

# Stanford Law School

## Public Interest Fellows 2015 - 2016

Each year, Stanford Law School names as Public Interest Fellows third-year students who have a history of public service, provide leadership within the law school, and are committed to beginning their careers as lawyers in the public service. Fellows serve a variety of roles within the law school – they mentor first-year students, provide policy direction for the Center and the law school, have direct access to the law school administration regarding myriad issues related to public interest, and engage in direct programming with the assistance of the Levin Center staff.

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### **Micah Bluming**

Micah hails from Grayson, Georgia, and graduated from Tulane University in the country's most unpredictable city (New Orleans) with the most predictable combination of majors (political science and philosophy).

After college he completed a master's degree in philosophy at Tufts University where he discovered that academia and six-month-long winters were not for him. Since arriving at Stanford, Micah has served as co-editor in chief of the Stanford Journal of Criminal Law and Policy and is a project leader for the Social Security Disability Project. He worked his 1L summer at the U.S. Attorney's Office in Boston, his 2L summer in the Public Integrity section of the Department of Justice's Criminal Division, and externed his 2L spring quarter at the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office, where a judge once told him on the record that his argument was "completely ridiculous." After graduation Micah will clerk in Phoenix, Arizona, become a prosecutor, and try harder not to be ridiculous.



### **Marcus Bourassa**

Marcus came to SLS so that he could someday practice public-interest, criminal law. Marcus earned his BA and MA here at Stanford in 2009. Before returning for law school, he served as an officer

in the United States Marine Corps, where he did investigations, managed interrogation efforts, and coordinated networks of confidential informants along the Pakistani border with Afghanistan. He grew up between three border states (Texas, Florida, and New Mexico) and plans to live in San Diego, where he was stationed in the Marine Corps. He

spent his 1L summer helping defense teams prepare for death penalty trials in Texas with a small non-profit, the Texas Defender Service. His 2L summer he returned to his San Diego home to work at the Federal Defender. Besides criminal law, he has interests in immigration, housing, employment, and discrimination law. At SLS Marcus did the prosecution clinic, externed in the U.S. Attorney's office, and was the student-government co-president. He is still active in the Housing Pro Bono, Criminal Law Society, and American Constitution Society. He will clerk for a judge in the Central District of California after graduation. However, he is still planning a career in criminal justice and as a public policy advocate in San Diego. He loves playing and developing board games with his wife, debating with friends, and building wood furniture.



### **Robert Curran**

Robert is from Bainbridge Island, Washington. He graduated from Loyola University Chicago in 2012 with a degree in History. At Loyola, he was co-president of his school's chapter of the Platypus Affiliated Society, a leftist

political organization. At Stanford, Robert worked on the Social Security Disability Project pro bono, and also volunteered at the Orleans Public Defenders over spring break. During his 1L summer, Robert worked at the Anchorage branch of the Alaska Legal Service Corporation, where he worked primarily on foreclosure defense and Indian law issues. His 2L year, he worked in the Youth & Education Law Project clinic, where he assisted students in obtaining educational services. Last summer, Robert worked at the Sitka office of Alaska's Public Defender Agency. Robert is excited to return to Stanford as a senior editor of Stanford Law Review.

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#### **Akiva Friedlin**

Akiva graduated from Hampshire College in 2005 with a B.A. in American Studies. He then worked in the music industry for five years as a sound engineer and tour manager, managing national and international tours for recording artists and producing events in New York City. During 2008–11 he earned an M.F.A. in Nonfiction Writing from Columbia University. During that period he started volunteering at the Innocence Project, and then joined the Project's staff as a researcher and grant-writer from 2011–2013. At Stanford, he has worked with the Criminal Defense Clinic, Project ReMADE, the Three Strikes Project, Shaking the Foundations, and the Journal of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. During summer breaks, he worked at Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem (1L) and the Southern Center for Human Rights (2L).



