Harvard Black Law Students Association
32nd Annual Spring Conference

Friday, February 27 – Saturday, February 28, 2015
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Agenda
Friday, February 27, 2015

9:00 – 9:30 am Tour of HLS Campus/Breakfast
9:45 – 10:30 am Panel/Q&A with Students
10:45 – 11:45 am Juvenile Justice Jeopardy
12:00 – 1:00 pm Lunch
  Lunch Keynote Speaker:
   Paul Butler, Professor of Law at Georgetown University and
   Author of Let's Get Free: A Hip-Hop Theory of Justice
1:00 – 2:00 pm Panel / Q&A with Music Industry Executives

Location: Austin West

7pm –10pm Conference Kick-Off Mixer/Networking Reception

Location: HLS Pub (first floor Wasserstein Hall)
Agenda
Saturday, February 28, 2015

9am – 9:45am Continental Breakfast
10am – 11:15am Black Health Matters
11:15am – 11:30am Snacks
11:30am – 12:45pm Black Activism Matters
1pm – 2pm Lunch

Keynote Speaker: Naomi Murakawa, Associate Professor of African American Studies at Princeton University and Author of The First Civil Right: How Liberals Built Prison America

2:15pm-3:30pm My Sister’s Keeper/My Brother’s Keeper (separate panels)
3:45pm-5:00pm Black Media Matters

6:30pm-8:00pm Dinner at the Sheraton Commander Hotel
Keynote Speaker: Opal Tometi, Co-Founder of Black Lives Matter and Executive Director of the Black Alliance for Just Immigration

Entertainment: Strivers Row Spoken Word Artists Joshua Bennett and Zora Howard, Aaron Liao Jazz Band

9:00pm to Until After Party/Mixer at Savvor Restaurant and Lounge
Location: Wasserstein Hall
Greetings!

On behalf of everyone at snowy Harvard Law School, I give my warmest welcome to the 32nd annual Spring Conference of the Harvard Black Law Students Association.

The theme of this year’s conference, “Black Lives Matter,” could not be more timely or important. Members of HBLSA have been national leaders in the call for justice in the aftermath of the events in Ferguson, Missouri, Staten Island, New York, and elsewhere. This conference is a valuable opportunity to reflect on how the legal system should be improved for all Americans, especially those for whom justice is too often elusive.

The conference gathers the wisdom and experience of people with many perspectives, including young people, seasoned activists, jurists, and policy makers. This wide range of participants holds the promise of expressing and highlighting perspectives crucial to ensuring our legal system can become — and become perceived — to be legitimate for all. As important as the probing panel conversations will be are the informal discussions — between sessions, over meals, and long after this important event. I salute the organizers for creating the contexts for these discussions that will strengthen our networks within HLS, our ties to the broader legal community, and our chance to contribute to the vital issues of our time.

I look forward to learning from the conversations and inspiration that will unfold this weekend!

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Martha Minow
Morgan and Helen Chu Dean and Professor
Harvard Law School
Dear Guests:

Welcome to the Harvard Black Law Students Association’s 32nd Annual Spring Conference. This year’s conference is fittingly titled, “Black Lives Matter.” Since its inception in 1983, we have protected the tradition of HBLSA’s Spring Conference to further our mission to build, lead, serve, and advocate for our community. This mission is shared with communities far beyond the reach of Harvard Law School. In order to cultivate this charge we have brought together speakers and panelists from all over our nation to discuss the importance of activism, mental and financial health, collegiality, and brand management throughout the black community.

Organizing this Conference is a herculean task, and its accomplishments would not be possible without the collective efforts of our Harvard BLSA Spring Conference Committee, Officers, Executive Board, Advisors, and members. Month after month, our Spring Conference Chairs, Jenae Moxie ’16 and Lakeisha Williams ’16 have devoted countless hours to bring the Conference to fruition. The skill, leadership, and conscientiousness these individuals have exhibited in planning this Conference will manifest through the impact this Conference will have on us all. We are truly indebted to you both for your sacrifice and commitment.

We also owe a special thank you to our Faculty Advisors, Professor Charles J. Ogletree Jr., and Ronald Sullivan, who have been tremendous leaders throughout the year. We thank each of our moderators who selflessly dedicated their precious time and offered their individual expertise to lead each of our panels. And we extend our sincerest gratitude to our keynote speakers, Mr. Paul Butler, Dr. Naomi Murakawa, and Ms. Opal Tometi, as well as our esteemed panelists.

Last, but certainly not least, I must recognize the irreplaceable members of Harvard BLSA’s leadership team, Davida McGhee ’15, Valerie Wood ’16, Leland Shelton ’16, and Shay Johnson ’16, not only for their contributions to the Conference, but for their unyielding leadership in Harvard BLSA for the 2014-2015 year. I am truly honored to work alongside such amazingly talented and committed individuals who serve this organization with grace and integrity.

