

# PROGRESSIVE LAW DAY

FRI. SEPT. 24<sup>TH</sup>, 2021 | 12-6PM

UC Hastings College of the Law  
200 McAllister St, San Francisco, CA

Lunch provided | NextGen appetizer hour to follow

[bit.ly/PLD-2021](https://bit.ly/PLD-2021)





2021 PROGRESSIVE LAW DAY





# PROGRESSIVE LAW DAY



**Progressive Law Day** is a free half-day conference, historically organized and led by law student members of the National Lawyers Guild, San Francisco Bay Area Chapter, and open to legal workers, lawyers, activists, and anyone interested in learning about radical lawyering and legal work.

**Progressive Law Day 2021** will be held on campus at UC Hastings College of the Law, with an appetizer hour to follow that will be the kick off event for the relaunch of our local NextGen/Mentorship Committee. While we are optimistic about hosting this event in-person for the fall, we are prepared to transition this event virtually in the event of circumstances beyond our control.

## 2021 AGENDA

11:30 AM – 12:00 PM REGISTRATION

12:00 PM – 1:15 PM OPENING PANEL: Pathways to Movement Lawyering

1:15 PM – 2:00 PM LUNCH

2:00 PM – 3:15 PM BREAKOUT SESSION 1

### *WORKSHOP SESSIONS:*

- CPRA Requests Clinic Training
- Basics of Eviction Defense Legal Support
- How Movement Lawyers Work with Community Partners
- Supporting Internationalist Struggle– At Home & Abroad
- Santa Rita Jail Hotline Training

3:30 PM – 4:45 PM BREAKOUT SESSION 2

### *WORKSHOP SESSIONS:*

- CPRA Requests Clinic Training
- Basics of Eviction Defense Legal Support
- How Movement Lawyers Work with Community Partners
- Supporting Internationalist Struggle– At Home & Abroad
- Santa Rita Jail Hotline Training

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM CLOSING PANEL: Abolition & Transformative Justice

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM NEXTGEN APPETIZER HOUR (on campus)





# 2021 PROGRESSIVE LAW DAY

## *PROGRAM*





## PLENARY & WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

### PLENARIES

#### PATHWAYS TO MOVEMENT LAWYERING

12:00–1:15PM

ARC, Floor 2  
(Alumni Reception)  
200 McAllister Bldg.

[Zoom Link](#)

**Presenters:** Jay Kim | John Viola | Azadeh Zohrabi  
Andrea Henson | **Moderator:** EmilyRose Johns

By way of opening the conference, we will hear from movement lawyers involved in diverse struggles for social justice and human and civil rights. Speakers will share what brought them to movement lawyering, their pathway to becoming one, and stories that share the victories won, the rewards experienced, the challenges and the lessons learned.

#### ABOLITION & TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE: SUBVERTING THE CRIMINAL & LEGAL SYSTEM

5:00–6:00PM

ARC, Floor 2  
(Alumni Reception)  
200 McAllister Bldg.

[Zoom Link](#)

**Presenters:** nuri nusrat | Deidre Wilson | James Burch  
Leila Sayed-Taha | **Moderator:** Sara Kershner

The conference will close with a powerful panel on abolition and transformative justice as alternatives to the current criminal legal system and as a way of subverting state processes for addressing harm. Addressing harm through transformative processes builds the power of community to refuse state interventions and to move intimate, community and movement relationships towards the world we want to create and live in. In addition to alternatives to state violence and repression in response to harm, the panel will explore litigation and policy work that moves us closer to abolition and transformative justice rather than undermine our goals of getting there.

## WORKSHOP SESSIONS

Session 1: 2:00–3:15PM | Session 2: 3:30–4:45PM

All workshops will be offered both sessions.

#### CPRA CLINIC REQUESTS TRAINING

333  
Golden Gate  
Room 404  
[Zoom Link](#)

**Presenters:** Abenicio Cisneros

California Public Records Act Requests are a powerful movement tool. In this training you will learn what the California Public Records Act is and how it can be used to support movement strategy and tactics both in and out of the courtroom. This training will support and connect student volunteers to our upcoming CPRA Clinic in partnership with Hastings Law School.

#### BASICS OF EVICTION DEFENSE LEGAL SUPPORT

333  
Golden Gate  
Room 203  
[Zoom Link](#)

**Presenters:** Carlos Wadlins | Candy Smallwood | Andrea Henson  
Anita De Asis Miralle | **Moderator:** E Conner

Eviction Defense is a legal and direct action strategy to resist displacement. In this workshop you will hear from movement attorneys and organizers who are active in resisting the displacement of encampment residents and other people experiencing houselessness and those living in vehicles or other kinds of informal housing. In this workshop you will also learn about the NLG-SFBAs Eviction Defense Legal Support Network and how law students can join this work.

