



/ 2023 Disaster Resilience Symposium

SYMPOSIUM LOCATION

Stetson University College of Law
1401 61st Street South
Gulfport, FL 33707
[Campus Map](#)

AGENDA AT A GLANCE

Wednesday March 15

Time	Session
8:45am-9:45am	Registration and Exhibitors will be in building T
9am-9:45am	Welcome and Breakfast (Grab food in the Mann Lounge and proceed to Great Hall)
9:45 am - 10:45 am	Session 1: How Building Partnerships improved Response to Hurricane Ian (Great Hall)
10:45 am - 11:00 am	BREAK
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Session 2: Where Practice and Policy Meet in Disaster Law (Great Hall)
12pm - 1pm	Lunch & Keynote Speaker Rob Verchick (Grab food in Mann Lounge and proceed to Great Hall)
1:15pm - 2:15pm	CONCURRENT SESSION Session 3: FEMA's Public Assistance Program: Disaster Assistance for Public Entities and Private Nonprofits (Great Hall)
	Session 4: Disaster Response and Recovery at the Local Level: Lessons, Insights, and the Importance of Collaboration in Building Resilience (Classroom A)
2:15pm - 2:30pm	BREAK
2:30pm - 3:30pm	Session 5: Disability Inclusion in Disasters: Working Towards Meaningful Access & Recovery for All (Great Hall)



3:30pm - 3:45pm	BREAK (Snacks in Mann Lounge)
3:45pm - 4:45pm	CONCURRENT SESSION Session 6: Movement Lawyering and the Fight to End Immigration Detention (Great Hall)
	Session 7: Beyond Recovery: Bridging the Gap Between Community and Disaster Legal Issues (Classroom A)
5pm-6pm	Networking Reception (Banyan Courtyard)

Thursday March 16

Time	Session Title
9am - 9:30am	Networking Breakfast (Banyan Courtyard)
9:30am - 12:30pm	Session 8: Disaster & Poverty Interactive Workshop (<u>Great Hall</u>)
12:30pm - 1:30pm	Lunch & Keynote Speaker Verna Williams (Grab food in Mann Lounge and proceed to Great Hall)
1:45pm - 2:45pm	CONCURRENT SESSION Session 9: Professional Responsibility in Disaster Community Outreach (Classroom A)
	Session 10: DLS Stakeholders Roundtable (Mann Lounge)
3:45pm	Symposium Adjourns



/ 2023 Detailed Agenda

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15

8:45am-9:45am **Welcome to the Disaster Resilience Symposium (Building T)**
Registration Opens! Please stop by the registration table to check in. Once registered please visit our Exhibitors and network with other attendees.

9:00am-9:45am **Welcome Breakfast (Great Hall) (Set up in Mann Lounge)**
Please join us for a complimentary breakfast as we kick off the Symposium with welcoming remarks from our hosts.

Welcome Remarks from:

- Deborah Enix-Ross, President, American Bar Association
- Linda Anderson Stanley, Senior Manager, Equal Justice Works
- Theresa Pully Radwan, Interim Dean, Stetson Law

9:45am-10:45am **How Building Partnerships Improved Response to Hurricane Ian (Great Hall)**
In September 2022, Hurricane Ian ripped a path across southwest to central Florida, destroying homes and businesses with wind and rain. Attorneys from across the state likewise deployed tried and true strategies gained from lessons learned in prior disasters. Speakers will discuss how state, regional, and national relationships built with partners improved the ability of attorneys to respond to the imminent and growing needs of the communities, and improved the outcomes and results achieved for clients.

Panelists:

- Kathy Grunewald, Disaster Coordination Attorney, Legal Services of North Florida
- Michelle Trunkett, Managing Attorney - Ft. Meyers, Florida Rural Legal Services
- Jeff Harvey, CEO, Community Legal Services
- Bill Litton, Director, Osceola County Emergency Management



10:45am-11:00am

Break

Visit the exhibitors!

11:00am-12:00pm

Practice and Policy in Disaster Response and Resilience (Great Hall)

How do policy and practice intersect in immediate disaster response and resilience planning? During this session, panelists will explore how we maintain the rule of law during a disaster, as well as the socioeconomic and environmental implications arising in disaster response and recovery operations. Attendees will also learn about policies making personal and community-based resilience planning challenging, and how we can leverage policy to be better prepared.

Panelists:

- Robert R.M. Verchick, Senior Fellow, Tulane University Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy
- Bryan Sky-Eagle, Deputy Chief, Houston Fire Department

12:00pm-1:00pm

**Lunch and Keynote Remarks (Great Hall)
(Set up in Mann Lounge)**

Please join us for a complimentary lunch featuring keynote speaker Rob Verchick.

Keynote Speaker:

- Robert R.M. Verchick, Gauthier-St.Martin Chair in Environmental Law and Professor at Loyola University New Orleans and Senior Fellow at the Tulane University Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy

1:15pm-2:15pm

Concurrent Sessions:

Disaster Response and Recovery at the Local Level: Lessons, Insights, and the Importance of Collaboration in Building Resilience (Great Hall)

Join us for an in-depth discussion on the roles played by emergency management and local community partners in the time leading up to, and in the immediate aftermath of,

disaster events. Our speakers will address their respective functions when reacting to an event, discuss the overall mechanism of disaster response, and explore the importance of collaboration with community disaster relief partners. The panel speakers will discuss their experiences during disaster response and offer insight, successes, and suggested areas of improvement for a collaborative disaster response. The discussion will also include thoughts on community resilience through the scope of long-term recovery, ideas on strengthening the relationship between government and non-government resources, and how non-traditional disaster relief partners such as legal aid can further integrate into a holistic approach to disaster recovery.

Panelists:

- Michelle Lockett, Board of Directors Vice Chair, Florida VOAD & CEO, BeReady Alliance
- Jason Susalla, Grant Project Manager, Disaster Relief Team at Bay Area Legal Services
- Joe Barrios, Response and Recovery Operations Manager, Pinellas County Emergency Management
Stephanie Stachowicz-Twomey, General Counsel, Florida Division of Emergency Management
- John Lawless, Staff Attorney, Disaster Relief Team at Bay Area Legal Services

FEMA's Public Assistance Program: Disaster Assistance for Public Entities and Private Nonprofits (Classroom A)

Last year, FEMA obligated almost \$21 billion in Public Assistance grants under 90 Presidential disaster declarations. This funding is administered under the Public Assistance program, which has no shortage of rules, regulations, and restrictions that applicants for funding must navigate to obtain and keep this vital assistance. Former FEMA General Counsel Ernie Abbott and Michelle Zaltsberg will provide an overview of the Public Assistance program, share insights into how FEMA's provision of assistance is evolving, and provide helpful tips for maximizing federal grant opportunities.



