17th ABA National Conference on Children & the Law: 
*Strengthening Our Advocacy for Results (SOAR)* 
April 27-28, 2017 
Ritz Carlton Tysons Corner, VA

---

**Agenda**  
*Thursday, April 27*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 8:00 – 8:30 a.m. | Registration and Breakfast  
Continental Breakfast and Registration in Registration Foyer |
| 8:30 – 10:45 a.m. | Welcome and Opening Plenary  
**WELCOME & INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**  
• Prudence Beidler Carr, Director, ABA Center on Children and the Law  
**PRESENTATION OF THE MARK HARDIN AWARD FOR CHILD WELFARE LEGAL SCHOLARSHIP AND SYSTEMS CHANGE TO MARGARET BURT**  
• By Mimi Laver and Jennifer Renne, ABA Center on Children and the Law  
**OPENING PLENARY**  
Salon I & II  
**CHILD WELFARE LAW, ISN’T THAT DEPRESSING**  
*Margaret Burt, JD, Private Attorney and ABA Consultant*  
Margaret A Burt has made the practice of child welfare law her career choice since 1979. She currently has a private practice in upstate New York and through the years has had the privilege of representing parents, children, agencies, and foster parents in trial and appellate courts on the full range of child welfare work. She trains attorneys, Judges and caseworkers on child welfare issues all over the country - over 45 states to date. Margaret is also very involved in state legislation in the field.  
Margaret will speak about her personal decision to work in this area of law - and to continue this as her career choice. She will reflect on the experiences she has had in court, in the field and in her travels over the years. |
ABA’S COMMITMENT TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
• Hilarie Bass, President-Elect, American Bar Association

REDEFINING WHAT JUSTICE MEANS IN CHILD WELFARE
• Lexie Pérez-Grüber, Policy Associate, American Public Human Services Association
Lexie Pérez-Grüber works to pursue excellence in child welfare and child care by representing state and local agencies before Congress and the Administration. Ms. Pérez-Grüber has testified before the United States Senate Finance Committee and the Connecticut State Legislature, presented at Congressional briefings on child welfare issues, and published many articles on these topics.

Dr. Cornel West famously said that “justice is what love looks like in public.” Informed by her own personal journey through foster care, Ms. Pérez-Grüber will discuss the injustices she bore witness to and her search for justice. Drawing on her professional experiences and her legislative advocacy, including her testimony before Congress that led to the introduction of the Family First Act, Ms. Pérez-Grüber will also challenge the audience to reconsider the ways they can involve current and former foster youth in their work. Ms. Pérez-Grüber’s personal and professional accomplishments are featured in the upcoming documentary, Lost in America.

11:00 – 12:30 p.m.   Workshop Session A

Plaza

PARENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN CHILD WELFARE CASES: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW
• Honorable Marguerite Downing, Los Angeles Superior Court
• Robyn M. Powell, JD, Lurie Institute for Disability Policy, Brandeis University
• Kimberly Tissot, MSW, Able South Carolina

Parents with disabilities are often viewed as unfit based solely on their disability and are not provided with appropriate family preservation and reunification services and supports that are tailored to their needs. This session provides an overview of applicable laws and federal guidance followed by an examination of unique challenges and common pitfalls attorneys encounter when working on dependency cases that involve parents with disabilities. We will also discuss real-world experiences and recent case law.

Participants will learn about working on cases that involve parents with disabilities and will come away with strategies and best practices for successfully advocating for clients with disabilities.

Attaché

WHAT EVERY CHILDREN’S LAWYER SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ADVOCATING FOR HOMELESS YOUTH
• Casey Trupin, JD, Raikes Foundation
• Brian Blalock, JD, Tipping Point Community
• Michael Santos, JD, National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty

Court-involved children and youth can be at tremendous risk of becoming homeless. This session identifies and explores risk factors for youth homelessness and addresses particular legal issues that arise for homeless youth.

Attendees who work with youth on child welfare, juvenile justice, and education issues, in particular, will learn about ways to prevent homelessness for their clients and about how to identify and address their clients’ legal needs if they do become homeless.
**The Indian Child Welfare Act: 2017**
- Kathy Deserly, Capacity Building Center for Tribes, Tribal Law and Policy Institute
- Jack F. Trope, JD, Casey Family Programs
- Margaret Burt, JD, Private NY Attorney and ABA Consultant
- Scott Trowbridge, JD, ABA Center on Children and the Law

New federal ICWA Regulations and Guidelines were issued in 2016. This session will provide an overview of the law, an analysis of these recent developments, and recent case law. Presenters will also share practice tips for attorneys and courts interacting with various types of clients.

Participants will learn the history of why ICWA was passed and how it affects their work with clients. Participants should expect to come out of the session feeling more comfortable advocating for any client around the Act.

**Applying Education Research to Advocacy and Action for Students in Foster Care**
- Elysia Clemens, PhD, Kristen Klopfenstein, PhD, University of Northern Colorado
- Judith Martinez, MURP, Colorado Department of Education
- Kathleen McNaught, JD, ABA Center on Children and the Law (moderator)

Researchers have identified patterns in school data (e.g., attendance, behavior, course completion, and educational stability) that are early indicators a client might be disengaging from school or not making progress toward a diploma. This session creates a bridge between that research and on-the-ground advocacy by highlighting actions that directly support the educational success of children in foster care.

Participants will learn strategies and tools for asking the right questions to get valid information and determine how to overcome barriers to educational progress for students in foster care.

**Discussion Group: The Family Justice Initiative: Parents’ and Children’s Attorneys Joining Together to Improve Outcomes for Families**
- Leslie Heimov, JD, Children’s Law Center of California
- Mimi Laver, JD, ABA Center on Children and the Law

This session will engage participants in a discussion about the new Family Justice Initiative (FJI), which focuses on ways that parents’ and children’s counsel can join forces to strengthen outcomes for families.

Attendees will join in a conversation about how to build a joint campaign around the shared goal that every child and every parent have high quality representation when child welfare courts make life-changing decisions about their families.

12:30 – 2:00 p.m.  **Lunch on your own**
2:00 – 3:30 p.m.  **Workshop Session B**

**Immigrant Children in the Child Welfare System: How Best to Address Their Needs**
- Randi Mandelbaum, JD, LLM, Child Advocacy Clinic, Rutgers Law School
- Joanne Gottesman, JD, Immigrant Justice Clinic, Rutgers Law School
- Meredith Pindar, JD, NJ Department of Children and Families

This session will examine the correlation between addressing a child’s immigration needs and achieving permanency and stability for a child in the child welfare system.

Attendees will learn about the common forms of immigration relief for children, including Special Immigrant Juvenile status, and about best practices for ensuring that child welfare agencies meet immigrant youth’s particular needs.
This workshop addresses the needs of youth who run from care or who are at risk of running from care, with a focus on sharing strategies that reduce placements, build resiliency, and address the specific needs of cross-over, CSEC, and LGBTQ youth. We hope participants will come to learn, as well as to share innovative programs in their own jurisdictions.

Participants will learn about new and emerging strategies for identifying and providing services to three groups of youth: 1) those at risk of running from care; 2) those on the run to bring them back to care; and 3) youth who return to care.

During this workshop, presenters will share An Advocate’s Policy Guide for Promoting System Change and Better Outcomes for LGBTQ Youth of Color in Child Welfare – shaped by over 50 system-involved LGBTQ youth of color across the country – and research on relevant state regulations on placement.

Participants will gain a better understanding both of effective policies for promoting better outcomes for LGBTQ and gender nonconforming youth and of how to use this information to support advocacy efforts for client representation, policy change, and system reform.

This workshop will explore the intersection between ASFA’s “reasonable efforts” requirements to preserve or reunify families and the child welfare’s system obligation to ensure full and equal opportunities for all persons involved in the system.

Participants will acquire a better understanding of how federal civil rights laws protect children and families from unlawful discrimination in the administration of child welfare programs, activities and services.

Federal and state laws increasingly require youth engagement in court hearings and case planning, which in turn requires practice changes for all those working with youth, including foster parents, caseworkers, judges, attorneys and GALs. In this interactive session, we will discuss how youth involvement provides advantages for youth and courts. We will also address challenges and concerns that often arise in regard to including youth in court.

Participants will learn key strategies for successfully encouraging youth participation in court hearings and will come away with tools and resources from around the country that help make the permanency planning and court process more inviting and meaningful to youth.

