

SUMMER LAW INSTITUTE

Newsletter

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Brooklyn Law School's Summer Law Institute: Inspiring Students to Find Their Academic Passion

For the summer of 2024, 24 bright young students made their way to Brooklyn Law School's campus every day to study the criminal justice system. With a passion to learn threaded into the classroom, these young people grew as scholars every day. Through this intensive five-week program, students were challenged as they studied complex material about the criminal justice system and understood the ins and outs of criminal trial procedure. These students were challenged everyday to rise up beyond their capabilities. They grew their skills through comprehensive lessons, thought-provoking essay writing, weekly exams, and high expectations that transcended their limits.

Legal Outreach also exposed these students to professionalism through daily guest speakers and interactive field trips. Finally, our dazzling students took to the courtroom and participated in a mock trial where they put their newly-found skills to the test.

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Meet the Staff



Chandani Shah
Legal Teaching Fellow

Chandani is a rising 2L at Brooklyn Law School and is from Westchester, NY. At Brooklyn Law School, she is a member of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Honor Society and serves as a 1L delegate for the South Asian Law Students Association. She received her bachelor's degree in Psychology and Philosophy from Boston University. She runs a non-profit organization, United 4 Social Change, where she has served as the lead instructor for a civic leadership workshop for Middle Schoolers for several years. She loves watching Bollywood and trying new food and desserts with her family and friends.



Jesse Levinson
Legal Teaching Fellow

Jesse is a rising 2L at Duke Law School and is from Connecticut. At Duke Law, he serves on the Innocence Project and Jewish Law Students Association's leadership boards, participated in the transactional law competition, and will serve as an orientation leader for the incoming 1L class. He received his bachelor's degree in English from Colgate University, where he graduated with high honors. Prior to beginning law school, he taught middle school English for two years in Chicago. He is a New York sports fan and enjoys reading and cooking.



Ariel Gunnell
Coordinating Intern

Ariel graduated this May from The University of Massachusetts Amherst. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Legal Studies and a Minor in Psychology, and she plans to attend law school in the coming years to focus on Family Law and Juvenile Justice. She has always loved working with young people and was excited that she got to share her passion for the legal field with her students. Ms. Ariel enjoys painting, cooking with friends, and hanging out with her two cats, Zaatara and Zeytin.

Field Trips



Pictured: Students at New York Life Insurance

Our students started to build their sense of professionalism through weekly field trips to court houses and legal institutions. These institutions provided mock legal activities that pushed students to utilize their knowledge of the law in unique new

Guest Speakers



Pictured: Students with Immigration Attorney Charles Brown.

Every Monday through Thursday over the summer our classroom was graced with visits from attorney guest speakers. Thank you for helping expand our students' visions for their futures!

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Field Trips

Thurgood Marshall Courthouse

During this field trip, students got the opportunity to visit and explore the Thurgood Marshall Courthouse. The courthouse's historic ties to Supreme Court justices served as a crucial landmark for the students to learn about the pathways of Supreme Court justices, like Sonia Sotomayor. The students toured the courthouse, observing and reading on the exhibitions. Afterwards, they received an educational lesson about the United States Court System.



New York Life Insurance

Our field trip to New York Life Insurance exposed the students to corporate law contract negotiations. The students were warmly welcomed by the New York Life team who shared the roles they play in the company's success. These motivating stories presented the students with the possibilities for their futures. For the activity, they were presented with a mock contract negotiation for a business deal. They got to negotiate terms like real lawyers and come to agreement via contract.

Mock Trial: Prosecution v. Defense

Students engaged with the knowledge they've learned over the summer through the Mock Trial competition. Inspired by "the slap heard around the world," our case this year was *State v. Smythe*. In this case, Mr. Bill Smythe has been charged with Assault in the Third Degree and Disorderly Conduct after Bill Smythe slapped Rick Stone on live television for cracking disrespectful jokes of his wife, Jamie Blue-Smythe. The case expanded on the source material in order to be trickier for both sides to argue, including adding elements where the Rick Stone character was acting in an intimidating manner towards Ms. Blue-Smythe and adding in that the Bill Smythe character continued aggressively disrupting the night's activities after the slap.



Prosecution

Defense

Angelina Lam
Ava Simoniello
Mouri Bhowmik
Omar John
Omar Thomas
YuChen Yang

Alysha Vega
Cassady Ramkissoon
Cynthia Wong
Janelle Singleton
Karen Yu
Tony Oates

Amreen Nora
Edel Flores-Munoz
Jennifer Yap
Joy Weng
Mandy Zhang
Mohammed Nadir

Adrian Liu
Daniel Garcia
Jack Simoniello
Sherry Lu
Wakif Khan
Yuanming Zhao

The prosecution presented their case, arguing that Mr. Stone was brutally assaulted by Mr. Smythe for no reason and attempted to reject Smythe's self-defense claim by arguing that there was no immediate threat. Defense countered this argument by claiming that as Rick Stone was walking towards the two to apologize, the Smythe's saw it as a threat to physically hurt Jamie, and that Mr. Stone had menacingly stalked over to them with a trophy in hand. The defense's argument hinged on the idea Bill Smythe saw this as a threat and thought that Mr. Stone would try to hurt his wife. During the Finals of the competition, Prosecution and Defense passionately presented their arguments in front of the honorable Attorney Sean Edwards who gave a verdict of guilty.

The Verdict:

GUILTY.

Our Students

I learned a lot. I evolved in a positive way over the summer. At the beginning of the summer I was intimidated but as I got more comfortable I got much more confident, so I tried to take on roles that would bring me out of my shell more. I surprised myself because my team members for the mock trial relied on me which has never happened before. Before this program I had no interest in Law as a career path, but now I'm heavily considering it as a potential career.

-Amreen Nora



I have grown so much in so many ways in these past few weeks, SLI allowed me to adapt to situations better and address my procrastination. SLI has allowed me to evolve into a better me. Not only this but now I can brag that I did "Law School" in 8th grade! Knowing the law is a key factor in the US and SLI allows younger students to learn about it.

- Adrian Liu

Adrian Liu

Alysha Vega

Amreen Nora

Angelina Lam

Ava Simoniello

Cssady Ramkissoo

Cynthia Wong

Daniel Garcia

Edel Flores-Munoz

Jack Simoniello

Janelle Singleton

Jennifer Yap

Joy Weng

Karen Yu

Mandy Zhang

Mohammed Nadir

Mouri Bhowmik

Omar John

Omar Thomas

Sherry Lu

Tony Oates

Wakif Khan

Yuanming Zhao

YuChen Yang

Final Thoughts & Thank You!

Thanks to all the supporters and sponsors that helped make Legal Outreach's Summer Law Institute possible! Over the past five weeks, our students have truly grown into young professionals who are ready for high school and beyond. Your support allowed these young men and women to learn not just about criminal justice, but about the importance of teamwork, confidence, and advocacy. We cannot thank you enough!

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Simpson Thatcher LLP

Guest Speakers

Joy Kanwar, Brooklyn Law School
Elizabeth OuYang, OCA-NY OCA-NY Asian Pacific American Advocates
Matthew Flink, Duke University School of Law
Emily Bass, New York Public Library
Alex Neumann, Duke University School of Law
Megan Carr, New York Lawyers for The Public Interest
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