

**EDUCATION**

<b>UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI SCHOOL OF LAW</b> , Coral Gables, FL Juris Doctorate				2011-2014 Bar and Gavel Honor Society
<b>UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA</b> , Los Angeles, CA Doctorate of Education Concentration: Educational Psychology Masters of Educational Psychology	GPA 3.86 GPA 3.90			2008-2011 <a href="#">Dissertation</a>
<b>RUTGERS UNIVERSITY</b> , New Brunswick, NJ Bachelor of Arts Major: History	GPA: 3.51	Cum Laude		2005-2007 Phi Beta Kappa
<b>UNION COUNTY COLLEGE</b> , Cranford, NJ Associates of Arts Major: Business				2002-2005 Chi Alpha Epsilon Honors

**EXPERIENCE**

**American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California** Los Angeles, CA  
[Senior Policy Counsel](#), November 2017-Current  
 Develops and leads educational equity campaigns. Reviews legislation and develops priorities. Published national and statewide reports related to racial inequality, mental health, and education that have influenced legislation. Report cited by the [United Nations](#) Human Rights Council. **MEDIA:** [Washington Post](#) [Huffington Post](#) [LA Times](#) [KPCB](#)

**Project KnuckleHead** Los Angeles, CA  
*Founder and Director*, June 2012-Current [www.projectknucklehead.org](http://www.projectknucklehead.org)  
 Established national non-profit for underserved students and system-involved youth. Served thousands of children through educational, music, after school, art, mentoring, prevention, and intervention programs. Recruited, trained, and supervised over 150 volunteers and mentors throughout Florida, California, and other states. Created and managed communications, marketing, finance, fundraising/development, event planning, social media, graphic design and web design, program management, and direct service delivery. Raised over \$100,000 through annual galas and development campaigns. Created partnerships with over twenty schools, businesses, and universities.

**Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles at UCLA, CCRR** *Research Associate*, January 2017-2018  
 Published students and conducted research to assist advocates in improving educational opportunities for marginalized children. Assisted the California Department of Justice with its first school desegregation case in nearly 50 years. Corresponded with advocates, organizations, government officials, and the media regarding issues of educational equity. Identified issues with data, policies, and practices at the state California, local, and federal levels.

**Southern Poverty Law Center** Montgomery, AL Miami, FL  
*Staff Attorney/Fellow/ Teaching Tolerance Fellow/ Certified Legal Intern*. Summer 2013- December 2016  
 Impacted 100,000+ students across Florida and Alabama through settlement negotiations and policy changes with school districts. Drafted legal memoranda, filed class-wide complaints, led [campaigns](#), and represented students across eight districts. [Published](#) fact sheets, op-eds, and Know Your Rights materials that have reached to thousands of parents, students, advocates, and practitioners. Published equity report cards described as “[scathing](#),” “[startling](#),” and “[grim](#)” by separate news sources. Contributed to DOJ complaint against the state of Florida on behalf of every Black and Latino student in public schools. Conducted client interviews, and assisted in litigation of federal class-action civil rights lawsuit. Featured in [documentary](#) challenging school segregation, inequality, and the school-to-prison-pipeline. Over thirty [media](#) appearances. Facilitated trainings for entire school districts. Administered surveys to 1,200+ teachers, and conducted focus groups with dozens of educators. Published articles and created [professional](#)

[development](#) materials for educators. Delivered [webinars](#), trained lawyers, teachers, counselors, and psychologists at national conferences.

### **University of Miami School of Law**

*Street Law Teacher/Fellow*, August 2012- Spring 2014

Taught courses on law in Miami high schools and juvenile detention centers. Supervised two law student interns. Visited and co-taught at seven other schools. Develop lessons, curriculum, mock trials and [student action](#).

*Educational Rights Project Fellow*, Fall 2012-Spring 2014

Facilitated 20+ educational rights workshops for parents and students within University of Miami School of Law's Historic Black Church Program. Created connections and organized with 50+ churches, multiple universities, and legal service organizations. Facilitated seminars to empower low-income families to challenge inappropriate school action/non-action.

### **Miami-Dade County Public Defenders, Juvenile Division**

*Certified Legal Intern*, Summer 2012, Fall 2013

Represented youth by writing and arguing motions in juvenile court. Communicated with clients and parents. Maintained court calendar. Drafted training materials for future attorneys and interns.

### **Mental Health America of Los Angeles**

*Secondary Education Teacher/Program Coordinator/Counselor*, October 2007- June 2010

Developed curriculum and taught high school courses. Served as College and Career Counselor. Supervised 2,000+ student internship hours at multiple sites. Created after school programs at two Los Angeles high schools. Prepared curriculum and budget for the programs. Coordinated educational services for youth exiting the foster care and juvenile justice systems. Assisted in research studies conducted in schools.