Finally, we are overjoyed that so many of you have joined us for our 32nd Annual Spring Conference, and we thank you for choosing to spend your precious time with us. It is our hope that this Conference will both empower its participants to see their individual strengths, and inspire them to further the agenda of #BlacksLivesMatter.

Warm Regards,

McKenzie Morris
President, 2014-2015
Harvard Black Law Students Association
Paul Butler is Professor of Law at Georgetown University Law Center. He teaches in the areas of criminal law and race and the law. Prior to joining Georgetown’s faculty he was Associate Dean for Faculty Development and the Carville Dickinson Benson Research Professor of Law at George Washington University Law School.

Professor Butler’s scholarship has been published in many leading scholarly journals, including the Yale Law Journal, the Harvard Law Review (two articles), the Stanford Law Review and the UCLA Law Review (three articles). He has been awarded the Professor of the Year award three times by the GW graduating class. He was a visiting professor at the University of Pennsylvania Law School and the Acting Co-Director of the GW/Oxford Human Rights Program at Oxford University. Mr. Butler was elected to the American Law Institute in 2003.

Professor Butler is one of the nation’s most frequently consulted scholars on issues of race and criminal justice. His scholarship has been the subject of much attention in the academic and popular media. His work has been profiled on 60 Minutes, Nightline, and The ABC, CBS and NBC Evening News, among other places. Professor Butler has written a column for The Legal Times and has published numerous op-ed articles and book reviews. He lectures regularly for the American Bar Association and the NAACP, and at colleges, law schools, and community organizations throughout the United States.

Professor Butler served as a federal prosecutor with the U.S. Department of Justice, where his specialty was public corruption. His prosecutions included a United States Senator, three FBI agents, and several other law enforcement officials. While at the Department of Justice, Professor Butler also served as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney, prosecuting drug and gun cases. After graduating from law school, he clerked for the Hon. Mary Johnson Lowe in the United States District Court in New York, and then joined the law firm of Williams & Connolly in Washington, D.C., where he specialized in white-collar criminal defense.


B.A. Yale University, cum laude;
J.D. Harvard Law School, cum laude
Naomi Murakawa is an associate professor of African American Studies at Princeton University. She studies the reproduction of racial inequality in 20th and 21st century American politics, with specialization in crime policy and the carceral state. Her work has appeared in Law & Society Review, Theoretical Criminology, Du Bois Review, and several edited volumes. She has received fellowships from Columbia Law School’s Center for the Study of Law and Culture, as well the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Health Policy Research Program. Prior to joining African American Studies at Princeton, she taught in the Department of Political Science at the University of Washington. Professor Murakawa received her B.A. in women’s studies from Columbia University, her M. Sc. in social policy from the London School of Economics, and her Ph.D. in political science from Yale University.

Professor Murakawa is also the author of The First Civil Right: How Liberals Built Prison America (Oxford University Press, 2014). In The First Civil Right, Naomi Murakawa explores the explosive rise in the U.S. incarceration rate in the second half of the twentieth century, and the racial transformation of the prison population from mostly white at mid-century to sixty-five percent black and Latino in the present day, is a trend that cannot easily be ignored. She inverts the conventional wisdom by arguing that the expansion of the federal carceral state—a system that disproportionately imprisons blacks and Latinos—was, in fact, rooted in the civil-rights liberalism of the 1940s and early 1960s, not in the period after.

Professor Murakawa traces the development of the modern American prison system through several presidencies, both Republican and Democrat. Responding to calls to end the lawlessness and violence against blacks at the state and local levels, the Truman administration expanded the scope of what was previously a weak federal system. Later administrations from Johnson to Clinton expanded the federal presence even more. Ironically, these steps laid the groundwork for the creation of the vast penal archipelago that now exists in the United States. What began as a liberal initiative to curb the mob violence and police brutality that had deprived racial minorities of their “first civil right—physical safety—eventually evolved into the federal correctional system that now deprives them, in unjustly large numbers, of another important right: freedom. The First Civil Right is a groundbreaking analysis of root of the conflicts that lie at the intersection of race and the legal system in America.
Opal Tometi is a Black feminist writer, communications strategist and cultural organizer. She is a co-founder of #BlackLivesMatter with Alicia Garza and Patrisse Cullors-Brignac. The historic political project and leader-full network was launched in the wake of the murder of Trayvon Martin in order to explicitly combat implicit bias and anti-black racism and to protect and affirm the beauty and dignity of all Black lives.

Ms. Tometi is currently at the helm of the country’s leading Black organization for immigrant rights, the Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI), a national organization that educates and advocates to further immigrant rights and racial justice together with African-American, Afro-Latino, African and Caribbean immigrant communities. As the executive director at BAJI, Opal collaborates with staff and communities in Los Angeles, Phoenix, New York, Oakland, Washington, DC and communities throughout the Southern states. The organization’s most recent campaign helped win family reunification visas for Haitians displaced by the 2010 earthquake.

