

# Celebrate 30 YEARS

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## 2022 Martin Luther King, Jr. Summer Internship & Fellowship Program Summer 2022 Newsletter



*"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."*

*Letter from Birmingham Jail, April 16, 1963*

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Pennsylvania  
**Legal Aid** Network





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## **CELEBRATING 30 YEARS!**

It is truly remarkable to be celebrating the 30th anniversary of PLAN's Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK, Jr.) Summer Internship Program. The program was conceived at a time when today's discussions of racial equity and justice were – as Dr. King might put it – merely a “dream.” The program was created through the efforts of five Black women: Edie Benson, Carolyn Johnson, Debi Johnson, Linda Renick, and Phyllis Stevens. Fondly known as the “Founding Mothers,” these women recognized the need to create a PLAN diversity pipeline. They felt it was important for PLAN attorneys to be more representative of the client population they serve, a majority diverse population. These women worked alongside members of the PLAN and client community, including Mrs. Louise Brookins, to convince funders to provide funding to support the MLK, Jr. Summer Internship Program. Since the program's inception in 1991, 402 law students have participated in the program.

In 2003, an evaluation of the MLK, Jr. Summer Internship Program revealed that while the program was successful, its full potential had yet to be realized. In response, PLAN created the MLK, Jr. Fellowship Program in 2004. To date, PLAN has hired a total of 29 MLK, Jr. Fellows, 12 of whom remain employed by PLAN. While the others may have moved on from the PLAN network, many remain committed to public interest work. Please see page 27 to learn more about the MLK, Jr. Fellowship Program and to hear from our current Fellows.

In PLAN's ongoing commitment to the success of its MLK, Jr. Programming and expansion of its diversity efforts throughout the network, PLAN, Inc. recently announced Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith, Esquire as PLAN's first Director of Diversity, Equity, Including, and Belonging (DEIB). Arlene, a former MLK, Jr. Intern, Class of 2005, is the first woman of color to hold a senior leadership role at PLAN, Inc. Shortly thereafter, the PLAN Board of Directors appointed Jayme Cassidy, Esquire, also a woman of color, as the next Executive Director of PLAN, Inc.



As PLAN Director of DEIB, Arlene will continue to oversee the MLK, Jr. Programming and support PLAN Affinity Groups while concentrating on supporting PLAN, Inc. and PLAN network programs in developing a vision and strategy around incorporating DEIB in all parts of the network's culture and operations, including hiring, retention, supervision, data collection and analysis, advocacy, and communication. Another important part of her role will be to assist PLAN, Inc. and PLAN programs in assessing their current DEIB status and implementing inclusiveness processes that aim to increase and sustain diversity among PLAN staff at all levels.

As you can see, PLAN has come a long way over the past 30 years. We are pleased with our diversity efforts, but work remains to be done. The continued success of our MLK, Jr. Programs depends not only on those within the PLAN network, but our community partners, funders, donors, and you, our readers. If you'd like to help ensure our programs' continued success, please see the last page of this newsletter to donate.

As always, PLAN appreciates your continued support, and we hope you enjoy this special edition of our newsletter!

# A LOOK BACK AT 30 YEARS OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. INTERNS



1992 Stacie Barnes  
Christine Biancheria  
Jonathan Diego  
Arthur Gamble  
Lara Greco  
Peter Guadagnino  
Virginia Gutierrez  
Dariel Janerette  
Sharon López  
Donna Marshall  
Jacqueline Ware

1993 Lisa Bell  
Robert Chambers, Jr.  
Terrence Coles  
Erik Collazo  
James Fraser  
Amy M. Garner  
April D. Garrett  
Cheryl T. Harris  
Audrey Jordan  
Adriana Katzew  
Sharon Lawson-Davis  
Anthony P. Litwin  
Kimberly Merriweather  
Lisa Newman  
Maureen Olives  
Mark Prior  
Rhonda Redwood-Ray  
Benjamin Reyes  
Muriandra Ruffin  
Roderick Scott  
Leisa Sinclair-Vick  
Lydia Tate  
Chunping Shen  
Tonya Williams

1994 Kim Adams  
Farley Banks  
Marcia Burton  
Robert Cain III  
Ijaz Chaudhry  
Terence Coles  
Eric Domfe  
Amy Garner  
Julie Gulley  
Rene Johnson  
Jacqueline Lewis  
Karyn Lynn  
Christina Molitor-Monrea  
Lisa Newman  
Diem-Thy Nguyen  
Darnell Parker  
Carmen Rivera  
Muriandra Ruffin  
Ruth Ruggero Hughs

Shakura Sabur  
Sharee Sanders Gordon  
Willie M. Saunders  
Brenda Wiley  
Debra Williams  
Theresa Williams

1995 Ma'isha Lenore Amatullah Aziz  
Kathleen Chess  
Gailien Cosby  
Marcus Devine  
Natasha Dorcus  
Todd Drayton  
Angela George  
Karen Hamberlin  
Jeffery Hicks  
Sandra Jacques  
Pamela Janus  
Rene Johnson  
Min-Yen Jung  
Edward Lanza  
Emanuel "Manny" Oakes, Jr.  
Robert Rosenwald  
Marygrace Reese  
Tricia (McDermott) Thompson  
Rainie Thompson  
Eduok Uwah  
Felicia A. Wilcox  
Brenda Lee Wiley  
Tony B. Wilson  
Catherine Williams-Frank  
Joseph Youngblood

1996 Ma'isha Lenore Amatullah Aziz  
Christopher Brown  
Gailien Cosby  
Karyn (Plivelic) Coy  
Natasha Dorcus  
Karen R. Edsell  
Kelli Ford  
Charlema Grant  
Leola M. Hardy  
Schaun Henry  
Sandra L. Jacques  
David Q. Jones  
Tanique Lee  
Jacqueline Marrast-Simpson  
Charles Moore  
Teleah (Scott) Moore  
Marsha Murray  
Stacy Y. Perry  
Garline Octobre  
James Schultz  
Megan Tepper  
Angela D. Terry



1997 Laura Austin  
Christine A. Bailey  
Bryan K. Barts  
Christine Taylor Brann  
Anthony Brown  
Dakota Byfield  
John DeSantis  
Kia D. Floyd  
Melvin Frye, Jr.  
Roxanne Garner  
Jacqueline Marrast-Simpson  
Harold Yamil Mendez  
Nabi Musoke  
Akunna Nwachuku  
Khoi Pham  
Saulo Santiago  
Donna Marie Sweeney  
Baye Wilson

1998 Leslie Affleck  
Charlene Alexander  
Pierre Almonacy  
Lindiwe Ashton  
Y. Madeline Bach Nguyen  
Anupam R. Biswas  
Matthew Bomberger  
Roger Louis Crawford  
Rosemarie Davis  
Tama Denson  
Michael D. Grace  
Roopal Gupta  
Kristen Harris  
Lavinia Jones  
Leslie Faith Jones  
Shanicka Kennedy  
Karen Koenigsberg  
Crystal L. Latimer  
David Lopez  
Desmond M. McCallum  
Kenneth Muhammad  
Jason Willis

1999 Daniel Butz  
Winnie W. Chow  
Norman M. De Moose  
Sean Dougherty  
Bernadette S. Finch  
Jennifer A. Ford  
Jerrion (Benjamin) Forrester  
Jasroop Gill-Gakhal  
Raquel Gomes Dinis  
Doreen (Prescott) Grant  
Cara Gruszecki-Smalley  
Kristen Harris  
Utpal Inamdar  
Shanicka Kennedy