#### **Shereen Griffith**

Shereen grew up in Arizona but has lived in California for the past ten years. She graduated from U.C. Berkeley in 2009 with a B.A. in International Political Economy and spent the next four years working at a healthcare consulting firm in San Francisco. At SLS, Shereen participated in the Stanford International Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Clinic, is the co-president of the Afghanistan Legal Education Project and a senior editor on Stanford Law Review, and formerly served as co-lead of the Guardianship Pro Bono and a member editor of Stanford Journal of International Law. Shereen worked at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty during her 1L summer, and split her 2L summer between Gibson Dunn & Crutcher in Palo Alto and Accountability Counsel in San Francisco. After graduation, she hopes to work in international development to further responsible and sustainable rule of law efforts.



#### **Gagan Gupta**

Gagan grew up in Belmont, North Carolina. After graduating from Davidson College in 2007 with a B.A. in Political Science, he set off to

New Orleans, Louisiana, to assist in the post-Katrina recovery effort as a Congressional Fellow. He then joined the 2008 Obama campaign, serving thereafter as a White House political appointee helping to implement the 2009 Serve America Act which tripled the size of America's national service programs, including AmeriCorps and the MLK Day of Service. He then completed his Masters in International Political Economy at The London School of Economics, at which time he began participating in amateur Lindy Hop swing dance performances and competitions. He also helped expand a startup social enterprise that manufactures and distributes small-scale solar energy products in rural West African markets. In law school, Gagan is involved with the Stanford Law Review, the Stanford Journal of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, Project ReMADE, and a research assistantship with Professor Deborah Rhode. He spent his 1L summer as a Justice John Paul Stevens Public Interest Fellow with the San Francisco Public Defender's Office. As a 2L, Gagan joined the Community Law Clinic, and spent his summer as a Martin Luther King, Jr. Fellow with the Legal Aid of North Carolina's Raleigh office.



#### **Virginia Halden**

Ginny grew up in Sandy, Utah. She graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 2010 with majors in Sociology and Spanish. After college, she worked as a paralegal at Akin Gump in Washington, D.C. for two years and spent a summer with the Disability Law Center in Salt Lake City. At Stanford, she co-chaired Shaking the Foundations, coordinated the Housing Pro Bono program, and led student discussions of the Stanford Critical Law Society (SCritLS). She has visited courtrooms in Fresno, Pasadena, and the Bay Area for the Language Access Policy Practicum and worked as a research assistant for Professor Michelle Anderson. Ginny spent her 1L summer working on civil rights cases for the ACLU of Utah and her 2L summer at the Employment Unit of Community Legal Services in Philadelphia. This year, she is excited to continue her work with Stanford's Community Law Clinic. After graduation, Ginny plans to start her career as an anti-poverty lawyer working in legal services.

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### Elizabeth Jones

Liz grew up in Redondo Beach, CA, and graduated from Vassar College in 2011. Liz has been passionate about environmental and social justice issues for as long as she can remember. After college she worked as an AmeriCorps

member assisting small cities with municipal energy management programs; a fellow at a small non-profit implementing energy efficiency, renewables development, and affordable housing projects; and a research assistant at the NRDC. She spent her 1L summer working at the California Attorney General's Office in the Natural Resources Section and her 2L summer at the Southern Environmental Law Center in Chapel Hill and Communities for a Better Environment in Los Angeles. At Stanford Liz is pursuing a joint masters degree in Environment and Resources, and is involved in the Environmental Law Society, the Environmental Law Journal, and the Environmental Law, Animal Law, and Social Security Disability Pro Bono Projects.



