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Elevating Justice Institute Program Guide

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Elevating Justice Institute

University of Richmond School of Law

March 9, 2023

A hands-on exploration and collaborative discussion of Access to Justice topics and techniques.
Hosted in conjunction with the Southeastern Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting.

Program Schedule Overview

9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. | Check-in and Registration

9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. | Breakfast

10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. | Institute Introduction and Overview

Roger Skalbeck, Richmond School of Law

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. | User Mapping & Issue Spotting

Emily LaGratta, LaGratta Consulting LLC

11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | Break & Lunch

12:00 p.m. – 12:30 p.m. | Lunchtime Keynote

Hon. Don Johnson, PhD, Chief Judge, 19th Judicial District of Louisiana

12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. | Local Innovations & Solutions

Emily LaGratta, LaGratta Consulting LLC

1:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. | Break

1:15 p.m. – 2:15pm | Real-World Planning for Self-Help Centers

Hon. Susan J. Stoney, Fairfax County District Court

Renee Danser, Harvard A2J Lab

2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. | Break

2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. | Communicating Clearly: Forms, Scripts and Signs

Emily LaGratta, LaGratta Consulting LLC

3:30 – 4:00 p.m. | Action Planning

Emily LaGratta, LaGratta Consulting LLC

Event Sponsors

The Elevating Justice Institute is made possible through the financial support of two organizations. The Virginia Law Foundation provided a Spot Grant to support this work. The **Virginia Law Foundation** supports projects throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia that facilitate access to justice, promote an appreciation and understanding of the Rule of Law, and provide law-related education in support of these ideals.

Support also comes from the **AALL / Bloomberg Law Continuing Education Grant Program.** The purpose of this program is to encourage educational program development and promote program sharing among AALL entities. The Elevating Justice Institute takes place on the day before the two-day annual conference for the Southeastern Association of Law Libraries (SEAALL).

Virginia Law Foundation

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SOUTHEASTERN CHAPTER | AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF LAW LIBRARIES

Session Details and Descriptions

9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Breakfast

10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

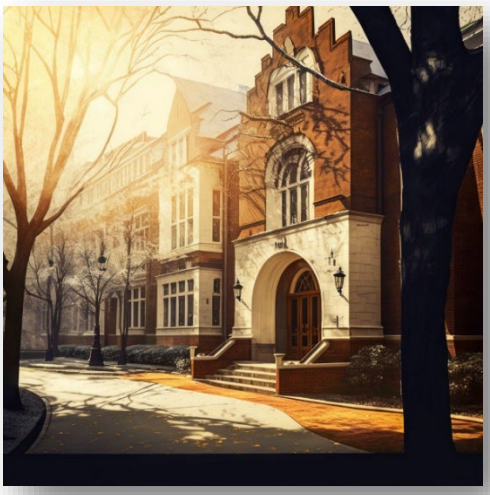
Institute Introduction and Overview

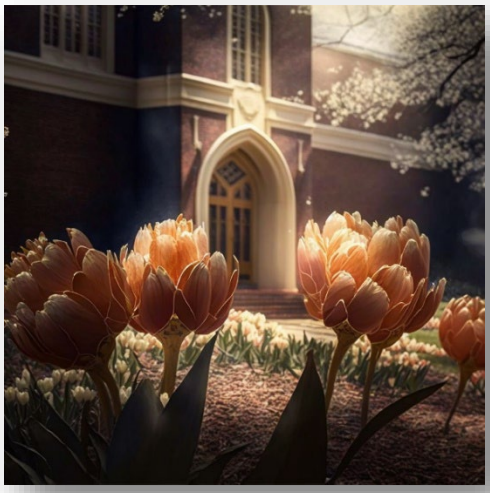
Facilitator: Roger Skalbeck, Richmond School of Law

Session Description

No single person, group or project will fix the access to justice challenges we face across our communities. Improvements and solutions arise from collective efforts and collaborative projects.