Byung-Chan "Ted" Moon  
Nellita S. Moore  
Oluseyi "Seyi" Olubadewo Page  
Alicia Tracey-Ann Simpson  
Jennifer A. Wentzel  
Danielle S. Williams

2000 Zoya Bailey  
Tabatha Castro  
Stuart Crichton  
Laurel Fedak  
Cessalie V. Harris  
Amy (Tuckett) Howell  
David Johnston  
Jaime M. Kulick  
Kimberly Loyd  
Robin C. Marable  
David A. Miller  
M. Albert Naranjo  
Michelle Smith  
Gertrude "Trudy" Strassburger  
Jennifer (LaBelle) Traxler  
Noah Weisberg  
Helena Wooden-Aguilar

2001 Philip B. Balmaseda II  
Jean Marie Bandish  
Donna (Johnson) Bullock  
Otis L. Bullock, Jr.  
Leonardo David Cuello  
Kristi Jasberg Robinson  
Erik Kulick  
William Corey McCaskill  
Gregory Miller  
Denita Neal  
Samantha Phillips  
Samuel L. Ruprecht  
Mario Alvarez Serrano  
Sean Shultz  
Michelle L. Smith  
Frankie Walker  
Lena Wang

2002 Eugenia Amador  
Jean Marie Bandish  
Tsedey Berhanu  
Leonardo David Cuello  
Pawnee Davis  
Christopher J. Harris  
Cindy S. Huang  
Mari Kargbo  
Adele McDonald  
Gregory Dion Miller  
Cornell Mimms  
America "Amy" Nieves-Febres  
Abena Osei

Teresa M. Rodriguez  
Terryl Simeina  
James Snowden  
Melissa Stampler Alberts

2003 Scott Brown  
Nnenna Ezekoye  
Michele (Miller) Freeman  
O. Kemi Laniya  
Abena Osei  
Teresa Rodriguez  
Ameer Shaikh  
JaCina Stanton-Buttrom  
Mandla Sukati  
Shaleeta Washington

2004 Ishamael P. Alejo  
Zarinah Akbar  
Rafiah (Davis) Gilliam  
Lynval G. Gray  
Claudia (Junghwa) Kim  
Jocelyn Mallory  
Ernest Lee Poland  
Candace Ragin  
Jacob T. Stipe  
Dionne Wiggins

2005 Zarinah Akbar  
Arnold Bituin  
Kathryn (Jones) Brown  
Daniel Graham  
Samara Gomez  
Lynval G. Gray  
Autumn Leah Johnson  
Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith  
Brian Pulito  
Valente Rodriguez  
Nexus U. Sea  
Isadora Velazquez

2006 Zarinah Akbar  
Arnold Bituin  
Tahira M. Bland  
Tighe Burns  
Kristyan Rose Gilmore  
Sipi (Shubhra) Gupta  
Jeffry T. Johnson  
Alma Magana  
Christina M. Matthewson  
Jesse A. Rodriguez  
Suzanne Sekutowski Paryse  
Trevor Taylor

2007 Bernardo Carbajal  
Jacqueline Castaneda  
Taisha Chambers

Karen Fernandez  
Vanessa Yvette Flores Arrison  
Joseph Palmerson  
Seema Pereira-Palmerson  
Rasheedah Phillips  
Mark James Reccek  
Justin P. Schantz

2008 Mukta Agrawal  
Sakeenah S. El-Amin  
Karen Fernandez  
Amanda Franzen  
Benjamin Haire  
Emalohi L. Iruobe  
Cherie Long-Hardin  
Tedeisha Rowe  
Sheldon Smith  
Alejandro Ventura  
Truniece White

2009 Abraham Cepeda  
Shamika N. Creech  
Sherrell L. Dandy  
Emalohi L. Iruobe  
Jenell Johnson  
Martha P. Mosquera  
Whitney D. Pryor  
Danielle Dionne Owens  
Chenelle Rollins  
Ben Salehi  
Laticia Spears

2010 Hannah Akintoye  
Abraham Cepeda  
Hughens Dolisca  
Paul Hajjar  
Toni Holness  
Marilyn Le Lodico  
Yajuan Lu  
Michael P. Pest  
Jennifer Rosa Perez  
Jeffery "Jay" Young, Jr.

2011 Deborah O. Babalola  
Romil Devang Amin  
Jing Geng  
Obi Ikeme  
Martin Enrique Klein  
Rodlena I. Sales  
David N. Schley  
Sheila Vennel O'Rourke  
Vestonia M. Viddy  
Neha Yadav Chiaramonte  
Ashley N. Young

2012 Steven Budd  
Daniel C. Conlon  
Berneta Hayes  
Olivette Joseph  
Olanrewaju "Lanre" O. Kukoyi  
Kendahl Lester  
Yvelisse Pelotte  
Paul Remy  
Bryce Robertson  
Alyce Thompson

2013 Melaniesha Abernathy  
Chukwudi Erechukwu  
Jennifer Kye  
Paulo Martinez  
Stephen I. McLendon  
Khara Moody  
Yvelisse Pelotte  
Michelle Santos-Light  
Wesley S. Speary

2014 Krystal Aquino  
Chukwudi Erechukwu  
Mingjie Gan  
Casey L. Martinez  
Angel Murphy  
Cana Noel  
Wesley S. Speary  
Renu Urvashi Sagreiya  
Nailah W. Williams

2015 Alonso Arguedas  
James Baker  
Addie K. Brice  
Redeate Dessalegn  
Ashley Harris  
M. Zane Johnson  
Christopher Nock  
Cana Noel  
Krystin Paul  
Lanique Roberts

2016 Shahirah Brown  
Hermoinne Cadet  
Peter Claasen  
Elizabeth Dennis  
Taylor Haga  
Rondell Jordan  
Ariel N. Oliver  
Zoe Reyes  
Burak Serbetci  
Liam Thomas  
Chandra E. Ulinfin

2017 Lauren (Wilmer) Atkinson  
Chantel Briggs  
John Sebree Harris  
Emma Jobinpicard  
Marissa LaWall  
Jessyca (Byssainthe) McCarl  
Supriya Phillips  
Deokhee Ryu  
Liam Thomas  
Chandra E. Ulinfin  
Elizabeth Wolfe

2018 Giovanna Brackbill  
Glory Brown  
Daniel Cortes  
Queenette Echefu  
Sara Planthaber  
Supriya Phillips  
Alexandra Robinson  
John Ukenye  
Juliana Vergara  
Cykhira N. Walton

2019 Shalisa J. Brunson  
Amy Chin-Arroyo  
Abraham N. Doe  
Marcus Gaines  
Sierra Lyles  
Juliana Muhaj  
Gabriella D. Reber  
Alexandra J. Robinson  
Jason Sullivan-Halpern  
Santana K. Velez

2020 Kendra Barr  
Sharai Bryan  
Zane Gates  
Bingran Li  
Jessica Maharaj  
Juliana Muhaj  
Ashley Reyes  
Jason Sullivan-Halpern  
Gabrielle Tock  
Iman Woodyard

2021 Nicole Bennett  
Sharai Bryan  
MaLisa "Lisa" Dang  
Gobrielle Francis  
Kayla Gonzalez  
Brittany Griffin  
Madelyn Snyder  
Gabrielle Tock  
Cooper Townsend  
Octavia Williams

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Over the past 30 years, 402 MLK, Jr. interns have graced the halls of our PLAN program offices across the state, in order to gain practical lawyering experience and to assist in providing access to justice for those who need it the most. Join us as we catch up with some of our past interns as they reminisce about their experiences and learn more about how their internships impacted their careers today.