### **Plainfield, New Jersey Board of Education**

*Substitute Teacher*, December 2005- June 2007

Substituted grades K-12 in Math, Language Arts, Social Studies and other subjects. Followed specified curriculum. Served as long-term sub for middle school social studies class.

## **FELLOWSHIPS**

### **University of Southern California**

*Educational Psychology TA Fellow*, August 2009- December 2010

Delivered lectures and facilitated college labs for undergraduate Educational Psychology course. Graded assignments and exams. Assisted in research studies. Received 4.8 out of 5 on student evaluations.

### **Rutgers University Graduate School of Education**

*South Africa Initiative Fellow*, Summer 2007

Taught 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Amstelhoff Primary School in Paarl, South Africa. Took course at the University of Pretoria. Worked with educational institutions throughout the country. Volunteered with NGO Tebeho Trust.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

- [State of Student Wellness California](#) (2022)
- [No Police in Schools: A Vision for Safe and Supportive Schools in California](#) (2021)
- [Arts Education is a Civil Right](#) Inseparable from Freedom, PBS SoCal/KCET (2021)
- [1.7 Million Students Attend Schools With Police But No Counselor](#), Hechinger Report (2019)
- [Freedom Reimagined](#), ACLU Magazine (2019)
- [Encyclopedia of Afro Diaspora Music](#) Draft Edition: (2019)
- [Black Youth Matter: A Message for Mental Health Month](#), Los Angeles Sentinel (2019)
- [Cops and no Counselors: How the Lack of School Mental Health Staff Is Harming Students](#) (2019)

- [The Striking Outlier: The Persistent, Painful Corporal Punishment in Schools](#), UCLA (2019)
- [Schools Need Counselors, Not Guns -- And 6 Other Key Things](#), Washington Post (2018)
- [Federal Data Shows Public Schools Nationwide Are a Hotbed of Racial Injustice](#) (2018)
- [My B.E.A.T. Book: Behavior Emotions Attitude and Thoughts](#) (2018)
- [Eleven Million Days Lost](#), UCLA & ACLU (2018)
- [Lost Instruction: The Disparate Impact of California's School Discipline Gap](#) (2017)
- Ending Discrimination, Sharing Opportunities and Building Integration, California Department of Justice (2017)
- [Compilation of Education-Focused Publications](#), (2013-2016)
- [TIME Magazine](#), "Brown v. Board of Education is a Broken Promise" (2016)
- [KnuckleHead Publishing](#), "The KnuckleHead's Guide to Escaping The Trap: A Memoir" (2016)
- [Tampa Bay Times](#), "Why Suspensions aren't the Answer" (2016)
- [Pensacola News Journal](#), "Reduce School Arrests" (2015)
- [A Lawyer's Story from the Field](#) "Students Feel Hopeless and Humiliated because of School's Culture" (2015)
- [Pensacola News Journal](#), "Hitting Children is Wrong, Ineffective" (2014)
- [Corporal Punishment in Florida Schools](#), Preface and Executive Summary (2014)
- [A Lawyers' Story from the Field](#) "Teaching Experience Highlights Inequality" (2014)
- [Dissertation](#), *Reducing the Risk Among the Most At-Risk: Determining What Contributes to African-American Males in Special Education Having the Highest Rates of Incarceration and Academic Failure* (2011)

## **LEADERSHIP**

### **Arts for Healing and Justice Network**

Board Member 2017-2022

Member and former chair of Board of Directors of non-profit network of 15 non-profit arts organizations serving incarcerated youth. Oversaw the diversification the network and board of directors. Lead board through transition to an independent 501c3 and growth to a multimillion-dollar organization. Lead initiative to change name from "Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network" to "Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network" because of principles of psycho-social rehabilitation and non-labeling.

### **Educational Doctorate Student Assembly (EDSA)**

Co-Founder, President, 2009-2011

Drafted the constitution and served as the first President of an organization comprised of over 200 doctoral students in education. Coordinated academic, social, and community service events.

### **Students Transforming the Education Process (STEP) Co-Founder, President, 2007**

Drafted the constitution and served as the first President of an organization for students completing their masters in Educational Psychology. Coordinated academic, social, and community service events.