Panelists:

- Ernie Abbott, Of Counsel, Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC
- Michelle Zaltsberg, Shareholder, Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC

2:15pm - 2:30pm

Break

Visit the exhibitors!

2:30pm - 3:30pm

Disability Inclusion in Disasters: Working Towards Meaningful Access and Recovery for All (Great Hall)

Over 60 million adults in the United States have a substantial impairment that limits a significant life activity, and the percentage of people living with a disability is highest in the South. According to the Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies, people with disabilities are 2-to-4 times more likely to die or be injured in climate-driven emergencies when compared to people who do not have a disability. This session will explore essential elements of accessibility and inclusive planning in disaster preparedness, response, and short-term and long-term recovery. Experts from Texas, Florida, Louisiana, and California will share takeaways from their experiences working with disaster survivors and discuss what attendees can do in their communities to ensure equitable recovery outcomes.

Panelists:

- Bryan Russell, Emergency Management Coordinator, Disability Rights Florida
- Jordan Davis, Equal Justice Works Disaster Resilience Fellow, Disability Rights California
- Sarah Bacot, Equal Justice Works Disaster Resilience Fellow, Disability Rights Louisiana
- Stephanie Duke, Attorney, Disability Rights Texas (moderator)

3:30pm-3:45pm

Snack Break (Mann Lounge)

Enjoy some refreshments and visit the exhibitors!



3:45pm-4:45pm

Concurrent Sessions:

Movement Lawyering and the Fight to End Immigration Detentions (Great Hall)

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed and further exacerbated the issues facing migrants and asylum seekers in immigration detention. From completely inadequate medical care, unlivable conditions of confinement, and laws designed to ensure deportation, migrants and asylum seekers face a myriad of barriers when trying to seek refuge in the United States. This panel will provide an overview of the current state of immigration detention during the pandemic and suggest movement lawyering strategies to address systemic issues facing our immigration system.

Panelists:

- Sophia Genovese, Equal Justice Works Disaster Resilience Program Lead Fellow, New Mexico Immigrant Law Center
- Taylor Noya, Equal Justice Works Disaster Resilience Fellow, New Mexico Immigrant Law Center

Beyond Volunteerism: Using Your Talents and Skills to Develop a Career in Disaster Law (Classroom A)

This panel will present a day in a life in a disaster law career. It will also help to identify different disaster law tracks, organizations, and skill sets.

In 2021, John Kerry, former Massachusetts senator and the first United States special presidential envoy for climate, said to attorneys attending an American Bar Association event in Chicago, "You are all climate lawyers now." He tied his remarks to the unprecedented disasters we have seen over the past few years and the role attorneys will play in shaping climate change policies and providing legal advice to people impacted by weather events. What does a career in disaster law look like? This panel will give attendees a snapshot of a "day in the life" of attorneys engaged in disaster response and/or disaster law. Speakers will identify disaster law tracks, skill sets, and organizations focused on climate solutions.

Panelists:

- Latisha Nixon-Jones, Assistance Professor of Law, Mercer University - Walter F. George School of Law
- Jeanne Ortiz-Ortiz, Pro Bono & Strategic Initiatives Manager, Pro Bono Net
- Brittany Perkins Castillo, CEO, AshBritt
- Allison McLeary, Director, Disaster Recovery Programs at Tetra Tech

5:00pm-6:00pm**Networking Reception (Banyan Courtyard)**

Continue to grow the connections you've made throughout the day at our networking reception. Get to know other attendees while enjoying some drinks and light bites from our sponsors: Winspeed, HD Vonage, and AVANT

/Thursday, March 16:**9:00am - 9:30am****Breakfast (Great Hall) (Food in in Mann Lounge)**

Please join us for a complimentary breakfast as we kick off day two of our Symposium with welcoming remarks from Florida VOAD and an opportunity to network with attendees.

Welcome Remarks from:

- Michelle Lockett, Board of Directors Vice Chair, Florida VOAD & CEO, BeReady Alliance

9:30am - 12:30pm**Disaster and Poverty Interactive Workshop (Great Hall)**

Our responses to the intersection of poverty and disaster are only useful when they are accessible to people and meet their real needs. The Disaster & Poverty Interactive Workshop highlights the practical barriers to accessing resources and emergency relief. Participants will navigate challenges of meeting daily needs with low or no income, both before and after a disaster hits. After the workshop, both experienced and newer advocates will have greater insight and be prepared to ask better questions about how to make help genuinely accessible in their community.

Workshop Lead:

- Alicia Aiken, Principal, Danu Center for Strategic Advocacy



12:30pm - 1:30pm

Lunch and Keynote Remarks (Great Hall)

Please join us for a complimentary lunch featuring keynote speaker Verna Williams.

Keynote Speaker:

- Verna Williams, CEO, Equal Justice Works

1:45pm - 2:45pm

Concurrent Session:

Lawyers as Ethical Leaders and First Responders in Disaster (Ethics Credit) (Classroom A)

This panel will earn 1 credit for Ethics CLE Credit. Part I of the panel discussion will first engage the audience in understanding the need for lawyers before and during disasters and explore the many changes to the “Katrina Rule” and how states have adopted various versions to encourage or discourage outside state licensed attorneys in outreach. The panelists will provide model responses in both helping communities prepare for disaster as well as coordinating legal assistance through a mobile unit after disaster. Part II will provide specific examples covering the Model Rules of Professional Conduct and ethical implications of disaster response that cause many attorneys to hesitate and volunteer. The panelists seek to inspire and engage audience members to explore solutions to overcome the hesitation on issues related to Scope of Representation, Conflict of Interests, Solicitation, and ethical limitations of Lobbying.

Panelists:

- Christine Cerniglia, Associate Professor and Director of Clinical and Experiential Education, Stetson Law
- Alejandro Figueroa Quevedo, Deputy Director, Servicios Legales de Puerto Rico
- Jeff Harvey, CEO, Community Legal Services



1:45pm - 3:45pm

Concurrent Session:

**Disaster Legal Services (DLS) Roundtable Discussion
(Mann Lounge)**

During this session, the DLS team will lead a discussion on:

- *Success and challenges of past DLS implementations in Florida*
- *Observed policy and equity issues in disaster response*
- *How the DLS program utilizes its unique position to better coordinate marketing and outreach efforts to disaster survivors*

Participants should include bar association representatives, ABA District Representative, direct legal service organizations and participating pro bono attorneys, community organizations involved in disaster response and recovery outreach efforts.