### SHARON LÓPEZ, ESQ.

#### THEN

Host Program:  
Central Pennsylvania  
Legal Services

Law School:  
Widener University  
Commonwealth Law  
School, Class of 1993



CLASS OF 1992

#### NOW

Partner,  
Triqueta Law

Sharon was the first  
MLK, Jr. intern hired by  
PLAN & the first Latina  
Pennsylvania Bar  
Association President!

The fondest memory of my internship experience was developing friendships with the lawyers and paralegals in the program like Michael Goldberg, Jim Kearney, Paul Sternberg, Geisha Cruz, Susan Danforth.

During my time as an MLK, Jr. Intern, I learned that advocacy was what I was meant to do. Previously, I thought I wanted to work in public policy development to make big changes for poor people and victims of discrimination and abuse. After I started at Central Pennsylvania Legal Services (now known as PLAN), I knew within a week that my calling was to work as an advocate.

This internship program is why I understand the value of pro bono work. It is why I understand the value of legal services work. I understand the struggles of poor people, that it is more likely systemic than personal. That understanding helps me to have more understanding to advocate for change on the political level with other organizations and lawyers.

My message for future MLK, Jr. Interns is to listen to your clients tell their stories of their lives. It is easy to say we would not make the same choices if we were in that position, but the choices are limited and challenging. Poor people do not get many breaks and ironically people with means get more forgiveness and opportunities than poor people. Consider what you can do to change the system that keeps them locked in their situation and form alliances with public interest advocates to make changes.

## MAUREEN OLIVES, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
North Penn Legal Services

Law School:  
University of Buffalo School  
of Law, Class of 1994



### NOW

Managing Attorney,  
Philadelphia Legal  
Assistance

CLASS OF 1993

The fondest memory of my internship experience was meeting Anita Santos! Us interns had a group learning opportunity – I think we were going to role play the representation of an unemployment compensation client. Anita was our group coach. She has now been my colleague and friend for many years. I learned from her then, and now I learn from her everyday – and am truly privileged to be part of her leadership team.

My MLK, Jr. Internship provided a paid internship, which was like finding a needle in a haystack. I didn't have any ability to fund an internship through work study or other means and couldn't go without any pay for the summer. The internship also introduced me to the REALITY of working with vulnerable populations, not some silly misguided fantasy that I think I was carrying around at that time. I still remember one of the first people I met doing an intake. I had so much to learn about compassion, humility, privilege, poverty, about race, class, power, systems. My MLK, Jr. Internship was really a huge part of starting that journey – one that continues to this day. I am beyond grateful for the opportunity and to be part of this community.

## SCHAUN HENRY, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
Legal Services, Inc.

Law School:  
Penn State Dickinson Law  
School, Class of 1997



### NOW

Member, Labor and  
Employment Group,  
McNees, Willace & Nurick, LLC

CLASS OF 1996

During my time as an MLK, Jr. Intern, I assisted women to obtain Protection From Abuse Orders which was very rewarding. The MLK, Jr. Internship Program is an experience that contributed greatly to my growth as an attorney. Trials are less daunting when it's the first real work that you've ever experienced. PLAN, you do a lot of great work that helps people. Please know that people appreciate you and all that you do.



## DR. OLUSEYI "SEYI" OLUBADEWO PAGE

### THEN

Host Program:  
Lehigh Valley Legal Services

Law School:  
Villanova University  
Charles Widger School of Law,  
Class of 2004



### NOW

Clinical Psychologist,  
Sterling Medical/United  
States Coast Guard

CLASS OF 1999

My participation in the MLK, Jr. Internship Program influenced me by teaching me how to search for information and how to engage with government organizations and private entities to get the information I need to advocate for clients. I learned that the information you need is out there, you just have to find it. I've used this seminal lesson in all my career pursuits since then, from being a transactional attorney to conflict resolution fellow to business owner to college professor to forensic/clinical psychologist. This has impacted my life overall in that I don't see any goal or desire as out of reach, because the information is out there somewhere, and I am well versed in advocating for myself or others to get it and get things done.

## DONNA BULLOCK, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
Community  
Legal Services

Law School:  
Temple University James  
Beasley School of Law,  
Class of 2003



### NOW

Pennsylvania  
State Representative,  
195th District

CLASS OF 2001

Fun Fact! Donna and  
her husband, Otis, met  
during their MLK, Jr.  
Internships.

During my time as an intern at Community Legal Services. I gained a working knowledge of the public interest sector in Philadelphia. Interns had a brown bag lunch series every Friday with the Philadelphia Bar Association and all the different public interest agencies in the city. These series were very informative and gave me a thorough introduction to the landscape and the many ways a public interest career may take shape. My participation in the MLK, Jr. Program formed my interest in influencing policy. Community Legal Services has a strong commitment to going beyond individual cases, to looking at how as lawyers we can make systemic change that benefits the public at large. I found that fascinating and it encouraged me to look at how lawyers working in government inform and draft legislation and policy.

## TERESA RODRIGUEZ, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
Justice At Work (formerly  
Friends of Farmworkers)

Law School:  
Temple University James  
Beasley School of Law, Class  
of 2004



### NOW

Hearing Officer,  
Pennsylvania Judiciary,  
Philadelphia Municipal Court

### CLASS OF 2002 & 2003

During my time as an MLK, Jr. Intern, Rhodia Thomas and Cynthia Newcomer were my liaisons with the MLK program and, ultimately, we became very dear friends. Although I didn't necessarily love going to Harrisburg for the orientation training, I loved coming back as a presenter for the employment law meetings. The camaraderie with other interns and leadership from participating legal services was invaluable in shaping me as a professional and advocate. My message for future MLK, Jr. Interns is to enjoy this time and serve your clients with respect and with the utmost preparation. Learn as much about the law as you do about compassion. It will be a pivotal time to hone your legal skills while serving those that need our assistance the most.

## SHALEETA WASHINGTON, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
MidPenn Legal Services

Law School:  
Penn State Dickinson Law  
School, Class of 2005



### NOW

Counsel,  
Highmark, Inc.

### CLASS OF 2003

I have so many fond memories from my experience at MidPenn (MPLS), but I really enjoyed engaging with the clients, and doing my best to assist with their needs. During my time at MPLS, I gained more experience and valuable skills in those ten weeks than I probably did in all three years of law school – from learning how to draft and file complaints and other legal pleadings, to negotiations, and just generally learning about areas of the law that really affect people on a day-to-day basis. My participation in the MLK, Jr. Internship Program has made me appreciate the work of PLAN staff and the importance of helping others in need as much as possible, something I continue to do by being active in the community and providing pro bono services. Thank you PLAN for all that you do for the community and for providing me with the opportunity to learn so much during my internship. I truly value the time I spent at MPLS and wouldn't have traded my experience there for anything. In fact, I continued working at MPLS beyond the MLK, Jr. Internship program, as I interned there throughout the academic year.

## DIONNE WIGGINS, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
Philadelphia Legal Assistance

Law School:  
Widener University  
Commonwealth Law School,  
Class of 2006



### NOW

Vice President of People &  
Culture,  
American Jewish World  
Services

CLASS OF 2004

This MLK, Jr. Summer Internship Program influenced my personal and professional life in many ways. Having the opportunity to contribute to Dr. King's legacy of fighting for humanitarian rights by participating in this program was an absolute honor. The pursuit of life, liberty, happiness, and justice are at the forefront of everything that I do for myself, my family, and for those who I encounter in my work. As a mother, I am an advocate for my children and everything that I do is to ensure that they are equipped with the tools necessary to be safe, successful, and to make their own positive impact in this world.

