



“The Brooklyn Summer Law Institute’s vision is to instill the confidence and courage to pursue informed ambitions and inspire hope.”

THE SUMMER LAW INSTITUTE AT BROOKLYN LAW SCHOOL

On June 29, 2015, 28 rising ninth graders from across Brooklyn met at Brooklyn Law School for the commencement of their shared summer experience. Dressed in professional attire, they toted handmade collages depicting themselves, their likes, and their interests, and waited nervously to learn what the rest of their summer would look like. The students were beginning Legal Outreach’s Summer Law Institute, a five-week academic program centered on the law.

The Summer Law Institute (SLI) gives students the opportunity to learn about

criminal justice and the criminal trial process. Students are instructed by two law students, who serve as coordinators, and one undergraduate intern. They also meet and listen to a number of attorney guest speakers throughout the month, and attend field trips to various law-related offices every week. In addition, students gain necessary academic and critical thinking skills to help them thrive in high school. The SLI culminates in a very exciting Mock Trial in front of a real judge, during which students have the chance to display their growth and evolution over the course of the summer.

Students are encouraged to strive for excellence, and are repeatedly assured that struggle is a positive and constructive learning experience. They leave the program with a comprehensive knowledge of criminal law, stronger public speaking skills, an improved command of writing, and a greater sense of confidence. The SLI not only inspires them to pursue careers in law, but also to evolve as people.

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Meet the Instructors!

SLI Coordinator



Lauren Johnson is a rising 2L at Brooklyn Law School. She is interested in immigration law and currently resides in Queens, New York.

SLI Coordinator



Jackson Yates is a 2L at New York University School of Law. He is passionate about education, but he also hopes to pursue a career in Entertainment Law.

SLI Intern



Kaveri Sengupta is a rising junior at Columbia University studying Political Science and South Asian Studies. She hails from New York City.



ACADEMICS AND EDUCATION

Throughout the course of the SLI, students took lessons from the “Criminal Justice: Theory and Practice” and the “Criminal Trials: Process and Procedure” curriculums created by Legal Outreach. As a whole, the classes allowed students to develop their analytical and critical thinking skills, as well as their oratorical and writing abilities. Students were required to use facts and evidence to defend any argument they chose to make, which helped them effectively advocate for themselves. During the Criminal Justice lessons, which included topics such as Search and Seizure and Miranda Rights, students learned the basics of criminal law. For Criminal Trials, students were able to explore the nuts and bolts of a criminal trial, including learning about and practicing opening and closing statements, defense and cross examinations, and acting as a witness. These lessons served to prepare the students for the climax of the Summer Law Institute:

the Mock Trial competition!

Students were also given weekly lessons on skills that would help them both in high school and in any rigorous academic environment. These classes included Study and Test-Taking Skills, Essay Writing, Note-Taking, Time Management, and Public Speaking. During each lesson, students explored best practices for each topic and incorporated them into their SLI experience. Students wrote a number of five-paragraph essays over the duration of the summer, and also took comprehensive exams that were often more difficult than any exams they had previously taken in middle school. All students improved their scores on exams and essays during the SLI.





Students with Ms. Janelle Christian, an associate at Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP. A real estate lawyer, she led our students in a rent negotiation activity.



Ms. Chitra Aiyar is the Executive Director at the Sadie Nash Leadership Project and was previously a Senior Staff Attorney at the African Services Committee. She was wonderfully candid with the students and gave them an activity about immigration.



Mr. Ari Joseph is the Diversity Initiatives Manager at Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP. He illustrated realities related to diversity in the workplace, and provided students with a deeper understanding of the issues surrounding it.

“During this summer I got the opportunity to be inspired by so many amazing people in the law field... Every morning I would be really excited to see the guest speakers walk in and speak to us.