3:30 – 3:45 p.m.  Break
### Workshop Session C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Speakers</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3:45 – 5:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Attaché</td>
<td><strong>Holistic Advocacy for Families Involved in a Dependency Case in Tribal Court</strong></td>
<td>Amy Lettig, JD, Tulalip Office of Civil Legal Aid</td>
<td>This workshop will share experiences about a holistic approach to representing parents, assisting families in acquiring services, and working collaboratively in the tribal community context. Attendees will learn how to engage clients involved in dependency cases in tribal court to improve outcomes for the families. Attendees will also learn skills for communicating complex legal concepts to drug affected clients and will gain practice guidance on working in low income tribal communities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Colonnade  |          | **They Took the Kids and I Signed a Safety Plan: Legal Issues in Safety Plans and Other Non-Judicial Removals of Children** | Diane L. Redleaf, JD, Family Defense Center  
Carolyn Kubitschek, JD, Lansner & Kubitschek  
Anne Marie Lancourt, JD, MAT, ABA Center on Children and the Law | This workshop will discuss federal civil rights decisions that set the legal standard for emergency removals and safety plans that separate children from their parents during child protection investigations, including the impact of family separations in creating a “shadow foster care system.” Participants will learn about constitutional standards for removing children from their parents without consent, limitations on safety plans, and relevant federal litigation and state legislation. They will also gain strategies for related legal and policy advocacy. |
| Plaza      |          | **Building a Holistic System of Support and Advocacy for Transition Aged Youth in the Child Welfare System** | Jennifer Pokempner, JD, Juvenile Law Center  
Angie Schwartz, JD, Alliance for Children’s Rights  
Brian Blalock, JD, Tipping Point Community  
Sarah Helvey, JD, MS, Nebraska Appleseed | This session tackles the topic of engaging with and providing effective services for transition age youth. Participants will be equipped with strategies for supporting older youth, ranging from extended foster care, to smartphone apps, and the provision of post discharge legal services. |
| Consulate  |          | **Sending An SOS: Advocating for Change**                          | Melissa Tanguay Laney, JD, Adams County Children and Youth Services  
Kirsten Johnson, MSW, LSW, Hempfield Behavioral Health  
Mary Bissell, JD, ChildFocus | This workshop explores the findings behind the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s national movement to transform foster parenting. Without strong supports and a valued role in a child’s service team, foster families often lack tools they need to address the joys and challenges of caring for children in out of home placement. Participants will hear about experiences from Adams County, Pennsylvania, where the child welfare agency created the Securing our Stability (SOS) program, an initiative that provides trauma-informed support to foster parents to strengthen and sustain these critical relationships. That program integrates assessment tools and other strategies that predict stress, measure hope, and identify foster family needs. Participants will learn how agencies and courts can transform their own partnerships with foster families. Legal representatives will learn how to better support foster families in their primary roles to ensure permanency and well-being for children in foster care. |
### Ambassador (limited to first 25 participants)

**DISCUSSION GROUP: LAWYERS USING DATA AND RESEARCH FOR ADVOCACY**
- Christopher E. Church, JD, MS, Children’s Law Center at University of South Carolina School of Law
- Kristin Kelly, JD, ABA Center on Children and the Law

We live in a data-driven world. Nearly every aspect of our lives – politics, finance, social and professional relationships, hobbies, etc. – are informed by data. For lawyers working in child welfare, our data-driven world is a result not only of our funding requirements, which typically require data collection and analysis, but also by our own interest in supporting research efforts to better understand how our advocacy can promote better outcomes for children and families.

Participants will learn about and share strategies for how lawyers and other child welfare professionals can be better consumers of data and research.

---

**5:30 – 7:00 p.m. Conference Reception in Old Dominion**

*Thank you to the Ritz-Carlton Hotel for generously providing the food for this event*

---

**Friday, April 28**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 8:15 – 8:45 a.m. | **Coffee and Tea**  
Coffee and Tea in Registration Foyer |
| 8:45 – 10:15 a.m. | **Workshop Session D**  
**LEGAL OPTIONS FOR IMMIGRANT CAREGIVERS**  
- Jennifer Nagda, JD, Young Center for Immigrant Children’s Rights  
- Cristina Ritchie Cooper, JD, ABA Center on Children and the Law  
Challenges that non-parent caregivers face – e.g. whether they can serve as approved foster care placements, how they can enroll the child in school or seek medical care outside the child welfare system, if custody or guardianship is a realistic option – are amplified when the caregiver is not a U.S. citizen.  
Attendees will learn about legal caregiving options for immigrants including state citizenship requirements for foster parent certification; options for sponsors reuniting with unaccompanied immigrant children; the differences between custody, guardianship, and power of attorney; and what form of caregiving may provide the most stable setting for your child or adult clients. |
| 10:15 – 10:30 a.m. | **Break**  |
| 10:30 – 12:00 p.m. | **EVALUATING A CHILD REPRESENTATION MODEL IN COLORADO**  
- Linda Weinerman, JD, Colorado Office of the Child’s Representative  
- Amanda Donnelly, JD  
- Alicia DeVault, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges  
- Rebecca Garrison, Office of the Child’s Representative  
This session will discuss the evaluation findings of an organization’s pilot of multidisciplinary law firms to deliver GAL representation in dependency cases in Colorado. The evaluation examines quantifiable data such as cost, time, court observations, court records and case file reviews as well as qualitative data such as stakeholder perceptions and youth and judicial feedback. |
Participants will learn about the evaluation methodology, results, and challenges, which can all inform others contemplating evaluating attorney services in their jurisdiction.

**ETHICS-FAMILY DEPENDENCY TREATMENT COURT**

- Julie Butner, JD, Barton Fellow, ABA Center on Children and the Law
- Terrence Wilson, JD, MPA, Barton Child Law and Policy Center

This workshop will explore the ethical challenges of Family Treatment Courts, specialty courts for dependency cases where a parent has a substance use disorder. FTCs are multiplying rapidly and exist in 35 states, but only eight have written statewide standards to govern their operation. The presenters will highlight positive standards and discuss unique ethical challenges for attorneys in these courts.

Participants will gain an understanding of FTCs and the need for rigorous standards to protect the client and the attorney.

**USE OF PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION AMONG FOSTER YOUTH: RESEARCH INFORMING POLICY AND PRACTICE**

- Laurie Ayler, LSW, MSW, Support Center for Child Advocates
- Meredith Matone, DPH, PolicyLab, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia
- Eva Klain, JD, ABA Center on Children and the Law

This presentation addresses the use of psychotropic medication, which is prescribed at a much higher rate for children in foster care than for the general population. Presenters will use Pennsylvania as a case study of research informing policy and practice, present case examples, and discuss ABA policy.

Attendees will learn about best practices for monitoring the use of psychotropic medication for children in foster care and specific questions they can ask to promote safe and effective prescribing methods.

**DISCUSSION GROUP: YOUTH TRANSITIONING FROM CARE - PRESSURE POINTS FOR FUTURE ADVOCACY**

- Brent Pattison, JD, Drake University School of Law, Middleton Center for Children’s Rights
- Jennifer Pokempner, JD, Juvenile Law Center
- Jamien Weddle, JD, Legal Aid Society of New York

There are strong federal protections in place to assist foster youth with the transition to adulthood, yet many advocates report that real transition planning is not occurring for their clients. This workshop will go beyond the legal requirements to discuss strategies advocates can use to enforce those requirements both individually and systemically.

Attendees will learn and share ideas about concrete strategies for ensuring that legal requirements in place to protect foster youth transitioning to adulthood are implemented successfully in practice.

**CROSSOVER YOUTH**

- Honorable Guido DeAngelis, Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, PA, Family Division
| Colonnade | • Honorable Cathy Hollenberg Serrette, Circuit Court for Prince George’s County, Maryland  
• Shay Bilchik, JD, Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, Georgetown University’s McCourt School of Public Policy  
• Linda Britton, JD, ABA Commission on Youth at Risk  
• Lisa Pilnik, JD, Child & Family Policy Associates (moderator)  

According to 2010 data, 82% of youth with an open case in the child welfare system are subsequently arrested and enter the juvenile delinquency system; multi-system youth also cross over into other systems – mental health, education, substance abuse, and law enforcement. Assisting crossover youth necessitates a high level of collaboration and coordination among systems and an adherence to practice standards designed for this population. This session will discuss national research on crossover youth, the practice model developed at the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, its application in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, and Prince George’s County, Maryland, and improved outcomes for this population. Participants will learn techniques and approaches for collaborating across systems to support youth and about the upcoming ABA Standards on Crossover Youth, which are expected to be published this fall. |
| Consulate | **SUPPORTING PERMANENCY THROUGH SOCIAL SECURITY**  
• Eliza Hirst, JD, Office of the Child Advocate  
• Treenee Parker, MA, Delaware Division of Family Services  
• Dan Hatcher, JD, Saul Ewing Civil Advocacy Clinic, University of Baltimore School of Law  

This session provides an in-depth understanding of the different types of Social Security, eligibility criteria, and approved uses for Social Security funds available to financially assist youth in foster care to achieve permanency. Participants will learn how to ensure that their clients successfully access the various types of financial support for which they may be eligible. This is particularly critical because for many youth, financial constraints can make the difference between achieving permanency and remaining in foster care. |
| Plaza | **IMPLEMENTING THE INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT**  
• Kathy Deserly, Capacity Building Center for Tribes, Tribal Law and Policy Institute  
• Scott Trowbridge, JD, ABA Center on Children and the Law  

With 2016 federal Regulations, Guidelines, and new ICWA AFCARs elements, there are new opportunities and challenges in practice around ICWA. Presenters will provide a brief overview of the provisions and focus on key issues for implementation. This session will be interactive with topics to include training, team building, tool development/modification, and/or data collection. Presenters have worked with multiple states and tribes on implementation of the Act. Participants will improve their skills and knowledge around implementing the Indian Child Welfare Act on a local, state, tribal, or inter-jurisdictional level. |
| Plaza | **HOW TO CREATE A KIN FIRST CULTURE**  
• Lorrie Deck, PA Department of Human Services, Office of Children, Youth and Families  
• Shara Saveikis, Westmoreland Children’s Bureau  
• Ana Beltran, JD, Generations United  
• Heidi Redlich Epstein, JD, MSW, ABA Center on Children and the Law  

How to create a Kin First Culture  

- Lorrie Deck, PA Department of Human Services, Office of Children, Youth and Families  
- Shara Saveikis, Westmoreland Children’s Bureau  
- Ana Beltran, JD, Generations United  
- Heidi Redlich Epstein, JD, MSW, ABA Center on Children and the Law  

This session provides an in-depth understanding of the different types of Social Security, eligibility criteria, and approved uses for Social Security funds available to financially assist youth in foster care to achieve permanency. Participants will learn how to ensure that their clients successfully access the various types of financial support for which they may be eligible. This is particularly critical because for many youth, financial constraints can make the difference between achieving permanency and remaining in foster care. Participants will learn how to ensure that their clients successfully access the various types of financial support for which they may be eligible. This is particularly critical because for many youth, financial constraints can make the difference between achieving permanency and remaining in foster care. Participants will learn how to ensure that their clients successfully access the various types of financial support for which they may be eligible. This is particularly critical because for many youth, financial constraints can make the difference between achieving permanency and remaining in foster care.
### Attaché

This session introduces the Kinship wikiHow – a guide to creating a child welfare system that consistently promotes kinship placement, helps children in foster care maintain connections with their family, and tailors services and supports for kinship foster families. Presenters include agency administrators in Pennsylvania who will discuss how they created a successful kin first culture that has resulted in significantly improved outcomes for the children and families they serve.