Discussion Leader:

- Amanda Brown, *Director*, American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division Disaster Legal Services

3:45pm

Symposium Adjourns

CLE INFORMATION

The Disaster Resilience Symposium has been approved by the Florida Bar for 12.5 hours of general CLE credits and 1 hour of ethics credit.

Additionally, the symposium has been approved for 12.5 hours of Certification Credits for State and Federal Government and Administrative Practice, as well as City, County and Local Government Law.

Stetson will also assist out of state attorneys in obtaining CLE in their respective states as well. Once attendance is verified, you will receive an email after the conclusion of the Symposium on how to obtain CLE credit in your state.

Please contact ope@law.stetson.edu for any CLE related questions.



TRAVEL SUGGESTIONS

Local Airports

- [Tampa International Airport](#)
- [St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport](#)

Ground Transportation

Transportation will be provided from the hotel block to Stetson in the morning and back to the hotel in the evening. More details on the shuttle schedule to come.

Both Uber and Lyft are readily available in the Tampa Bay area. Stetson's campus is a short 15-minute ride from the hotel block. Both airports are approximately a 20-30-minute ride to the hotel block. Ride sharing is encouraged!

Symposium Location

Stetson University College of Law
1401 61st Street South
Gulfport, FL 33707
[Campus Map](#)

ACCOMODATIONS

Room Block

[Hilton St. Petersburg Bayfront](#)
333 1st Street South, St. Petersburg FL

Reserve your room at our special room block rate of \$225 per night plus tax. The deadline to reserve your room at this discounted rate is February 21, 2023.

Booking Your Hotel Reservation

You must register for the conference before you can book your room.

To make your reservation call hotel reservations at 1-800-HILTONS (1-800-445-8667). Individuals must identify themselves as being with the group, Equal Justice Works Symposium at the time the reservation is made in order to receive the special group rate. OR

Use this [booking link](#) (once you've registered) to book online.



Other Hotel Suggestions

In the event the room block is sold out, you're looking for a beach vacation, or you'd just prefer some additional options, below are some additional hotel options in St. Petersburg and St. Pete Beach. There are many Air BnB options available as well.

- [Crystal Bay Hotel](#)
- [The Hotel Zamora](#)
- [Sirata Beach Resort](#)
- [The Beachcomber](#)
- [The Don CeSar](#)
- [Island Grand - A TradeWinds Resort](#)
- [The Vinoy Renaissance St. Petersburg Resort](#)
- [Courtyard by Marriott St. Petersburg Downtown](#)
- [The Cordova Inn](#)

LOCAL RESTAURANTS

Gulfport

- Golden Dinosaurs (vegan)
- Pia's Trattoria
- Gulfport Brewery + Eatery

Downtown St. Petersburg

- Doc Ford's Rum Bar and Grille St. Pete Pier
- Red Mesa Cantina
- BellaBrava
- Craft Kafe Downtown (gluten free)
- Good Intentions (vegan)
- 3 Daughters Brewing

St. Pete Beach

- RumFish Grill
- Crabby Bill's in St. Pete Beach
- Sea Dog Brewing Co.
- The Toasted Monkey



OTHER LOCAL ACTIVITIES

- Spend the day one of the many beautiful beaches St. Pete Beach and Fort. De Soto Park or take a short trip to Honeymoon Island State Park or Caladesi Island State Park.
- Visit a museum—nearby options include the Dali Museum, the Museum Chihuly, the James Museum of Western & Wildlife Art or the Florida Holocaust Museum.
- Explore the St. Petersburg Pier.
- Pop into the Saturday morning market.
- Check out some spring training baseball.
- Rent kayaks or go hiking at Weedon Island Preserve.
- Book a tee time at one of the many golf courses.
- Take the official walking mural tour of St. Pete.

Check [here](#) for current events and other happenings in the Tampa Bay area during your trip!



SPEAKER INFORMATION

Alejandro Figueroa Quevedo

Since 2017, Alejandro has served as Deputy Director for Puerto Rico Legal Services supervising the programmatic area, including managers of direct service centers and special projects and the intake system. His career in PRLS started as staff attorney, later becoming the manager of the Arecibo branch office. He graduated with high honors from the University of Puerto Rico with a major in Strategic Management. He obtained his law degree from the University of Puerto Rico, also with high honors.

In 2017, Hurricane Irma and two weeks later Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico as category five, leaving unprecedented damage. Alejandro oversaw PRLS legal work to assist survivors, served as liaison with FEMA, NGOs, and government agencies. At the time, he was part of a legal team requesting FEMA to adapt federal regulations of the Stafford Act with Puerto Rico's Civil Code to overcome obstacles that prevented granting assistance to survivors. He was part of the team who drafted the Declarative Statement approved then. At the same time, PRLS's 1-800 number was designated as the official Disaster Legal Aid Hotline.

As other disasters have stricken Puerto Rico continuously since then, (2020 earthquakes, COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown, tropical storm Isaias, historical floodings in 2022 and more recently Hurricane Fiona), Alejandro has set up PRLS response to assist survivors and supervised the legal work, outreach, training, being liaison with more than 20 entities, and coordinating legal assistance from pro bono attorneys.

As liaison with FEMA, he holds weekly meetings to report news, problems, cases, and details of the work performed. Also, coordinates legal assistance for survivors in DRC's, either on-site or remotely, as it was during the pandemic. With his staff he ensures the provision of services in all legal matters that spike after a disaster such as unemployment, domestic violence, child custody issues, and disaster assistance benefits.

Alejandro served as guest in the 2019 Legal Talk Network's podcast Natural Disasters and Dealing with the Aftermath. Participated as panelist in the Webinar: 25 Pro Tips for Working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): COVID-19 Edition. In 2020 he also served as panelist in the NLADA: Natural Disasters During a Public Health Crisis: The Journey to Response, Recovery and Resiliency. He has also been invited to assist draft disaster recovery plans to Legal Services Programs through the United States. PRLS's work was mentioned on the LAW 360's article: 'Now Is The Real Crisis': Puerto Ricans Struggle For Disaster Aid. Alejandro has been interviewed in many radio and TV programs.