-- Ydeline Michel

GUEST SPEAKER SERIES

Students started each morning off with a lesson from a guest speaker. All twelve guest speakers at Brooklyn discussed a variety of topics and areas of law, from immigration to taxes to real estate to criminal law. They discussed their own lives and their paths to involvement in the law, and many also included interactive activities related to their fields for students to engage in. One morning, students acted as immigration lawyers, deciding whether or not to allow certain people into the country. Another day, they stepped into the role of a landlord or a tenant and negotiated a rent price. Guest speakers gave our students the opportunity to hear firsthand about a lawyer's day-to-day life, and in tandem, exposed them to the diversity of career paths available once one graduates with a law degree. They truly inspired the students to build visions for their futures.



Students with Ms. DawnMarie Goins, a Staff Attorney at the U.S. District Court, Pro Se Office. Her talk was the most inspirational for students – she listened closely to their voices and gave her own genuine life and career advice. She told the students fascinating stories about her experiences as a prosecutor and encouraged them to pursue their own ambitions.

FIELD TRIPS

In total, the students attended three field trips hosted by a variety of legal institutions. Each trip focused on a different area of the law, and students were really able to see the law in action! This summer, the Brooklyn SLI visited the New York County District Attorney's Office, New York Life Insurance, and the Children's Law Center.

New York County District Attorney's Office

Students were first treated to a detailed discussion led by an Assistant District Attorney about the criminal trial process. Subsequently, they watched arraignments and a portion of a trial, during which a prosecutor was directly examining one of his witnesses. The defendant in the case had originally been charged with driving while intoxicated, but authorities then discovered that he had actually stolen the car he had been driving. The students were very excited to see the law play out up close.



New York Life Insurance

Over a delicious lunch provided by New York Life Insurance, our students first were able to discuss their interests and ambitions with a group of NYLI lawyers. After that, the students were asked to complete a sale of land and easement negotiation between two celebrity clients. They asked their clients many thoughtful questions, and then came back together to negotiate with each other. Each successful negotiation ended in a handshake and a prize! Lastly, students were taken on a comprehensive tour of the building.

The Children's Law Center

Just a two-minute walk from Brooklyn Law School, CLCNY was a wonderful culmination to our field trip series. Students learned about various aspects of cases involving children, and about the attorneys' responsibilities in defending children. A judge and his court assistant, who had presided over a number of cases related to children, also spoke to them. Finally, students were broken into groups to analyze child-related policies, argue for or against them, and create a new law. They were asked to present their arguments for the group, and were rigorously questioned by the staff at the CLC.



MOCK TRIAL: *STATE V. CARPER*

The Mock Trial Competition is the grand finale of the SLI. Instructors prepared students thoroughly for their roles in the mock trial. This summer, the prosecution needed to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant, John “Kay-B” Carper, intentionally crashed his vintage Rolls Royce into the vehicle driven by his sister-in-law Zorange Coals following their physical altercation in an elevator at the Met Gala.

MOCK TRIAL TEAMS

Prosecution: The People in Suits

Crishna Armstrong
Abigaëlle Estriplet
Tazshane Johnson
Latonya Murphy
Aliyah McMahon
Nyah Rollock
Darren Tan

Defense: The Dream Team

Dienabou Barry
Matthew Benavides
Skyla Brown
India Faulcon Squires
Amber-Reign Forde
Jeremiah Pascal
Tiffany Roger

Prosecution: The Truth and Justice League

Dmitria Baptiste
Sha’Miayah Duncan
Gabriella Holder
Seeya Mangra
Alanys Memeti
Janai McDowell
Alanys Memeti

Defense: Team Innovation

Aaliyah Anderson
Keyana Charles
Maimouna Diallo
Mikkalyn Legaspi
Ydeline Michel
Zaina St. Louis Small
Zariah Tulloch

“I felt most excited when I was at the Mock Trial direct examining Mr. John “Kay-B” Carper. When I was in court, I actually felt alive like I was a real lawyer.”

- Tiffany Roger



“This mock trial is going to be a long lasting memory. I conquered my fear of public speaking and I did my best. I really surprised myself and pushed myself.”