### Cassandra Kildow

Cassandra was born and raised in Chicago. She majored in (something very elaborate-sounding that boils down to) Arabic at Yale. She then worked as Operations and Finance

Assistant at the Center for Justice and Accountability (CJA), a legal nonprofit dedicated to deterring torture, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other severe human rights abuses around the world through litigation, policy advocacy, and outreach. At Stanford, Cassandra has kept involved with CJA on their Young Professionals Committee. Last year, she was the Legal Director of the Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project's Stanford chapter, and she edited and wrote chapters of legal textbooks for the Afghanistan Legal Education Project. During 1L summer, she served as a Ford Foundation Fellow at Human Rights Watch (U.S. division), and 2L summer she divided her time between Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton (in New York and Paris), and the Office of the Legal Adviser at the State Department (Office of African and Near Eastern Affairs and Office of Human Rights and Refugees).



### Grace Kouba

Grace was born and raised in Eugene, Oregon. She came to Stanford straight out of college, having graduated from Dartmouth with a degree in linguistics and a minor in creative writing. In law school, she has been involved in the Criminal Law Society, the Stanford Journal of Criminal Law and Policy, the Immigration Pro Bono Project, and the Criminal Defense Clinic. She is very interested in criminal work and plans to go into prosecution. She spent her 1L summer at the US Attorney's Office in San Jose and her 2L summer at the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office. In her spare time, Grace enjoys hip-hop dance, yoga, hiking, soccer, language study, and baking.



### Heather Kryczka

Heather grew up in Naperville, Illinois and graduated from Washington University in St. Louis, where she majored in environmental studies, minored in creative writing, and worked as a research assistant at

the Interdisciplinary Environmental Law Clinic. After college she worked for Green Corps as a community organizer, and came to law school to develop strategic ways of combining litigation and grassroots organizing. At Stanford Heather has been involved in the Environmental Law Society, Shaking the Foundations, Environmental Law Journal, the Environmental Law Clinic, the Social Security and Disability pro bono project, the Animal Law pro bono project, and is a writing tutor at the Hume Writing Center. She spent her first law school summer as a Ford Foundation fellow at Environmental Defense Fund in Boulder, Colorado working on climate change and air pollution issues. She spent her second summer working at Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger in San Francisco, focusing on land-use, local government and environmental law. In her free time she enjoys creative writing and eating tacos at her new home in the Mission.



### Jeannie Lieder

Jeannie grew up in Carbondale, Illinois—about two hours from St. Louis, the nearest city. She graduated from the University of Michigan in 2011 with a degree in Cultural

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Anthropology. At Michigan she was actively involved in tutoring and mentoring underprivileged youth through the Peace Neighborhood Center and in working with the HIV/AIDS Resource Center, providing direct services to at-risk populations. She spent the entirety of her third year living in Prague and learning about the history and culture of central Europe. After graduation, Jeannie worked with children in the Bay Area in a variety of contexts, including working as a nanny, in a daycare center, and at a summer camp. At Stanford, Jeannie has been involved in the Three Strikes Project, the Criminal Defense Clinic, StreetLaw, the Criminal Law & Policy Journal, the American Constitution Society, and the Stanford Law Association. She spent her 1L summer with the Department of Justice's Environmental Crimes Section. She split her 2L summer between the New Hampshire Public Defender and The Bronx Defenders. She plans to extern with the San Francisco Public Defender's Office next year and will be clerking in Atlanta and Boston after graduation.



### **Chris McLamb**

Chris grew up in Raleigh, North Carolina, but has lived in Virginia, Missouri, Washington, D.C., and now, California, for most of the last decade. He graduated from Washington University in St. Louis in 2012 with a degree in American Culture Studies and Political Science. While at Washington University, he was a group leader in the Leadership Through Service program and spent a summer interning for the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia. Before law school, Chris spent one year as a fellow with the American Constitutional Society's national office in Washington, D.C. At Stanford, he has participated in the Youth & Education Law Project and is a member of the Stanford Law Review and the American Constitution Society. During his 2L summer, Chris worked for Lief Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein in San Francisco. He did an externship with Judge Beryl A. Howell at the United States District Court for the District of Columbia during his 1L summer. After graduating from law school, Chris will know what he is doing after law school.