Born in Miami and raised in Puerto Rico, he has been living all his life in the "hurricane highway" and knows firsthand the needs of people, before, during and after a natural disaster.



Alicia Aiken

Alicia Aiken has dedicated 25 years to working within the public and nonprofit sectors to further social justice for people living in poverty and surviving violence. Alicia brings a deep understanding of the legal and social services nonprofit sector, having spent 15 years as a trial attorney and then a member of the Executive Committee at Legal Aid Chicago, a 150-person legal services program.

Alicia is a principal at the Danu Center for Strategic Advocacy, and the director of the Danu Center's Confidentiality Institute, a national policy and technical assistance project that supports helping professionals to protect privacy for crime victims. Alicia is also the faculty Fellow for Practising Law Institute's Interactive Learning Center where she designs innovative programs that teach lawyers to work well with individual clients, and hosts the podcast Pursuing Justice: The Pro Bono Files which tell stories about the work of nonprofit and pro bono attorneys nationwide. Alicia regularly strategizes with direct service nonprofits, local coalitions, government entities, law firms, and professional organizations on a wide range of issues, including service delivery models, client confidentiality, organizational structure, internal procedures, legal compliance, litigation strategy, policy advocacy, professional development, and distance learning design.

Alicia attended the University of Michigan, where she received a Law degree and a Bachelor of Arts in English and History. In 2006-2007, Alicia was awarded the Chicago Foundation for Women Founder's Award, enabling her to study organizational change at Northwestern University, and to undertake a national study of model domestic violence courts. Most recently, she received the American Bar Association's 2018 Sharon L. Corbitt Award for Exemplary Legal Service to Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking.

Alicia McLeary

Allison McLeary, Esq. serves as Director of Disaster Recovery and Emergency Management Programs for Tetra Tech, Inc. She is an experienced emergency response and recovery executive with nearly 20 years of experience and offers direct, senior-level expertise administering grant programming in coordination with federal agencies. As former Recovery Bureau Chief of the Florida Division of Emergency Management, she has direct experience administering FEMA, USDA and US Treasury grant programming throughout Florida. She also served as Recovery Counsel for the Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP), where she participated in drafting legislation at the state and federal level to address necessary changes to the Stafford Act and state authorities. In this role she also represented the agency in appeals and arbitrations of FEMA agency actions. Ms. McLeary is a graduate of Auburn University and the Paul Hebert Law Center at Louisiana State University. She serves as a steadfast advisor in planning for, responding to, and recovering from challenges and disasters for state and local government clients throughout the country.



Amanda Brown

Amanda Brown is Lagniappe Law Lab's founder and executive director. She is the co-chair of the Louisiana's Access to Justice Commission's technology subcommittee and is a member of the Legal Service Corporation's Emerging Leaders Council. She is also active in the ABA, serving as the Director of the YLD's Disaster Legal Services Team and as a member of the ABA Center for Innovation's Governing Council.

Most recently, Amanda was a legal technology consultant for the Louisiana Bar Foundation on its statewide triage portal, the Louisiana Civil Legal Navigator. Prior to that, she served as the inaugural Microsoft NextGen Fellow for the American Bar Association's Center for Innovation and was a disaster recovery attorney at Southeast Louisiana Legal Services. She is a graduate of Loyola University New Orleans College of Law.

Bill Litton

Bill is the Emergency Management Director for Osceola County Office of Emergency Management. Bill graduated from Florida State University, with B.S. degree in Criminology and a master's degree in Emergency and Disaster Management from American Military University. Bill is credentialed as a Certified Emergency Manager (CEM®) with the International Association of Emergency Managers, a Florida Profession Emergency Manager (FPEM) with the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association (FEPA) and is a Master Exercise Practitioner (MEP). He is also a graduate of FEMA National Emergency Management Advanced Academy (NEMAA) and the FEMA National Emergency Management Executive Academy (NEMEA) - Cohort X.

Bill is responsible for the oversight of the county's Emergency Management program and Intergovernmental Communication department. Prior to joining Osceola County, he served in emergency management leadership positions with the Seminole County Sheriff's Office, Orlando Health, and the Seminole County Office of Emergency Management.

Bill has been involved with major disasters/incidents that have affected Central Florida which include Hurricane Ian, Hurricane Nicole, the COVID-19 Pandemic, Hurricane Dorian, Hurricane Irma, Hurricane Matthew, the PULSE Nightclub shooting, George Zimmerman Trial, Trayvon Martin Incident, Tropical Storm Fay; as well as Hurricanes Charley, Frances, and Jeanne.

Bill is a member of the Regional Domestic Security Task Force (RDSTF)-Incident Management Team; and serves on RDSTF as an Emergency Management Co-Chair; Orlando/Orange Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) as Emergency Management Co-Chair, Certification Commissioner with Florida Emergency Preparedness Association.

Bill is a National Committee member for the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) and Board Member with the Central Florida Council, BSA. Graduate of Leadership Osceola; FBI Citizen's Academy Graduate.



Brittany Perkins Castillo

Brittany Perkins Castillo is Chief Executive Officer at AshBrittFamily of Companies - AshBritt, Inc., AshBritt Management and Logistics, and AshBritt Infrastructure. As CEO Brittany has taken AshBritt to new heights, launching AshBritt Infrastructure and growing AshBritt Management and Logistics. Brittany has led AshBritt's operations following natural disaster events including Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Michael and the 2017 California wildfire U.S. Army Corps of Engineers mission, the COVID-19 pandemic, and various humanitarian crises.

Prior to joining AshBritt, Brittany was a prosecutor, managed a law practice in Austin, Texas, and was a program manager in Doha, Qatar. She holds a Juris Doctor from The University of Texas School of Law and a Bachelor of Arts from Vanderbilt University. Brittany served on Florida Governor Ron DeSantis' Transition Advisory Committee on the Environment, Natural Resources & Agriculture as well as on the Transition Advisory Committee on Health and Wellness Policy.

Brittany is known as a vocal advocate for supporting and mentoring young women and frequently speaks about the need for equity and diversity in operations and emergency management fields. She recently launched WTFem.org, a repository for resources to help advance women in the emergency management field. Brittany is Vice Chair of the Pace Center for Girls Board of Trustees, a member of the board of directors of the AshBritt Foundation and 4Girls Foundation, and serves on the Business Advisory Council for Dress for Success Palm Beaches. Brittany is also the co-author of the international best-seller *Leading Through the Pandemic: Unconventional Wisdom from Heartfelt Leaders*.

