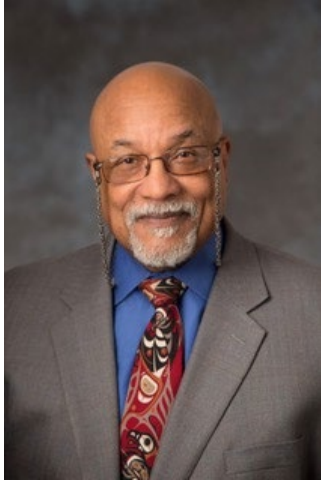


Washington State Minority and Justice Commission Supreme Court Symposium
A Legacy of Harm: Examining the Impacts of Our Sentencing Paradigm

Speaker Biographies

Judge Wesley Saint Clair (ret.)

Chair, Washington Sentencing Guidelines Commission



Judge J. Wesley Saint Clair boasts a diverse legal career spanning both prosecution and defense. After graduating from law school, he began as a prosecutor in King County before opening a private practice specializing in criminal defense. In 1991, his career transitioned to the judiciary, starting with a King County District Court judgeship. He steadily rose through the ranks, becoming Presiding Judge for the District Court, then moving to the Superior Court. Judge Saint Clair later took on the challenge of reforming the Juvenile Court system, serving as Chief Juvenile Judge until his retirement in 2019. Since then, he has remained active in the legal realm, currently chairing the Sentencing

Guidelines Commission and contributing to criminal justice reform efforts. Beyond official roles, Judge Saint Clair is a dedicated advocate for restorative justice practices, which is evident in his board leadership of a relevant non-profit and his work as a consultant. Throughout his career, Judge Saint Clair has garnered numerous accolades for his work, including recognition for his leadership in drug courts and his commitment to humanitarian ideals.

Katherine Beckett, Ph.D.

University of Washington



Katherine Beckett is Chair and Professor in the Department of Law, Societies, and Justice and S. Frank Miyamoto Professor of Sociology at the University of Washington. She is also a faculty associate and steering committee member of the University of Washington's Center for Human Rights. Professor Beckett's research analyzes the causes and consequences of criminal legal changes and penal practices. Her research projects have explored the

Speaker Biographies

consequences of criminal justice expansion for social inequality, the role of race in drug law enforcement and the administration of the death penalty in Washington State, the assessment of fees and fines, the transformation of urban social control practices in the United States, the proliferation of long and life sentences, and the politics of urban disorder. She is the author of numerous articles and four books on these topics. Her most recent book, *Ending Mass Incarceration*, was published by Oxford University Press in 2021.

Heather D. Evans, Ph.D.
University of Washington



Heather D. Evans is a socio-legal scholar who focuses on the ways in which institutions such as the law, higher education, and medicine can constrain or enable marginalized populations. She has conducted statistical analyses, ethnographic fieldwork, and evaluation research. Heather's current work is in the field of Critical Disability Studies examining disclosure, identity management, and workplace accommodations among people with physical, mental, and sensory differences that are not readily apparent. She is also conducting research testing ways to dismantle ableism and foster disability allyship through curricular interventions in post-secondary education and medical education and training. Heather is committed to community-engaged research and does consulting work for local social justice organizations, including examining racial disparities within the criminal justice system.

Heather earned a Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Washington and is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine at UW. Heather also serves as the Director of the UW Disability Studies Program and is the Research Director for the Northwest ADA Center.

Speaker Biographies

Emily Knaphus-Soran, Ph.D. *University of Washington*



Emily Knaphus-Soran is the owner and principal researcher at EKS Evaluation Consulting and a senior research scientist and affiliate assistant professor of sociology at the University of Washington. Emily received a PhD in sociology from the University of Washington with a minor in social statistics and graduate certificate in comparative law and society studies. Emily has conducted research on the dynamics of mass incarceration, including racial disparities, policy complexities, and intergenerational consequences.

Much of her current work focuses on the evaluation of efforts to reduce reliance on the criminal legal system to address problems stemming from unmet behavioral health needs.

Michele E. Storms *Executive Director, ACLU-WA*



Michele E. Storms is the Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Washington (ACLU of Washington), former Deputy Director of the ACLU of Washington, and previous Assistant Dean for Public Service and executive director of the William H. Gates Public Service Law program at the University of Washington School of Law. Preceding those roles, she served as a statewide advocacy coordinator first at Columbia Legal Services and later at the Northwest Justice Project where over a combined five-year period she coordinated civil

legal aid advocacy in the areas of family law, youth and education, housing, elder law, Native American and right to counsel issues. She was also previously on faculty at the University of Washington School of Law where she founded what is now the Child and Youth Advocacy Clinic and taught several other courses

Speaker Biographies

In addition to her service on numerous boards and guilds both locally and nationally, Michele served on the Washington State Access to Justice Board for six years and the board of One America. Michele is concerned with equity and justice for all and has dedicated her professional and personal attention to access to justice, preservation of freedom and democracy for all and ensuring that all humxns safely reside in the “circle of human concern.”