### **Sarracina Littlebird**

A native of Santa Fe, New Mexico, Sarracina (Cina) graduated from Columbia University with a BA in Environmental Biology and Dance in 2009. After college, Cina divided her time between working for an independent think tank in New Mexico and touring with an all-Native American contemporary dance company. She then spent some time leading a group of at-risk youth in green service-learning construction projects in the Santa Fe area. Before taking a year to explore life and the law in Seattle, Cina taught English in Thailand through the Fulbright Program. At Stanford, Cina is involved with the Native American Law Students Association and the Environmental Law Journal. She spent her 1L summer with the National Indian Education Association supporting the organization's work in fighting for increased tribal sovereignty in the realm of Native education. She split her 2L summer between a small firm doing water and Indian law work and working for the Tulalip Tribes' Office of the Reservation Attorney in Washington State. She hopes to use her JD as a tool in becoming an advocate for Native peoples in the US, particularly her home communities in the Pueblos of New Mexico.



### **Malia McPherson**

Malia grew up in Los Angeles, and graduated from UC Berkeley in 2010 with a degree in Biochemistry and Public Health. Before law school, she studied viral populations at the Pasteur Institute in Paris and worked for a neuro-medical device company. Malia came to Stanford to study Health Law and has (unsurprisingly) participated in BioLaw, the Social Security Disability Pro Bono Project, and the Environmental Law Clinic. Malia spent her 1L summer at the CA Office of the Attorney General in the Health, Education, and Welfare Section and her 2L summer at the SF City Attorney's Office on the Health Team. After graduation, she will be clerking in the Northern District of California and hopes to pursue her dream career in local government.



### **Ruhan Nagra**

Ruhan is originally from Punjab, India but was born in the UK and grew up in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia and St.

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Louis, MO. She majored in human biology at Brown University, where she was an active member of Students for Justice in Palestine. Ruhan went on to medical school, also at Brown, and completed a year before quitting and moving to the West Bank. Ruhan lived and worked in the West Bank for the next two years, first as a high school biology teacher at the Ramallah Friends School and then as co-coordinator of the Right to Education Campaign, a grassroots Palestinian movement based at Birzeit University. At SLS, Ruhan has been involved with the National Lawyers Guild, Shaking the Foundations, and the International Human Rights Clinic. She spent her 1L summer in the National Security and Civil Rights Program at Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus in San Francisco and her 2L summer at the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York City.



### **Serena Premjee**

Serena grew up in Bombay, India, and Atlanta, Georgia. She attended the University of Georgia, where she studied English and International Affairs, and spent her free time volunteering as a teacher and a tutor.

After graduating, Serena worked with children and adolescents with learning disabilities and figured out that she wanted to be a lawyer working in education and juvenile justice. During law school, Serena has pursued that interest with the Stanford Journal of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, the Youth and Education Law Project, and the San Francisco Juvenile Public Defender's Office. She has also been involved with Law Students for Reproductive Justice, the Women of Color Collective, the Guardianship pro bono, and the Social Security Disability Project.



### **Nicole Roberts**

Nicole is from Seattle, Washington, and graduated from the University of Washington in 2013 with a degree in Disability Studies and Law, Societies, and Justice. Before coming straight through to law school, Nicole

interned for a summer at Morrison & Foerster LLP in San Francisco as a SEO Legal Intern. Nicole spent her 1L summer at K&L Gates LLP in Seattle as a Summer Associate, and her 2L summer as a Summer Honors Program Intern with the New York City Law

Department, working in the Special Federal Litigation Division. Nicole is an active member of the Black Law Students Association, and served on BLSA's board during her 2L year as Academic Development Co-Chair. She is also the current Senior Development Editor for the Stanford Law Review. At Stanford, Nicole has been involved with the Woman of Color Collective, the Stanford Association of Law Students for Disability Rights, and the StreetLaw pro bono. Nicole also participated in the Youth and Education Law Project Clinic last spring. After graduating from law school, Nicole will clerk in the Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit in Raleigh, North Carolina. In the future, Nicole hopes to continue working and furthering a career in public service.