- Abigaëlle Estriplet



Left: The defense and winning team (Team Innovation) with Hon. Pamela Chen at the Mock Trial final round. Top right: Students at the Mock Trial finals. Bottom right: The prosecution team (The Truth and Justice League) at the Mock Trial finals.

STUDENT EXPERIENCES

“The memories I will take away from the SLI would be the relationships I built during this summer. I strengthened relationships and created new ones. Also the relationships I created with the teachers. I will never forget this experience. BLS! Woohoo!”

-- Mikkalyn Legaspi



“I was a very different person when I started SLI, and I have evolved positively. It was a fun and surprising experience I will never forget.”

--Matthew Benavides

“Being in the Legal Outreach program has changed my life. I learned how to be more focused and determined with my work. Before I came, I was quiet and didn’t really participate much. [Now] I am more confident.”

-- Gabriella Holder



“When I first started my reaction was ‘Oh gosh, I can’t handle this, let me drop out,’ but Ms. Johnson, Ms. Sengupta, and Mr. Yates helped me decide that I should stay... SLI has influenced me to seize the day!”

-- India Faulcon Squires



THANK YOU!

Special thanks to **Brooklyn Law School** for hosting the Summer Law Institute, especially **Dean Nicholas Allard, Danielle Sorken, Sophie Maerowitz, and Mercedes Ravelo** for their support and assistance.

Special thanks to the **New York County District Attorney's Office, New York Life Insurance,** and the **Children's Law Center** for hosting our students on field trips.

Special thanks to the **Honorable Darcel Clark**, Appellate Division, First Judicial Department of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, for judging our semifinal rounds of the Mock Trial.

Special thanks to the **Honorable Pamela Chen**, United States District Court Judge for the Eastern District of New York, for judging our final round of the Mock Trial.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Steven Dean – Professor of Law, Brooklyn Law School

DawnMarie Goins – Pro Se Staff Attorney, Southern District of New York

Sasha Linney – Corporate Associate, Debevoise & Plimpton LLP

Ari Joseph – Diversity Initiatives Manager, Fried Frank LLP

April Harris – Partner, Dyer-Harris LLP

Nicholas Allard – Dean, Brooklyn Law School

Francis Balducci – Professor, Queensborough Community College

Janelle Christian – Associate, Fried Frank LLP

Linda Feldman – Professor of Law, Brooklyn Law School

Chitra Aiyar – Executive Director, Sadie Nash Leadership Project

Eliza Orlins – Staff Attorney, Legal Aid Society

BROOKLYN SLI STUDENTS

Aaliyah Anderson – Andries Hudde

Crishna Armstrong – P.S. 189

Dmitria Baptiste – Explore Charter School

Dienabou Barry – North Star Academy

Matthew Benavides – Hunter College High School

Skyla Brown – I.S. 223

Keyana Charles – P.S. 189

Maimouna Diallo – P.S. 189

Sha'Miayah Duncan – M.S. 88

Abigaëlle Estriplet – P.S. 189

Amber-Reign Forde – M.S. 381

India Faulcon Squires – M.S. 381

Gabriella Myah Holder – Explore Charter School

Tazshané Johnson – Brooklyn Prospect Charter School

Mikkalyn Legaspi – M.S. 381

Seeya Mangra – I.S. 171

Janai McDowell – Explore Charter School

Aliyah McMahan – Achievement First Crown Heights M.S.

Alanys Memeti – P.S. 189

Ydeline Michel – P.S. 189

Latonya Murphy – East New York M.S. of Excellence

Jeremiah Pascal – P.S. 189

Tiffany Roger – Andries Hudde

Nyah Rollock – Kings Collegiate Charter School

Zaina St. Louis Small – Andries Hudde

Darren Tan – I.S. 104

Zariah Tulloch – Urban Assembly of Arts and Letters

Basillee Wallerson – M.S. 381