#### HOW MOVEMENT LAWYERS WORK WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS: INTEGRATING TRAUMA-INFORMED AND LIBERATION LAWYERING

200  
McAllister  
Room 630  
[Zoom Link](#)

**Presenters:** Azadeh Zohrabi | James Burch | Leila Sayed-Taha  
Stephany Arzaga | **Moderator:** Sara Kershner

The work of movement lawyers is to find mechanisms within the legal system to defend those most impacted by and in the fight against injustice, exploitation and repression and to advance protections and wins that shift conditions towards human and constitutional rights, justice and liberation. At the heart of the practice of movement lawyering is taking the lead and partnering with directly impacted individuals, communities, activists, grassroots organizations and movements on the frontlines of resisting and/or transforming injustice towards the world we want to live in and build. This makes movement lawyering distinct as a form of civil rights and legal defense - the challenge of balancing strong and effective legal strategy with the demands and desires of those most impacted and of the movements of which they are a part. This workshop will offer guidelines and practices to inform students as they work in support of frontline communities and movement activists and organizations. This includes trauma-informed approaches to working with those bearing the brunt of state repression and targeting.

## SUPPORTING INTERNATIONALIST STRUGGLE: AT HOME & ABROAD

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333

Golden Gate  
Room 204

[Zoom Link](#)

**Presenters:** Rhonda Ramiro | Liz Jackson | **Moderator:** *Judith Mirkinson*

International solidarity is a crucial component in connecting our local struggles to the struggles abroad in order to strengthen our collective fight against U.S. imperialism and global capitalism. This realm of activism often causes backlash against vulnerable people in the movement and calls for legal defense as a tactic in the long-term movement strategy. In this workshop, we will hear from lawyers and legal workers on how they collaborate with and are accountable to organizers and activists who are involved in internationalist movement work.

## SANTA RITA JAIL HOTLINE TRAINING

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333

Golden Gate  
Room 403

[Zoom Link](#)

**Presenters:** Lina García-Schmidt | Anne Weills | EmilyRose Johns

Launched in Summer 2020 in response to a prisoner-led hunger and labor strike in Santa Rita Jail (SRJ), the SRJ Hotline is a reporting mechanism and organizing tool which engages in rapid response to prisoners' individual and collective concerns, and provides a platform for their interviews, testimony, and writing. The growing Hotline community of advocates, attorneys, incarcerated people, and their loved ones has participated in civil litigation and has played a key role in encouraging principled political struggle which takes into account the agency and lived experiences of incarcerated people. This panel will provide the practical training needed in order to become a Hotline Worker, as well as address important legal and political developments in Alameda County regarding prisoners' access to mental and physical healthcare.

## SPEAKER BIOS

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**Abenicio Cisneros**, he/him, is an attorney in private practice focusing on cases to enforce the California Public Records Act. Cisneros has litigated CPRA cases across the state, including against police departments, sheriff departments, and district attorney offices. Cisneros has been a member of NLG since 2011 and regularly works with NLGSF to provide CPRA trainings and advice to NLGSF's movement partners.

**Andrea Henson** is a local Bay Area attorney. Her practice includes homeless encampment defense, criminal defense and tenant's rights cases. Prior to opening her own law offices, she worked as a litigation attorney at the Eviction Defense Center in Oakland. She is the cofounder of Where do we go? Berkeley. She serves on the Board of Directors for Glide Memorial Church (San Francisco, CA), Where do we go? Berkeley (Berkeley, CA) and Consider the Homeless (Berkeley, CA).

**Anita De Asis Miralle**, better known as Needa Bee, is a Filipina, single mother, entrepreneur, educator, artist, activist and organizer. She is a co-founder and interim Executive Director of The Village in Oakland - a grassroots organization providing direct services and support, opportunities for media and policy advocacy, education programs, and arts programs by and for unhoused residents of Oakland, Berkeley & San Francisco. The Village in Oakland has been providing know your rights trainings, eviction defense, and adverse possession to unhoused Oakland residents since 2017. In Spring 2017, to help document the conditions and government interventions (or lack of) in shanty towns, favelas, and slums around the world, The Village in Oakland co-hosted the United Nations Rapporteur on Adequate Housing. In the final UN report, Oakland and San Francisco were named the top two cities in the world where the Special Rapporteur documented the most human rights violations of unhoused residents.