My message to PLAN is to keep doing impactful work and giving law students the opportunity to pick up the torch and carry the work forward. No matter what career you land in, the MLK, Jr. Internship Program helps to shape paths for everyone who participates. I'm grateful for Cynthia Newcomer, Samuel Milkes, Esq. and my friend and fellow law school alum, Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith, Esq. for ensuring that this program not only continues, but that it flourishes. I am extremely proud to be an MLK, Jr. Alum!

## AUTUMN JOHNSON, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
Neighborhood Legal Services

Law School:  
Widener University  
Commonwealth Law School,  
Class of 2007



### NOW

First Assistant Public Defender,  
Mercer County Public  
Defender Office

CLASS OF 2005

I gained invaluable court experience as a certified legal intern during my time as an MLK, Jr. Intern. My experience at PLAN solidified my desire to serve the low-income population in my community, something that I continue to do in the Public Defender's Office and by volunteering my time with non-profit community organizations. PLAN staff were supportive during my law school years and long after. PLAN helped make my career.

## BERNARDO CARBAJAL, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
North Penn Legal Services

Law School:  
Penn State Dickinson Law  
School, Class of 2008



### NOW

Attorney,  
Bernardo Carbajal Law  
Firm, P.L.L.C.

CLASS OF 2007

My fondest memory of my internship experience was learning from experienced attorneys and connecting with other MLK, Jr. Interns. I currently represent clients who are similarly situated as those served by PLAN. Thank you so much for allowing me to be a part of this unique program.

## TRUNIECE WHITE, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
MidPenn Legal Services

Law School:  
Widener University School  
of Law, Class of 2009



### NOW

Senior Law Clerk,  
Forfeiture Support  
Associates

CLASS OF 2008

The fondest memory of my internship experience was working with Steve Krone. It seemed like everybody knew him and he knew everybody. He was like an avenger for the poor. It was amazing. I truly enjoyed the legal experience I gained as an MLK, Jr. Intern. I can't even express how invaluable being in a courtroom and participating in trials during my internship helped me once I graduated from law school. I always wanted to use my law license to help people.

The MLK, Jr. Internship Program allowed me to see the various ways that I could help clients outside of the courtroom. Thank you PLAN for the opportunity and for the exposure to courts and legal issues that I could have never fathomed.

## ABRAHAM CEPEDA, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
Community Justice Project

Law School:  
Widener University  
Commonwealth School of  
Law, Class of 2011



### NOW

Managing Attorney,  
Cultura Law, LLC

CEO/Owner,  
Abe's Abstract, LLC  
Zade Abstract, LLC

CLASS OF 2009 & 2010

My fondest memory of my internship experience was Larry Norton pretending to fire me and an intern for stopping for Icees on our walk back to the office. My participation in the MLK, Jr. Summer Internship Program totally changed my legal plans. It is why I became an immigration attorney. Thank you PLAN for all that you do. You influenced my life in more ways than you will ever know. Special thanks to Cynthia, Larry, and Benita!

## HUGHENS DOLISCA, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
Neighborhood Legal Services

Law School:  
University of Pittsburgh  
School of Law, Class of 2012



### NOW

Counsel, Division of  
Enforcement,  
United States Securities and  
Exchange Commission

CLASS OF 2010

The MLK, Jr. Internship Program is a wonderful program. It was my first legal internship, and I did not know what to expect. I was placed at Neighborhood Legal Services in Pittsburgh. During my time as an intern, I worked with several other 1L and 2L law students. Together, we represented individuals in landlord tenant disputes. We formed a bond that summer and became great friends most of whom I remain in contact with twelve years later. I did not spend my summer simply drafting memos but represented individuals and made a real difference. I also gained an understanding of what it meant to be an attorney. To be really thoughtful about how I approach work with clients. I also learned to put my pencil and note pad down for a moment and just listen to clients to understand their situation and really consider how could I help them with their issues. This understanding remains with me today. I am truly grateful to have been chosen to be part of this program.



## RODLENA SALES, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
Neighborhood Legal Services

Law School:  
North Carolina Central  
University, Class of 2012



### NOW

Public Interest Program  
Manager,  
Philadelphia Bar Association

CLASS OF 2011

My first landlord tenant hearing was my fondest memory of my internship experience. Going into the hearing, I knew it was unlikely that my client would have a successful result. Ultimately, the landlord received possession of the apartment. However, despite the negative outcome, my client looked at me during the hearing and stated, "I am sure glad you were here with me today. Boy, we really shocked the landlord and the judge. Thanks for being here." It was at that moment I realized being a lawyer is more than the successes but also about giving a voice to those who may not have one without an attorney. My participation in the MLK, Jr. Internship Program influenced my choice to dedicate my legal professional career to the public. Prior to my internship, I was uncertain about a public interest legal career. However, after that summer, I knew that the public interest field was the right professional path for me. Choosing a professional career to serve others is a path of greatness. I know serving others isn't often considered very lucrative. But after eight years as a public interest attorney, the legal experience you develop and the people you help makes this path priceless. Thank you PLAN for choosing my application eleven years ago. I am especially grateful to Cynthia Newcomer who selected me as an intern in 2011 and as an MLK, Jr. Fellow in 2014. My experiences in both programs have been very instrumental in molding me into the public interest attorney that I am today.

## WESLEY SPEARY, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
Regional Housing  
Legal Services

Law School:  
University of  
Pittsburgh School of  
Law, Class of 2015



### NOW

Assistant Solicitor,  
Allegheny County  
Health Department

CLASS OF 2013 & 2014

My participation in the MLK, Jr. Internship Program laid the foundation for my future work. While I am not perfect, I strive to uphold the principles of equity and equality espoused by Dr. King and PLAN. I want to thank everyone at PLAN for their support and for the great opportunity.

## MINGJIE GAN, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
Pennsylvania Utility Law  
Project

Law School:  
Penn State Dickinson Law  
School, Class of 2016



### NOW

Deputy Judicial Clerk,  
Commonwealth Court of  
Pennsylvania

CLASS OF 2014

My participation in the MLK, Jr. Internship Program provided me with a good understanding of administrative law and proceedings, which I now practice at the Commonwealth Court. During my time as an MLK, Jr. Intern, I worked at the Pennsylvania Utility Law Project (PULP). I enjoyed traveling with PULP staff attorneys to Philadelphia and Pittsburgh to negotiate with utility companies for their rate change on behalf of low-income consumers. Utility law is now my favorite area. My law review article was influenced by my work at PULP. The topic was municipal utilities, a research topic I started when working with PULP and continued to work on throughout my law school years. Thank you PLAN for giving me such a tremendous experience. PLAN is doing very important work and bringing life impacts to thousands of people across the Commonwealth.

## M. ZANE JOHNSON, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
Legal Aid of Southeastern  
Pennsylvania

Law School:  
Temple University James  
Beasley School of Law,  
Class of 2016



### NOW

Managing Attorney,  
MZA Legal

CLASS OF 2015

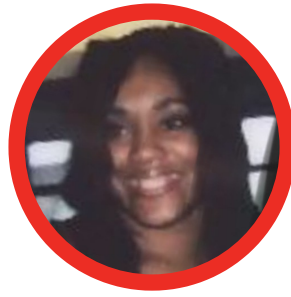
The MLK, Jr. Internship Program showed me just how wide the access to justice gap is for impoverished communities. During my time as an intern, I learned what a multifaceted role lawyers can play in bridging the gap. When it comes to community lawyering, one must be a true problem solver. Knowing the law is paramount, but sometimes people need help that extends beyond the scope of a lawyer's expertise. Even though it is not in the job description, a community lawyer makes it their responsibility to shepherd people closer to a solution. Thank you PLAN for the opportunity, and for continuing to offer it to law students who look like me.