The Elevating Justice Institute is structured to show a range of techniques and topics, inspiring all participants to do good and do well for ourselves and those we serve.





Session Objective

This session will include an overview of the day's programming, together with an opportunity to learn more about event participants.

We'll engage with the audience to learn more about attendees, including the organizations and regions they represent.

Session Details and Descriptions Cont.

10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

User Mapping & Issue Spotting

Facilitator: Emily LaGratta, LaGratta Consulting LLC

Session Description

Legal consumers represent every demographic and bring a range of experiences and challenges to their interactions with the legal field. This session will begin to explore that diversity – both seen and unseen – and how it may influence needed services.

Session Objective

Explore the process of user mapping and how it informs access and fairness efforts and priorities

Explore potential user needs and expectations through the framework of procedural justice and legitimacy

Additional Resources

"Procedural Fairness: A Bench Card for Trial Judges,"
American Judges Association, available at:
https://amjudges.org/publications/courtrv/cr53-4/PJ-Bench-Card-Full-Final.pdf

"Procedural Fairness: A Key Ingredient in Public Satisfaction,"
Kevin Burke & Steve Leben, 44 CT. REV. 4, 2007-2008, available at:
http://goo.gl/afCYT

Session Details and Descriptions Cont.

11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Break

(Stretch your legs and pick up lunch)

12:00 p.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Lunchtime Keynote

Speaker (virtual): Hon. Don Johnson, PhD, Chief Judge, 19th Judicial District of Louisiana

Keynote Description

This session will highlight perspectives from a unique vantage point: a sitting judge and academic scholar in the fields of justice management and innovation and procedural justice.

Speaker Biography

Chief Judge Johnson holds several advanced degrees, including a Ph.D. in Criminal Justice Administration with a doctorial minor in statistics and a doctorate in philosophy with a major in judicial studies. He is the winner of several awards, including the William R. McMahon Award from the American Bar Association for significant implementation and development in the use of technological advances in a court of limited jurisdiction.

Additional biographical information is provided at the end of these materials.

Session Details and Descriptions Cont.

12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Local Innovations & Solutions

Facilitator: Emily LaGratta, LaGratta Consulting LLC

Session Description

Every jurisdiction has its own strengths and limitations in addressing community needs. While no two places are the same, many share common themes in what resources are developed and how. This session will invite audience members to describe local innovations and the strategies that support them, as well as what challenges remain.

Session Objective

Outline the range of access and fairness efforts represented by attendees' jurisdictions and review through a user-centered framework

Session Details and Descriptions Cont.

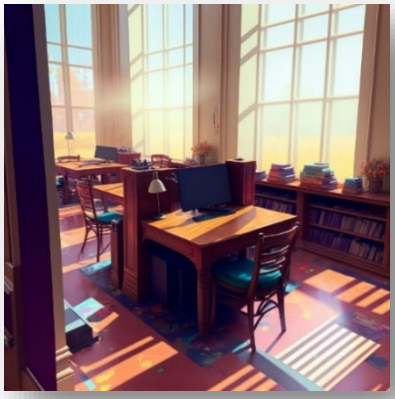
1:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.

15-minute break

1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Real-World Planning for Self-Help Centers

Facilitators: Judge Stoney and Renee Danser



Session Description

Self-help centers are longstanding cornerstones for many courthouses and mere fantasies for others. This session will explore the creation story of two self-help centers, one built years ago and one currently in the making.

Session Objective

Chart and contribute to the design and planning process for a real-world project, as Fairfax County in Virginia begins to implement a pilot self-help law center in partnership with their law library.

Join a conversation between two members of the Virginia Committee for Self-Represented Litigants, sharing your expertise and insights.

Questions to Explore

How do we pick a good location? How do we define the best scope of help provided?

How can people best understand the difference between legal information and advice?

Session Details and Descriptions Cont.

2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

15-minute break

2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Communicating Clearly: Forms, Scripts and Signs

Facilitator: Emily LaGratta, LaGratta Consulting LLC

Session Description

Effective communication goes beyond plain language. It accounts for the multitude of abilities, learning styles, needs, and expectations of those in conversation. When guided by a procedural justice framework, various written and oral communications can build trust and legitimacy along the way.