## **PRESENTATIONS, TRAININGS, AND CONFERENCES**

- [LURN Conference](#), Arts Justice and Cultural Criminalization, 2019
- [National Alliance For Mental Illness California](#), Conference, Hip Hop Healing and Therapeutic Beat Making, 2018
- [New York University](#), Black Boys and Men Changing the Narrative, 2017
- [Fix School Discipline](#) Webinar, "Creating a Data Driven LCAP to Support Discipline Reform" May 2017
- Facing Race, "America Divided: The Class Divide Discussion" November 2016
- National Council of Teachers of English "A Guide to Responsive Discipline," Atlanta, GA. November 2016
- [Teaching Tolerance](#), "Reframing Classroom Management: A Toolkit for Educators," Webinar October 2016
- [Education Week](#) "Corporal Punishment: A Persistent Practice," Webinar. October 2016
- [National Juvenile Justice Network](#) "Engaging Youth in their Communities," Memphis, TN. July 2016
- [National Conference on School Discipline](#) "Policies, Practices and Procedures to Reroute the School-to-Prison Pipeline" (CEUs credits provided to teachers and counselors), Atlanta, GA. June 2016
- [Black Minds Matter Conference](#) "The State of Black Education in Florida," Tallahassee, FL. May 2016
- American Bar Association "Current Trends with OCR Complaint Process on School Disparities," December 2015

- [Nova University School of Law](#), “Training for Shutting Down the School to Prison Pipeline: Juvenile Justice Reform & Legislative Remedies” (CLE credits provided to lawyers), Fort Lauderdale, FL. September 2015
- [Florida Association of School Psychologist](#) Annual Conference “The Right to an Education Should Never be Suspended” (CEUs credits provided to school psychologists), Orlando, FL. October 2015
- [The School-to-Prison Pipeline in Pinellas County](#), St Petersburg, FL. December 2015
- [Escambia County Report Card](#), Pensacola, FL. May 2015
- State of Black Education in Bay County, Panama City, FL. March 2015
- [State of Black Education in Flagler County](#), Palm Coast, FL. January 2015
- Community Forum “Race-Based Standards and Learning,” Miami, FL. January 2014
- American Society of Criminology Annual Conference “Understanding the Most At-Risk for Incarceration: Black Males with Disabilities, from the Schoolhouse to Jailhouse,” Chicago, IL. November 2012
- California Partnership Academy 20th Annual Conference “Motivation Strategies: Increasing Students’ Academic Engagement,” San Diego, CA. March 2008

## **SKILLS**

Community organizing and outreach, legal research and writing, public speaking, policy negotiation and development, program management and evaluation, curriculum design, qualitative/quantitative data collection and evaluation methods, and statistical software, fundraising and grant writing, SPSS assessment development, video editing and production, audio and sound engineering, web design, graphic design, and film-making

## **PUBLIC SPEAKING, KEYNOTES, AND LECTURES**

[\[Speaker Video Reel\]](#)

<b>Education Justice Summit Keynote, 2019</b>	Bakersfield, CA
<b>Graduation Keynote Addresses 2018-2020</b>	HPIAM High School, Plainfield High School, Penn Hills High School
<b><a href="#">Youth Mental Health Day</a>, 2018</b>	Keynote for Cal- HOSA in Sacramento, CA
<b>University of Southern California</b>	Global Executive Doctoral Cohort Lecturer, 2017-2018
<b>University of Miami HOPE Center, November 2015</b>	“Framing Education as a Civil Right”
<b>NAACP Freedom Banquet, August 2015</b>	Keynote speaker, Palm Coast, FL.
<b>Gulf Coast College, March 2015</b>	Impact Awards Banquet Keynote. Student Advocacy Center of Bay County
<b>AMIkids, August 2014</b>	Graduation speech at Miami program for delinquent youth
<b>Miami-Dade Public Schools, June 2014</b>	Graduation at Saunders Elementary School in Homestead, Florida
<b>University of Miami, April 2014</b>	Guest lecturer in education course for undergraduate students
<b>University of Southern California, May 2013</b>	Delivered the <a href="#">keynote address</a> to thousands of people at the graduation
<b>Dartmouth University Ethics Institute, December 2012,</b>	Collaborative program with University of Miami

## **AWARDS**

*Fearless Child Advocate Recognition*, American Bar Association, 2022

*Advocate of the Year*, California Association of School Counselors, 2019

*Impact Award*, Student Advocacy Center, 2015

Recognized for "the impact you have made on Panama City, Bay County, Florida, and the rest of the world."

*HOPE Innovative Service in the Public Interest Award*, 2014

Recognizes innovation in the creation of a new program that addresses the unmet legal needs of others.

*Roger Sorino Award*, 2014

Given to the law student who “best exemplifies leadership, dedication to the school, and service to the community.”