Ms. Tometi supports and helps shape the strategic work of Pan African Network in Defense of Migrant Rights, and the Black Immigrants Network (BIN) international and national formations respectively, dedicated to people of African descent. She has presented at the United Nations and participated with the UN’s Global Forum on Migration and Commission on the Status of Women.

Prior to becoming executive director, Opal worked as co-director and communications director at BAJI. Her contributions include leading organizing efforts for the first ever Black-led rally for immigrant justice and the first Congressional briefing on Black immigrants in Washington DC. Additionally, she coordinated BAJI’s work as launch partner with Race Forward’s historic Drop The I-Word campaign, working with the campaign to raise awareness about the importance of respectful language and history through the lens of the Great Migration, the Civil Rights Movement and current migration of the Black diaspora.

Opal has been active in social movements for over a decade. She is a student of liberation theology and her practice is in the tradition of Ella Baker, informed by Stuart Hall, bell hooks and Black Feminist thinkers. She has been published in the Oxford Dictionary of African Biographies and in November 2014 was named a “New Civil Rights Leader” by ESSENCE Magazine for her cutting edge movement building work which bridges immigrant and human rights work to the current and ever-growing Black liberation movement. She was a lead architect of the Black-Brown Coalition of Arizona and was involved in grassroots organizing against SB 1070 with the Alto Arizona campaign. As a result she was the 2012 recipient of the ‘Unsung Hero for Justice’ Award by the African American Legislative and Leadership Conference of Arizona. Opal is a former case manager for survivors of domestic violence and still provides community education on the issue.

Ms. Tometi holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and a Masters of Arts degree in Communication and Advocacy. The daughter of Nigerian immigrants, she grew up in Phoenix, Arizona where she is a board member of the Puente Movement. She currently resides in Brooklyn, New York. And is passionate about dancing and collecting African art.
Zora Howard is a performance artist hailing from Harlem, New York City. Her work with filmmaker Lisa Russell on the short film, “Biracial Hair”, based on her original poem, won an Emmy for Outstanding Advanced Media Interactivity in 2009. In 2010, she was named the inaugural New York City Youth Poet Laureate by the Office of the Mayor and released her first collection of poems, CLUTCH, under Penmanship Books. Her performance art has given her the opportunity to perform at venues such as the Apollo Theater, the Brooklyn Academy of Music and Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. Zora holds a Bachelor of Arts in Comparative Literature from Yale University and is currently pursuing her Master of Fine Arts in Acting at the University of California, San Diego.

Joshua Bennett hails from Yonkers, NY. He is a doctoral candidate in the English Department at Princeton University, and has received fellowships from the Ford Foundation, The Center for the Study of Social Difference at Columbia University, and the Callaloo Creative Writing Workshop. Winner of the 2014 Lucille Clifton Poetry Prize, his poems have been published or are forthcoming in Anti-, Callaloo, Women & performance: a journal of feminist theory and elsewhere. Joshua has recited his original work at events such as the Sundance Film Festival, the NAACP Image Awards, and President Obama’s Evening of Poetry and Music at The White House. He is also the founding editor of Kinfolks: a journal of black expression.
Balaal Hollings was born to Janice Karen Lee Hollings on June 3rd 1995 shortly after his father Dennis Holmes was sent to jail for statutory rape. His mother remarried Laval Everett Lucas. Balaal never knew his biological father, but Lucas raised him as his own. Balaal attended Northwestern high school, where he was 9th grade class president. Balaal also joined the golf, baseball, and swim teams. During 10th grade he retained his presidency, and picked up football and track and field. Soon after, Hollings life changed when his mother suddenly died. However, he didn’t let that stop his dreams of going to the NFL. He attended practice the very same day his mother’s death. Because of Balaal’s actions on and off the field he won ESPN’s Rise Above Student of The Year Award in 2011. Balaal was elected senior class president, student Government president and steering committee president. He was also captain of the football, baseball, golf, and swim team his senior year, while still participating in track and field and basketball. He won first place overall in the city of Detroit for mock trial, and earned a ticket to Chicago where he and his team placed 18th in the country. Balaal persevered his way into college after a bullet shattered his entire skull and tore out a piece of his brain. He is determined to become the first person in his family to earn a degree in 120 years. So dedicated, Balaal even moved into a shelter to stay in school after being removed from the residence hall. He now attends Jackson College in Jackson, MI, where he is a member of the Men of Merit student government, and works daily as a motivational speaker, MC and host, among other things.
Christopher Gholson a.k.a. Drumma Boy, is a multi-award winning record producer, composer, rapper, entrepreneur and founder of Drum Squad Records. He has worked with an array of hip-hop artists that include August Alsina, Tela, 2 Chainz, Juicy J, Young Buck, Young Jeezy, T.I., Kanye West, Lil Watne, Nelly, T-Pain, Usher, Ciara, Wiz Khalifa, Wale, Waka Flocka Flame, Gorilla Zoe, Drake, Soulja Boy, Ludacris, Plies, Gucci Mane, Young Joc, Fabolous, Roscoe Dash, Rick Ross, Monica, Goapele, Travis Porter, Chris Brown and more.