Participants will learn about kin support structures in multiple states and will come away with an understanding of how to help create a “kin first” culture in their own communities.

### Ambassador

**DISCUSSION GROUP: EXAMINING STATUTES TO REINSTATE PARENTAL RIGHTS: THE GOOD, THE BAD AND ... NEXT STEPS**

- Meredith Schalick, JD, MS, Rutgers Law School
- LaShanda Taylor Adams, JD, University of the District of Columbia Law

This session will focus on reinstatement of parental rights statutes, which give biological parents another chance at caring for their children. Presenters will provide an overview of the legal issues involved, as well as existing laws in over 15 states and how often those laws are used.

Through small group discussions and consideration of case law and data, participants will analyze existing statutes and make recommendations and strategies for future legislation and amendments to existing statutes that support parental rights.

### 12:00 – 12:30 p.m.  Conference Luncheon in Salon I & II

### 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.  Lunch Speaker

### Salon I & II

**COUNTERING THE IMPACT OF IMPLICIT BIAS ON YOUTH OF COLOR**

- Michael Harris, JD, National Center for Youth Law
- Alexandra Santa Ana, JD, National Center for Youth Law

The rapidly growing body of implicit bias research shows that even people consciously committed to equality may still hold implicit biases. Learn about exciting new research that shows how advocates can improve outcomes for youth of color by counteracting implicit bias in their own work and on a systemic level.

### 1:45 – 3:15 p.m.  Workshop Session F

**UNDERSTANDING ESSA, TRAUMA, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL STABILITY FOR STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE**

- Maura McInerny, JD, Education Law Center
- Eliza Hirst, JD, Office of the Child Advocate

Significant disparities exist between the educational outcomes of youth in foster care and their non-foster peers. This session provides an overview of how trauma impacts learning, emphasizes the importance of educational advocacy, and highlights innovative practices.

Participants will learn how to help reverse poor educational outcomes for youth in foster care.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attaché</th>
<th>FROM IDEAL TO REALITY: WHAT’S NEEDED TO SAFELY REDUCE RELIANCE ON CONGREGATE CARE AND ENSURE EVERY CHILD CAN BE RAISED IN A FAMILY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| | • Angie Schwartz, JD, Alliance for Children’s Rights  
| | • Brian Blalock, JD, Tipping Point Community |
| | This workshop offers an interactive discussion on legal and fiscal barriers in the way of reforms to reduce reliance on congregate care and ensure all children are raised in families. |
| | Participants will come away with an action plan to implement meaningful reform in their communities as well as model laws and best practices that can be adapted and translated into practice and legal changes within their jurisdictions. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colonnade</th>
<th>BUILDING BRAINS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| | • Cynthia Widitora, JD, MSW, Children’s Law Center of California  
| | • Julie McCormick, JD, Children’s Law Center of California |
| | This interactive session guides participants through “The Brain Architecture Game,” a hands on activity that helps advocates gain a richer understanding of the impact of early adversity and trauma on a child’s resilience and development. |
| | Attendees will learn how to enhance the protective capacities of system involved youth. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consulate</th>
<th>HOW QUALITATIVE DATA AND EXPLORING STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTION CAN HELP YOUR SYSTEM REFORM EFFORTS (OR STALL THEM)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| | • Stacey Obrecht, JD, PMP, Public Knowledge  
| | • Melissa Davis, M.P.Aff., Public Knowledge |
| | Presenters in this session will give concrete strategies to collect qualitative data and use it to drive decision making, reform, and change. An approach to root cause analysis will be offered as a way to establish a foundation for identifying solutions or interventions. The session will also highlight several examples to demonstrate the importance of stakeholder perceptions in the analysis. |
| | Participants will learn about the value of collecting and analyzing qualitative data and stakeholder perceptions when moving system reform and policy change forward. This includes an approach to the analysis, several examples, and a discussion of different system issues identified through quantitative data that may lend itself to a qualitative analysis. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ambassador (limited to first 25 participants)</th>
<th>DISCUSSION GROUP: CREATING A NATIONAL POLICY AGENDA - PROTECTING THE SAFETY NET FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AND LOOKING TO THE FUTURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| | • MaryLee Allen, MSW, Children’s Defense Fund  
| | • Amy Harfeld, JD, Children’s Advocacy Institute-USD School of Law  
| | • Prudence Beidler Carr, JD, ABA Center on Children and the Law |
| | This discussion group will allow facilitators and participants to take stock of what’s happening or likely to happen in the national policy arena and examine its impact on the children and families we serve. |
| | Participants will engage in a lively discussion about these questions and others: With a new Congress and a new Administration, how do we play offense and defense to ensure we move forward not backwards for our children and families? What are the biggest threats and opportunities for children and families and for child-serving systems? How can advocates for children and youth serving multiple roles unify their messaging and coordinate efforts? Participants will leave with strategies for collaborating for children at the national, state, and local levels. |

3:15 – 3:30 p.m. Break
### Plaza

**Social Media Ethics and Using Social Media as an Investigative Tool**
- Sophie Vick, Children’s Law Center of Washington, DC
- Anne Marie Lancour, JD, MAT, ABA Center on Children and the Law

This interactive presentation will cover the ethics of Social Media in child welfare cases. We will discuss applicable Model Rules of Professional Responsibility and how those rules should guide attorneys as they use Social Media in their practice. The session will also include a live demonstration of what information can be found on Social Media and how that information can or should be used in child welfare cases.

Attendees will come away with a better understanding of the ethical implications of using information obtained through Social Media in child welfare litigation.

### Attaché

**Children as Parents: Effective Advocacy of Expectant and Parenting Youth in the Juvenile Dependency System**
- Rebecca Harkness, JD, Children’s Law Center of California
- Susan Abrams, JD, Children’s Law Center of California
- Abby Eskin, JD, Children’s Law Center of California

Young women in foster care are more than twice as likely as their peers to become pregnant before their 19th birthday. The response of child protective agencies may vary, from efforts at family maintenance and reunification, to almost immediate physical and legal separation of child from parent. This session will examine an attorney’s role and duties to minor parents.

Participants will learn practical strategies for navigating and prevailing in a world of “children raising children” as well as tips on effective advocacy and minor parent client interview techniques. Participants will also engage in an interactive discussion of tough legal quandaries that arise in these cases.

### Consulate

**Mental Health Advocacy for Court Involved Children**
- Sarah L. Flohre, JD, Children’s Law Center of Washington, DC
- Beth Kurtz, JD, Children’s Law Center of Washington, DC

Too often, youth involved in child welfare, juvenile justice, and status offense cases do not receive needed mental health services and are even punished for their unmet mental health needs. This workshop will provide an overview of what youth are eligible to receive under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), Medicaid, and other legal entitlements, as well as advocacy tools for attorneys.

Participants will gain creative strategies for accessing mental health services in and out of school, including informal grievance processes and litigation tools available when appropriate services are not being provided to youth.

### Colonnade

**Protective Responses to Domestic Child Sex Trafficking**
- Christine Raino, JD, Shared Hope International
- Preston Findlay, JD, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children
- Sharon G. Elstein, MS, ABA Center on Children and the Law

This workshop offers statutory, policy, and practice-based approaches to improving the response to child victims of sex trafficking. Presenters will describe Shared Hope International’s JuST (Juvenile Sex Trafficking) Response, which seeks to protect trafficking victims through a safe and trauma-informed approach, as well as other promising practices. Research results from an ABA survey on implementation of Safe Harbor laws and its implications will be shared. Counsel from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children will discuss resources and strategies to assist in cases involving endangered runaways and child sex trafficking victims.
Participants learn how to promote collaborative victim-centered response models in their own jurisdictions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ambassador</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(limited to first 25 participants)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DISCUSSION GROUP: CREATING AND SUSTAINING COALITIONS TO ADVANCE SYSTEM CHANGE**

- Angie Schwartz, JD, Alliance for Children’s Rights
- Ana Beltran, JD, Generations United
- Stefanie Sprow, Children’s Defense Fund

Coalitions can be one of the most forceful and effective agents of change, particularly with regard to the most intractable problems. This discussion group will focus on how to engage coalition partners, share successes, and troubleshoot barriers to building and maintaining effective coalitions over time.

Participants will exchange best practices for coalition building in their communities and come away with concrete ideas for future projects.
Speaker Biographies
Speaker Biographies

Opening Plenary Speakers

Margaret A. Burt is an attorney in private practice in Rochester, New York. For thirty seven years she has specialized in the representation of children, adults and child welfare agencies in trial court and appellate practice. A substantial amount of her practice involves consulting and training for lawyers, judges, caseworkers and service providers all around the country in the areas of child abuse and neglect, permanency for foster children, the termination of parental rights, and adoptions. She provides national and local training on such issues as the Adoption and Safe Families Act, the Indian Child Welfare Act, confidentiality, legal ethics in child welfare, the representation of children and trial techniques. She also consults on legislation connected to child welfare issues.