Alexis Hale

Justice for Girls

Justice for Girls is a statewide nonprofit that seeks to elevate girl* and gender-expansive youth voice through advocacy and training. jfgcoalition.org

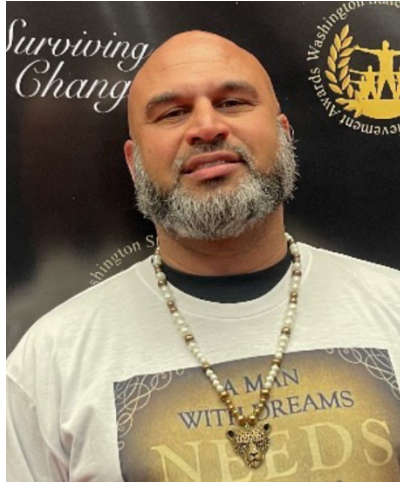
Alexis (*she/her*) is currently a resident at Echo Glen. She is also a licensed cosmetologist and is pursuing a degree in cultural anthropology. Alexis is a survivor of abuse and intergenerational trauma. Since being incarcerated, Alexis has dedicated her time to working through her trauma and doing what is needed to heal from what she has been through. Because she has lived experience, she uses it to advocate for youth and individuals who have been silenced, suppressed and misunderstood. She not only intends to be a voice for them but strives to provide them the opportunities to regain their voice for themselves.

Alexis believes that hurt people hurt people and in order to be a part of stopping the problems that we have in society we need to make sure we are not a part of them. She is most passionate about social issues such as preventing domestic violence and sexual abuse. While incarcerated, Alexis has testified on legislation and continues to work on advocacy that not only impacts incarcerated individuals but also focuses on restorative justice, personal accountability and equality for women in the legal system. Alexis is native to New Mexico and hopes to one day return. She enjoys playing softball and plans to travel later in life.

Speaker Biographies

Eugene Youngblood

Look 2 Justice



Eugene Youngblood is a remarkable individual whose life story is one of redemption, transformation, and healing. His journey began in 1991, when he was arrested at the age of 18 and subsequently sentenced to spend the rest of his life in prison. Despite the bleak circumstances of his incarceration, Youngblood remained determined to turn his life around and make a positive impact on his community inside of prison. While serving time, Youngblood became involved with the BPC Black prisoners caucus in 1993.

Through this organization, he discovered a sense of purpose, self-worth, and belonging, eventually becoming an integral part of the BPC community. In 2001, he was invited to join the leadership committee, and since then, he has dedicated his time, effort, and energy to various initiatives and projects on behalf of the BPC community.

Today, Youngblood holds the title of court support advocacy coordinator, a position that reflects his deep commitment to supporting individuals who are going back to court to be resentenced or face other legal challenges. He also helps to lead the many trainings and workshops on behalf of the BPC, he has consulted with lawmakers and academics, given speeches and lectures to students, and presented to law offices, both criminal defense and prosecution. His efforts have helped further their understanding of the criminal legal system as he advocates for change, reform, and healing within the criminal legal system. His tireless work within the BPC community and his advocacy for legal reform have made a real difference in the lives of countless individuals who have been impacted by the criminal legal system. Through his efforts, Youngblood has shown that it is possible to overcome past mistakes but also use them as a source of motivation to make positive change in the world.

Speaker Biographies

La'Keisha "KeWee" Roselle *The Black Rose Collective*



La'Keisha "KeWee" Roselle is a member of Black Prisoners Caucus Community Group and does her community work through the BPCCG, Freedom Project WA as a Community CARE Coordinator, and Liberation Scholars as a Liberation Reintegration Navigator for the Evergreen Prison Education Project at The Evergreen State College. La'Keisha is a Tacoma, WA, native and a 2020 Evergreen State College Tacoma campus graduate. She is an alumni for the Freedom Project of Puget Sound (FEPPS) and The Womxns Village, and has helped to create a reintegration curriculum for incarcerated youth and

adults. La'Keisha is a liberation activist, an advocate for education, anti-oppression and for legally liberated individuals. La'Keisha believes in the power of storytelling in order to change oppressive systems and is passionate about mass liberation, healing, and bringing opportunities to those most harmed by dominant norms and systems in her community.

Judge André M. Peñalver *Pierce County Superior Court*



André Peñalver is a Pierce County Superior Court Judge. Prior to joining the bench in 2021, Peñalver practiced civil litigation in Tacoma at Gordon Thomas Honeywell and in Yakima at Stokes Lawrence. From 2015 to 2021, he served as a federal prosecutor in Tacoma. Currently, Peñalver is a member of the Minority and Justice Commission and co-chair of the Equality and Fairness Committee of the Superior Court Judges Association.

The Minority and Justice Commission would like to extend a special thanks to all those who participated in the planning and execution of this program. This event could not have happened without the generous support of our volunteers.

2024 Supreme Court Symposium Planning Committee:

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