Sulaiman Mausi, is President of Divine Order Music and Entertainment Group, Inc. (The DOME Group, Inc.), a premier entertainment promoter of live music events, including world-class concerts and music festivals. Catering to both urban and mainstream markets nationwide, the company’s extensive portfolio boasts some of the most successful performances to hit the Detroit, St. Louis, Charlotte, and Raleigh-Durham area markets in decades. His sold-out shows have featured artists such as T.I. and Young Jeezy, The Isley Brothers, Nas featuring DMX, Frankie Beverly and Maze, Kem and India Arie, Smokey Robinson, The Whispers and The Dramatics, The O’Jays, Anita Baker and Erykah Badu. Mausi continues to explore new avenues through which to enlighten and empower his audiences of the Triangle area and beyond.

William “Squeak” Watkins, is a Partner/CEO at Drum Squad Publishing
Conference Panels
Black Health Matters: Mental and Financial Health in the Black Community.

10am – 11:15am, WCC 2012

Maintaining positive mental and financial health is a significant struggle for Black legal professionals and the Black community as a whole. Establishing financial stability, reducing debt, and effectively saving and investing for the future proves to be a difficult feat. Often financial instability, can contribute to mental health issues. These issues, such as depression, anxiety and stress are silent killers within our community. This panel will provide proactive steps and tips from experts in the mental health field and financial industry to ensure prosperity and good health in the future.

Moderator
Dr. Cynthia Carter, Harvard University Health Services

Panelists

Terrie M. Williams a licensed clinical therapist, is one of Woman’s Day magazine’s “50 Women On A Mission To Change The World,” Ebony magazine’s “Power 150” for activism, and a Black history makers honoree on the 2013 theGrio 100 list. For more than 30 years, she has used her influence and communications expertise to educate and engage audiences in causes. She launched The Terrie Williams Agency (TTWA) in 1988 with superstar Eddie Murphy and the late jazz legend Miles Davis as her first clients and has continued to represent some of the biggest personalities and businesses in entertainment, sports, business and politics. TTWA is a premiere incubator and legendary breeding ground for public relations talent. Terrie’s critically acclaimed book, entitled Black Pain: It Just Looks Like We’re Not Hurting (2008), is credited with starting an unprecedented national dialogue that recounts her personal struggles with depression and the impact the stigma of mental illnesses have particularly on the African-American community. Her dialogue has led to a national mental health advocacy campaign called “Sharing Ourselves…Healing Starts With Us” with the collaboration with the Ad Council’s and SAMHSA’s Campaign of Mental Health Recovery. The campaign has garnered $2.5 million in donated national advertising space and 11 million media impressions to significantly heighten the awareness and importance of mental and emotional health. Terrie is a member of the NCAA Mental Health Task Force and spoke at the United Nations’ World Mental Health Day in 2012 where she provided a global perspective on mental health and depression– and shared some commonalities that exist worldwide. She is also an online contributor to numerous publications including CNN.com, Ebony.com, theGrio.com and a clinical therapist on WE tv’s SWV Reunited.

Lisa Jones is a New York City based psychotherapist in clinical private practice, and assists both adolescents and adults in living healthier lives. Ms. Jones began her training in psychotherapy at The Pennsylvania State University, earning her undergraduate degree in Psychology. She completed her master’s degree with honors in Clinical Social Work from Howard University in Washington, DC with a specialization in Clinical Psychiatry. She received her post-graduate training at Dominion Hospital, a 94-bed psychiatric facility for children, adolescents, and adults in Fairfax County, Virginia. Ms. Jones has been practicing as a clinician for over 10 years. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in the state of New York. Jones is also a board member of the Siwe Project, a recently established nonprofit organization that aims to reduce mental illness stigma in the African and African-American communities.
Stacey Tisdale is an on air financial journalist, who has reported on business and financial issues for more than 15 years. Ms. Tisdale is also the author of The True Cost of Happiness: The Real Story Behind Managing Your Money. A financial expert, Ms. Tisdale has created a financial literacy curriculum called Winning Play$ for high school students in conjunction with NFL Hall of Famer Ronnie Lott’s All Stars Helping Kids Foundation. Winning Play$ was awarded the U.S. Department of Education’s Excellence in Economic Education award for 2010 and in 2011, The National Association of Black Journalists awarded Stacey its 2011 Community Service Award for the program. Ms. Tisdale was Business Correspondent for Al Jazeera America from May 2013 to May 2014. Before joining Al Jazeera America, she reported for PBS national newsmagazine show Need to Know. In addition, she is a financial expert on NBC’s Today Show and the financial contributor for Arise TV. She is also a blogger on the Huffington Post – Black Voices platform. From 2002 to 2004, Stacey filed business and consumer reports for all of the CNN networks, including, CNN, CNNI and Headline News. Ms. Tisdale also reported for “Inside Africa,” a weekly news magazine show on CNN International. During this period, Stacey Tisdale contributed reports to “Money Talks,” the nationally syndicated program created by BusinessWeek. Ms. Tisdale has appeared on “The Oprah Winfrey Show” as a financial expert and in O magazine. She also writes columns for Essence Magazine.