Lexie Pérez-Grüber serves as a Policy Associate at the American Public Human Services Associations. In this role, she works to pursue excellence in child welfare and child care by representing state and local child welfare and child care agencies before Congress and the Administration. Ms. Pérez-Grüber has testified before the United States Senate Finance Committee and the Connecticut State Legislature, and presented at several Congressional briefings on child welfare issues. In addition to her policy work at the state and federal levels, Lexie has been published in the Washington Post, Hartford Courant, and Huffington Post. Lexie’s personal and professional accomplishments are the subject of the upcoming documentary, Lost in America, by executive producers Rotimi Rainwater (Sugar), Tom DeSanto (Transformers, X-Men), and Russell Simmons.
Hilarie Bass, JD, is the President-Elect of the American Bar and will become ABA President in August 2017. Ms. Bass has dedicated herself to supporting the mission of the ABA for several decades in a range of roles; while serving as Chair of the Section of Litigation she spearheaded the creation of a Task Force on Implicit Bias in the Justice System. Ms. Bass is Co-President of the international law firm, Greenberg Traurig, where she continues her 30-plus year career as a prolific trial attorney and helps chart the course for the multi-practice firm with approximately 2,000 attorneys across 38 offices worldwide. Additionally, Ms. Bass is widely recognized for her pro bono work on behalf of two foster children that led to the elimination and declaration as unconstitutional of Florida’s 20-year-old ban on gay adoption.

Lunch Speakers

Michael Harris is a Senior Attorney at the National Center for Youth Law (NCYL). At NCYL, Michael works on reducing racial disparities in juvenile justice systems, “school-to-prison pipeline” issues, and litigation to address implicit bias. He has presented to local and national gatherings on implicit bias’s role in decision making within the juvenile justice system. Before joining NCYL, Michael served as Deputy Director of the W. Haywood Burns Institute, working to reform juvenile justice systems, and Assistant Director of the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights in San Francisco where he worked on a broad range of civil rights cases.

Alexandra Santa Ana is a Public Service Venture Fund Fellow at the National Center for Youth Law (NCYL). At NYCL, Alexandra’s work focuses on eliminating the school-to-prison pipeline by ensuring that students of color and students with disabilities have equitable access to public education. Prior to her fellowship at NCYL, Alexandra’s experience included working directly with clients on housing, re-entry, and special education cases. Alexandra earned her J.D. from Harvard Law School and a B.A. in Sociology from UC Berkeley.
Workshop Presenters

**Susan Abrams** has been representing youth in the California foster care system for the past ten years. In 2005, Susan implemented an Equal Justice Works fellowship project at Children’s Law Center of California aimed at reducing the rate of dependent youth entering the juvenile justice system. Following her fellowship, Susan worked as a Staff Attorney representing children in all aspects of dependency proceedings in Los Angeles Superior Court. Since October 2013, Susan has served as the Policy Director, advocating at the state and local level to ensure the best outcomes for children in foster care.

**LaShanda Taylor Adams,** JD, is the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and an Associate Professor at the University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law. Prior to taking on the role of Associate Dean, she was the Director of the School of Law's General Practice Clinic. Prior to joining the UDC Law faculty, Dean Adams worked at the ABA Center on Children and the Law, American University Washington College of Law, the New Jersey Office of the Child Advocate and the Children’s Law Center.

**MaryLee Allen** is Director of Policy at the Children's Defense Fund. Ms. Allen is responsible for defining and advancing CDF’s agenda to keep children safe in nurturing families and communities. Her work focuses on improving policies and practices to better support families in order to prevent problems from occurring and family crises from intensifying and to promote permanent families for children. Her work addresses child abuse and neglect, substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence, foster care and adoption. Ms. Allen has played a leadership role in the development, passage and implementation of major child welfare and children's mental health reforms over the past two decades. She testifies frequently before Congress.

**Heidi Altman** is the director of policy at the National Immigrant Justice Center, a Chicago-based organization that advances the rights of immigrants through policy reform, legal services, and litigation. Previously, she served as the legal director for the Capital Area Immigrants’ Rights Coalition and created the in-house immigration services program at the Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem. Heidi served as a Teaching Fellow in the immigration clinic at Georgetown Law School and is a graduate of New York University School of Law.

**Laurie Ayler** is the Clinical Coordinator for the Support Center for Child Advocates’ ‘Outcomes in Behavioral Health (OBH) Project,’’ a special project funded by Pew Charitable Trusts with the goal of promoting access to children’s behavioral health services. In this role, Ms. Ayler works as a Child Advocate Social Worker for a caseload of clients with complex behavioral health needs and consults agency-wide to ensure optimal service delivery for clients with mental health needs. Ms. Ayler earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology at Temple University and Master of Social Work degree at Widener University. She has extensive experience in child welfare direct service, casework consultation, and staff training from her current position as well as her former job as a Training Coordinator and Foster Care Social Worker for a medical foster care agency. Ms. Ayler regularly trains on the topic of children’s behavioral health issues, childhood trauma, and vicarious trauma at agencies throughout the Philadelphia area and at national and statewide conferences.
Ana Beltran is an attorney, Special Advisor to Generations United, and the former Director of its National Center on Grandfamilies. Ana heads Generations United’s collaboration with the ABA Center on Children and the Law, which created and maintains www.grandfamilies.org and jointly developed National Model Family Foster Home Licensing Standards. Ana also provides technical assistance and training on the breadth of kinship care issues, and has worked to help enact and implement several federal and state laws to support the families, including the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008. Prior to joining Generations United, Ana worked in all three branches of the federal government and was a practicing attorney. As someone who was raised in part by her grandmother, she found her true passion when she started working on behalf of grandfamilies.

Prudence Beidler Carr is the Director of the ABA’s Center on Children and the Law, where she manages a team of attorneys, researchers, and support staff who work on children’s law projects throughout the country. Prudence joined the ABA in July 2016 and brings a background in government, nonprofit management, and children’s advocacy to her role. Most recently, Prudence worked with JUCONI, a Mexican organization that helps street-living youth reintegrate with their families. Previously, Prudence worked at the Department of Homeland Security Office of General Counsel (DHS OGC), where she managed class action, appellate and Supreme Court litigation and advised senior leaders on the legal effects of immigration and national security policies. Prudence also served as OGC's Deputy Managing Counsel, helping manage a $30 million budget and a 150-person staff.

Mary Bissell is an attorney, child and family policy expert and founding partner of ChildFocus. She is also an Adjunct Professor at the Georgetown University Law Center where she teaches a class on advocacy for public interest lawyers. Mary was formerly a Fellow at the New America Foundation, a Heinz Fellow, a Legislative Assistant in the Office of Senator John D. Rockefeller (D-WV), and an Equal Justice Works/Crowell & Moring Fellow at the Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia, where she started the nation’s first legal services program exclusively for grandparents and other relative caregivers. She also served as a senior staff attorney and lobbyist at the Children’s Defense Fund (CDF).

Annie Blackledge is the Executive Director for the Mockingbird Society, with the mission to improve foster care and end youth homelessness. Previous to this role she worked in a senior advisor role with the U.S. Department of Education. She has over 19 years of experience in education and youth services and an extensive background in serving vulnerable youth. Annie is an alumnus of the New York State foster care system.

Brian Blalock is the Law and Policy Coordinator at T Works, the policy division at Tipping Point Community, where he currently looks at systemic funding issues that create barriers to entitled services and works collaboratively with public system, 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 and 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.

Shay Bilchik is the Founder and Director of the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University’s Public Policy Institute. The Center’s purpose is to advance a balanced, multi-system approach to reducing juvenile delinquency in a way that promotes positive child and youth development, while also holding youth accountable. From 2000-2007, Mr. Bilchik was the President and CEO of the Child Welfare League of America. Prior to his tenure at CWLA, Mr. Bilchik led the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) in the U.S. Department of Justice. Before coming to the nation's capital, Mr. Bilchik was an Assistant State Attorney in Miami, Florida from 1977-1993, where he served as a trial lawyer, juvenile division chief, and Chief Assistant State Attorney.
Michelle Brané is the Women’s Refugee Commission, Director of the Migrant Rights and Justice where she advocates for the protection of migrant women, children and youth. Michelle is a recognized expert on immigration and human rights policy, authors critical reports on immigration enforcement, testifies before Congress and International Human Rights bodies, and appears frequently in print and broadcast outlets. She is the recipient the Daniel Levy Memorial Award for Outstanding Achievement in Immigration Law and was named by Women’s eNews’ as one of “21 Leaders for the 21st Century.” Michelle holds a B.A from the University of Michigan and a J.D. from Georgetown University.

Linda Britton works at the American Bar Association in Washington, DC, as the Director of the Commission on Youth at Risk. She served for twelve years as a juvenile court magistrate in Collin County, Texas, and heard both delinquency and dependency cases. She also served as a mediator in child welfare cases, and was appointed by the courts to represent children as an amicus attorney when she was in private practice. Linda’s career includes teaching legal writing as an adjunct law professor, working as an appellate attorney for indigent defendants, and serving as a felony prosecutor in both Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Collin County, Texas.

Julie Butner is a Child Law Policy Fellow at the ABA Center on Children and the Law in partnership with Barton Child Law and Policy Center. After graduating from Northeastern University School of Law, she served as an AmeriCorps Attorney in a women’s homeless shelter in Boston. While at Northeastern, she worked at the Children’s Law Center of Massachusetts and also as a public defender, DV advocate, and human rights fellow in DC and New Delhi, India. Julie earned degrees in History and Criminal Justice at George Washington University and worked at Friendship Place in DC before attending law school.

Carla Carter is a Civil Rights Analyst in the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Ms. Carter is responsible for oversight of OCR’s Child Welfare Initiative, a federal interagency workgroup with the U.S. Department of Justice and the HHS Children’s Bureau that promotes civil rights compliance in the child welfare field. Ms. Carter develops civil rights policy, provides technical assistance to state and local child welfare agencies, and trains child welfare stakeholders on the intersection of child welfare and federal civil rights law. Ms. Carter is a member of the New York State bar.

