



Call for Papers

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

A lot of national and local attention has been given to what is known as the "School to Prison Pipeline." This conference will address concerns over the injustices that youth of color, youth in poverty, and youth with disabilities experience in school and in over-referral into the juvenile justice system, and the negative consequences those experiences have later in life. Many efforts are underway to improve the school environment, reduce zero tolerance practices, change the role of law enforcement in schools, and change school discipline codes.

The focus of this conference is on the courts' role in ending the "School to Prison Pipeline."

In our current system, youth often end up in juvenile courts when they misbehave in school. While the stated goal of court involvement is to get youth back on track and in school, court involvement often has the opposite effect. Putting youth in and out of juvenile detention and requiring youth to appear for multiple court dates create challenges for youth to attend school regularly and stay on track academically.

Courts can play an important role in getting youth back on track in school and in connecting with social supports in their communities, but they cannot do it alone. This conference provides an opportunity for all of the stakeholders to explore and develop 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 and the law. It is part of a discussion that (1) examines the effects of involving youth in the court system and placing youth in prisons, (2) critiques the current ways that the juvenile justice system funnels youth from schools to prisons, and (3) advocates for more just ways of treating youth.

Judges, law professors, criminal court lawyers, community activists, and, of course, youth are concerned and frustrated with the ways the law harms rather than protects or supports youth. This conference will include presentations and workshops focused on racial disproportionality in school discipline and in the juvenile justice system; forms of redirecting youth away from courts; the negative impacts that detention has on youth and the growing Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) movement; models for getting youth re-integrated into schools after court involvement, including teamwork between courts and community partners; reducing educational disruption; and building consensus that courts should be tools for change.

Courts Igniting Change organizers invite youth to submit articles, creative writing, or works of art concerning their experiences with school discipline, the law, the court system, and/or juvenile detention. This can be in the form of articles, stories, poems, rap/song lyrics, drawings/paintings, or any other forms of expression. A selection of submissions will be chosen for publication in the Spring 2015 issue of the Seattle Journal for Social Justice. Being published is a huge honor and is an opportunity to be recognized in the community. Youth whose submissions are chosen will also receive a \$100 Amazon.com gift certificate and may be invited to present to judges from all over the state at the conference on October 10th, 2014.

Submissions of these pieces should be sent to the following email address: sjsjcontent@seattleu.edu.

Submissions should be submitted by September 7, 2014 to be considered for presentation at the conference. Submissions must be received by November 7, 2014, for consideration for publication in the Seattle Journal for Social Justice.

If you have any questions, please contact one of our two Content Development Editors, Rachel Bryant at bryantr@seattleu.edu, and Andrés Muñoz at munoza@seattleu.edu.

Thank you and we look forward to seeing your submissions.