Steven Rogers is a Senior Lecturer in General Management and teaches Entrepreneurial Finance in the executive programs, “Launching New Ventures” and “Owners, Presidents and Managers (OPM)”. He also teaches the Field Immersion Experience for Leadership Development (FIELD course in the MBA program, where students create their own entrepreneurial ventures). A 1985 graduate of the school, Professor Rogers holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Williams College. Prior to teaching at HBS, he taught for 17 years at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, in the MBA, PhD and Executive programs in the U.S., Toronto, Germany, and Hong Kong. He received the Outstanding Professor Award for the Executive Program 26 times and the MBA Lawrence Lavengood Outstanding Professor of the Year award twice. He was the first professor in the school’s history to receive the latter award more than once. Before joining the Kellogg Faculty, he owned and operated two manufacturing firms and one retail operation. Prior to becoming an entrepreneur, Professor Rogers worked at Bain and Company Consulting firm, Cummins Engine Company and UNC Ventures, a venture capital firm. In 2013, he became the Faculty Director for the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City (ICIC) program, that has the objective of teaching business owners in urban cities how to grow their companies. Professor Rogers was selected to give a speech on the topic of Entrepreneurship at the United Nations in 2013 as part of the TEDxUNPlaza Program. In 2011, he joined Chicago Mayor Emanuel’s Supplier Diversity Task Force.
Black Activism Matters.

11:30am – 12:45pm, WCC 2012

This panel will explore current Black activism and mobilization efforts, while allowing panelists to discuss how their work relates to, supports, and encourages such efforts. This includes detailing programs and systems that are currently being implemented and barriers to their success. Particularly, the panel will focus on efforts to address police brutality and other salient issues in the Black/minority communities throughout the United States. Panelists will discuss the importance of Black activism in modern social movements, and also challenge black activist to consider actively addressing structural and policy reforms and policy. Further, panelists will provide tools that black activist can use to increase and improve their efforts.

Moderator
Professor Jon Hanson, Harvard Law School

Panelists

Chloe Cockburn is the Advocacy and Policy Counsel for the American Civil Liberty Union’s Campaign to End Mass Incarceration, where she has worked to advance state legislative and policy reforms to reduce criminalization and incarceration in addition to collaborating with national strategic partners across the field to plot the end of mass incarceration. Her policy expertise includes both state-specific substantive criminal law reforms as well as practical, commonsense alternatives to the criminal justice system as a catch-all problem solving tool. She has advanced bills to modify extreme sentencing laws, implement sensible drug policies focused on health rather than criminalization, and reduce the tide of low-level offenses into the criminal justice system. Her work is grounded in the principle of racial justice and a conviction that in order to foster safe and healthy communities, we must end our addition to criminal justice as the answer to all our social problems. Ms. Cockburn is a co-author of the white paper, Healthcare not Handcuffs: Putting the Affordable Care Act to Work for Criminal Justice and Drug Policy Reform. Prior to joining the Campaign to End Mass Incarceration, Ms. Cockburn spent several years litigating civil rights cases focused on police misconduct with the ACLU’s Racial Justice Project and the civil rights law firm of Neufeld Scheck and Brustin. She served in the General Counsel’s office at the Vera Institute of Justice, and clerked with Judge Sifton of the Eastern District of New York. Chloe is a graduate of Harvard Law School and Harvard College.
Robert Rooks provides leadership for key constituencies programs and partners for Californians for Safety and Justice, including our Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice, Criminal Justice Advocacy networks, organized labor and more. Mr. Rooks joined Safe and Just after three years with the NAACP, where he served as both National Criminal Justice Director and Executive Director of the California State Conference. As National Criminal Justice Director, Mr. Rooks was the founding director of the program and provided strategic direction, oversight and management of criminal justice activities. He was responsible for launching the “Misplaced Priorities – Educate Not Incarcerate” campaign, where he worked with Right on Crime to recruit conservatives to join NAACP’s efforts to reduce state prison populations and reallocate dollars to education. Prior to NAACP, Mr. Rooks was a national criminal justice reform expert and labor organizer working on sentencing reform and green jobs. Mr. Rooks has served in senior leadership roles at A Better Way Foundation (in Connecticut), Justice Strategies and the Institute for Community Research. For several years he was a grant reviewer for California HIV/AIDS Research Programs. He also worked with the strategic research program at Change To Win labor federation to organize workers in emerging green industries. Mr. Rooks served as an adjunct professor teaching social movement theory and research methods at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work and St. Joseph’s College, and at Central Connecticut State University. He lives in Sacramento with his wife and three sons.