Dalia Castillo-Granados is the Director of the ABA’s Children’s Immigration Law Academy. She is a 2008 graduate of the University of Houston Law Center. Prior to working at CILA, Dalia was a Senior Attorney at Kids in Need of Defense, a Staff Attorney at Tahirih Justice Center, a Clinical Supervising Attorney at the University of Houston’s Immigration Clinic, and began her public interest career as an Equal Justice Works Fellow with Catholic Charities’ Cabrini Center in Houston. She is also currently the Grants Committee Chair of Latino Giving Houston, a giving circle devoted to promoting philanthropy in Houston’s Latino community.

Wendy Cervantes is a Senior Policy Analyst at the Center for Law and Social Policy where she works to develop and advocate for policies that support low-income immigrants and their families. Previously, Ms. Cervantes was the Vice President of Immigration and Child Rights at First Focus. She also served as Director of Programs at La Plaza, Indianapolis and managed the immigrant and refugee families’ portfolio at the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Ms. Cervantes holds an M.A. in Latin American Studies and Political Science from the University of New Mexico and a B.A. in Communications from the University of Southern California.

Christopher Church is the Law and Policy Director at the Children's Law Center at the University of South Carolina School of Law. At the center, he supervises a small team of researchers and conducts independent research on child protective services and foster care. Christopher consults with a number of state child welfare agencies, non-profit organizations, and the federal government on improving outcomes for children and families involved in civil child abuse and neglect proceedings. Christopher holds a Masters in Mathematics from the University of North Texas and a Juris Doctor from Gonzaga University School of Law.
Alexandra Citrin, Senior Policy Analyst at the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP), works to advance CSSP’s child welfare system change efforts and public policy agenda through providing direct technical assistance to child welfare systems and developing policy strategies to support outcomes and advance equity for children, youth and families. Prior to joining CSSP, she was a family advocate at the Center for Family Representation, Inc., where she engaged in direct practice with parents and families involved in the child welfare system. She is a graduate of Middlebury College and earned a master’s degree in social work and master’s degree in public policy from the University of Michigan.

Dr. Elysia Clemens is an Associate Professor in the Department of Applied Psychology and Counselor Education at the University of Northern Colorado. Her research focuses on the relationship between mobility and educational success for students in foster care and how to create successful school transitions. Clemens is a licensed professional counselor, and prior to joining the faculty and University of Northern Colorado she worked with child welfare and court involved youth receiving mental health and educational services at an inpatient psychiatric hospital.

Cristina Ritchie Cooper is Senior Counsel with the ABA Center on Children and the Law and director of the Center’s Immigration Project. Cristina supports courts and agencies working with immigrant children, immigrant parents and kin with children in or at risk of entering the dependency system, and child welfare and immigration attorneys who seek to understand their clients’ legal needs in both fields. Cristina is also a liaison with the Children’s Bureau’s Capacity Building Center for Courts, which helps Court Improvement Programs identify priorities and achieve their goals. Before joining the ABA, Cristina represented children and youth in dependency, protection order, and family law cases in the Bronx, NY and Washington, DC.

Melissa Davis has 12 years of experience supporting the implementation and improvement of public programs at the community, city, county, and state levels. Her consulting work focuses on organizational development, including group facilitation and training, strategic planning, organizational and management assessment, change management assistance, leadership development, program evaluation and performance measurement. Melissa has a background in policy research and analysis, assisting state programs to implement and improve programs in accordance with federal and state policies. She holds a Masters of Public Affairs, is certified in Hogan Leadership Assessment Systems, and facilitation methods developed by the Institute of Cultural Affairs.

Dylan de Kervor is an attorney advisor in the Federal Coordination and Compliance Section of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Civil Rights Division. In this capacity, she investigates allegations of Title VI violations and ensures federal agencies consistently and effectively enforce statutes and related Executive Orders prohibiting discrimination in programs that receive Federal financial assistance. Prior to joining DOJ, Ms. de Kervor was a civil rights analyst with the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), enforcing federal civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination in health and social service programs, including child welfare.

Honorable Guido DeAngelis is a judge of the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas in Pennsylvania. DeAngelis was first elected to the court in 2001 and was retained in 2011. His current term expires in 2021. Prior to joining the court Judge DeAngelis spent 12 years as a district judge for the 7th and 8th wards of the City of Pittsburgh. He also has 16 years of experience as an attorney with John R. DeAngelis and Associates.

Alicia DeVault is a Research Assistant at the National Council for Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ). She is also a graduate student at the University of Nevada, Reno pursuing her Ph.D. in social psychology. Her research is focused on helping improve outcomes for children and youth in dependency cases.
Lorrie Deck has worked in the field of child welfare for 35 years and currently works for the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF) where she serves as the Director of the Program Division. Previous experience includes direct service work as a county caseworker in General Protective Services, Intake and Child Protective Services, as a caseworker at ChildLine, the state child abuse hotline, and as the manager of the Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network, which provides permanency services to children in foster care.

Amanda Donnelly recently joined Specialized Alternatives for Families and Youth (SAFY of America) a national non-profit that provides Treatment Foster Care, Family Preservation and Reunification Services, Older Youth Services, and Adoption and Behavioral Health Services in eight states. As SAFY’s Business Proposal Manager, Amanda works to advance SAFY programs dedicated to preserving families through trauma-informed community based services. Prior to joining SAFY, her career focused on supporting and promoting high quality legal representation for children first as a Staff Attorney and Deputy Director of the National Association of Counsel for Children and then as a Staff Attorney at the Colorado Office of the Child’s Representative where she oversaw the OCR’s Multidisciplinary Law Office Project.

Honorable Marguerite Downing is a judge on the Superior Court of Los Angeles, CA. Appointed in 2007, Judge Downing currently presides over a dependency law calendar. Judge Downing chairs an Incarcerated Parents Working Group Committee for the Los Angeles Superior Court which looks at barriers preventing incarcerated parents (former and current) from reuniting with their children who are subjects of dependency actions, and has presented on making “reasonable efforts” with incarcerated parents. She is Chair of the ABA Commission on Youth at Risk, and serves as their liaison to the Commission on Disability Rights. Prior to her appointment, Judge Downing worked as a Deputy Public Defender for over 18 years representing both juveniles and adults charged with crimes.

Sharon G. Elstein is the Research Director at the ABA Center on Children and the Law where she conducts research to evaluate and improve system responses to child maltreatment. Ms. Elstein’s current work focuses on increasing access to justice for child victims with disabilities. She is editing a book and developing training modules on enhanced prosecutorial and court responses to sexual abuse of children with disabilities. Ms. Elstein supports many Center initiatives with survey development and other data collection methods.

Heidi Redlich Epstein is the Director of Kinship Policy and the Assistant Director of State Projects at the ABA Center on Children and the Law. Heidi helped develop and currently co-manages the Grandfamilies State Law and Policy Resource Center at www.grandfamilies.org in partnership with Casey Family Programs and Generations United. Her other kinship efforts include training and technical assistance on kinship issues, and helping develop the National Model Family Foster Home Licensing Standards. In her State Projects work, Heidi co-manages the Permanency Barriers Project and provides technical assistance and legal training to judges, attorneys, and social service professionals. Prior to her work at the ABA, Heidi was a Law Guardian for Legal Aid of Maryland and a residential social worker in upstate New York.

Rosalynd Erney works to advance the public policy agenda of the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) with a focus on racial and gender equity and developing policy strategies focused on intersectionality. Her research supports CSSP’s get R.E.A.L. team working at the local, state and national level to support the healthy sexual and identity development of youth in foster care, specifically LGBTQ and gender nonconforming youth. Prior to joining CSSP, she was a policy assistant with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, where she focused on refugee resettlement, unaccompanied children and immigration enforcement practices. Rosalynd is a graduate of the Philosophy, Politics and the Public program at Xavier University.
Abby Eskin has been representing youth in the Los Angeles County foster care system for the past twelve years at the Children’s Law Center of California (CLC). For the past six years, Ms. Eskin has been a Supervising Attorney where she provides day-to-day training, support, and supervision to attorneys. She represents CLC in multiple inter-agency workgroups devoted to policy and legal changes and improved outcomes for expectant and parenting youth, and provides specialized expertise and coaching to attorneys representing teen parents. She is an NACC Certified Child Welfare Law Specialist and a graduate of the UCLA School of Law.

Preston Findlay is Counsel for the Missing Children Division of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. In this role he provides legal technical assistance and training to law enforcement, attorneys, family members, and the public regarding international and domestic child abductions, missing and runaway children, and child sex trafficking. Mr. Findlay edited and co-authored NCMEC’s litigation guide for attorneys as well as an investigation and program management guide for law enforcement agencies responding to cases of missing and abducted children. Mr. Findlay is a former prosecutor and government attorney, admitted to practice law in Texas and Virginia.

Sarah L. Flohre is a supervising attorney in the Healthy Together program of the Children’s Law Center in Washington, DC. She joined Children’s Law Center as a special education staff attorney in 2012, after working for many years in private practice, advocating for the special education needs of low-income children and families. She has litigated over thirty administrative due process hearings, has litigated appeals of Hearing Officers’ Decisions under IDEIA in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, and has assisted with class action litigation on post-Katrina health care issues. Sarah has also presented on special education issues and special education litigation practice in many forums.

Rebecca Garrison is the Information Systems Manager at the Colorado Office of the Child’s Representative where she designs, develops, and coordinates OCR’s online services, relational databases, and other software and automation tools. Ms. Garrison is originally from Blacksburg, Virginia and graduated with Highest Distinction from the University of Virginia. She was introduced to the juvenile justice system by serving as a Restorative Justice facilitator in Charlottesville, Virginia. That experience, combined with her ability to find data and technology solutions, led her into a career devoted to promoting efficiency and accountability in the public sector.