## CHANDRA ULINFUN, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
Pennsylvania Health  
Law Project  
Regional Housing  
Legal Services

Law School:  
Suffolk University Law  
School, Class of 2018



### NOW

Attorney,  
American Tower  
Corporation

CLASS OF 2016 & 2017

My fondest memory from my internship experience was attending a healthcare conference. I learned about the medical services offered through Pennsylvania's Medical Assistance Program. This is a fond memory for me because I had the opportunity to discuss with and learn from members of the public about services. Participating in the Internship influenced my current work because I learned the importance of empathy. My internships taught me to listen to my clients, understand their situation, and attempt to resolve each problem to the best of my ability. The internship provided me with opportunities to learn new subject areas, such as utilities, and develop skills that I can use in both professional and personal settings. More so, I have met so many great people while working with the program. To each of the programs I interned with, thank you so much for all the opportunities.

## JOHN HARRIS, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
Legal Aid of Southeastern  
Pennsylvania

Law School:  
Widener University  
Commonwealth Law School,  
Class of 2018



### NOW

Owner and Managing  
Partner,  
Read Legal Law Firm

CLASS OF 2017

My fondest memory of my internship experience occurred at my first referee hearing. I said, "Objection, Your Honor," and felt like a real attorney. At that moment, opposing counsel shot a smirk back at me. I remember talking about that moment for a week. This was my first-time litigating, so I will never forget that moment. I still recall the feedback I received from my supervisor and still apply it to the present day. My participation in the internship program helped me to gain a greater sense of awareness on how impactful that I could be within the legal profession. I am a voice for communities that were rarely heard and often ignored. At my firm, I am not as rigid with my legal service price list because any assistance that can I provide goes a long way. Thank you PLAN for the opportunity to participate in the MLK, Jr. Internship Program. The experience and connections I've made are priceless. I still reach out to the contacts I made at PLAN for assistance on legal matters.



## DANIEL CORTES, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
Community Justice Project

Law School:  
Florida International  
University, Class of 2019



### NOW

Immigration Attorney,  
Community Justice Project

CLASS OF 2018

One of my most vivid memories as an MLK, Jr. Intern I remember was helping a client file for a Protection From Abuse Order in court and getting her through the process. My participation in the program not only gave me the opportunity to experience the work of non-profit attorneys but an appreciation of working with the immigrant community. I learned a lot about the complexities of immigration petitions and received significant client experience. PLAN is a great organization, and I am so thankful for the knowledge and support given to me by PLAN.

## ALEXANDRA ROBINSON, ESQ.

### THEN

Host Program:  
Pennsylvania Health Law Project  
Community Legal Services

Law School:  
Temple University James  
Beasley School of Law,  
Class of 2020



### NOW

Independence Foundation  
Public Interest Law  
Fellow/Staff Attorney,  
Legal Clinic for the Disabled

CLASS OF 2018 & 2019

I participated in the MLK, Jr. Summer Internship Program twice. My fondest memory of my experience occurred during my first summer at the Pennsylvania Health Law Project. At the start of my internship, I conducted intake interviews of medically fragile twin sisters. Their Managed Care Organization (MCO) drastically cut their home health care hours. I represented the sisters in their grievances against their MCO. Within a few hours of the grievances, I was notified that the MCO reversed its decision. It was my first opportunity to handle a case from start to finish and my first major win. My participation in the MLK, Jr. Program strengthened my passion for public interest work. Thank you PLAN for building the foundation of my legal career. Thank you for giving me two opportunities to serve our community.

## GABRIELLE TOCK, JD

### THEN

Host Program:  
Community Justice Project  
MidPenn Legal Services

Law School:  
Penn State Law,  
Class of 2022



### NOW

Law Clerk,  
North Penn Legal Services

CLASS OF 2020 & 2021

I have had the privilege to work with four PLAN programs. At MidPenn Legal Services, I was especially happy to be a part of a team that was committed to my personal and professional growth. My MLK, Jr. internships (I completed two) helped me build a resume that attracted staff attorney job offers in three states. Ultimately, I accepted a staff attorney position with North Penn Legal Services, which I will assume full-time in August 2022. To my mentors and friends throughout the network: your work and professional guidance has been invaluable to my own career and more importantly to the communities you support. I am proud to continue my legal aid journey as part of the PLAN fold.

## SHARAI BRYAN, JD

### THEN

Host Program:  
Community Legal Services  
Pennsylvania Health Law Project

Law School:  
Penn State Law, Class of  
2022



### NOW

Judicial Clerk,  
Prince George's County Circuit  
Court, 7th Judicial Circuit

CLASS OF 2020 & 2021

My first MLK, Jr. Internship reminded me of why I wanted to become an attorney: to provide marginalized families access to equitable justice and advance anti-poverty legal initiatives in disenfranchised communities. It was an invaluable experience to intern at two legal aid organizations where I received experiential knowledge and strength-based mentorship. Through both of my internship experiences, I gained the confidence to become a public interest attorney, and I have a clearer vision of how I will be a change agent that makes a tangible impact in public interest law to provide children and families access to justice. My MLK, Jr. internship allowed me to meet and be mentored by Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith! As a Black Caribbean-American Woman, meeting Arlene, who is a Black Caribbean-American Woman, was an answer to my prayer. I had not met a black female attorney before meeting Arlene and her words of wisdom and encouragement have been invaluable.

# THANK YOU

The success of the MLK, Jr. Summer Internship Program is due, in part, to our volunteer trainers. Over the years, many PLAN attorneys, advocates, and community partners have imparted their wisdom to our interns and laid the foundation for future social justice-driven work. On behalf of PLAN, Inc. Board and staff, we thank you for your commitment to our internship program.

Peter Alexander  
Alfred Azen  
Arlene Balka  
Diana Baquero  
Edith Benson  
Giovanna Brackbill  
Louise Brookins  
Gloria Browne  
Tighe Burns  
Patrick Cicero  
Jillian Copeland  
Ryan Cummins  
Cynthia Witman Daley  
Karen Detamore  
Pam Fleck  
Ashley Gabrielle  
David Gates  
Harry Geller  
Julie George  
Thelma Grady  
Jamie Gullen  
Sipi Gupta  
Gonzella Hales  
Lauren Hartley  
Arthur Haywood  
Hon. Vincent Hughes  
Carolyn Johnson  
Debi Johnson  
Orient Johnson, Jr.  
Judy Jones  
Margaret Jones  
Stephen Krone  
Max Laun  
Yvette Long  
Angus Love  
Otto Lukert  
Marielle Macher  
Peter Macky  
Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith  
Elizabeth Marx  
Nick Matash

Rochelle McCain  
William McLaughlin  
Benita Mejia  
Samuel Milkes  
Linda Morris  
Kadeem Morris  
Jane Muller-Peterson  
Cynthia Newcomer  
Colleen Normile  
Larry Norton  
Jane Nylund  
Ria Pereira  
Rachel Pinsker  
Joline Price  
Robert Racunas  
Matthew Rich  
Rep. David P. Richardson  
Teresa Rodriguez  
Phil Rosenthal  
Louis Rulli  
Anita Santos-Singh  
Mark Schwartz  
William Shuey  
Peg Simok  
Julia Simon-Mishel  
John Sweet  
Michelle Terry  
Rhodia Thomas  
Hon. John J. Thomas  
Edward Van Stevenson  
Karen Vaughn  
Shana Walter  
Linda Ware-Johnson  
Ernestine Watlington  
Laurie Wiest  
Marcus Williams  
Lisa Williams  
Harry Witte  
Su Ming Yeh  
Peter Zurflied

## **SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT: MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS**

Since its inception, these three women of color have overseen and successfully grown PLAN's MLK, Jr. Programming into nationally recognized and respected internship and fellowship programs. Please join us as we recognize these women for their tireless commitment to increasing diversity within the PLAN network.

**Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith, Esq.**  
**Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging, PLAN, Inc.**  
Steward of MLK, Jr. Programming:  
December 2014 to Present



It has truly been a great honor of mine to oversee PLAN's MLK, Jr. Program. As a former MLK, Jr. Intern myself, Class of 2005, I have unique perspective on the internship experience and strong investment in the success of our program. I enjoy mentoring the interns and watching them grow in the legal profession. It is truly my most favorite part of my job.

**Rhodia Thomas, Esq.**  
**Executive Director, MidPenn Legal Services**  
Steward of MLK, Jr. Programming:  
May 2002–September 2003

My greatest joy which is also my fondest memory of the MLK, Jr. Program was recruiting and then getting to know all the dynamic young law students who worked at the programs each summer. Although it has been more than 20 years since I held the position of Chief Administrative Officer at PLAN, I still remember many of the interns (who are now attorneys) and often hear from them from time to time, in particular about how things are going with their legal careers.



One of my heroes is Constance Baker Motley who, in 1966, was appointed by then President Johnson to a seat on the Federal Court. Judge Motley was the first black woman appointed to the federal bench in the nation's history. In her own words, Judge Motley wrote, "When I was about fifteen, I decided I wanted to be a lawyer. No one thought it was a good idea, and I received no encouragement... however I was the kind of person who would not be put down."

My message to past and future interns as you pursue your legal careers is to remember the words of Judge Motley and never become discouraged and to be the "kind of person who will not be put down."

**Cynthia G. Newcomer**  
**Former Chief Administrative Officer, PLAN, Inc.**  
Steward of MLK, Jr. Programming:  
January 2004–October 2014



I recall meeting and selecting the first MLK, Jr. Fellow, Sharele Tucker Hatfield, to work for MidPenn Legal Services. During my time as the program administrator, I interviewed and placed hundreds of law students and graduates, all of whom gave me such a deep sense of pride and hope for the future. The fact that PLAN, Inc. recently hired a Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging speaks volumes on the positive impact of the MLK, Jr. Programming.

We also want to recognize Samuel W. Milkes, PLAN, Inc. Executive Director Emeritus, for his unwavering commitment and support of PLAN's MLK, Jr. Programming during his time in leadership and now.

**Samuel W. Milkes, Esq.**  
**Executive Director Emeritus, PLAN, Inc.**  
May 2001–March 2020

The MLK, Jr. Internship Program was intended to better reflect the look of attorneys in legal aid programs, as compared to the range of clients represented by these attorneys. I am convinced that without this program, PLAN programs would have not been as successful at hiring the diverse staff that they have now. During my involvement with the program, my fondest memory goes back 30 years, to hiring PLAN's first intern, Sharon López. Witnessing her great successes and commitment to public interest over the years, including being elected as President of the Pennsylvania Bar Association, has been very impactful.



The program overall has been a great success, resulting in many interns and fellows being hired, with many of them staying on for careers in public interest law. But there is still more to do. Today's world offers a highly competitive market and legal aid programs need to continue to look to ways of diversifying staff. I'm proud to have been part of the internship from its inception and while Executive Director of PLAN, to have been part of the oversight and success of the program, including the decision 20 years ago to expand from a summer internship program to also include the fellowship program, placing attorneys at PLAN programs.



## **MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

This year marks the 30th anniversary of our successful MLK, Jr. Summer Internship Program. Initiated in 1991 by the Pennsylvania Legal Services Black Caucus, this program is designed to promote and support minority attorneys' work in the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network programs across the Commonwealth. To date, PLAN has hosted a total of 402 law students.

The goal of our internship program is to instill in future attorneys a lifelong commitment of providing access to justice for all individuals, regardless of their ability to pay, and to promote diversity within PLAN's programs. Ten paid internships are awarded each summer to law students who participate in legal services work over a 10-week period. Our interns engage in a variety of situations through which they can better understand the special legal issues faced by those who live in poverty and low-income communities. In turn, they provide valuable services to PLAN clients.

This summer, PLAN welcomed 10 new interns into our network. Our interns worked both in-person and remotely for PLAN programs across the Commonwealth for a 10-week period. After a two-year hiatus from in-person trainings, PLAN, Inc. hosted a two-day in-person poverty law orientation for MLK, Jr. Interns at its Harrisburg office. IOLTA Fellows and an Equal Justice Works Fellow also joined. The training was well received, and everyone very much appreciated returning to in-person training.

At the conclusion of each internship program cycle, our interns are required to complete an essay sharing their summer experiences, which is compiled into a booklet called the MLK, Jr. Summer Internship Program Drum Major Essay Collection. Booklets are distributed at our annual recognition reception and made available on the PLAN website. To read this year's essay collection, visit our website: [www.palegalaid.net](http://www.palegalaid.net).

## MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CLASS OF 2022 SUMMER INTERNS



Top Row, Left to Right: Salem Amare, William & Mary Law School; Jamelia Graham, Penn State Dickinson Law School; Amira El Sawi, University of Pittsburgh School of Law; Abraham Lamptey, Penn State Dickinson Law School; Nneoma T. Ibe, Widener Commonwealth Law School.

Bottom Row, Left to Right: Avery Covington, Widener Commonwealth Law School; Iman Koney, Widener Commonwealth Law School; Mylon Medley, Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law; Cooper Townsend, Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law; Moises Tonoc Bonilla, University of Pittsburgh School of Law.

## **MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM**

This year marks the 17th anniversary of our MLK, Jr. Fellowship Program. In 2003, an evaluation of the MLK, Jr. Summer Internship Program revealed that while the internship experience had been a very positive one for PLAN, Inc. law students, clients, and programs, the goal to enhance cultural and ethnic diversity within PLAN programs was not fully realized. In response, PLAN, Inc. created the MLK, Jr. Fellowship Program.

In partnership with a sponsoring PLAN regional or specialty program, law school graduates and new-to-practice attorneys are hired for two-year fellowships. Our Fellowship Program is intended to support and promote new lawyers who are interested in long-term public interest careers. MLK, Jr. Fellows are assigned mentors and supervised by experienced attorneys. Salary and benefits are determined by the host program. In addition, MLK, Jr. Fellows are eligible for up to \$11,000 of loan repayment assistance during the two-year fellowship period.

### **MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. FELLOWS CONTINUE TO SHINE**

In our previous newsletter, we introduced you to MLK, Jr. Fellows Amy Chin-Arroyo, Richardo Brown-Whitt, Devyne Byrd, and Dominique Wiggins. Each is about to begin year two of their respective fellowships. Let's read about what they are up to now!



# Amy Chin-Arroyo, Esq.



Amy, former MLK, Jr. Intern, Class of 2019, received her JD in May 2021 from Temple University Beasley School of Law and graduated with a B.A. in English and Spanish, International Studies Concentration from Williams College. Her work at Justice at Work involves providing high quality direct legal assistance, community education, and advocacy on behalf of eligible clients with a focus on handling cases involving employment-related issues, immigration matters, landlord-tenant matters, and consumer protection matters.

**Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith:** Amy, you now have one year of experience as a practicing attorney. Please share with our readers your most memorable case to date.

**Amy Chin-Arroyo:** I recently submitted a T visa application (a visa application for victims of severe trafficking) for a client who experienced labor trafficking and sexual harassment at the hands of a repeat trafficker in the agricultural industry in Pennsylvania. This client's resilience in overcoming the trauma of the trafficking she experienced while also raising her young son was very inspiring to me.

**Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith:** What impact do you believe the MLK, Jr. Fellowship Program has made on you? PLAN?

**Amy Chin-Arroyo:** The fellowship program has been a wonderful source of support to me thus far as a new attorney at Justice at Work. The funding and loan repayment assistance program has made it financially feasible for me to pursue a career in public interest law. As the first attorney in my family and one of relatively few Asians working in public interest law, it has been lovely and inspiring to meet and learn from other BIPOC attorneys who are participating in the fellowship, as well as through PLAN's Asian Pacific American Affinity Group. I feel very fortunate to have access to such a diverse and supportive professional network.

**Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith:** What message do you have for PLAN and supporters of the MLK, Jr. Fellowship Program?

**Amy Chin-Arroyo:** Thank you for continuing to fund and support PLAN and the MLK, Jr. Programs. Without the MLK, Jr. Internship Program, I would not have done my 2L internship at Justice at Work which led to my current job. The internship program gave me a fantastic introduction to the public interest legal community in Pennsylvania and a chance to meet and learn from peers and public interest attorneys from across the state. Continuing to provide this type of mentorship, funding, and support to diverse law students is essential to diversifying the profession.

# Richardo Brown-Whitt, Esq.

Richardo received his JD in May 2021 from Wake Forest University School of Law and graduated with a B.A. in Political Science and English Writing from the University of Pittsburgh.



His work at the Pennsylvania Institutional Law Project involves litigating cases on behalf of incarcerated and institutionalized individuals, primarily in federal court, on statutory and constitutional civil rights claims. He conducts visits to prisons and institutions to meet with clients and monitor the ongoing conditions of confinement. He also works closely with the PILP legal team and clients to investigate and develop potential cases and develop relationships with community partners.

**Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith:** Richardo, you now have one year of experience as a practicing attorney. Please share with our readers your most memorable case to date.

**Richardo Brown-Whitt:** One of the first cases that I worked on was *Remlinger v. Leb. Cnty*, a case involving the shackling of a pregnant woman during labor. This case is ongoing, however it immediately grounded me in the seriousness of the work handled by the Pennsylvania Institutional Law Project.

**Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith:** What are your thoughts on your fellowship experience thus far?

**Richardo Brown-Whitt:** I thoroughly enjoy being an advocate for my clients. Many of our clients face significant hurdles with initiating and maintaining lawsuits. I am honored to work closely with clients who inspire me through their bravery and willingness to come forward and tell their stories.

**Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith:** What message do you have for PLAN and supporters of the MLK, Jr. Fellowship Program?

**Richardo Brown-Whitt:** PLAN has many programs within its network, many of which were unknown to me before applying to this fellowship program. The MLK, Jr. Fellowship Program doesn't just increase the diversity within a particular host program, but it also increases the visibility of all the other PLAN programs.

## Devyne Byrd, Esq.



Devyne received her JD in May 2019 from the University of Virginia School of Law and graduated with a B.A. in History from Houston Baptist University. Her work at Legal Aid of Southeastern Pennsylvania involves representing clients facing issues regarding public benefits, consumer law and bankruptcy, employment, expungements, housing, family law, protection from domestic violence, and other cases as assigned.

**Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith:** Devyne, you now have one year of experience as a practicing attorney. Please share with our readers your most memorable case to date.

**Devyne Byrd:** My most memorable case thus far was a custody case where I procured full physical and legal custody for a mother who had not seen her child in over six months due to the other parent refusing to abide by the unofficial custody agreement they had negotiated. After two hearings, the mother was granted full custody and was reunited with her child. This case was memorable to me because it illustrated the slow moving, often traumatic process of family court. The child was with a parent that had not been actively parenting for over ten years but because there was no official custody agreement, there was no recourse except a hearing that took over six months to schedule.

**Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith:** What are your thoughts on your fellowship experience thus far?

**Devyne Byrd:** The fellowship has allowed me to learn several different types of law and explore my career under the mentorship of Black women which has been invaluable. I am grateful for the opportunity to hear their guidance and have so many amazing people invested in me.

**Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith:** What message do you have for PLAN and supporters of the MLK, Jr. Fellowship Program?

**Devyne Byrd:** This fellowship is important because it allows the community of lawyers to better reflect the communities we serve, bringing comfort to our clients as well as culturally informed representation and perspectives to our work.



## Dominique Wiggins, Esq.

Dominique received her JD in May 2021 from Duquesne University School of Law and graduated with a B.A. in Psychology and Spanish from Rider University. Her work at Community Legal Services involves representing clients in both public housing and private landlord-tenant matters.

**Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith:** Dominique, you now have one year of experience as a practicing attorney. Please share with our readers your most memorable case to date.

**Dominique Wiggins:** My most memorable case happened during a Lawyer of the Day Shift while under my supervising attorney Kadeem Morris, a former MLK, Jr. Fellow. We reached an agreement with the landlord and landlord's attorney to re-house our client after a lockout. We provided assistance through a rental assistance agency and got our client re-housed in a week. Our client was very happy to return to his home after being locked out.

**Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith:** What are your thoughts on your fellowship experience thus far?

**Dominique Wiggins:** My fellowship experience has been amazing. I was very fortunate to be placed at Community Legal Services in the Housing Unit. Before starting this fellowship, I did not have a specific area law practice in mind. Since working in CLS's Housing Unit, I have found myself joining and co-leading policy efforts to improve the use of housing records for tenants seeking new housing with prior eviction filings.

**Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith:** What impact do you believe the MLK, Jr. Fellowship Program has made on you?

**Dominique Wiggins:** This program expanded the way I see public interest work. Initially, my view was very narrowly focused on specific areas of practice. I have also been impacted by the responses from clients who are able to identify with me culturally. Having clients respond positively to having me as their legal representation is a positive addition to the often-stressful work that I do.

## MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. FELLOWSHIP GRADUATE

### Shalisa Brunson, Esq.

In 2020, we introduced you to Shalisa Brunson. She will complete her fellowship at Philadelphia Legal Assistance in August 2022. We are happy to share that she will continue her employment as a permanent staff attorney at the program upon the conclusion of her fellowship.



**Arlene Marshall-Hockensmith:** Congratulations Shalisa on your graduation from the MLK, Jr. Fellowship Program! You were a wonderful addition to our program, and we are very excited to know that you will remain a part of the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network.

**Shalisa Brunson:** I am grateful for the MLK, Jr. Fellowship Program because it allowed me to serve in communities that are similar to the one in which I grew up. My fellowship experience reminded me that not everyone is afforded the same opportunities as me and that it is my responsibility to fill in the gaps where people have less knowledge about their rights. I also believe that it is important to increase the visibility of lawyers of color and I am happy to be a part of PLAN's efforts to do so. This program allows fellows to thrive in a way that is crucial to our formative years as lawyers. I received so much hands on experience that I am not sure that I would have gained in another role. I hope this program, and the MLK, Jr. Internship Program, continues for a long time. I also hope there is continued financial support for even more students and fellows to participate in these programs. Thank you PLAN for allowing me to be a part of both programs. I am grateful.



## FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM SUCCESS

We are extremely pleased with the success of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Fellowship Program. Since its inception in 2004, 29 lawyers have been placed as fellows with PLAN legal aid programs and scores of other former interns have entered other public interest careers. The Fellowship Program is an integral part of PLAN, Inc.'s goal to initiate new lawyers into public interest law careers. PLAN, Inc. partners with a sponsoring regional or specialty legal services program and pays 50% of the Fellow's salary, benefits, and student loan assistance up to \$5,500 each per year of the two-year fellowship. Salary is commensurate with that of the sponsoring program.