Session Objective

Practice reviewing and editing typical resources within user-centered and procedural justice frameworks

Additional Resources

"Building Public Trust and Confidence Through Model Court Websites," Texas Municipal Courts Education Center, 2019, available at: https://www.tmcec.com/files/4815/6173/0194/Model_Court_Websites.pdf

"Design Standards for Court & Government Forms," Margaret Hagan, 2023, available at: https://medium.com/legal-design-and-innovation/design-standards-for-court-government-forms-c5e157e42b2

"If Walls Could Talk: Can Better Signs Help Build Public Trust?," Texas Municipal Courts Education Center, 2019, available at: https://www.tmcec.com/files/3215/6209/0117/If_Walls_Could_Talk_-_Signage_Toolkit_6.28.19.pdf

Session Details and Descriptions Cont.

3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Action Planning

Facilitator: Emily LaGratta, LaGratta Consulting LLC

Session Description

The barriers to delivering justice can be overwhelming. However, tangible improvements are possible.

In this session, we plan how to bring new ideas, big and small, back to your organization and community.

Session Objective

Draft tangible follow-up items for attendees to continue the dialogue and efforts going forward.

Participant Biographies

Hon. Don Johnson, PhD, Chief Judge, 19th Judicial District of Louisiana

Judge Donald R. Johnson is a lifelong resident of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. In 1977, he graduated from Southern University with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering. In 1982, he earned his Juris Doctor degree from Louisiana State University, Paul M. Hebert School of Law. He has several advance degrees, including two doctorates.

Immediately after graduation, he worked as an Assistant District Attorney with the East Baton Rouge Parish District Attorney's Office. During this period, he opened a private law office until his election to the City Court of Baton Rouge in 1993. In 1999, he was elected to the 19th Judicial District Court where he has served on all divisions of court. Currently, he serves on Criminal, Traffic, Drug Treatment, and the Pretrial Release Court. He is the winner of several awards, including the William R. McMahon Award from the American Bar Association for significant implementation and development in the use of technological advances in a court of limited jurisdiction.

Judge Susan J. Stoney, Fairfax County General District Court Judge

Judge Susan Stoney is Fairfax County General District Court Judge. She is a graduate of the University of Virginia and William & Mary Law School. Susan clerked for the Honorable James W. Benton, Jr. on the Court of Appeals of Virginia before beginning her career as a Legal Aid attorney.

Over her twenty-five-year litigation career, Judge Stoney represented the interests of low-income individuals and marginalized communities on a wide variety of cases in both state and federal court. She served as the Deputy Director of Legal Services of Northern Virginia (LSNV) from 2010 until November 2016, when she was appointed to the Fairfax General District Court bench. Susan was recently appointed to the Committee on District Courts and serves as on the Access to Justice Commission's Committee on Self Represented Litigants. She also serves on Fairfax County's Council to End Domestic Violence (CEDV), co-chairing the Court Process Work Group. Susan was awarded Most Influential Women of Law in 2020 and Leader in the Law in 2012.

Renee Danser, Associate Director of Research and Strategic Partnerships, Harvard A2J Lab

Renee L. Danser obtained a Bachelor of Arts and her J.D. from the University of Pittsburgh. She graduated from the Institute for Court Management Fellows Program in May of 2013 where her project was awarded the Vice President's Award of Merit for Applied Research.

Ms. Danser began her career as a court manager when she chaired the multidisciplinary committee to unify the family court in Pittsburgh under the best practice principles of "One Judge/One Family". Thereafter Ms. Danser began oversight of self-represented litigant services. Ms. Danser then went on to oversee all court operations as the Court Administrator for the 43rd Judicial District of Pennsylvania before transitioning to advocacy as the Deputy Director of the Self-Represented Litigation Network (SRLN).

