Professor Emma Coleman Jordan’s determination to shape a more equal society can be traced to her parents’ technique of telling character-reinforcing stories about her to anyone who would listen. She remembers being told by her father, with great pride, the story of her leadership as a four-year-old kindergarten student, when she took charge of her classroom’s intricately-choreographed May pole entrance, when their teacher unexpectedly was called away. She told her fellow students where to stand, where to go, when to enter, and what routines to do, and she directed the performance without hesitation, setting a foundation for leadership at an early age.

The first in her family to graduate from a four-year college, Professor Jordan applied to only one law school to learn the law and civil rights history from legendary teachers at Howard University School of Law. She graduated first in her class each of her three years. Upon graduation, with encouragement from her Howard professors, Professor Jordan chose academia. She started as a Stanford Law School teaching fellow. Her Stanford mentors supported her entry into law teaching, first at the University of Santa Clara and then at the University of California, Davis, where she achieved tenure. She then applied for a highly-coveted White House Fellowship. During the selection process, Professor Jordan learned that she was pregnant. Her oldest daughter was the first child born to a fellow during the fellowship. Before the phrase was coined, she became a real-life example of work/life balance after giving birth during her fellowship and integrating her professional life with her life as a new mother.

Professor Jordan returned to U.C. Davis, continuing to specialize in banking and Uniform Commercial Code scholarship, an area in which women were greatly underrepresented. She gained traction in her field when the speaker of the California Assembly asked her to draft the first statute regulating the practice of lengthy bank holds on deposits.

Professor Jordan joined the Georgetown University Law Center faculty, with tenure, in 1987. The stimulation and support of her colleagues at Georgetown led her to envision the overlap between civil rights discourse and economic regulation. At Georgetown, she began to envision a unique interdisciplinary framework to address problems of economic inequality. Today, she is recognized as the founding scholar of the legal theory of economic justice. In 2011, she published the second edition of her classic textbook, *Economic Justice: Race, Gender, Identity and Economics*, providing legal scholars and social scientists with the analytical tools to frame the legal theories to address the economic dimensions of race, gender, linguistic and sexual identity inequality beyond employment discrimination. She also addressed the inequality effects of the 2008 market collapse, the foreclosure crisis, and the inequality effects of the crisis decision-making of the Federal Reserve.

In 1991, Professor Jordan organized a pro bono legal team to represent Professor Anita Hill during the Clarence Thomas Supreme Court confirmation hearings. Professor Jordan was then the newly-elected, first African American president of the Association of American Law Schools. She did not hesitate to collaborate with a hastily-assembled legal team to bring the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace to a national stage. The impact of the hearings nearly 25 years ago is still widely felt through sexual harassment education and training programs in the workplace, public awareness of the challenges sexual harassment victims face, and the entry of more women in politics. Professors Jordan and Hill collaborated on the book *Race, Gender and Power in America: The Legacy of the Hill-Thomas Hearings* and continued the dialogue on sexual harassment, race, and women.

At Georgetown, Professor Jordan created two lasting institutions to expand the opportunity for women to teach law where women remain underrepresented. She created the Georgetown Future Law Professors Fellowship and founded the Northeast Corridor Collective of Black Women Law Professors; both provide a safe place for young women scholars to present early drafts and get both criticism and support for adventurous scholarship. Her efforts at Georgetown paved the way to academia for countless young scholars. Professor Jordan herself has a legion of mentees who enthusiastically praise her positive and unwavering support. She has built a network of mentorship, asking only that her mentees “pay it forward” with support for other young women in the legal profession. An inspiration and tireless ally for women in the legal profession, Professor Jordan continues to pave the way for gender and racial equality by not only breaking glass ceilings, but also by bringing others along with her, the definition of a Margaret Brent Award honoree.