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Scholars Showcase to Highlight Work on Advancing Access to Justice

CHICAGO, April 19, 2021 - The inaugural cohort of the [American Bar Foundation \(ABF\)/JPB Foundation Access to Justice Scholars](https://www.abfn.org/abf-jpb-foundation-access-to-justice-scholars) will showcase their projects during a virtual event on Saturday, April 24, from 12:00 P.M. to 2:30 P.M. CT. The six faculty scholars will discuss their research, which advances access to justice scholarship and practice across the United States.

Between half to two-thirds of Americans confront at least one civil justice problem, leading to critical negative results, including poverty, unemployment, losing a home and even health problems. Yet, limited knowledge about access to civil justice has prevented many Americans from addressing everyday problems through the law.

[The ABF/JPB Foundation Access to Justice Scholars Program](https://www.abfn.org/abf-jpb-foundation-access-to-justice-scholars) seeks to generate more effective approaches to access to justice that can combat poverty and improve justice for all. The program brings together two cohorts of six Faculty Scholars serving overlapping 15-month terms. The program seeks to support the scholars' research, mentor their progress, and build intellectual relationships needed to grow the access to justice field. The goal is to obtain new knowledge, establish a theoretical and empirical understanding of what is currently happening with access to civil justice, and to create concrete proposals for increasing access that are likely to be effective, scalable, and sustainable.

Over the past year, the first cohort of six ABF/JPB scholars from diverse disciplines have worked to address a variety of civil justice problems in America, including: understanding how people seek legal help on the internet, examining how automated systems will affect access to justice, exploring legal services for medically complex children and their parents, and identifying immigration lawyers and judges and their impact in removal proceedings.

“In the midst of a global pandemic, renewed attention on access to civil justice could not be timelier,” said Program Director Rebecca Sandefur. “With creativity and hard work, these scholars are helping to change the way we solve legal problems, practice law, and seek justice.”

The Showcase will feature the following Access to Justice Scholars:

[Margaret Hagan](#) (Director of the Legal Design Lab, Stanford University) seeks to understand how people obtain legal help on the internet, and what kinds of strategies can most effectively engage them with public legal help.

[Rebecca Johnson](#) (Incoming Assistant Professor in Quantitative Social Science, Dartmouth College) investigates how school districts grapple with ethical dilemmas about whom to help as they navigate legal mandates that conflict with fiscal realities.

[Sarah Lageson](#) (Assistant Professor at Rutgers University-Newark School of Criminal Justice) examines how automated systems will change our understandings of access to justice, the perpetuation of bias and inequality, and effective legal outcomes.

[Erin Paquette](#) (Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine) seeks to describe legal issues in a group of medically complex children who were referred for legal services, explore parental experiences with the medical-legal partnership, and evaluate health outcomes associated with referral to a medical-legal partnership.

[Emily Ryo](#) (Professor of Law and Sociology, USC Gould School of Law) seeks to advance a comprehensive understanding of who immigration lawyers are and the contingent nature of their impact on removal proceedings.

[Kathryne M. Young](#) (Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst) investigates everyday people's legal consciousness—their beliefs and understandings of the law—around seven key civil justice problems.

The event will also feature remarks from: [Rebecca Sandefur](#), Program Director, ABF Faculty Fellow, and professor at [Arizona State University](#); and [Ajay K. Mehrotra](#), ABF Executive Director and Research Professor.

Register for the event [here](#).

Event Schedule

Saturday, April 24, 2021

10:00 AM - 12:30 PM PT

11:00 AM - 1:30 PM MT

12:00 PM - 2:30 PM CT

1:00 PM - 3:30 PM ET

About the American Bar Foundation

The [American Bar Foundation](#) (ABF) is among the world's leading research institutes for the empirical and interdisciplinary study of law. The ABF seeks to expand knowledge and advance justice through innovative, interdisciplinary, and rigorous empirical research on law, legal processes, and legal institutions. To further this mission the ABF will produce timely, cutting-edge research of the highest quality to inform and guide the legal profession, the academy, and society in the United States and internationally. The ABF's primary funding is provided by the [American Bar Endowment](#) and the [Fellows of The American Bar Foundation](#).

About The JPB Foundation

The [JPB Foundation](#) is a private foundation whose mission is to advance opportunity in the United States through transformational initiatives that empower those living in poverty, enrich and sustain our environment, and enable pioneering medical research.