**Anne Weills** is co-counsel in an ongoing class action lawsuit led by the Center for Constitutional Rights against the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (Ashker v. Brown, et al. (Case No. C 09-05796 CW). The suit challenged solitary confinement and indefinite detention in the Pelican Bay State Prison Security Housing Unit (SHU) and the lack of due process in which prisoners were assigned to the SHU. The Ashker suit was settled in September 2015, resulting in the release of approximately 2000 men from CDCR's Security Housing Units, who had been isolated from human contact for decades.

**Azadeh Zohrabi** – Born into a lineage of activists and advocates, Azadeh is a natural leader who has experienced the intergenerational impacts of imprisonment and has a deep conviction to advocate for the underdog. Currently directing her service for liberation in criminal justice reform and finding alternatives to incarceration, she is Director of the Underground Scholars Program at UC Berkeley. Through her public speaking, leadership coaching, and strategy consulting for non-profit organizations, Azadeh helps individuals create change from the inside out and to transform the systems they engage with. Her work has been cited by courts, attorneys, and scholars and has been featured in The New York Times, The Nation, The Guardian, Washington Post, The Atlantic, Ebony, Mother Jones, and Al Jazeera. Azadeh earned her BA from UC Riverside where she studied Ethnic Studies and a JD from UC Hastings College of the Law. She is an active alumna of the Women's Policy Institute, Soros Justice Fellowship, and New Leaders Council Oakland.

**Candy M. Smallwood**, a third-generation San Franciscan, is a Staff Attorney and Clinical Supervisor at the East Bay Community Law Center. Her work revolves around helping folks navigate their court debt, fines and fees, traffic court, and defending the rights of people who are experiencing homelessness.

**Carlos Wadkins** is a Human Rights Organizer with the Coalition on Homelessness, and has been involved with their work since 2019. In his current role, Carlos coordinates the Coalition's response to city sweeps, and works on campaigns aimed at stopping the city's patterns of displacing and criminalizing unhoused people.

**Deirdre Wilson** is a mother, a grandmother, and a survivor with an experience of incarceration. Since her release in 2005, she has worked in various capacities to build healthy and resilient community centering practices of restorative and transformative justice. Deirdre has been a member of the California Coalition for Women Prisoners since 2010. She facilitates programs of healing and accountability with the Ahimsa Collective and works as a licensed social worker for Aspire Mental Health in Las Vegas.

**E Conner** is a Texas transplant who has called Oakland her home for over a decade. E came to the NLG through community with many fellow activists involved. E brings to the NLG her experience interning at Freedom Archives to document the work of both resistance and the history and ongoing struggles against repression. E also brings her activism as a tenant organizer and skills as a community-based bike mechanic. E enjoys her paperback collection, obscure music and walking her dog.

**EmilyRose Johns** is a Senior Associate at Siegel, Yee, Brunner & Mehta and a NLG-SFBA chapter legal support co-coordinator. She fights tirelessly for her clients and has amassed numerous victories in the areas of prisoners' rights, police misconduct, discrimination in employment, education, athletic opportunities, and criminal defense. EmilyRose is an active member of the National Lawyers Guild and serves on several local committees, including the Demonstrations Committee, the Right to Shelter Committee and the NextGen committee. She also serves on the Legal Committee of the Anti Police-Terror Project.

**James Burch**, Policy Director of the Justice Teams Network and the Anti Police-Terror Project and the President of the NLG-SFBA Chapter. He began his journey in 2007 at the Southern Center for Human Rights where he investigated human rights conditions in GA and AL prisons, jails, and court systems. James left the SCHR in 2009 to study civil rights law at the Georgetown University Law Center. After graduating, James moved to the Bay Area where he worked with the Frisco 500 before joining APTP's Black Leadership Committee and assuming the role of Policy Director. For two-years, James worked as the Policy Director for St. James Infirmary, a peer-based occupational health and safety clinic for sex workers of all genders.

**Jay Kim** is the Co-Deputy Director at the East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC). As a Co-Founder and Co-Director of Common Law, a non-profit organization in New York City that supported community organizing efforts through legal education and legal assistance, Jay helped grow a volunteer-run start-up to a fully funded organization with innovative programming. For over seven years, Jay defended organized street vendors against excessive fines and administrative violations; represented low-income tenants in the Lower East Side fighting eviction and gentrification; and also created a foreclosure defense legal clinic for pro se homeowners. Employing a combination of direct representation, strategic direct action support, and intensive political and legal education, Jay developed a robust model for community lawyering with grassroots partners.

