Consultant

Elliott Orrin Hinkle (they/them) is an alumnus of the Wyoming Foster Care System. They are an advocate for child welfare, mental health, and the LGBTQ population. They graduated from Portland State University (PSU) in June of 2016 with a bachelor's degree in Women, Gender, Sexuality, and Queer Studies. While completing their degree they worked at the Regional Research Institute (RRI) at PSU as a coach on the My Life and Better Futures Projects. Nationally they work as a consultant to the National Capacity Building Center for States at ICF International and at JBS International working on NYTD. Since 2014 they have been a trainer of Youth Thrive and recently were certified to train on Youth Thrive for Youth. They have served as Commissioner and Vice Chair to the Oregon Governor's Child Foster Care Advisory Commission. They were a My Life coach and LGBTQ specialist on the PDX-Connect team at New Avenues for Youth before accepting a new position at the RRI. They are now the Youth/Young Adult Coordinator for Oregon Healthy Transitions at PSU.



Susan Jang
Google

Susan Jang is part of the Google legal team and has supported a variety of groups, including M&A, Corporate Securities, commercial deals in Asia Pacific, and marketing. Susan previously worked at Sullivan & Cromwell LLP as an associate attorney in the General Practice Group. Susan is active in pro bono and part of Google's Legal Impact Committee. She is also on the board of Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto. Susan earned her bachelor's degree in communication studies from UCLA and her JD from Harvard Law School.

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Cathy Krebs
Children's Rights
Litigation Committee

Cathy Krebs serves as the Committee Director of the American Bar Association Section of Litigation Children's Rights Litigation Committee (CRLC). Cathy works with CRLC leaders to implement the ambitious agenda of the Committee, which was created to address the vast under representation of children in all aspects of the legal system. The committee endeavors to inspire and assist lawyers to undertake the direct pro bono representation of children and to support and multiply the number, range and quality of children's legal projects. The committee offers support, training, referrals and information to lawyers and children's law programs to assist them in providing the highest quality of representation for children. Prior to her position with the committee she worked at the Children's Law Center of Massachusetts (CLCM), first as a Skadden Fellow where her project focused on representing children in abuse and neglect cases and expediting their cases to a permanent plan. Following this fellowship she became a staff attorney at CLCM where she continued to represent children in abuse and neglect cases as well as education cases.



Abd'Allah Lateef
Incarcerated Children's
Advocacy Network

Abd'Allah Wali Lateef is the Pennsylvania Coordinator for the Incarcerated Children's Advocacy Network (ICAN), an outreach initiative of the Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth headquartered in Washington. In spite of being condemned to life without possibility of parole at 17 years old—and without hope or expectation of ever being released from prison, Abd'Allah intentionally sought to transcend the ordinary in order to become extraordinary. While incarcerated, Abd'Allah studied legal jurisprudence, worked as a paralegal in the Para-Professional Law Clinic. While petitioning to overturn his "life without parole" sentence, Abd'Allah engaged himself in numerous learning, leadership, and mentoring roles within the prison. Since his release, Abd'Allah has continued his youth advocacy and sentencing reform efforts. Today, along with being the PA-ICAN Coordinator for the Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth, Abd'Allah is also the Chairman, Pro Tempore, of Life-After-Life, Inc., a member of the Philadelphia Reentry Coalition, a member of the University of Pennsylvania's Goldring Reentry Initiatives Advisory Board and lead fellow for the Media Justice Fellowship sponsored by Lenfest Institute for Journalism and the Philadelphia Reentry Think Tank.

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Michelle Leung
LinkedIn

Michelle Leung is head of Corporate Legal at LinkedIn and a member of the LinkedIn legal team's Pro Bono Committee.



Hilari Lipton
New Mexico Children, Youth
and Families Department

Hilari Lipton is the Director of Transition Age Youth for the New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department. In this role she is responsible for systems innovations that improve the outcomes for system impacted youth. She is an executive-on-loan from the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Jim Casey Initiative, where she specializes in cross-sector collaborations, authentic youth engagement, and promoting strategies that lead to equitable outcomes for young people. Hilari has worked on child welfare and juvenile justice issues for more than fifteen years and has extensive experience as a policy analyst and program manager. Before joining the Initiative, Hilari was the statewide Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Attorney for the New Mexico Supreme Court, where she led a major initiative to improve the quality of legal representation for New Mexico's most vulnerable children and families. She also served on the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) Statewide Leadership Team, where she helped develop a statewide juvenile probation order incorporating JDAI core principles and led efforts to expand the JDAI model statewide.

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Ashley Melwani
Legal Services for Children

Ashley is a senior attorney and the Pro Bono Director at Legal Services for Children (LSC), a non-profit law firm dedicated to representing youth in the San Francisco Bay Area. As Pro Bono Director, Ashley recruits, trains, and mentors pro bono attorneys from the private sector to represent youth in immigration, guardianship, and school discipline cases. Ashley's primary practice at LSC has focused on representing immigrant children, primarily unaccompanied minors who have come to the United States without a parent or guardian, fleeing violence and instability in their countries of origin. As a member of LSC's Detained Immigrant Children's Project (DICP), she has provided Know Your Rights presentations, legal screenings, and both direct and "friend of the court" representation to unaccompanied minors in the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement in Northern California. She has represented youth in removal proceedings before the immigration court and the Board of Immigration Appeals. Prior to assuming the role of Pro Bono Director, she also oversaw LSC's DACA ("Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals") Project.