Elevating Justice Institute Planning Team

Institute Facilitator + Consultant

Emily LaGratta, LaGratta Consulting LLC, New York, NY

Emily LaGratta, J.D., is a national subject matter expert on the topics of trust-building and procedural justice. As part of this work, she designs and implements innovative pilot efforts and conducts trainings across multiple touchpoints of the legal system, from courts to corrections. Recent efforts include the Court Voices Project, a 12-court pilot collecting real-time feedback from staff and court users about pandemic response practices, and trust-building interventions in three prosecutor offices. Emily has authored many practitioner resources, including "We Want to Hear From You!: A Toolkit," "To Be Fair," and "Procedural Justice in Action." She started LaGratta Consulting in 2019 after nearly ten years at the Center for Court Innovation, where she served as the Director of Procedural Justice Initiatives.

Institute Planning Team

Patricia Petroccione, Law Librarian, Walter T. McCarthy Law Library, Arlington, Va.

Member, Virginia Access to Justice Commission's Committee on Self Represented Litigants

Roger Skalbeck, Associate Dean and Professor of Law, Richmond School of Law, Richmond, Va.

Member, Virginia Access to Justice Commission's Committee on Self Represented Litigants

Nick Stump, Head of Reference and Access Services, West Virginia University College of Law, Morgantown, WV

Commissioner, West Virginia Access to Justice Commission

Gail Warren, State Law Librarian, Virginia State Law Library, Richmond, Va.

Member, Virginia Access to Justice Commission
Member, Virginia Access to Justice Commission's Committee on Self Represented Litigants

Recognition

Thanks to the University of Richmond School of Law for providing space and support for the Institute. The following people provided extended assistance: Jenika Simmons, event coordination and logistics; Daniel Turner, production support and design; Allie Voehringer (L '24), research assistance; Carl Hamm, media production. Also, several people provided contributions for the resource guide created for this event.

Institute Resources + Attribution

Following is information on the resources used to create materials for the Elevating Justice Institute.

"User Mapping" Pictures

The "User Mapping and Issue Spotting" session includes photographs and biographical details for several people. They are all fictionalized. To create the photographs, we used the website "This Person Does Not Exist" – this site now redirects to Stability.ai, which developed the Stable Diffusion network that provides a system to generate images based on user prompts. The site was formerly at: thispersondoesnotexist.com – The system used a "generative adversarial network" that combined elements of actual photos to create fictional composites.

Stylized Program Graphics

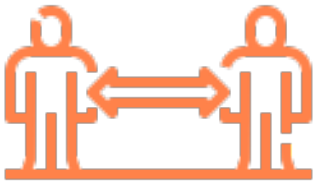
The cover images and all images in the program originate from MidJourney, which is an Artificial Intelligence-assisted system that creates pictures from text prompts. Images are generated using an implementation of Stable Diffusion. Some of the images are derived from actual photographs of the Fairfax County Law Library and Virginia Supreme Court. Others originate purely from MidJourney.

Photographs for the Real-World Planning for Self-Help Centers

Photos displayed during the Self-Help Center session include pictures taken by Judge Susan Stoney and Renee Danser. Judge Stoney provided photos of the Fairfax Public Law Library and the Self-Help Center being developed there. Renee Danser provided photographs of a few of the court systems and organizations that she has worked with through the A2J Lab at Harvard, where she works. Some photos also include stylized versions of the Fairfax Public Law Library, reimagined with MidJourney.

State Maps

The state map outlines for the resource guide come from the Noun Project, created by designer Ary Prasetyo https://thenounproject.com/arypst/ - Noun Project subscribers can choose from millions of icons to use on a royalty-free basis. With the service, you can illustrate everything from subpoena to statute to social distancing.



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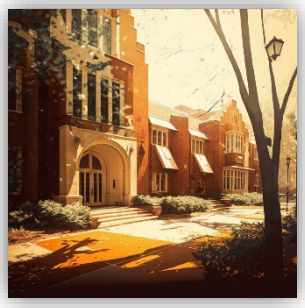

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