Joanne Gottesman is Clinical Professor of Law and Director of the Immigrant Justice Clinic (IJC) at Rutgers Law School. The IJC provides representation to non-citizen children in immigration and related state court matters. Prior to founding the IJC in 2012, Professor Gottesman co-directed the Civil Practice Clinic at Rutgers. She also teaches courses on immigration and professional responsibility. Before joining Rutgers, Professor Gottesman was a Kirkland & Ellis Public Service Fellow in the Immigration Law Unit of the Legal Aid Society of New York, and a law clerk to Judge Edmund Ludwig in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. Professor Gottesman earned a J.D. from Columbia Law School and a B.A. from Wesleyan University.

Amy Harfeld serves as the National Policy Director and Senior Staff Attorney for the Children's Advocacy Institute. She has been an advocate, educator, and public interest attorney for over 20 years. After obtaining her BA from the University of Michigan and her JD from the City University of New York School of Law, she went to litigate child welfare cases for New York City’s Administration for Children’s Services, founded a legal services program for incarcerated parents at the Fortune Society, and served as the Executive Director of First Star. She has overseen the American Bar Association's Commission on Youth at Risk and the Children’s Leadership Council, and serves as the pro-bono government affairs coordinator for the National Association of Counsel for Children.
**Rebecca Harkness** is an attorney with nine years’ experience in Dependency Law. Rebecca began her law career at Los Angeles Dependency Lawyers representing parents in the dependency system. There she wrote numerous writ petitions on behalf of parents, orally arguing several petitions in District Two of the California Court of Appeal. Rebecca recently accepted a position as staff attorney and assistant writ attorney at Children's Law Center. She helped to write and pass California bills making it easier for parents engaged in in-patient drug programs to maintain custody of their children, as well as a bill that allows minor parents to be granted extended reunification services beyond the normal timelines.

**Daniel L. Hatcher** is Professor of Law at the University of Baltimore, teaching the Civil Advocacy Clinic. He previously worked at the Children’s Defense Fund, and at the Maryland Legal Aid Bureau as assistant director of advocacy and as staff attorney representing foster children and impoverished adults. Hatcher’s new book, “The Poverty Industry: The Exploitation of America’s Most Vulnerable Citizens” (NYU Press 2016) exposes how states and companies are using vulnerable populations to maximize state revenue rather than serving their best interests – including foster care agencies taking foster children’s Social Security benefits, Medicaid diversion, and welfare and foster care cost recovery through child support enforcement.

**Leslie Starr Heimov** has been with the Children's Law Center of California (CLC) since 1992. CLC’s Executive Director since 2007, she previously served as a staff attorney, a supervising attorney, and Policy Director, responsible for CLC’s legislative and policy agenda. Ms. Heimov has worked tirelessly to improve outcomes for children in foster care and toward best practices in the representation of children and their families in the child welfare system and is considered an expert in the child welfare field. She has served a trials skills instructor for the National Institute of Trial Advocacy and the Juvenile Law Society, and regularly presents to judicial officers, attorneys, social workers, caregivers and law students on a multitude of topics related to the representation of abused and neglected children.

**Sarah Helvey** is a Staff Attorney and Director of the Child Welfare Program at Nebraska Appleseed. Sarah serves on the Bridge to Independence Advisory Committee, a statutorily established group of stakeholders to monitor and make recommendations regarding Nebraska’s program of extended services and support to age 21. In addition, Sarah serves as co-chair of the Normalcy Taskforce, also a statutorily established stakeholder group charged with monitoring and making recommendations regarding the implementation of the Strengthening Families Act in Nebraska. Sarah is the chair of the State Policy Advocacy and Reform Center (SPARC) Leadership Council.

**Eliza M. Hirst**, Esq., CWLS, is a Deputy Child Advocate with Delaware's Office of the Child Advocate, where she has represented children in dependency/neglect proceedings since 2010. Prior to being a Deputy Child Advocate, Eliza was a staff attorney for seven years at Community Legal Aid Society, Inc. in Wilmington, DE. Eliza earned her B.A. from Oberlin College and her J.D. from the University of Texas Law School. Eliza is a member of the Delaware, New York, and Pennsylvania Bars. In 2012, Eliza was certified by the National Association of Counsel for Children as a Child Welfare Law Specialist.

**Matt Hudson** is the Youth Development Program Area Manager where he works closely with the Children’s Bureau and other experts to shape and implement the Youth Development program Agenda for the Capacity Building Center for States. One of Mr. Hudson’s primary responsibilities is helping build capacity in Youth Development by developing and managing projects, products, learning experiences, and constituency groups. Formerly a Program Development Specialist in child welfare with 12 years of professional experience, Mr. Hudson has worked extensively in child welfare advocacy, authentic youth engagement, child welfare training and independent living programs.
Kirsten Johnson has been engaged in family systems work since 2003, primarily focused on the child welfare population. She has provided direct, supervisory, and administrative services throughout this time, lending her advantage point that blends macro level practice issues with individualized family systems dynamics. She is currently working with Hempfield Behavioral Health, Inc. providing clinical interventions with research families aimed at building relationships and supporting the child's healing. Kirsten has a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from Penn State University, as well as an MSW from Widener University.

Kristin Kelly is a Senior Staff Attorney with the ABA Center on Children and the Law. Her child welfare law and policy work focuses on youth transitioning from foster care, youth empowerment, and the educational needs of children in foster care. Kristin provides training and technical assistance across the country on these topics, and enjoys working with cross-agency teams to identify challenges and implement concrete program and policy changes. She has authored numerous articles and publications, including the education advocacy chapter of the National Association of Counsel for Children’s textbook, Child Welfare Law and Practice.

Eva Klain is the Director of the ABA Center on Children and the Law’s Child and Adolescent Health Projects. Ms. Klain researches and analyzes legal responses to children’s exposure to violence, polyvictimization and trauma-informed advocacy, the health and developmental needs of children and adolescents, substance abuse, domestic child sex trafficking, and sexual exploitation of children. Ms. Klain is also a liaison with the Children’s Bureau’s Capacity Building Center for Courts to help Court Improvement Programs identify their priorities and achieve their goals. As part of this effort, she co-leads a group addressing the sex trafficking provisions of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act.

Kristin Klopfenstein is the Executive Director of the Education Innovation Institute (EII) where she works to build the capacity of decision-makers to routinely generate and use meaningful evidence for effective resource allocation in the running and governing of schools. Prior to founding EII, she was the interim director of the Education Research Center at the University of Texas at Dallas, a state repository for administrative, individual-level longitudinal education data where she managed the operation of the center and conducted education policy research. Previous to that, she spent ten years as a faculty member in Economics at Texas Christian University.

Carolyn A. Kubitschek has been practicing law for 43 years, and has litigated many issues concerning the interaction of families and the government, especially with respect to foster care, child abuse, and domestic violence. With David Lansner, she founded the firm of Lansner & Kubitschek in 1991, www.lanskub.com. She has argued before the Supreme Court in Camreta v. Greene and has established many important precedents including on behalf of domestic violence victims in Nicholson v. Scoppetta and children in foster care in Doe v. New York City Department of Social Services, 649 F.2d 134 (2d Cir. 1981).

Beth Kurtz is a staff attorney in the Guardian ad Litem project of the Children’s Law Center in Washington, DC. She first joined the Center in 2014 as an Equal Justice Works Fellow sponsored by The Morrison & Foerster Foundation. Through her fellowship project, Beth represented children with mental health needs in abuse and neglect proceedings and worked to ensure greater access to mental health care for at-risk children in the District of Columbia. She came to Children’s Law Center after serving as a law clerk to the Honorable Catharine Easterly of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. Before entering law school, Beth worked in the legislative department of Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

Melissa Tanguay Laney has served as the Solicitor for Adams County Children & Youth Services in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania since 2014. She previously served as Assistant Solicitor for Children & Youth in two other counties in Pennsylvania. Melissa earned her Juris Doctor degree from the Penn State Dickinson School of Law in Carlisle, Pennsylvania and her Bachelor of Arts degree, magna cum laude, from American University in Washington, DC. She is admitted to practice before the Supreme Court of the United States, the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
Mimi Laver is the Director of the National Alliance for Parent Representation at the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law. Mimi’s publications include Opening Doors for LGBTQ Youth in Foster Care: A Guide for Lawyers and Judges, It’s My Life, Foundations for Success: Strengthening Your Agency Attorney Office, and edited Representing Parents in Child Welfare Cases: A Basic Introduction for Attorneys. In collaboration with expert work groups, Mimi drafted Standards of Representation for Child Welfare Agency Attorneys and Standards of Practice for Attorneys Representing Parents in Abuse and Neglect Cases. Prior to joining the ABA, Mimi was a Deputy City Solicitor in the Health and Human Services Unit of the Philadelphia Law Department.

Anne Marie Lancour, JD, MAT, is the Associate Director of the ABA Center on Children and the Law. She directs the Center’s award-winning Permanency Barriers Project and is a national expert on child abuse and neglect, termination of parental rights, adoption, and foster care. She provides training on legal ethics, system reform, and permanency planning, and serves on several statewide policy reform workgroups in Pennsylvania. Prior to her work at the ABA, Anne Marie was an agency attorney in Broome County, New York where she litigated child abuse and neglect and termination of parental rights cases.

Amy Lettig is a Parent Advocate Attorney at the Tulalip Office of Civil Legal Aid, where she represents both parents and youth in tribal dependency cases. She also works as a Parent Advocate Attorney with the Snoqualmie and Muckleshoot Tribes. She is a graduate of the University of New Mexico School of Law where she worked at the Southwest Indian Law Clinic. Prior to her work in Tulalip Tribal Court she volunteered at the University of Washington’s Tribal Court Public Defense Clinic. Ms. Lettig has previously presented at the 2015 Northwest Indian Child Welfare Conference.