### **Vina Seelam**

Vina grew up in the Bay Area and in Arizona. She graduated from Yale in 2011 with a B.A. in Psychology and International Studies. Afterwards, she worked as a paralegal in New York City and later as a project manager for a

healthcare non-profit in India. At SLS, she has been involved in the Criminal Defense Clinic, Criminal Law and Policy Journal, Criminal Law Society, StreetLaw, and the Afghanistan Legal Education Project. During her 1L summer Vina interned at the Legal Aid Society's Criminal Defense Practice in Manhattan, and during her second summer she interned at the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Alabama. This Fall, Vina will be externing at the Alameda County Public Defender's Office and also participating in the Three Strikes Project at SLS.



### **Michael Skocpol**

Michael was born and raised in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Between graduating from Brown University in 2010 and starting at SLS in 2013, he worked as an investigator for the Public Defender Service for the District of

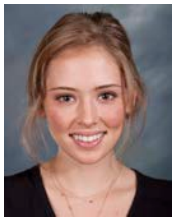
Columbia, as a paralegal at the Department of Justice, as a freelance editor, and as a leader of a cross-country bicycle trip. At SLS, Michael has been involved with the Supreme Court Litigation Clinic and the Three Strikes Project, as well as OutLaw, the Stanford Journal of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, the American Constitution Society, the Housing Pro Bono, and the Stanford Law

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Review. He spent his 2L summer at Relman, Dane & Colfax, a plaintiff-side civil rights firm in Washington, D.C., and his 1L summer at the ACLU of Southern California in Los Angeles as a Justice John Paul Stevens Public Interest Fellow. Law school has been his first experience living on the west coast, and he's a fan of all the sunshine and year-round opportunities for hiking, biking, and pickup soccer, even if it's a little lonely being a New England Patriots fan out here. After graduating, Michael plans to clerk on the Northern District of Illinois and the D.C. Circuit and then practice as a civil rights litigator.



### **Paulina Slagter**

Paulina is from San Diego, California. She attended Loyola Marymount University, as a double major in History and Political Science and graduated in 2013. She dedicated her four years in undergrad to serving the Los Angeles

Community, devoting much of her time to a restaurant-style soup kitchen for the homeless in Venice Beach called Bread and Roses. She also volunteered weekly at an after-school program in Nickerson Gardens—the largest public housing development west of the Mississippi—as well as a shelter for domestic violence victims. Paulina worked for a member of Parliament in London, a publishing house for Ethiopian political prisoners, a research assistant as well as a jails project and LGBT student rights' organizer at the ACLU in her junior and senior year. At SLS, she has been active in project ReMade, the American Constitution Society, three strikes project as well as submissions editor for the Stanford Journal of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. Her first summer she worked on education reform and racial justice at the ACLU of Southern California and her second summer she worked at the Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Central District of California. After graduation, she will be clerking in the Central District. After clerking for two years, she hopes to work as a public defender.



### **Rylee Sommers-Flanagan**

Rylee is from Montana, raised in Missoula, with roots in Absarokee. Before college, she was an AmeriCorps volunteer in Seattle, Washington. She then attended Emory University, majoring in International Studies with a concentration

in Political Economy and Latin America. She also has a Creative Writing degree from the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. In 2012, Rylee worked for President Obama's reelection campaign in Colorado and following the election, she moved to Washington, D.C., where she worked for Democracy: A Journal of Ideas, as a copy-editor and fact-checker. During the same time, she also worked a co-manager for the OpEd Project in Atlanta. At SLS, Rylee was the President of the American Constitution Society and now serves as a 3L advisor to the board. She has also served as a board member for the Criminal Law and Policy Journal, the Criminal Law Society, and Shaking the Foundations, and as a member of the Women of Stanford Law. She spent her 1L summer as a Ford Foundation Fellow at the Brennan Center for Justice in the Justice Program and her 2L summer as a legal intern for the White House Counsel's Office. As a 2L, she participated in the Youth and Education Law Project, representing students and parents in special education and school discipline matters. In the fall, she will participate in the Supreme Court Litigation Clinic. After graduation, she will clerk for the 9th Circuit.