Bryan Russell

Bryan Russell is the Emergency Management Coordinator with Disability Rights Florida where he works to ensure the needs of persons with disabilities and their caregivers are included in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts across the state. Prior to this role, Bryan was the Program Manager for the Florida Department of Health's Disability and Health Program where he focused on adapting and implementing public health interventions for persons with disabilities.

During emergencies and disasters, Bryan serves as the State Access Coordinator with the Florida State Emergency Response Team providing guidance and recommendations to ensure the needs of persons with access and functional needs are met during all phases of disasters. Prior to re-joining FL DOH in 2016, Bryan managed the Disability Employment Initiative with CareerSource Gulf Coast in Panama City and other public health programs at the Bay County Health Department.



Bryan Sky-Eagle

Bryan Sky-Eagle is experienced public safety professional with over 22 years of successful experience in large area and complex incidents. He was appointed Deputy Fire Chief for the Houston Fire Department (HFD) in November 2020. Chief Sky-Eagle is committed to ensuring the members of the HFD are prepared to exceed expectations of the citizens of Houston and the professional standards of the fire service with creativity, industry best practices and firefighter safety.

Bryan is one of the Shift Commanders for the Emergency Response Division and was appointed in 2020 to serve as the HFD's first Department Resilience Officer that currently oversees the implementation of the department-wide Strategic Remote Communications Redundancy project. Previously he has served as the Area Commander for Hurricane Harvey, Emergency Operations Center fire liaison for Winter Storm Uri, Homeland Security Chief, Legislative and City Hall Liaison, Special Legal Assistant to the Interim Fire Chief, District Chief in Operations, and Captain in the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Special Operations Division.

Chief Sky-Eagle is a strong supporter of education and officer development. In this role, Bryan joined two other chiefs and founded the Chief Officers Association in 2018, currently serving as President, and is committed to bringing solutions to improve the department's ability to serve through education, management practices and improving leadership skills for the chiefs and officers. He obtained a Master of Public Administration from the Sam Houston State University, holds the prestigious Chief Fire Officer (CFO) Designation from the Center of Public Safety Excellence, is an alumnus from the Texas A&M Fire Service Chief Officer Executive Program and the Executive Leadership Program from the Naval Post-Graduate School. Bryan also graduated from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law, is a practicing attorney and currently serves as an Affiliate Legal Scholar for the University of Houston Law Center for First Responder and Emergency Management Law.

Christine Cerniglia

Professor Cerniglia graduated from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law and pursued the civil law curriculum dedicated to the Louisiana Civil Code. She practiced maritime law in New Orleans, Louisiana where most of the firm's cases involved personal injury or wrongful death claims involving Jones Act seamen or longshore harbor workers involved in deep water drilling operations.

Her legal career was completely interrupted by Hurricane Katrina when she relocated to the Tampa Bay/St. Petersburg area and became a staff attorney at the Sixth Judicial Circuit. This change in career was during the 2008 mortgage foreclosure crisis at a time when Florida was deeply impacted by an overload in filings. During her time at the Sixth Circuit, she became licensed in Florida and learned many aspects of Florida civil practice.

She began her teaching career as a visiting professor at Stetson and then accepted a director position at Atlanta's John Marshall Law School. She returned to New Orleans in 2012 in a newly labeled academic position Director of Skills and Experiential Education at Loyola



College of Law to help transform Loyola's skills curriculum where she designed practice tracks which are still part of Loyola's curricular offerings. She joined Stetson College of Law in 2017 in the role of Director of Clinical and Experiential Education to build upon the long history of clinical training at Florida's first law school. While at Stetson, she created a new course entitled Disaster Law Primer and Externship and Covid-19 and the Impact on the Civil System.

Her scholarship is dedicated to disaster law and preparedness, the self-representation crisis and civil Gideon and legal education reform. Professor Cerniglia believes to "bloom where you are planted" and to take each day as an opportunity to connect to people and learn through experience. She holds active licenses in both Florida and Louisiana.

Ernie Abbot

Ernie Abbott is the Counsel of Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC. Mr. Abbott has more than 20 years of experience with the laws, regulations, policies and procedures relating to eligibility for federal disaster and mitigation assistance, the coordination of federal, state, local, nonprofit and private sector responders in catastrophic events, and the elements of the National Flood Insurance Program, including insurance, floodplain mapping and floodplain management. Mr. Abbott assists his clients with issues pertaining to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance Program, homeland security, the Hazard Mitigation Disaster Grant Program, flood insurance rate maps, public health emergency laws, disallowance and Office of Inspector General (OIG) audits.

Mr. Abbott is well versed in the administrative appeals process under FEMA's Public Assistance program, and he regularly represents applicants for public assistance in the arbitration process promulgated by Section 601 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Mr. Abbott is a former general counsel of FEMA. In that role, he managed all FEMA regulatory development and coordinated the legislative program for all FEMA agencies. He led expedited development of regulations to implement the Cerro Grande Fire Assistance Act, which created a new \$500 million FEMA compensation program. Mr. Abbott developed and implemented an integrated litigation and regulatory program to protect the National Flood Insurance Program from punitive damage awards. He also created the FEMA Office of Dispute Resolution in the Office of General Counsel, which received special mention by the Justice Department. He has extensive experience in the regulation of critical infrastructure industries and critical infrastructure projects.

Prior to his role at FEMA, Mr. Abbott worked as managing deputy general counsel of a \$3 billion diversified natural gas company, where he led negotiations on a 275 billion cubic-foot international natural gas purchase contract and on the gas processing and liquids transportation aspects of the \$500 million sale of a gas liquids business. He has experience in toxic tort litigation and environmental corporate compliance programs. Mr. Abbott has also worked at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Interstate Commerce Commission.



Jason Susalla

Jason Susalla is an attorney supervisor and grant project manager on the disaster relief team at Bay Area Legal Services. Jason joined Bay Area Legal Services in 2009 as an intern working with the Community Counsel program. Jason was hired shortly thereafter as a part-time advocate for the Centralized Telephone Intake Unit while maintaining a full-time job as a marine mammal trainer. He has been a full-time attorney at the firm since 2013, first working in the Senior Advocacy Unit and assisting seniors with housing and custody issues. He moved to the Fair Housing team in 2014 where he served clients at risk of discrimination in housing and transferred to the New Port Richey office in 2018 where he primarily representing survivors of domestic violence.