Adam J. Foss is an Assistant District Attorney in the Juvenile Division of the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office (SCDAO). He is on the executive board of the Massachusetts Black Lawyers Association and chair of its Community Service Committee. He is an active member of the Massachusetts Bar Association in its House of Delegates as the chair of its Criminal Justice Section Council, and he sits on the Boston Bar Association’s Criminal Justice Section Steering Committee. SCDAO selected Mr. Foss as the 2012 recipient of the Brian J. Honan Award recognizing excellence in the courtroom and a commitment to the communities he serves and he also received a commendation from the State House for those efforts. In 2013, the Massachusetts Bar Association recognized Mr. Foss with the Access to Justice Section Council Prosecutor of the Year Award. Most recently, Governor Deval Patrick appointed Mr. Foss to his administration’s Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee. His latest project focuses on creating a diversion program for first time juvenile offenders in the Suffolk County Juvenile Court. He is also the co-founder of a collaborative effort in Roxbury court called the Roxbury CHOICE Program, an initiative to turn probation from a punitive sentence into a beneficial relationship with the court, the probation department, and the District Attorney’s Office. He is also the founder of the SCDAO Reading Program, a project he started to bridge the achievement gap of area elementary school students. Mr. Foss graduated Cum Laude from Suffolk University Law School in 2008. He lives in the Ashmont neighborhood of Dorchester and moonlights as a bartender at a popular bar in Central Square.
My Sister’s Keeper

2:15pm – 3:30pm, WCC 2012

Existing at the intersection of race and gender, Black women must navigate double marginalization as we seek full recognition. The ‘My Sister’s Keeper’ Panel will seek to engage panelists in a discussion of the particular issues that face African American women and possible ways that we can address them collectively. Our panelists will be encouraged to share their experiences and consider suggestions as to how we can embolden all women to reach their full potential. The discussion will touch upon various salient topics including but not limited to educational disparities, representation of black women in the media and maximizing our political efficacy. Come and join us for what’s sure to be a captivating and purposeful conversation.

Moderator
Professor Dehlia Umunna, Harvard Law School

Panelists

The Honorable Justice Shannon Frison was appointed to the Massachusetts Superior Court in March of 2013 at age 42. She took that seat after serving for more than 3 years on the Boston Municipal Court in from 2009-2013, beginning her tenure on the bench at age 39. Before her appointment, Justice Frison practiced locally and abroad as owner of Frison Law Firm, P.C. Her practice focused on “blue collar” criminal law and military justice. Justice Frison spent nearly seven years as a litigation associate at the former white collar defense firm, Dwyer & Collora, LLP in Boston, MA, prior to opening her own firm. From 1997-2000 she was the prosecutor aboard Marine Corps Air Station New River in Jacksonville, North Carolina. In addition to serving the country and practicing law, she has served as a Gubernatorial Teaching Fellow at Brandeis University for three years teaching “Introduction to Law,” as well as appearing as guest lecturer at Brandeis on military justice and military tribunals. Justice Frison was also recently a member of the Boston Bar Association’s “Task Force to Prevent Wrongful Convictions” and Harvard Law School’s Trial Advocacy Workshop.

Allison R. Brown is a Program Officer with the Open Society Foundations, responsible for the Racial Justice portfolio. She is a civil rights attorney, certified mediator, founder of Allison Brown Consulting (ABC), and host of the online radio show Know-It-All: The ABCs of Education. Ms. Brown has been recognized by the National Bar Association and IMPACT as a member of the 2012 Nation’s Best Advocates: Top 40 Lawyers Under 40. Immediately prior to founding ABC, Ms. Brown worked as a trial attorney for the United States Department of Justice in the Educational Opportunities Section of the Civil Rights Division where she enforced federal statutes that prohibit discrimination in public education. At the Department of Justice, Ms. Brown also coordinated efforts to combat the School-to-Prison Pipeline, which effectively removes children of color, black children in particular, from mainstream educational programs and, as a result, closes off opportunities for lifelong success. For her work at the Department of Justice, Ms. Brown received numerous Attorney General’s Meritorious Awards, Special Achievement Awards, and the Special Commendation Award. Ms. Brown has worked as a litigation associate at the law firm of Crowell & Moring LLP in Washington, D.C. After law school, Ms. Brown clerked for the Indiana Supreme Court and for the Southern District of Indiana. Ms. Brown graduated summa cum laude from Howard University and obtained her law degree from Harvard Law School, where she was an articles editor for the Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review. Ms. Brown lives in Washington, D.C., with her husband and two children.
My Sister's Keeper.

