



## Call for Papers

**Courts Igniting Change: Reconnecting Youth from the *Courtroom* to the *Classroom* at Seattle University on October 10, 2014, sponsored by the Minority and Justice Commission, the Seattle Journal of Social Justice, the Korematsu Center for Law and Equality, the Washington State Partnership Council on Juvenile Justice, and TeamChild.**

Much national and local attention has been given to what has been coined the “School to Prison Pipeline.” Fueling concern are the disparities that youth of color, youth in poverty, and youth with disabilities experience in school discipline practices, and the poor educational and life outcomes associated with it. Many efforts are underway to improve school climates, reduce zero tolerance practices, retool the role of law enforcement in schools, and transform school discipline codes.

**This conference focuses on the courts’ role in this phenomenon.**

In our current system, school discipline routinely ends up in juvenile courts. While the goal is to get students back on track and in school, court involvement has the effect of exacerbating the disconnection and disengagement of students who end up in court. Time in and out of detention and required appearance at multiple court dates create challenges for attendance, continuity, and staying on track academically.

Courts can play an important role in redirecting and reconnecting court-involved youth to educational and social supports in their communities. But they cannot do it alone. This conference provides an opportunity for stakeholders to explore and develop collaborative solutions to improve educational outcomes for youth involved in or at risk of becoming involved in the juvenile justice system.

This conference addresses the relationship between the school to prison pipeline phenomenon to jurisprudence and lawyering. The conference builds on a burgeoning body of work devoted to 1) limiting the forms and effects of placing youths in prisons, 2) advocating for more just ways of treating youths, and 3) critiquing the ways that the juvenile justice system funnels youths from schools to prisons.

A survey of law professors, criminal court lawyers, and community activists reveals mounting frustration with how the law often serves as a tool that funnels youths from schools to prisons. This conference will include presentations and workshops focused on racial disproportionality in school discipline and in the juvenile justice system; forms of diverting youth away from courts; negative impacts that detention has on youth and the growing Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) movement; models for reengagement of youth in education after court involvement, including collaboration between courts and community partners; reducing educational disruption; and building consensus around the court as a leverage point.

*Courts Igniting Change* organizers invite stakeholders and scholars to submit 250-500 word abstracts describing traditional or non-traditional academic paper topics to be delivered at the conference. In accord with the Seattle Journal of Social Justice’s tradition of publishing creative work alongside scholarship, we also welcome abstract proposals for fiction, non-fiction, or visual art. All proposals should concern:

The courts as a leverage point where judges, attorneys, administrators, and other stakeholders have the power to stop the flow of the school to prison pipeline through

- Prosecutorial discretion;
- Defense strategies;
- Civil litigation strategies;
- Judicial discretion; and/or
- Alternative and collaborative administration of the juvenile justice system.

Proposals may focus on how these mechanisms can address racial and economic disproportionality in the juvenile justice system; collateral consequences and educational and life outcomes after involvement with the juvenile justice system; redirection of youth away from criminal activity; reengagement of court-involved youth in education; and other issues stemming from the school to prison pipeline

**Submissions of the 250-500 word abstracts should be sent to the following email address: [sjsjcontent@seattleu.edu](mailto:sjsjcontent@seattleu.edu).**

**Abstract submissions must be received by August 22, 2014, for consideration by the conference committee. The proposals selected for presentation will be announced in September.**

**Final papers will be due on November 24, 2014.**