In April 2019, Jason accepted a supervisory position with the Disaster Relief Team, first representing hurricane survivors, eventually expanding assistance to survivors of all natural disasters with disaster-related legal issues, including COVID-19. Since his transition to the disaster team, he has worked to integrate legal services into the regional disaster relief community as a component of disaster response and recovery: Jason now sits on the boards of several COADs/VOADs; works to develop disaster preparedness and relief training with a legal aid lens; focuses on cultivating strong relationships with local LTRO's and traditional disaster relief partners; and is overseeing the development and rollout of a statewide, blue-skies, disaster relief legal helpline to assist disaster survivors.

Jeanne Ortiz-Ortiz

Jeanne is the Pro Bono & Strategic Initiatives Manager at Pro Bono Net, a national nonprofit dedicated to building innovative technology tools that expand access to justice. After the 2017 major disasters, she worked as Pro Bono Net's Disaster Response Legal Fellow and helped survivors affected by Hurricane María in Puerto Rico with FEMA appeals. Jeanne also co-authored Touro Law Review's "Disaster Legal Tech: Strategies for Providing Legal Information to Survivors."

In Puerto Rico, Jeanne provided free legal representation and employment discrimination litigation on behalf of low-income LGBT individuals. During law school, she founded and led an award-winning Ms. JD chapter and facilitated workshops on reproductive justice. She has been a part of the ABA YLD Disaster Legal Services Program since 2019 and often presents on technology, pro bono, and disaster recovery. In 2021, she was honored as one of the ABA Top 40 Young Lawyers On the Rise. She is bilingual and admitted to practice in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and New Jersey.

Jeff Harvey

Jeffrey D. Harvey, Esq., is the CEO of Community Legal Services, the largest legal aid in Florida. He is a decorated military leader, service to his country spanned deployments in both Iraq and Afghanistan from 2001-2009, and response in Florida to Hurricanes Irma, Michael, and Ian.



In addition to a JD from Stetson, he has an MBA from American Military University, a Master's in Leadership from Murray State University, and an undergraduate degree from Boston College in Political Science and Theology. His leadership within CLS has resulted in the Orlando Business Journal naming him a "Veteran of Influence" in 2019 and "CEO of the Year" in 2021, as well as CLS being honored as "Best Place to Work" as voted by staff three years in a row from three different publications.

Joe Barrios

Joe Barrios is the response and recovery operations manager at Pinellas County Emergency Management. Joe has over 28 years of experience in county government. He is a proven leader in Geographic Information Systems and Emergency Operations. Joe has been with Pinellas County Government for 25 years and has served as the Response and Recovery Operations Manager since 2013. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics from Florida State University and is a 2016 graduate of the National Emergency Management Advanced Academy.

During his career Joe developed his passion for Emergency Management working on a variety of leading-edge projects such as hurricane evacuation studies, hazard analysis and application implementations. He has been part of every Pinellas County Emergency Operations Center activation since Hurricane Charlie in 2004 and has served as the EOC Operations Chief since 2013. Joe deployed to Bay County during Hurricane Michael supporting the immediate response. Currently, Joe serves as the Committee Chair for the Governor's Hurricane Conference Awards committee.

Jordan Davis

Jordan Davis is a current Equal Justice Works Disaster Resilience Fellow and Staff Attorney at Disability Rights California. They earned a B.A. in Anthropology from the University of Florida, a B.A. in Community Development from Portland State University, and a J.D. from Golden Gate University School of Law. Jordan advocates for people with disabilities impacted by wildfires through direct legal services, outreach and trainings on emergency preparedness, public policy, and collaborating with legal aid organizations across the state.



Kathy Grunewald

Kathy Grunewald is the Disaster Coordination Attorney at Legal Services of North Florida, Inc. in Tallahassee, Florida. LSNF provides civil legal aid to the 16 counties in the Florida Panhandle. She is responsible for bridging the knowledge gap between legal and non-legal responders to disasters. Prior to working with LSNF, she was an attorney with Florida Legal Services representing indigent clients in Florida on poverty law issues and directing the statewide training program. She is a graduate of Florida State University College of Law and a member of the Florida and Georgia Bars.

Latisha Nixon Jones

Professor Nixon-Jones is an emerging voice in the developing field of Disaster Law. Prior to joining Oregon Law's Legal Research and Writing faculty, Professor Nixon-Jones was the Assistant Clinical Professor of the Disaster Law Clinic at Southern University Law Center (SULC). As a Visiting Professor at the University of Oregon, Professor Nixon-Jones was the recipient of the 2020 COVID-19 Research Innovation Award. Her research on Covid-19 and its disparaging effects on vulnerable populations in the class has been presented in the Conversation, and several other national publications.

As a 2017 AmeriCorps Equal Justice Works Fellow, she was responsible for establishing, coordinating, and expanding SULC's disaster law clinic. The clinic's focus is helping low-income individuals who have been affected by natural or man-made disasters with civil legal issues.

As a fellow, Professor Nixon-Jones has appeared on several news programs and delivered vital community outreach presentations and programs. She was also featured in a September 2017 American Bar Association article highlighting the importance of the clinic. She has presented at numerous national conferences and helped develop a national federal guideline white paper for future Equal Justice Works disaster law fellows.

Professor Nixon-Jones is a member of the Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition and is currently a certified business coach and a national SCORE mentor. She also serves on the Association of Legal Writing Directors' members committee and the Legal Writing Institute's diversity committee.

Professor Nixon-Jones is licensed to practice in Louisiana. She earned her JD from Southern University Law Center with cum laude distinction and received her BSM in Management and Finance from Tulane University.



Linda Anderson Stanley

Linda Anderson Stanley is the senior manager of disaster programming at Equal Justice Works; mobilizing public service attorneys across the country to assist disaster survivors with their unique legal issues. In this position, Linda led the award-winning Disaster Recovery Legal Corp and created and implemented the Disaster Resilience Program. Linda is also an adjunct professor and teaches a Disaster Law Primer at Stetson University College of Law. Prior to joining Equal Justice Works, Linda worked as a Staff Attorney at Bay Area Legal Services in Tampa, Florida assisting individuals with limited access to legal services with their civil legal needs. She focused primarily on disaster relief; housing law; consumer law; and some Veteran's issues. In her capacity as staff attorney at Bay Area Legal Services, Linda was awarded the Hillsborough County Outstanding Young Lawyer of the year award for 2018. Linda now serves on the board of directors for Bay Area Legal Services.