**Dr. Brittney Cooper** is Assistant Professor of Women’s and Gender Studies and Africana Studies at Rutgers University. Professor Cooper is a 2009 alumna of the Graduate Institute of Liberal Arts at Emory University with a Ph.D. in American Studies. She is also a summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Howard University, with a bachelor’s degree in English and Political Science. A scholar of Black women’s intellectual history, Black feminist thought, and race and gender in popular culture, Dr. Cooper writes extensively about both historic and contemporary iterations of Black feminist theorizing. Dr. Cooper’s first book Race Women: Gender and the Making of a Black Public Intellectual Tradition is under review with a major university press. Race Women excavates the political theorizing of public Black women from the 1890s -1970s with hopes of re-invigorating the theoretical and intellectual project of Black feminism. A self-avowed Hip Hop Generation Feminist, Dr. Cooper also has a forthcoming article on Sapphire’s Push as a Hip Hop novel.

**Imani Perry** is a Professor in the Center for African American Studies at Princeton University. She also holds appointments in the Program in Law and Public Affairs and Gender and Sexuality Studies. Professor Perry is the author of two books: More Beautiful and More Terrible: The Embrace and Transcendence of Racial Inequality in the United States (2011), and Prophets of the Hood: Politics and Poetics in Hip Hop (2004.) She has provided social and political commentary for NPR, the Chris Hayes Show, CNN and HuffPostLive, and has written book reviews for the New York Times, The San Francisco Chronicle and The London School of Economics Book Review blog. Professor Perry holds a Ph.D and a Law degree from Harvard University, a B.A. from Yale, and an LLM from Georgetown University Law Center. She lectures on a wide range of topics including: Constitutional Law, Race in the United States, Gender Inequality, and Popular Culture.

**Deesha Dyer**, is Deputy Social Secretary at the White House. While growing up she attended a boarding school in Hershey, PA for economically challenged families, where she began volunteering with people diagnosed with AIDS. After graduating from high school, she moved to Ohio to begin her collegiate career, but soon became a college drop-out - working three jobs to pay bills. Leaving Ohio in 2001, she went back to Philly and quickly became involved in various issues, eventually landing a seat on the Board of Directors at Pennsylvania’s largest AIDS service organization. She also wrote regularly about the hip-hop culture tackling touchy subjects like the role of female rappers, popularity of video girls and the noticeable lack of women at underground hip-hop shows. She merged her two main interests to create ‘Cover Your Lover’, a HIV program focused on the hip-hop community. She went back to school in 2008 and graduated with a Women’s Studies degree from the Community College of Philadelphia. In her final year of college at age 31, Deesha earned an internship at the White House.
In February of 2014, President Obama challenged the nation to be more responsible for our nation’s young males. This challenge entailed strengthening our cradle to college pipeline in an effort to help young males throughout the nation reach their fullest potential. In addition, this challenge speaks to six (6) specific goals: (1) ensure all children enter school cognitively, physically, socially and emotionally ready; (2) ensure all children read at grade level by 3rd grade; (3) ensure all youth graduate from high school; (4) ensure all youth complete post-secondary education or training; (5) ensure all youth are employed; (6) ensure all youth remain safe from violent crime. These objectives laid out by the President are a signal of hope for our nation’s young people. This panel will address these objectives, as well as the following questions: How are you involved? What can you do to get involved? What will this mean for our future as a nation?

Moderator

Jermaine Kidd, Associate at Morgan, Brown & Joy, LLP

Panelists

Dr. Matthew Lynch is an award winning writer, activist and the Dean of the School of Education, Psychology, & Interdisciplinary Studies and an Associate Professor of Education at Virginia Union University. He spent seven years as a K-12 teacher – an experience that gave him an intimate view of the challenges facing genuine education reform. With that experience behind him, he has focused the second stage of his career on researching topics related to education reform, the achievement gap, and teacher education. Dr. Lynch has found that improving teacher education is an essential component in closing the achievement gap. Dr. Lynch’s articles and op-eds appear regularly in the Huffington Post, Diverse: Issues in Higher Education, and Education Week. He has also written numerous peer-reviewed articles, which have appeared in academic journals such as AASA Journal of Scholarship & Practice, International Journal of Progressive Education, Academic Leadership Journal, and others. In addition, he has authored and edited a number of books on school reform and school leadership.