In the past fiscal year, PLAN programs handled over 72,130 client cases, saving their homes from foreclosure, protecting them from domestic violence, securing health insurance, establishing custody stability for children, and helping clients in many other ways.

The Fellowship Program has a proven track record of launching minority law students into careers as public interest lawyers and legal aid attorneys and has generated a reliable recruitment pool for legal aid organizations. PLAN, Inc. appreciates the financial support and sponsorships it receives from Pennsylvania law firms, businesses, and individuals to help support this program. PLAN, Inc. does not realize any of these sponsorship funds, but funnels them directly to the salary and benefits of our fellows. PLAN, Inc. also appreciates the financial support of this program from the Department of Human Services and the Pennsylvania IOLTA Board. Our goal is to place at least two fellows per fiscal year. You can help by donating to our Fellowship Program. Contributions are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by the law. On behalf of PLAN, Inc., we thank you for your support.

# THANK YOU

PLAN, Inc. acknowledges and thanks the following for their generous contributions to the MLK, Jr. Fellowship Program over the years.

Allentown Branch of the NAACP  
Ballard Spahr, LLP  
Bazelon Less & Feldman, PC  
Latoya W. Bellamy  
Blank & Rome, LLP  
Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney, PC  
Campbell & Levine, LLC  
Carl (Tobey) Oxholm, III  
Christie & Young, PC  
Cozen O'Conner  
David L. Hyman and Farah Jimenez  
Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, PC  
Dilworth Paxson, LLP  
Drexel University, Office of the General Counsel  
Drexel University, Office of the Information Resources  
and Technology  
Drinker Biddle & Reath, LLP  
Duane Morris, LLP  
Duffy & Partners  
Eagles Social Justice Fund, Philadelphia Foundation  
Eckert, Seamans, Cherin & Mellott, LLC  
Elizabeth Daulton  
Esther Spear  
Farrell & Reisinger, LLC  
Feldman, Shepherd, Wohlgelernter, Tanner, Weinstock  
& Dodig, LLP  
Fox Rothschild, LLP  
Francine Thornton Boone  
Frank Miles  
Frommer D'Amico Anderson, LLC  
Gay, Chacker & Mittin, PC  
Hangley Aronchick Segal Pudlin & Schiller  
Hershey Entertainment and Resorts  
Honorable Gerald A. McHugh, Jr. and Maureen E. Tate  
In Memoriam of Dorothy Ridley-Leftwich  
In Memoriam of Leonard Spear  
Independence Foundation  
James Giles  
James P. and Linda DeAngelo  
Jeff Ernico  
Jennifer Deitchman

John Frommer  
James Grasty  
John Giles  
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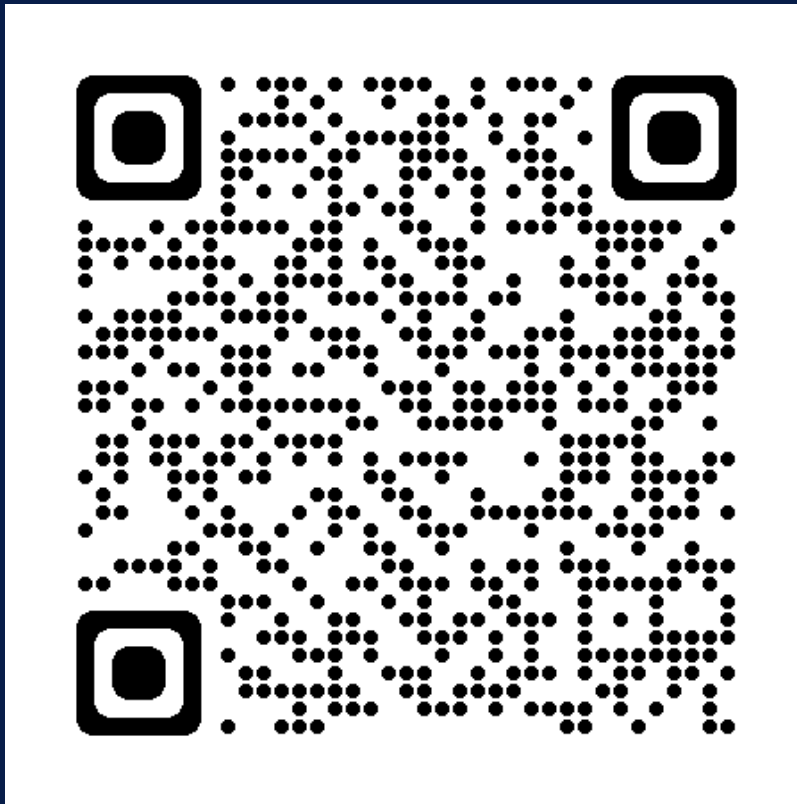
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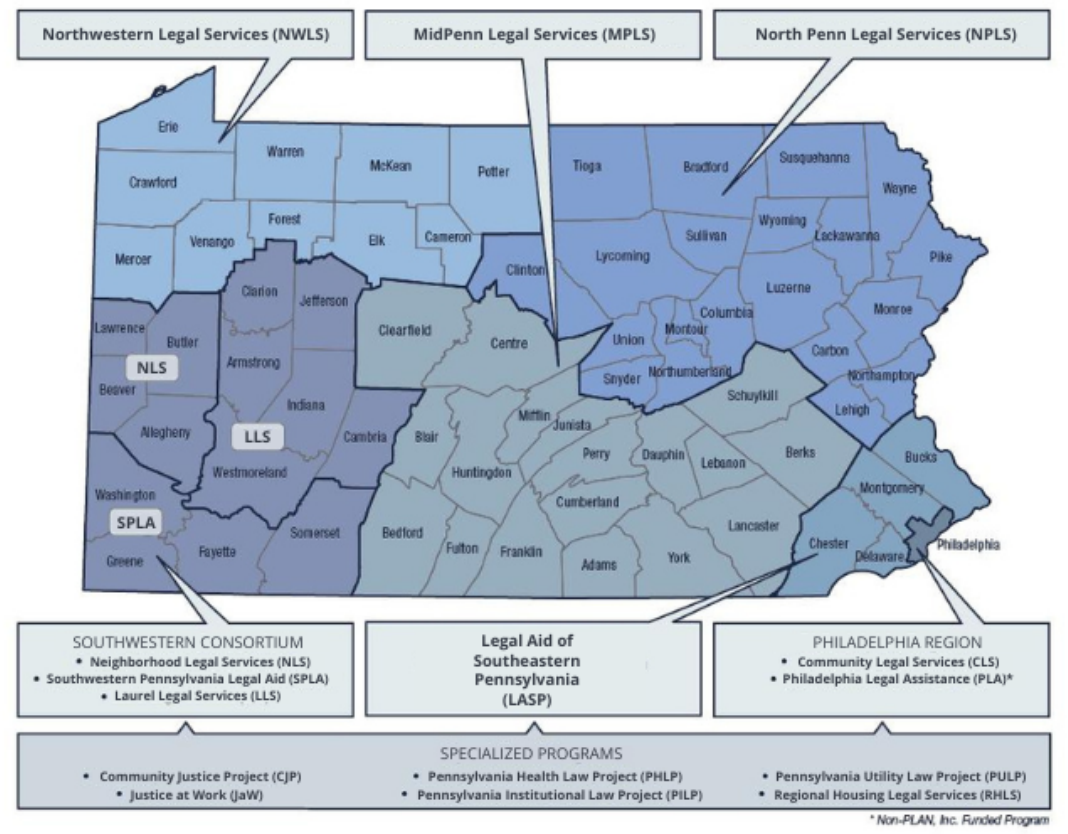
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