Meredith Linsky is the Director of the ABA Commission on Immigration in Washington, DC. She was formerly the Director of ProBAR, the South Texas Pro Bono Asylum Representation Project, located in Harlingen, Texas, from 2000 to 2014, where she supervised staff and mentored volunteers working on behalf of detained immigrants and asylum-seekers. Previously, she worked as a Research and Writing Attorney at the Office of the Federal Defender in the Eastern District of California. In 2012, the American Immigration Lawyers Association awarded Ms. Linsky with the Arthur C. Helton Human Rights Award for her outstanding service in advancing the cause of human rights.

Randi Mandelbaum is a Clinical Professor of Law, the Annamay Sheppard Scholar, and the Director of the Child Advocacy Clinic (CAC) at Rutgers Law School. The CAC provides representation to foster children, immigrant children, and children with disabilities. Professor Mandelbaum began her career at the Child Advocacy Unit of the Legal Aid Bureau in Baltimore, Maryland. Prior to Rutgers, she taught at Georgetown University Law Center and Hastings College of the Law. Her scholarship focuses on the legal representation of children, the rights of siblings to maintain their relationships, and issues concerning immigrant children, among other topics. She earned a B.S. from Brandeis University, a J.D. from American University, and an LL.M. from Georgetown.

Judith Martinez serves as the Director of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement at the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). Her work is dedicated to reducing Colorado’s dropout rate and increasing high school completion rates of students who face unique challenges and barriers. Prior to joining CDE, Judith was the Director of the National Center for School Engagement and Deputy Director of Family and Community Education and Support (FACES), a non-profit dedicated to child abuse and neglect prevention. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in History/Ethnic Studies and Master’s degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Colorado.
Meredith Matone, DrPH, serves as Deputy Director of the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia’s PolicyLab. Her research interests include child maltreatment prevention and maternal health. She is experienced in large-scale program evaluation and use of administrative data for observational study designs in areas of child and family health. Recent work includes a statewide evaluation of federally funded home visitation programs for families of young children in Pennsylvania and an assessment of the health service needs of adolescent mothers with involvement in the child welfare system in Philadelphia. She formerly served as the study director for a national epidemiologic study of trends in psychotropic medication prescribing to youth in foster care.

Julie McCormick, J.D., is a staff attorney at Children’s Law Center of California, Los Angeles (CLCLA). Ms. McCormick came to CLCLA after practicing family law for a decade. Frustrated that children often seemed not to have a voice in family court proceedings, Ms. McCormick joined CLCLA in 2011 and has represented countless children and non minor dependents as dependency trial counsel since then. Ms. McCormick has presented on topics of family law, domestic violence, trial skills and dependency court proceedings to attorneys and law students and at the NACC National Child Welfare, Juvenile and Family Law Conference. Ms. McCormick is particularly passionate about placing children with family.

Maura McInerney is a Senior Staff Attorney at ELC and a member of the Leadership Team. Maura engages in legislative and policy work at the national and state level and is recognized as a national expert on laws involving the education rights of children who are homeless and those in foster care. She helped found and represents ELC as a member of the national Legal Center for Foster Care and Education. In 2012, Maura was named Child Advocate of the Year by the Pennsylvania Bar Association’s Children’s Rights Committee for her work on behalf of children in foster care. She has also received the Unsung Hero Award from the Legal Intelligencer for her litigation on behalf of students experiencing homelessness.

Kathleen McNaught has been with the American Bar Association's Center on Children and the Law for 15 years, and is the Project Director for the Legal Center for Foster Care and Education, a collaboration between the ABA, Education Law Center, and Juvenile Law Center. Kathleen provides training and technical assistance around the country on a variety of legal child welfare issues, primarily focused on the educational needs of children in foster care. Prior to joining the Center, Kathleen spent seven years practicing law in the state of Maryland. She was a staff attorney for Maryland's Legal Aid Bureau in their Child Advocacy Unit. She also was in private practice, representing parents and children in child welfare cases, as well as in education, delinquency and custody matters.

Jennifer Nagda is the Policy Director and a former staff attorney and associate director for the Young Center for Immigrant Children’s Rights, where she advocates for the rights of unaccompanied immigrant children. She is a Lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania Law School’s Interdisciplinary Child Advocacy Clinic and also taught at the University of Chicago Law School. Jennifer was a staff attorney at the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) where she represented immigrant families, employees, and students. She clerked for the Honorable James B. Zagel of the Northern District of Illinois.

Stacey Obrecht has more than 15 years of experience working with and within governmental agencies, educational institutions, and nonprofit organizations in the health, human services, and early education sectors. This includes experience in training development and implementation; organizational development; as well as research, writing, and over ten published works. Stacey is a licensed attorney, a Child Welfare Law Specialist, and has experience with development and administration of indigent legal services and state-run GAL services. Stacey received her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Northern Colorado, her Juris Doctorate from the University of Wyoming, and is a certified Project Management Professional.
Treneee Parker received her B.A. in Psychology from Wesley College in Dover, DE, and her M.A. in Psychology from Salisbury State University in Salisbury, MD. She has spent her career working for the Delaware Division of Family Services and was appointed to the position of Deputy Director in December 2015. Prior to this appointment, Ms. Parker has worked in the areas of investigation, treatment and adoption and has been a direct worker, supervisor, and member of regional administration.

Brent Pattison is Clinical Professor of Law and Director of the Middleton Children’s Rights Center at Drake University Law School. Brent began his career as a Soros Justice Fellow at TeamChild, an award-winning program in Seattle that provides civil legal advocacy for children in the juvenile justice system. Brent has represented children in a wide variety of contexts, including delinquency, child welfare, housing, public benefits, and education cases. He is also a former special education teacher. Most of his scholarship focuses on children’s constitutional rights, and he has a special interest in children’s rights in the context of school, as well as the overlap between the child welfare, juvenile justice, and school systems.

Lisa Pilnik is co-founder and director of Child & Family Policy Associates, where she undertakes a wide range of short- and long-term consulting projects. She is a consultant for Georgetown University Center for Juvenile Justice Reform’s Crossover Youth Practice Model and for the American Bar Association’s Homeless Youth Legal Network. She previously served as the Deputy Executive Director of the Coalition for Juvenile Justice, and as a Staff Attorney at the ABA Center on Children and the Law. Prior to that, she was an Associate at Arent Fox, LLP. Lisa holds a JD and a Masters in Nonprofit Leadership from the University of Pennsylvania and is admitted to the bar in New York and DC.

Meredith Pindar is the Immigration Legal Specialist for New Jersey’s Department of Children and Families (DCF). She educates DCF staff on immigration matters and helps develop and implement practices to more effectively serve immigrant clients. Prior to joining DCF, Ms. Pindar served as a Deputy Attorney General in New Jersey’s Attorney General’s Office, representing DCF’s Division of Child Protection and Permanency. Ms. Pindar earned a B.A. from Cornell University and a J.D. from Temple Beasley School of Law, where she was a member of Temple Law Review, the Rubin Public Interest Law Honor Society, and the Federal Judicial Clerkship Honors Clinical Program.

Jennifer Podkul, the Director of Policy at KIND, is a human rights lawyer and expert on child migration in the United States. She is a national expert on issues affecting immigrant children, and has published articles, handbooks, and reports on child migration. Jennifer began her legal career as an attorney representing immigrant children at Ayuda in Washington, DC. She served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Honduras, holds a B.A. in American Studies and Spanish from Franklin and Marshall College and a J.D. with honors from the Washington College of Law, American University.

Jennifer Pokempner is the Child Welfare Policy Director at Juvenile Law Center where she focuses on improving law and policy for transition aged youth. Ms. Pokempner joined the Juvenile Law Center in 2001 as a Skadden Fellow, after serving as a law clerk to the Honorable Andre M. Davis, District Court of Maryland. Ms. Pokempner has worked extensively with children in Baltimore, including at the Harlem Park Middle School, and for organizations such as Teach Baltimore. Prior to attending law school, Jenny worked as a paralegal in the child advocacy unit at the Legal Aid Bureau in Baltimore City.

Robyn M. Powell, JD, is a PhD Candidate at The Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University as well as a Research Associate at the Lurie Institute for Disability Policy. Previously, Ms. Powell served as an Attorney Advisor at the National Council on Disability (NCD), an independent federal agency that advises the President and Congress on matters concerning people with disabilities. Ms. Powell is one of the country’s foremost authorities on the rights of parents with disabilities. Ms. Powell is principal author of NCD’s Rocking the Cradle: Ensuring the Rights of Parents with Disabilities and their Children.
Christine Raino is the Director of Public Policy at Shared Hope International. She leads the management of Protected Innocence Challenge research and advocacy, with particular focus on access to services for juvenile sex trafficking victims and victim-centered approaches to demand enforcement. She directs legislative advocacy efforts and provides technical assistance to legislators. She also authors and leads research initiatives on emerging topics related to juvenile sex trafficking. Christine is a licensed attorney. Prior to obtaining her law degree at American University, she worked with refugees, asylees and victims of trafficking through federal and state resettlement programs at the International Institute of Boston.

Diane L. Redleaf is the founder and Legal Director of the Family Defense Center. A child and family advocate since she graduated from Stanford Law School in 1979, Ms. Redleaf has brought more than three dozen major systemic reform cases on behalf of families, has been involved in over 60 cases with published opinions, including numerous precedential appellate decisions, has spearheaded major legislative and regulatory reforms in Illinois, and has represented parents in hundreds of juvenile court and administrative proceedings. She sits on the Steering Committee of the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law’s Parent Representation Project.

Michael Santos is an attorney at the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty whose work focuses on advocating for homeless youth access to education through public education, impact litigation, and policy advocacy. Prior to joining the Law Center, Michael Santos has had a long history of working on the rights of low-income and underrepresented communities through the Department of Health and Human Services and various non-profit organizations. Most recently, he was a fellow at the Clinton Foundation where he worked on an initiative to decrease the upward trend of childhood obesity in the United States.