Miguel Molina
Hewlett Packard Enterprise

Miguel Molina is Counsel at Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) in San Jose, California, where he negotiates and manages agreements on behalf of HPE's Financial Services business unit. In Miguel's previous role as Litigation Counsel, he focused his practice on commercial and employment litigation. At HPE, he also serves on the company's Pro Bono and Inclusion & Diversity Committees. In addition, Miguel maintains an active pro bono practice and serves on the Advisory Board of OneJustice, a nonprofit dedicated to providing legal services to low-income Californians. Miguel received his law degree from the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law, and his bachelor's degree, with honors, from Stanford University. While in law school, Miguel served as Articles Editor on the California Law Review.

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Colin Murray
Baker McKenzie

Colin Murray is Chief Executive Officer in Baker McKenzie's North America Region with responsibility for managing practices in the United States, Mexico and Canada. A seasoned trial lawyer who represents global and local clients in complex, fact-intensive business disputes, Colin has tried over 50 cases through final jury verdict, as well as a substantial number of bench trials and private domestic and international arbitration proceedings. He is a former prosecutor who regularly conducted internal investigations on behalf of special committees, and has defended SEC and state agency enforcement actions on behalf of companies and individuals. He also has significant appellate experience, having briefed and argued in the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and the California Court of Appeal.



Jyoti Nanda
Golden Gate University
School of Law

Jyoti Nanda is an Associate Professor of Law at Golden Gate University (GGU) School of Law where she teaches Criminal Law, Professional Responsibility, and Juvenile Law. Her research and writing is at the intersections of gender, race, disability, education, and juvenile justice. Nanda's 2012 Law Review article served as the framework for a national report on the adultification of girls of color in our criminal justice system; her current article, The Construction and Criminalization of Disability in School Incarceration in the Columbia Journal of Race & Law (2019) explores how race functions to ascribe and criminalize disability. Nanda is currently involved in an education project to address the knowledge gaps about the justice system for youth in the Los Angeles delinquency system that she plans to scale statewide.

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Noah Nash
Foster Youth in Action

Noah Nash (he/him/his) is an interdisciplinary leader working on behalf of system-involved youth. Noah's skills include teaching, research, public speaking, copywriting, and web development. After earning his BA in Recording Arts Technology from Loyola Marymount University, Noah served as an advocate and educator with the Children's Law Center of California, where he designed and delivered culturally relevant trainings to youth statewide. As a consultant, Noah plans and executes projects that improve life for people impacted by systems. This Spring, Noah successfully defended his dissertation on technology, foster care, and change to earn his Doctorate in Education Leadership. Currently, Noah is a volunteer board member of Foster Youth in Action.



Jaclyn Pampel
Baker McKenzie

Jaclyn Pampel is a Pro Bono Partner in Baker McKenzie's Pro Bono Practice. Jackie has an active practice in immigration, including recent cases before the Board of Immigration Appeals and the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals and she represents women in correctional facilities across California who are seeking parole. In addition to her work with NGOs and corporate partners in pro bono matters on a global scale, she spearheads the Firm's Virtual Legal Clinic for Youth and teaches on litigation and advocacy skills with NITA and at University of San Diego School of Law. Prior to this, Jackie as a Partner in Baker McKenzie's nationally recognized Tax Litigation practice.

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Tristan Torres

Tristan Torres is a former foster youth, children's rights advocate, and LGBTQ activist. In his home state of Nevada, Tristan lobbied for a law that applied protections for youth in out-of-home care against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. AB-99 was passed bipartisanship and signed into law on April 4, 2017. He has also worked with several non-profits like the ACLU, Foster Club, Human Rights Campaign, Lambda Legal, and others to share his personal experience and promote policies locally and nationally that defend the rights of underserved youth.



Casey Trupin
Raikes Foundation

Casey Trupin is the director of the Raikes Foundation's youth homelessness strategy, which supports efforts in Washington state as well as national approaches to ensure that all youth have a safe and stable place to live. Casey Trupin joined the Raikes Foundation in 2015. Prior to coming to the Foundation, Trupin was the Directing Attorney for the Children and Youth Project at Columbia Legal Services, where he engaged in litigation, legislative advocacy and other systemic initiatives to improve outcomes for children, youth and adults experiencing homelessness, as well as those in foster care and the justice system. Casey has chaired a number of national initiatives related to children and youth, including the American Bar Association's (ABA) Commission on Homelessness and Poverty and the ABA's Children's Rights Litigation Committee. He has authored and edited numerous books and articles on at-risk, homeless and foster children and, in 2011, was awarded the ABA's Child Advocacy Award—Distinguished Lawyer. Trupin has worked on issues related to youth experiencing homelessness since 1994 in Seattle, California, Washington DC and throughout Latin America.

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Angela Vigil
Baker McKenzie

Angela C. Vigil is a Partner and Executive Director of Pro Bono at the law firm of Baker McKenzie. She has an active practice in the representation of children in children's law, in appellate work and in human rights and civil rights advocacy. Angela helps lead teams on child welfare, juvenile justice and education issues in federal circuit courts, state supreme courts and in the appellate and trial courts of Florida where she has been focusing on the representation of victims of immigrant children and trafficking victims in Miami and from around the nation. In 2018 Angela was honored by the Financial Times as "Top 10 Legal Innovator" and in 2019 was named as one of "Women Who Inspire Us" by the ABA Section of Litigation.