*Stillman Outstanding Alumni Award*, 2014

Awarded for “valuable contribution to the lives of children and outstanding achievement as an alumni.”

## **AFFILIATIONS**

Florida Bar Association, American Bar Association, American Psychological Association, Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society, Bar and Gavel Honor Society (Law), Chi Alpha Epsilon Honor Society, NAACP, ACLU

## **TELEVISION/MEDIA APPEARANCES**

[Resist Documentary](#) [BET](#) [EPIX](#) [ABC News](#) [News 13 Orlando](#) [ABC News](#) [Channel 13](#) [ABC News](#)

## **NEWS ARTICLE FEATURES**

[CalMatters](#), 2022  
[EdSource](#), 2022  
[Fox News LA](#), 2021  
[ShoutoutLA](#), 2021  
[Artbound, PBS SoCal/KCET](#), 2021  
[California New Times](#), 2021  
[Chicago Tribune](#), 2020  
[News 21](#), 2020  
[LA Daily News](#), 2020  
[EdSource, 2020](#)  
[Los Angeles Times](#), 2020  
[SF Gate](#), 2020  
[New York Times](#), 2019  
[National Public Radio](#), 2019  
[LA Witness](#), 2019  
[Honolulu Star Advertiser](#), 2019  
[LA School Report](#), 2019  
[KPCC](#), 2018  
[East Bay Times](#), 2018  
[VICE News](#), 2018  
[Washington Post](#), 2018  
[KPFK](#), 2018  
[News 12 NJ](#), 2017  
[The New Yorker](#), December 2016  
[TIME Magazine](#), October 2016  
[Tampa Bay Times](#), September 2016  
[Tampa Bay Times](#), February 2016  
[Daytona Times](#), August 2015  
[The Daily Bruin](#), May 2015  
[In Weekly](#), January 2015  
[The Miami Hurricane](#), February 2015  
[Miami Times](#), January 2015  
[USC News](#), March 2013

[CBS News](#), 2022  
[CalMatters](#), 2022  
[LA News Observer](#), 2021  
[SCV News \(2021\)](#)  
[Zocolo Public Square](#), 2021  
[Arts Ed Partnership](#), 2020  
[Creative Generation](#), 2020  
[Bay City News](#), 2020  
[SF Gate, 2020](#)  
[Palenque Podcast](#), 2020  
[EdSource](#), 2020  
[LAist](#), 2020  
[74 Million](#), 2019  
[Davis Vanguard](#), 2019  
[Guild Notes](#), 2019  
[EdSource](#), 2019  
[ABA Podcast](#), 2019  
[EdSource](#), 2018  
[EdSource](#), 2018  
[CBS/KBAK Bakersfield](#), 2018  
[ABC News, Unlock The Vote](#), 2018  
[At Liberty ACLU Podcast](#), 2018  
[My Central Jersey](#), 2017  
[NPR/WUSF](#), December 2016  
[NEA Today](#), October 2016  
[State of Opportunity](#), 2016  
[Weekly Challenger](#), 2015  
[Pensacola News Journal](#), 2015  
[Palm Coast Observer](#), June 2015  
[Miami Herald](#), February 2015  
[Daytona Times](#), February 2015  
[Miami Times](#), January 2014  
[Miami Law News](#), March 2013

[SCV Signal](#), 2022  
[EdSource](#), 2022  
[Miami Law](#), 2021  
[LA News Observer](#), 2021  
[Los Angeles Times](#), 2021  
[Creative Generation](#), 2021  
[Times News](#), 2020  
[Otis Media](#), 2020  
[EdSource, 2020](#)  
[Daily Democrat](#), 2020  
[Miami Law](#), 2020 [TAP](#), 2020  
[LA Times](#), 2020 [TAP](#), 2020  
[HI Civil Beat](#), 2019  
[CS Monitor](#), 2019  
[Zee Podcast](#), 2019  
[The Crime Report](#), 2019  
[From the Ground Up Podcast](#), 2019  
[Steamit](#), 2018  
[Bakersfield News](#), 2018  
[EdSource](#), 2018  
[ArtNet News](#), 2018  
[WLRN](#), 2017  
[Gist of Freedom Podcast](#), 2016  
[Tampa Bay Times](#), December 2016  
[Birmingham News](#), September 2016  
[Huffington Post](#), August 2016  
[Tampa Bay Times](#), December 2015  
[News 6](#), June 2015  
[Pensacola Voice](#), June 2015  
[Palm Coast Observer](#), January 2015  
[South Florida Times](#), April 2014  
[USC News](#), May 2013  
[Miami Law News](#), December 2012