Shara Saveikis has been the Executive Director of Westmoreland County Children's Bureau for over nine years. Over the past 24 years, her entire professional career has been devoted to Child Welfare, serving in various capacities in both the public and private sectors. In the public sector, Ms. Saveikis was employed by the Commonwealth and at two county agencies. At the state level, she served as a Regional Program Representative for the Western Region Office of Children, Youth and Families; at the local level with Monroe County Children and Youth, she worked as a caseworker and Program Manager. In the private sector, she served as a counselor in a residential setting for treating adjudicated dependent/delinquent youth and was a summer camp counselor.

Meredith L. Schalick, JD, MS, is a Clinical Associate Professor of Law and Director of the Child and Family Advocacy Clinic (CFAC) at the Camden Campus of Rutgers Law School. CFAC represents children in family law, Social Security benefits, special education and immigration cases. CFAC also partners with the First Star Academy to advocate for educational needs of children in placement. Prior to joining the Rutgers faculty, Professor Schalick worked at the Child Abuse Research Education and Service (CARES) Institute, New Jersey Department of Human Services, New Jersey General Assembly, and the Support Center for Child Advocates.

Angie Schwartz is the Policy Director at the Alliance for Children’s Rights where she works to improve the well-being of children living in poverty and children placed in foster care or at-risk of dependency. Angie has been instrumental in passage of several key reforms including the extension of foster care to 21, creation of a new state-only funding system for kinship foster parents, and development of a screening and application process to improve foster youth’s access to disability benefits. Angie earned her B.A., Magna Cum Laude, from American University, and her J.D. with distinction from Stanford Law School.
Honorable Cathy Hollenberg Serrette is the Family Division Coordinating Judge for the Circuit Court for Prince George’s County, Maryland. Judge Serrette is involved in many legal committees, including as a member of the Maryland Court of Appeals Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services, the Maryland judiciary’s liaison on the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, and vice-chair of the Maryland Judicial Council Domestic Law Committee. She co-chairs the Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Committee of the National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ), serves on NAWJ’s Maryland Correctional Institution for Women Re-entry Conference Committee, and initiated the Maryland Women’s Bar Association’s Waxter Children’s Center program.

Stefanie Sprow is the Deputy Director of Child Welfare and Mental Health at the Children’s Defense Fund. Her work at CDF is directed at improving outcomes for children and youth who are in or on the edges of the child welfare system by promoting public policies, practices, and programs to help keep children safe and in permanent nurturing families and communities. Stefanie has worked to enact and implement several federal laws to improve outcomes for children, including the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 and the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014. In addition to working on CDF’s child welfare agenda, Sprow also works on broader data research and analysis and helps in the production of several CDF publications.

Elizabeth Thornton is an attorney representing parents and children on appeal in dependency cases in California. From December 2013 through January 2017, Elizabeth was a Casey Family Programs Fellow embedded in the United States Department of Homeland Security. In this role, she worked with both United States Citizenship and Immigration Services and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), serving most recently as the ICE Senior Advisor for Parental Interests and Legal Access Coordinator. Prior to joining Casey Family Programs, Ms. Thornton was an attorney with the ABA Center on Children and the Law.

Kimberly Tissot is the Executive Director of Able SC, where she guides the staff in applying the philosophy of independent living to real situations. Currently, Able SC is engaged in state legislative and agency-level work to ensure that services fully accommodate and protect the rights of parents with disabilities. Kimberly has developed several innovative independent living programs to reach all populations, and has developed an international program to promote disability rights. Kimberly also is a Governor-appointed member of the South Carolina Statewide Independent Living Council and of the South Carolina Advisory Council on the Education of Students with Disabilities, where she serves as Co-Chair. Lastly, Kimberly is a proud parent with a disability!

Abigail Trillin is currently the Executive Director of Legal Services for Children, a Bay Area non-profit legal office serving children and youth in foster care, guardianship, education and immigration cases. She has been at Legal Services for Children for over twenty years, handling cases in all LSC practice areas and providing community outreach and training for attorneys and law students. Prior to attending law school, Ms. Trillin taught elementary school in Los Angeles. Ms. Trillin holds a B.A. from Yale University and a J.D. from New York University. She is a Certified Child Welfare Specialist. She is fluent in Spanish.

Jack F. Trope has been a senior director with Casey Family Programs since 2015. He was formerly the Executive Director of the Association on American Indian Affairs starting in 2002 and Director of the Western Area Office in New Mexico for the Save the Children Federation. Mr. Trope has also held a number legal positions, including having been a partner with the law firm of Sant Angelo & Trope for 8 years, a senior staff attorney with AAIA for 6 years and an Assistant Counsel to two New Jersey governors. Much of his legal work has focused in the areas of Native cultural preservation and Indian child welfare.
Scott Trowbridge has been a staff attorney with the ABA Center on Children and the Law since 2007. He has provided technical assistance to states and tribes on a variety of child welfare topics. Particular areas of interest include parent and child empowerment in legal representation, the Indian Child Welfare Act, and systemic data-driven decision making. Prior to attending law school at the University of the District of Columbia, Mr. Trowbridge was a supervisor and case worker for the Tennessee Department of Children Services in various departments. He received his BA in psychology and philosophy/religion from Queens University of Charlotte.

Casey Trupin is a program officer for the Raikes Foundation’s youth homelessness strategy. He has represented thousands of foster youth and homeless adults in litigation and worked on state and federal legislation designed to improve services to low-income children, youth and adults. Previously, he served as the coordinating attorney for the Children and Youth Project at Columbia Legal Services in Seattle, advocating for at-risk, homeless, and foster children and youth. Casey is a special advisor to the American Bar Association’s (ABA) Commission on Homelessness and Poverty as well as a former co-chair of the ABA’s Children’s Rights Litigation Committee. He has authored and edited numerous books and articles on at-risk, homeless, and foster children.

Mary Van Cleve is an attorney with the Children and Youth Project at Columbia Legal Services in Seattle, WA. Her litigation and administrative law practices seeks systemic change in the laws and policies affecting foster care and other at-risk youth through impact litigation and legislative and administrative advocacy. She joined CLS in 2013, and her practice experience includes large firm complex administrative law and litigation, and domestic and sexual violence criminal prosecution. She is a 1988 graduate of The University of Texas School of Law.

Sophie Vick joined the Children’s Law Center of Washington, DC in 2013 as an investigator with the Guardian ad Litem Program. As an investigator, she assists attorneys who represent children in neglect and custody cases. She also serves on the leadership team for Girls Rock! DC. Sophie is pursuing a graduate degree in philosophy.

Brandy Wagstaff is a Trial Attorney in the Disability Rights Section of the United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division. Ms. Wagstaff represents the United States in enforcement actions alleging violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Ms. Wagstaff’s enforcement efforts focus on discrimination by both private and public entities. Ms. Wagstaff also served for several years as an attorney advisor in the Disability Rights Section, where she worked on developing regulations under the ADA and providing counsel to attorneys on administrative law issues. Ms. Wagstaff is also an adjunct professor who teaches courses in legal writing, appellate advocacy, and disability law.

Jamien Weddle joined the Legal Aid Society’s Juvenile Rights Practice in 2006 and is an Assistant Attorney-in-Charge of its Bronx office in New York City. The Juvenile Rights Practice represents children and adolescents in New York City’s Family Courts in abuse, neglect, PINS, and delinquency proceedings. In addition to managing a team of attorneys handling child protective cases, Jamien supervises the Bronx Adolescent Practice Team, an interdisciplinary group of attorneys, social workers and paralegals specializing in the representation of older youth in foster care. He is a graduate of Northeastern University School of Law.

Linda Weinerman joined the Colorado Office of the Child's Representative in 2003, and has served as its Executive Director since 2009. Ms. Weinerman served as a Denver City Attorney from 1999 through 2003, representing the Denver Department of Human Services. From 1992 until 1999, Ms. Weinerman was a Guardian ad Litem in Denver County representing children in dependency and neglect cases. Ms. Weinerman is a past editor of the Juvenile Law Column of the Colorado Lawyer and a former chair of the Juvenile Law Section of the Colorado Bar Association. Additionally, she served as a member of the Board and Executive Committee of the National Association of Counsel for Children.
Cynthia Widitora, J.D., MSW, CWLS, is a staff attorney at Children’s Law Center of California, Los Angeles (CLCLA), where she has represented thousands of children, minor parents, and young adults in dependency proceedings. Prior to joining CLCLA in 2010, Ms. Widitora worked extensively with system-involved youth though her social work internship, summer law clerk positions in dependency court, and volunteer work with student advocacy and mentoring groups. She has presented on topics of dependency law practice at the NACC National Child Welfare, Juvenile and Family Law Conference, and in law school and social work classrooms.

Terrence Wilson joined Barton Child Law and Policy Center in July of 2016 as the Robin Nash Postgraduate Fellow in Law. Prior to joining the Barton Center, Terrence worked in a variety of areas including political campaigning, legislative affairs, local government, and civil rights law and policy. Terrence attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as a Morehead-Cain Scholar. He graduated with honors with a Bachelors of Arts in Psychology and a minor in Social & Economic Justice. He then attended the University of Georgia where he received his Juris Doctor and a Master’s Degree in Public Administration.
The ABA Center on Children and the Law is very thankful for the many financial supporters who make our ongoing work in the children’s law field possible, including:

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children’s Bureau

State agencies and courts in:

- Connecticut
- Iowa
- Louisiana
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Pennsylvania
- Washington DC

The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Casey Family Programs

Emory University School of Law, Barton Child Law and Policy Center

The Hilton Foundation

The Redlich Horwitz Foundation

The Southern Poverty Law Center

The Stuart Foundation

The Walter S. Johnson Foundation

The ABA Criminal Justice Section

The ABA Enterprise Fund

The ABA Family Law Section

The American Bar Endowment

Jon Bridge and Justice Bobbe Bridge, ret.