### **Aaron Stanton**

Aaron is originally from Long Island, New York. After studying history at Brown University (class of 2008), he worked for five years as an emergency planner at the New York City Office of Emergency Management, where he was involved in the responses to Hurricanes Irene and Sandy. At Stanford, Aaron has been the Vice President of Submissions for the Stanford Environmental Law Journal and the Co-President of the Animal Legal Defense Pro Bono Project, and he has been involved in the Housing Pro Bono Project and the Shaking the Foundations conference. He spent his 1L summer at the Environmental Defense Fund in New York and his 2L summer at Shute, Mihaly, and Weinberger, a private public interest firm specializing in environmental and land use law in San Francisco. Aaron has also externed with the Land and Environment Sections of the California Attorney General's Office in Oakland.



### **Alex Twinem**

Alex was born and raised in Brookfield, Wisconsin. She graduated from Northwestern University with a BA



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in English in 2010. During college, she had the opportunity to volunteer with a number of criminal defense and criminal justice organizations, including the Safer Foundation, Northwestern University Law School's Center on Wrongful Convictions, and the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia. Following graduation, Alex spent three years teaching English in the Republic of Korea to elementary- and middle-school students in and around Seoul. At Stanford, Alex is the student leader/founder of the Stanford Clemency Project, as well as a student leader of the Stanford Tax Pro Bono. She is currently the Managing Editor of the Stanford Law Review and previously served as Managing Editor of the Stanford Journal of Civil Rights & Civil Liberties. She has also enjoyed being a part of the Volunteer Attorney Program, Stanford Public Interest Law Foundation, the Supreme Court Litigation Clinic, and working on several criminal law-related research projects with members of SLS's faculty. Focused primarily on criminal justice and reform, Alex spent her 1L summer at the Southern Center for Human Rights, splitting her time between impact litigation and habeas corpus cases for those convicted of capital offenses. She spent her 2L summer at Neufeld Scheck & Brustin, LLP, a civil rights firm in New York that focuses on seeking restitution for individuals who have been wrongfully convicted. After graduation, Alex will clerk for a year on the Ninth Circuit and then the Southern District of New York.

Ashley participates in Street Law, served on the board of the Women of Color Collective, served as co-president of the Black Law Students Association, and was a member of the 2015 Spring Criminal Defense Clinic. Ashley interned her 2L summer at San Francisco Public Defender's office, and is pursuing a position as a Public Defender.



### **Emi Young**

Emi is from Omaha, Nebraska, and graduated from Pomona College in 2013 with a B.A. in Politics and Philosophy. At Stanford she has participated in the Criminal Defense Clinic, Three Strikes Project, Streetlaw, the Shaking the Foundations Public Interest Lawyering Conference, WoCC, and APILSA. She spent her 1L summer at the New York Civil Liberties Union. During her second summer she worked at the San Francisco Public Defender's Office, where she will be continuing as an extern in the fall. In her free time Emi enjoys playing with her wild puppy Teeter, making music, and all things related to food.



### **Ashley Williams**

Ashley spent the majority of her time growing up in Alexandria, Virginia, in the suburbs of Washington, D.C.. Ashley graduated from Columbia University in 2012, where she majored in U.S. 19th Century American History with a concentration in Political Science. After working as a teacher in an all-girls grade school in Brooklyn, Ashley chose to matriculate to Stanford Law School to pursue large scale education reform, and explore how the law can be used as a tool to do so. At Stanford, Ashley participated in Street Law, a pro bono program in which SLS students teach lessons to kids in juvenile detention facilities about their criminal rights and responsibilities. It was through that experience, and her fantastic criminal law classes, that Ashley became passionate about criminal defense work. At Stanford,