Dr. Rashawn Ray is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Maryland, College Park. He received a Ph.D. in Sociology from Indiana University in 2010. From 2010-2012 he was a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Research Scholar at the University of California, Berkeley/UCSF. Ray’s research addresses the mechanisms that manufacture and maintain racial and social inequality. His work also speaks to ways that inequality may be attenuated through racial uplift activism and social policy. Currently, Ray is working on a series projects centered on the intersections of race, class, and gender. Ray is the editor of Race and Ethnic Relations in the 21st Century: History, Theory, Institutions, and Policy. His work has appeared in Ethnic and Racial Studies, American Behavioral Scientist, Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Journal of Higher Education, and Journal of African American Studies. Ray has been awarded funding from the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, American Sociological Association Minority Fellowship Program, Society for the Study of Social Problems, and the Ford Foundation.
Cory Anderson is vice president of Winthorp Rockefeller Foundation, responsible for managing the Foundation’s Program Team and leading the Foundation’s grant-making efforts. Mr. Anderson began working at WRF in 2008 after seven years with the Annie E. Casey Foundation in Baltimore, Maryland, where he worked to support state-level child advocacy organizations. A variety of job experiences prepared him for his work with the Foundation. As a reporter with the Arkansas Gazette, he researched and reported on issues related to school, children, and higher education. His roles as a juvenile probation officer, as a program coordinator for a direct service program that provided an array of services to families and children, and as a state program specialist with the Corporation for National Service with responsibility for 25 AmeriCorps VISTA projects add valuable knowledge and skills. Mr. Anderson also served as an intervention specialist and later as a program specialist with New Futures for Youth. While there, he assisted in the development of a gang intervention program and worked on youth employability issues. In addition to working for the Casey Foundation during his time away from Arkansas, Cory was also manager of partner development at the Forum for Youth Investment in Washington, D.C., engaging national organizations in partnerships designed to strengthen youth work. Mr. Anderson currently serves on the board of directors for Grant-makers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees, the advisory board for College Ready Now, and formerly served on the Health Policy Board of the Arkansas Center for Health Improvement.

Frank Rudy Cooper is a tenured Professor at Suffolk Law School. He is a graduate of Amherst College and Duke University Law School, where he was a staff editor on the Duke Journal of Gender Law & Policy. Prior to entering law teaching, he served as a federal district court judicial clerk, practiced law, and was a teaching assistant at Harvard University, where he won three Derek Bok Center teaching awards. He was previously an Assistant Professor at Villanova University School of Law. Here, he has taught Constitutional Law, Criminal Procedure, Criminal Law, and Race, Gender & Law. A leader in national law professor organizations, Mr. Cooper has served on the Boards of the Society of American Law Teachers, Latina/o Critical Legal Theory, and the John Mercer Langston Writing Workshop, among others. His scholarly interests lie at the intersection of Criminal Procedure, Cultural Studies, Critical Race Feminism, and Masculinities studies, especially as applied to policing of men of color. He has published more than 20 scholarly works, including the co-edited book, Masculinities and the Law a Multidimensional Approach.
Black Media Matters.

3:45pm – 5pm, WCC 2012

With the rise of social media, there are more opportunities to create and disseminate discourse. From Twitter to Facebook to Youtube to the plethora of blogging platforms, there are numerous ways to be heard. While much attention has turned to the more humorous instances involving social media, social media can serve as an important tool in highlighting and documenting serious problems in contemporary society. This panel will focus on the triumphs and challenges that individuals have experienced in using social media to create and control discourse on a variety of pressing social problems.

Moderator

Licia Harper, Founder of the Hip Hop Entertainment Law Project (HHELP)

Panelists

Damon Young is the co-founder and editor-in-chief of VSB Magazine. VSB (Very-SmartBrothas) is a daily digital magazine offering commentary, essay, and humor about news, pop culture, race, and sex. Founded in 2008 by Damon Young, Panama Jackson, and Liz Burr as a culture blog, VSB has won numerous awards and has cultivated a sizable community with its unique brand of witty and irreverent content from Young and Jackson. Mr. Young is also a contributing editor to EBONY Magazine (digital). His work has been featured in numerous publications, including Complex, The Root, Slate, Essence Magazine, and The Pittsburgh Post Gazette.

Panama Jackson is a co-founder and currently the Senior Editor of VSB Magazine. VSB (VerySmartBrothas) is a daily digital magazine offering commentary, essay, and humor about news, pop culture, race, and sex. Founded in 2008 by Damon Young, Panama Jackson, and Liz Burr as a culture blog, VSB has won numerous awards and has cultivated a sizable community with its unique brand of witty and irreverent content from Young and Jackson. Mr. Jackson graduated with a degree in Economics from Morehouse College and a Master’s in Public Policy from the University of Maryland-College Park. He has written for The Washington Post, Ebony.com, The Root, Huffington Post, Allhiphop.com, as well as other outlets. From 2012-2013, Panama was a host on TheBlaqout Show, an internet radio show broadcast via www.blis.fm and has been a special guest on several radio shows, both terrestrial and internet. In 2011, Panama was a special guest on “The Ed Gordon Show” on BET and has helped create and moderate various panel discussions through an arrangement with the Washington Post regarding African-Americans in mass media, relationships, and politics. He currently resides in Washington, DC.

Kimberly Foster is the founder, publisher and editor-in-chief of For Harriet as well as other online media properties for women of color. She created the blog after she noticed the dearth of media outlets focused specifically on the political and social lives of women.
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The Spring Conference Co-Chairs, Jenae Moxie and Lakeisha Williams, would like to thank Harvard BLSA and the Harvard Law School Community for all of its support. We are extremely appreciative of all of our wonderful sponsors, moderators, panelists, and keynote speakers. Your participation in our Conference was indispensable. In addition, we would like to send a very special thank you to all of the individuals who personally pitched in to make this Conference a success. We appreciate the countless hours that you have dedicated, and without you, this Conference would not have been possible.

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