Linda served three terms as the Director of the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division Disaster Legal Services (DLS) program as well as a cabinet member of the ABA YLD from 2019-2022. She is currently the chair of the ABA Standing Committee on Disaster Response and Preparedness for the 2022-2023 bar year as well as special advisor to the DLS program. Linda was recognized as an ABA Star of the Year for 2020 and 2021 and is a recipient of the ABA Top 40 Young Lawyers On The Rise award for 2021.

Linda received her undergraduate degree in psychology from the University of Illinois and her J.D. from the University of Illinois Chicago School of Law. She is licensed to practice in both Florida and Illinois.

Michelle Lockett

Michelle Lockett serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Be Ready Alliance Coordinating for Emergencies (BRACE), a nonprofit organization based in Pensacola Florida whose mission is to make communities disaster-resilient through public-private partnership. Nationally known for its commitment to partnerships by fostering communication, cooperation, collaboration and coordination among community, faith-based, nonprofit, private, and public organizations, and individuals active in one or more functions of emergency management, BRACE believes that emergency management is most effective when the whole community is engaged and involved. Faith-based organizations, service agencies, businesses and associations, tribal organizations, youth and older Americans, and people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, can make a real difference in their communities before, during, and after disasters.



As an educational organization, BRACE fully believes that the impacts of disasters are basically reduced when people are aware through proactive, engaging educational programs that create a culture of prevention and resilience to natural and man-made disasters. Ms. Lockett's experience as the current vice chair for the Florida VOAD and the Region 1 Board Representative for the Florida CERT Association allows BRACE to continue being at the tip of the spear for identifying rural and low-attention communities' needs before and after disasters.

As a deployed asset with the Florida Division of Emergency Management, she orchestrated the local development and initial execution of the Surfside Disaster Case Management Program in July 2021; and most recently during Hurricane Ian served as the Incident Commander for the state's first regional CERT Response Deployment and then transitioned to serve as the Emergency Support Function 15 state liaison in DeSoto County.

Ms. Lockett holds a Master's degree from the University of South Florida, is a James Madison Memorial Foundation Senior Fellow and a frequent speaker at state and national conferences on disaster preparedness and whole community engagement. Civically, Ms. Lockett is the Board President for Family Promise of Escambia County, the Vice President of the Woman's Club of Pensacola, a member of the Suburban West Rotary of Pensacola, and an active parishioner at the Basilica of St. Michael The Archangel.

Michelle Trunkett

Michelle Trunkett is the Managing Attorney for the Fort Myers office of Florida Rural Legal Services, Inc. Florida Rural Legal Services, Inc (FRLS) is a nonprofit law firm that provides free civil legal assistance and representation to low-income individuals. FRLS has five offices serving thirteen counties throughout south-central Florida, including Fort Myers, Lakeland, Fort Pierce, Riviera Beach, and Belle Glade. Michelle Trunkett's work at FRLS focuses on representing tenants in landlord-tenant matters, many of whom reside in federally subsidized housing, representing consumers in debt collection matters, and representing debtors in bankruptcy. Michelle also serves as the Housing and Consumer Workgroup Leader at FRLS. Ms. Trunkett received her B.S. in Sociology and Social Work at Florida State University and her J.D. at Stetson University, College of Law.

Michelle Zaltsberg

Michelle Zaltsberg is a shareholder with Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz. Michelle has significant experience with the laws, regulations and procedures relating to eligibility for federal disaster and mitigation assistance under



the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Public Assistance program. She regularly assists state and local governments and nonprofit entities navigate FEMA's administrative appeals process.

Michelle's practice also focuses significantly on helping clients create FEMA-compliant procurement programs pursuant to the federal procurement standards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200. In addition, Michelle represents clients in complex business disputes in both state and federal courts and in arbitrations.

Rob Verchick

Rob Verchick is one of the nation's leading scholars in disaster and climate change law and a former EPA official in the Obama administration. He holds the Gauthier-St. Martin Eminent Scholar Chair in Environmental Law at [Loyola University New Orleans](#). Professor Verchick is also a Senior Fellow in Disaster Resilience at [Tulane University](#) and the President of the [Center for Progressive Reform](#), a nonprofit research and advocacy organization.

Verchick has written more than 60 articles and five books. He has taught as a visiting professor at Yale University, Peking University, and Aarhus University in Denmark. He has received several teaching awards, including at Loyola, Tulane, and Harvard.

Verchick comments frequently on radio shows such as NPR's All Things Considered and has written commentary for the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, Slate, and other publications. A popular speaker, he has addressed audiences throughout the country and on nearly every continent. His podcast, [Connect the Dots](#), focuses on tackling some of our biggest environmental and health challenges.

In 2009 and 2010, Professor Verchick served in the Obama administration as Deputy Associate Administrator for Policy at the [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#). In that role he helped develop climate change adaptation policy for the EPA and served on President Obama's Interagency Climate Change Adaptation Task Force.

Verchick, who grew up in the sun-scorched Las Vegas desert and survived Hurricane Katrina as a resident of New Orleans, has spent a career studying environmental resilience across the country. Committed to "place-based" analysis, he has paddled swamps, scaled glaciers, and dived among endangered corals, all to understand what is at stake and how we can protect the things we love.



Sophia Genovese

Sophia is a senior attorney at the New Mexico Immigrant Law Center (NMILC), where she leads the asylum, detention, and housing team. She also works at NMILC as a Disaster Resilience Fellow through Equal Justice Works. Prior to joining NMILC, Sophia supervised and led detention representation programs at Catholic Charities New York and the Southern Poverty Law Center.

She is an active member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA), serving on several local and national committees. She is a frequent speaker and lecturer on asylum law, detention representation, criminal-immigration law, movement lawyering, and more. Sophia is also actively involved in movements to abolish immigration detention, community organizing, and advocacy to pass legislation in support of immigrant communities. Sophia received her J.D. from Brooklyn Law School and graduated summa cum laude from Whittier College. She is admitted to practice law in New York and New Jersey.

Stephanie Duke

Stephanie Duke is an attorney and disaster resilience coordinator at Disability Rights Texas (DRTx). DRTx is the Protection & Advocacy agency for Texas and operates to ensure Texans' with disabilities rights are upheld by affording equitable opportunities across all societal domains.