**John Viola** is a direct actionist turned criminal defense attorney, teacher at San Francisco State University; former staff attorney for the Coalition on Homelessness, and current steering committee member for the NLG Demonstrations Committee. His private practice focuses on mass-defense with over twenty years experience in demonstrations support. He provides legal support for the most visible social movements of our time and defended people in the largest mass-arrests and prosecutions. As a lawyer and academic his interests are social change, civil rights, environmental and economic justice, and intervention in government programs that target political beliefs, activities, or associations.

**Judith Mirkinson** is a long-time women's and human rights activist. She is a founding member of GABRIELA Network and Women Against Imperialism. She has spent decades doing international solidarity work including that with the Philippines and Puerto Rico. Most recently she is the co-author of the 2019 National Lawyers Guild report: The Lasalin Massacre and the Human Rights Crisis in Haiti. Judith is also active in the work for the freedom of political prisoners. She is a former president of the SF/Bay Area Chapter of the NLG and current president of the "Comfort Women" Justice Coalition.

**Leila Sayed-Taha**, Staff attorney with Arab Resource & Organizing Center, on the Board of the NLG-SFBA Chapter and on the Steering Committee for the NLG-SFBA Immigration Justice Committee. For the past decade, Leila has been active on issues pertaining to women empowerment, immigration, civil liberties and national security. She has worked with refugee and immigrant communities in the Middle East, the United Kingdom and the southwest side of Chicago, where she was previously based. She holds an LLM in International Human Rights Law and Criminal Justice from DePaul University.

**Lina García-Schmidt** came to the National Lawyers Guild through her involvement in an autonomous, volunteer-run support effort at Santa Rita Jail which continues to provide free food, phone calls, housing resources, and transportation to BART. When in 2019 prisoners in Santa Rita Jail organized a work and hunger strike, the National Lawyers Guild supported the creation of a Hotline for the jail, now coordinated by Lina and a team of volunteers. Prior to joining the Guild, Lina was a baker, musician, and legal visitor with the California Coalition for Women Prisoners.

**Liz Jackson** is a founding senior staff attorney for Palestine Legal. Her work focuses on building a network of movement lawyers to support activists organizing for Palestinian freedom, and related justice movements. She has organized for Palestinian liberation as a member of Students for Justice in Palestine, NLG, and as a Jewish solidarity activist. Liz is a graduate of the University of California Berkeley School of Law. Prior to law school, Liz organized with immigrant communities in Massachusetts to build power.

**nuri nusrat** has 6 years of experience in restorative justice and over 15 years supporting those impacted by the criminal legal system. She's trained people in circle process and restorative community conferencing models and has co-facilitated direct dialogues about harm, accountability, and support. nuri's parents were both child sexual abuse survivors, amongst many other identities, including fiercely loving and often hilarious parents. This motivates her to create opportunities that her parents didn't have-for communities to work together to acknowledge harm, seek accountability without shaming, and to support those impacted and each other. She cares deeply for all those who have experienced, done, and been affected by harm.

**Rhonda Ramiro** has been active in the movement for National Democracy in the Philippines since the 1990s. Rhonda was a founder of BAYAN-USA in 2005, establishing the first overseas chapter of the Philippines-based Bagong Alyansang Makabayan ("New Patriotic Alliance" or BAYAN for short), a nationwide, multi-sectoral alliance of over a thousand grassroots peoples' organizations in the Philippines, fighting for national and social liberation. Rhonda is currently the Chair of BAYAN-USA, as well as member of the International Coordinating Committee of the International League of Peoples' Struggle and the secretariat of the Resist US-Led War Movement.

**Sara Kershner** – After her father tested positive for HIV, Sara became involved in ACT-UP and started a life-long commitment to social justice activism and organizing. Sara has a background in reducing drug-related harm, transformative justice, prisoner solidarity and anti-racist organizing. She was part of building two youth centers – Youth Uprising in East Oakland and RYSE Center in Richmond. Sara has been involved in the NLG-SFBA for over a decade as a Board member and legal worker. She's a founder of the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network and GenerationFIVE (an organization committed to preventing and responding to child sexual abuse through transformative justice approaches). Sara is a queer mother of a six-year old.

**Stephany Arzaga** graduated from Golden Gate University School of Law in May of 2016 with experience in many fields of social justice work. Born and raised in the border town of El Paso, Texas, she discovered her passion for immigrant rights and justice at a young age. She has pursued her passion for immigration justice through internships and staff attorney positions at various non-profit organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area. Stephany is a Senior Staff Attorney at Legal Services for Children (LSC) and she is the Co-Lead of the of their Detained Immigrant Children's Project (DICP) representing youth in immigration detention. As part of the Detained Immigrant Children's Project at LSC, Stephany assists and represents youth who are currently detained by immigration in youth detention facilities located in the San Francisco Bay Area as well as youth in the community who were formerly detained.