Ms. Duke focuses on mitigating barriers that disaster survivors with disabilities face in response and recovery programs, services and activities by affording access to justice and remedying discriminatory practices. Ms. Duke works to build resiliency for the disability community by advocating for collaboration and inclusive planning processes with local and state entities and provides outreach to educate the community on individual preparedness and resources to promote independence and autonomy during any event. Ms. Duke also addresses systemic barriers in federal and state disaster and emergency programs to ensure meaningful access to all disaster survivors with disabilities via legal advocacy and policy reform.

Ms. Duke is an Equal Justice Works Disaster Fellow alumnus; Vice-Director of the American Bar Associations, Young Lawyers Division, Disaster Legal Services Team; she serves as the Chair of Board of Directors for Texas Volunteer Organization Active in Disasters (VOAD); Chair of the State Bar of Texas, Disaster Law Task Force and is an appointed member to the Governor's Task force on Disaster Issues Effecting Older Persons and Persons with Disabilities.



Stephanie Stachowicz-Twomey

Ms. Stephanie Stachowicz received a Bachelor of Science in Criminology and Criminal Justice from Florida State University and received a juris doctorate with Florida State University, College of Law. She has been a military spouse for over a decade and has four small children.

Before her employment with the Florida Division of Emergency Management (Division), Ms. Stachowicz worked as legal counsel for Agency for Persons with Disabilities and Department of Children and Families.

Ms. Stephanie Stachowicz has been a part of the Division since January of 2020 as the policy, rules, and public records attorney.

In April 2021, Ms. Stachowicz was promoted to the General Counsel, and an Executive Member of the Division. In this role, she provides legal advice to the Director, Deputy Director and Chief of Staff on all matters for the Division. Ms. Stachowicz was activated with the Division and served as legal counsel for the response of the COVID-19 State of Emergency. This included direct oversight and supervision of all contracts and all legal agreements for COVID-19 operations for the State of Florida including testing, vaccination, mobile missions, and monoclonal antibody therapies associated with the response. Additionally, Ms. Stachowicz ensured compliance for the Division for both State and Federal law. Ms. Stachowicz has responded to over 20 emergencies with the Division including a deployment to the Surfside building collapse where she worked with local, State, and federal counterparts during the tragic incident. Most recently, Ms. Stachowicz served as legal counsel for three activations at the same time, Hurricane Ian, Hurricane Nicole, and Mass Migration. Ms. Stachowicz took on a new role, as Head of Operations for debris removal, which included removal of all upland debris, derelict vessels, and waterway debris. Ms. Stachowicz has had the pleasure of serving in several acting capacities to include the Division's Chief of Staff and Human Resources Director.

Taylor Noya

Taylor Noya is a staff attorney at the New Mexico Immigrant Law Center where she works on the asylum, detention, and housing team. She earned her J.D. from the University of New Mexico School of Law class of 2021 and was the recipient of the International and Comparative Law Award for her studies in the area of international and human rights law. Following her admission to the NM Bar in September 2021, Taylor was an attorney at Enlace Comunitario. where she represented low-income and Spanish speaking survivors of domestic violence in Family Law matters. Taylor is admitted to practice law in New Mexico.



Verna Williams

Verna Williams is the CEO of Equal Justice Works. In her role as CEO, Verna will continue to advance the mission of Equal Justice Works to create opportunities for leaders to transform their passion for equal justice into a lifelong commitment to public service.

Verna brings with her an extensive background of experience teaching and practicing law, as well as researching civil and women's rights. Verna previously served as the dean of the University of Cincinnati College of Law, where she was a professor prior to becoming dean, and taught courses on family law, gender discrimination, and constitutional law. Additionally, she founded and co-directed the Judge Nathaniel Jones Center for Race, Gender, and Social Justice at the University of Cincinnati.

Before her work at the University of Cincinnati, Verna was the Vice President and Director of Educational Opportunities at the National Women's Law Center, where she focused on gender equity in education. In this role, she was the lead counsel and successfully argued before the United States Supreme Court *Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education*, which established that educational institutions have a duty to respond to and address complaints of student-to-student sexual harassment.

Verna clerked for the Honorable David S. Nelson, U.S. District Judge for the District of Massachusetts. After the clerkship, she practiced law at Sidley Austin LLP and the U.S. Department of Justice.

Verna also has a background in research, which examines the intersection of race, gender, and class in law and policy. She has authored and co-authored many articles and essays on her area of expertise.

Among her other achievements, Verna has presented papers at the Latina/o Critical Race Theory Conference and meetings of the Association of Law, Culture, and the Humanities. She also served as a consultant for the Ford Foundation, where she chaired the convening of a national conference at UC entitled *Women Coming Together: Claiming the Law for Social Change*.

Verna received the Goldman Prize for Excellence in Teaching in 2004 and 2011. She was recently honored by the YWCA of Greater Cincinnati, the Black Lawyers Association of Cincinnati, and the Cincinnati Bar Association, which presented her with the Themis Award for exemplary service to the law and the community.

Verna is a *cum laude* graduate of Harvard Law School and Georgetown University.



About the Sponsors

Equal Justice Works

[Equal Justice Works](#) is the nation's largest facilitator of opportunities in public interest law. We bring together an extensive network of law students, lawyers, legal services organizations, and supporters to promote a lifelong commitment to public service and equal justice. Following their Fellowships, more than 85% of our Fellows remain in public service positions, continuing to pursue equal justice for underserved communities across the country. In 2020, Equal Justice Works launched its [Disaster Resilience Program](#). This program mobilizes public interest lawyers to serve in disaster-prone areas to ensure vital legal services are accessible, comprehensive, and responsive to the unique legal needs of individuals, families, and communities.

American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division Disaster Legal Services Program

The [Disaster Legal Services](#) (DLS) Program is a federal disaster legal assistance program operated by the ABA YLD pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), a division of the Department of Homeland Security. Beginning in 1973, FEMA designated the DLS program to serve as the exclusive coordinator of free legal services to disaster survivors.

American Bar Association Standing Committee on Disaster Response and Preparedness

The [ABA Standing Committee on Disaster Response and Preparedness](#) strives to educate lawyers, bar associations, and the justice system to help them prepare for and respond to disasters; provide resources to assist lawyers and the public recover from disasters; and, ensure the rule of law in times of disaster.

Stetson University College of Law

[Stetson University College of Law](#) is an active part of the Tampa Bay metro area, with its main law campus in Gulfport/St. Petersburg and a satellite center in Tampa. The law school is a part of Stetson University, with a College of Arts and Sciences, School of Business Administration, and School of Music in DeLand.

A Special Thank You to our Reception Sponsors:

