

THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
SOUTHERN CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS | MAY 2019



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Carol F. Lee & David Seipp

The Human Rights Report

Annual Newsletter of the
Southern Center for Human Rights
May 2019

The **Southern Center for Human Rights (SCHR)** is working for equality, justice, and dignity in our criminal justice system. Our mission is to end capital punishment, mass incarceration, and other criminal justice practices that are used to control the lives of poor people, people of color, and other marginalized groups in the Southern United States. We do this through death penalty representation, impact litigation, policy advocacy, and public education.



Cover Image: Former SCHR client Garin Daniel embraces his two sons on the day of his release. Mr. Daniel served 12 years in prison for a nonviolent drug offense.

Mr. Daniel is pictured above with SCHR attorney Atteeyah Hollie and Investigator Nick Barber.

Turn to page 7 for more on our work challenging excessive sentencing.

From the Executive Director

Power without love is reckless and abusive.

At the Southern Center for Human Rights, we see manifestations of reckless and abusive power throughout the criminal legal system. We see it in our country's addiction to incarceration. We see it in the over-detention of immigrants and people of color as well as people struggling with addiction or mental illness. We see it in the ways that private prison and probation companies are making bank on the backs of our most vulnerable.

We see it especially in our nation's use of solitary confinement inside prisons and jails. In Georgia, harsh and horrible conditions of solitary confinement prompted us to litigate on behalf of the men trapped in these dark cells for many years.

This practice of locking people away for years on end is both cruel and entirely counterproductive to the goals of public safety and rehabilitation. It is void of love and void of justice. Thanks to your support, SCHR can bring love and justice to confront power.

We also see reckless and abusive power in the ways that our system criminalizes people for being poor and for being people of color. Every day, we see proof that the kind of justice a person gets varies dramatically depending on the color of their skin and the amount of money they have.

Our cash bail system is designed to permit people with means to purchase their release from jail while those without money must languish. This is wrong. This is power unchecked. And thanks to your support, SCHR is working to end this unjust system.

We see countless incidents during which the power of law enforcement becomes abusive. This is particularly problematic when the target of this abuse is our youth. SCHR filed a lawsuit on behalf of 64 young people who were attending a party in Cartersville, Georgia, only to be arrested, detained for days, strip-searched, and further humiliated—all because one small bag of marijuana was found.

And there may be no greater a perversion of power in our legal system than the racism that

JUSTICE = POWER + LOVE

“Power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic. **Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice**, and **justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love.**”

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
From *Where Do We Go From Here*

infects every part of it, from arrest to detention to sentencing and everything in between. With your support, we are fighting back against race discrimination in death penalty cases and by challenging extreme sentencing practices that are carried out almost exclusively against people of color.

Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love.

At SCHR, we believe that love is respecting the humanity and dignity of all people. Love is a desire for every person to have a full range of opportunities. Love is believing that every person's life is worth more than their worst moments. We believe that love in action is using our power to push back against abusive, corrupt, reckless power.

Implementing Dr. King's charge leads us to a simple equation: **Justice = Power + Love.**

Your gifts, your friendship, and your encouragement builds our power, fortifies our love, and supports our work to grow justice. Your generosity makes all our work possible.

Thank you for your partnership. We look forward to making you proud. Together, may we realize our full potential and implement the true demands of justice.

With hope,

Sara J. Totonchi
Executive Director



Judge Orders New Trial for Johnny Gates

In what the Atlanta Journal-Constitution described as a “searing decision,” the Muscogee County Superior Court granted SCHR client Johnny Gates a new trial in January 2019. Mr. Gates, a black man, was convicted and sentenced to death by an all-white jury in 1977 after the prosecutors struck all of the black qualified prospective jurors from serving on the jury.

The decision followed a two-day hearing at which SCHR and co-counsel from the Georgia Innocence Project presented newly discovered DNA evidence showing that Mr. Gates did not commit the crime. SCHR attorneys and co-counsel also presented evidence of systematic race discrimination in Mr. Gates’s trial and other capital trials in Columbus, Georgia in the late 1970s.

The court granted Mr. Gates a new trial based on the exculpatory DNA evidence. In 2015, interns from the Georgia Innocence Project discovered that the Muscogee County District Attorney’s Office still possessed critical physical evidence from the case—specifically, the ties that were used by the perpetrator to bind the victim during the 1977 murder. Because of the way in which the crime occurred, the perpetrator would have left their DNA on the evidence. However, testing revealed that Mr. Gates’s DNA was not on the items. The court found the exclusion of Mr.

Gates’s DNA “material” and “exculpatory.”

The court also made extensive factual findings about the “undeniable,” “systematic,” and “pervasive” race discrimination that infected Mr. Gates’s trial from the start. There were four black prospective jurors who were qualified to serve on Mr. Gates’s jury, and the prosecutors used peremptory strikes to exclude all four. The court found that the prosecutor’s jury selection notes, which Mr. Gates obtained in 2018, “demonstrate a purposeful and deliberate strategy to exclude black citizens and obtain all-white juries.” The court also found that the same prosecutors struck black qualified prospective jurors in numerous other cases and then “used racially charged arguments to the all-white juries they secured.”

The State has filed a notice of appeal, so the case remains pending. Mr. Gates has spent the past 42 years in prison. He served 26 of those years on death row, but he was resentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole in 2003.

Mr. Gates is represented by SCHR attorneys Patrick Mulvaney and Katherine Moss, along with Clare Gilbert of the Georgia Innocence Project.



SCHR attorney Patrick Mulvaney presents evidence of Muscogee County prosecutors’ history of race discrimination in jury selection.

SCHR Reaches Settlement to Reform One of the “Harshest and Most Draconian” Solitary Confinement Units in the Nation

SCHR and co-counsel Kilpatrick Townsend secured a significant victory for people housed in some of the “most draconian” conditions in the country. **A classwide settlement with the Georgia Department of Corrections in *Gumm v. Sellers*, 5:15-CV-41 (M.D. Ga.) could effectively abolish solitary confinement in the notorious Special Management Unit (SMU) at the Georgia Diagnostic & Classification Prison in Jackson, Georgia.**

The *Gumm* case began in 2015 when Timothy Gumm and a dozen other people held in the 192-cell SMU mailed a series of pro se complaints to the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Georgia. They alleged that they were being held in a severe form of solitary confinement—sealed for an average of more than 23 hours per day inside specially designed isolation cells.

In October 2016, the District Court appointed SCHR to serve as counsel for Mr. Gumm. SCHR sought class certification, after which attorneys C. Allen Garrett, James F. Bogan, Tamara Serwer Caldas, and Chris W. Haaf of Kilpatrick Townsend entered the case as co-counsel for Mr. Gumm and the putative class. The litigation team engaged in extensive discovery; they conducted 16 depositions, reviewed thousands of pages of records, interviewed dozens of prisoners, and toured the Special Management Unit with Dr. Craig Haney, a leading expert on solitary confinement.

In May 2018, Dr. Haney submitted an expert report describing the SMU as among “the harshest and most draconian” in the nation. He warned that the conditions there presented a “risk of very serious psychological harm” to prisoners, two of whom had committed suicide in the preceding year. To protect their clients, SCHR and Kilpatrick Townsend moved for a preliminary injunction. They supported the motion with over 2,000 pages of records, including official records

documenting the neglect of class members and detailed declarations of 25 class members describing their experiences. Class members compared their confinement to being in a “tomb,” “casket,” or “torture chamber.” A significant number of them had considered or attempted suicide while housed in the unit.

During preparations for an evidentiary hearing on the preliminary injunction motion, the parties reached a settlement. In October 2018, they agreed on a general framework for resolving the case.

On December 21, 2018, the parties reached an agreement that, if properly implemented, would effectively abolish solitary confinement in the SMU. Specifically, the agreement provides for four hours of daily out-of-cell time five days per week, computer tablets, periodic mental health evaluations, and improved programming opportunities for all class members. The agreement further established a 24-month cap on how long prisoners generally could be held in the unit.

On January 17, 2019, the District Court preliminarily approved the settlement agreement. Class members were given notice of the agreement and an opportunity to comment on it, and SCHR began monitoring the state’s compliance. On April 30, 2019, the parties submitted a proposed consent order in federal court, and we are awaiting final approval of the settlement.

Numerous people worked on this case, including SCHR investigators Mary Sidney Harbert, Caitlin Childs, Alicia Rabideau, and Maya Chaudhuri; and SCHR attorneys Aaron Littman, Ryan Primerano, Sarah Geraghty, and Akiva Freidlin.



A solitary confinement cell inside the Georgia Diagnostic & Classification Prison.

SCHR Defends Historic Bail Reform in Atlanta

Cash bail reform is a key national issue among communities seeking to end mass incarceration. SCHR supports this movement as part of our quest to end the criminalization of race and poverty.

In February 2018, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms signed as her first piece of legislation an ordinance that drastically reforms cash bail practices in Atlanta. The passage of the new law was the culmination of years of community organizing by groups like Southerners on New Ground, Women on the Rise and Racial Justice Action Center, coupled with the threat of impact litigation by SCHR. We celebrate this as a peoples' victory because Atlantans of all walks of life were critical in bringing about the unanimous city council vote.

Atlanta Ordinance 18-O-1045 requires the Department of Corrections to release most people accused of non-violent offenses without the condition that they purchase their freedom. This resulted in the community saving over \$3.1 million dollars that would have otherwise gone to the jail or bail industry in just a six-month period.

Since February 2018, our community has weathered attacks from not only the bail

industry, but also council members and other officials who aim to return to the status quo. In September 2018, SCHR supported community organizations in defending the bail reform before city council, when the law underwent a six-month review.

SCHR defended Atlanta's reform on the state level to defeat Senate Bill 452, which not only unjustly targeted immigrant communities but also outlawed the brand of bail reform passed in Atlanta. Finally, in February and March of 2019, SCHR and our community partners defeated two proposed state bills that would have made Atlanta's bail reform legislation illegal.

SCHR is committed to strengthening our partnership with community organizations looking to bring liberation to the inhabitants of Atlanta while using our own legal and economic resources to facilitate broader reform. We also look forward to bringing the promise of bail reform to other cities and counties in Georgia who want to reimagine their practices.



SCHR's Community Engagement & Movement Building Counsel Tiffany Williams Roberts testifies before the Atlanta City Council's Public Safety Committee along with community members in defense of bail reform.

Photo Credit

ATL Channel 26,
September 25, 2018.

After 19 Years, SCHR Client Christopher Williams Returns Home

Over the past few years, SCHR attorneys have represented and secured the resentencing and release of over 20 men serving exceedingly long recidivist sentences—often life without parole (LWOP) or the practical equivalent—for non-violent offenses involving small quantities of drugs. On average, these men spent over 16 years in prison. Last winter, SCHR expanded this project to include non-drug offenses by taking on the case of Christopher Williams, a 43-year-old black man who had served 19 years in prison for his participation in the armed robbery of a liquor store. During the offense, Mr. Williams took \$26. He did not have a weapon, no shots were fired, and no one was injured. **Although his only significant prior conviction had occurred when he was a teenager, he was sentenced to life in prison without parole.**

SCHR attorneys contacted Sherry Boston, the District Attorney for DeKalb County, Georgia, on Mr. Williams's behalf. They presented evidence that Mr. Williams's sentence was an outlier, including data showing that Mr. Williams was the only one of fourteen people serving life without parole sentences for armed robbery from the county who had been unarmed, while hundreds of people convicted in the county of murder were serving lesser sentences. Based on Mr. Williams's excellent disciplinary and work history while incarcerated, the support of the prosecutor who had tried his case, and a change in the law recognizing that prosecutors should have discretion to agree to reduced sentences even in recidivist cases, District Attorney Boston agreed that Mr. Williams had served enough time. On December 20, Judge Asha Jackson granted Mr. Williams's unopposed extraordinary motion for a new trial and resentenced him, resulting in his immediate release.

District Attorney Boston hosted a press conference after the resentencing at which she explained to gathered reporters that she supported



Christopher Williams stands center with his attorneys Patrick Mulvaney and Aaron Littman.

resentencing because misguided “tough-on-crime” policies have led to mass incarceration. She also encouraged other prosecutors across the state to take a second look at similar cases in their jurisdictions. Acknowledging that the victim had opposed her decision, she stated firmly that, regardless, releasing Mr. Williams was the “fair and just” thing to do.

Mr. Williams has done very well in the months since his return home. He is living with his mother, and he quickly found employment after completing his required community service in a fraction of the time allotted. SCHR celebrates Mr. Williams's success and looks forward to seeing other clients serving excessive recidivist sentences return to their families.

Mr. Williams was represented by Managing Attorney Patrick Mulvaney and Staff Attorney Aaron Littman with consultation from Senior Staff Attorney Atteeyah Hollie and Senior Fellow Joe Loveland. Interns Sarah Blair and Anna Leigh Keith also provided invaluable assistance.

CASE UPDATE

SCHR Represents Peaceful Protestors Arrested at Georgia's Capitol Building

Georgians went to the ballot box this past November in an unprecedented gubernatorial race between Republican Brian Kemp and Democrat Stacey Abrams. For days following the election, the race remained too close to call. On November 13, 2018, Georgia lawmakers held a special session at Georgia's Capitol building in Atlanta. There, peaceful protesters led by Southerners on New Ground congregated to demand the State count every vote.

When chants of "count every vote" broke out among demonstrators, law enforcement began arresting the peaceful protestors, including arresting first-term Democratic State Senator Nikema Williams, D-Atlanta, as she stood with her constituents. A total of 15 peaceful protestors were handcuffed, placed in the back of a paddy wagon, and taken to Fulton County Jail where they were booked and charged with disruption and obstruction of justice.

SCHR attorneys and investigators, along with other organizers and local attorneys, immediately assembled at the jail in order to facilitate the release of the protesters. In the following days, SCHR, along with partner organizations, assisted in the arrangement

of pro bono services for each of the protestors who wanted legal representation. SCHR attorneys have the privilege of representing multiple clients as well as serving as co-counsel with solo practitioners and law firms from across the city.

Currently, the cases remain pending in Fulton County State Court, and all protestors are free from jail on bond. SCHR will continue to defend the right to freely assemble and peacefully demonstrate.

The Capitol protestors are represented by SCHR attorneys Ruby-Beth Buitekant, Sarah Geraghty, Atteeyah Hollie, Princeton Hynes, Mark Loudon-Brown, Katherine Moss, and Tiffany Williams Roberts. Outside counsel includes SCHR Board Member Mawuli Davis, Jeff Filipovits, Tatiana Lima, Fallon McClure, Don Samuel, and Gary Spencer.



Peaceful protestors led by Southerners on New Ground gather at the Georgia Capitol to demand the State count every vote during the 2018 gubernatorial race.

Photo Credit
CBS 46, November 14, 2018

Lawsuit Challenges the Mass Arrest of 60+ Partygoers in Cartersville, Georgia

On March 11, 2019, SCHR filed a lawsuit on behalf of 64 young people who were unlawfully detained, searched, and arrested after police found less than an ounce of marijuana at a birthday party in Cartersville Georgia. 85% of the party guests were people of color.

On December 31, 2017, several Cartersville police officers were sent to investigate a call concerning suspected gunshots. While in the area, the officers allegedly smelled marijuana (even though their patrol car windows were rolled up) coming from a home that four black men were standing in front of. Upon seeing the four black men, the officers—acting pursuant to city policy—entered the home without consent, a warrant, or any emergency circumstance that would have allowed their warrantless entry.

Once inside the home, the officers announced that no one was free to leave. After detaining everyone present, they found less than an ounce of marijuana in the home. Though a subsequent search of every party guest yielded no contraband, the officers took the party guests to jail.

Upon arriving at the jail, everyone was strip-



Plaintiff Nija Clark is a 22-year-old single mom who lost her job after media coverage of the mass arrest.



sought in front of multiple officers and crammed into cold holding tanks. Some were placed in solitary confinement after complaining about their treatment. Others were denied proper medical care for seizures, diabetes, and other medical conditions.

Twelve days after the mass arrest, the Bartow County District Attorney dismissed all charges against the 64 party guests. Damage to the plaintiffs' lives, livelihoods, and reputations, however, had already been done. After leaving jail, plaintiffs returned home to find their booking photos and details surrounding the mass arrest circulating on the internet and social media. The highly-publicized arrests caused widespread humiliation and public ridicule. Some plaintiffs lost existing jobs, scholarships, or had their military enlistment deferred. One plaintiff lost a brand-new job and had to frequent food pantries to feed her 1-year-old son while she searched for employment. Another, who hoped to attend college on a basketball scholarship, was no longer allowed to play on his high school's team.

This is SCHR's second class action lawsuit in the last two years challenging unlawful police practices in Georgia. In 2017, SCHR filed *K.P. v. Hobby*, a federal class action lawsuit challenging the unlawful search of 900 high school students at the direction of the Worth County sheriff. No drugs were found during the mass search, and the lawsuit resulted in a \$3 million settlement for those students.

The lawsuit was filed against the city of Cartersville, as well as members of the Cartersville Police Department, Bartow-Cartersville Drug Task Force, and Bartow County sheriff's office.

This case is led by SCHR attorneys Gerry Weber, Atteeyah Hollie, and Ebony Brown along with SCHR investigator Alicia Rabideau. John and Ashleigh Merchant of The Merchant Law Firm, PC serve as co-counsel on this case.

CASE UPDATE

SCHR Reaches Settlement in Private Probation Challenge

In July 2017, SCHR sued predatory probation company Sentinel Offender Services for collecting unlawful fees from thousands of probationers.

From 2006 to 2017, Sentinel contracted with the Atlanta Municipal Court to supervise people sentenced to “pay-only probation.” This means people were placed on probation only because they could not immediately pay the fines for their minor offenses, usually traffic violations. SCHR attorneys Sarah Geraghty and Akiva Freidlin discovered Sentinel was charging a \$20 “enrollment fee” in addition to monthly, court-ordered supervision fees. The unauthorized “enrollment fee” directly violated a state law passed in 2015 to address widespread abuses in the misdemeanor probation system. With co-counsel from Caplan Cobb LLP, SCHR brought a class action lawsuit against Sentinel on behalf of named plaintiffs Stacy Adams, Jerry Saint Vil, and the other 2,350 individuals who were charged the illegal fee in 2015 and 2016.

Soon after SCHR and attorneys from Caplan Cobb filed suit, Sentinel agreed to a classwide settlement that included refunding each illegally collected fee and paying an additional \$33 in damages to each class member. SCHR

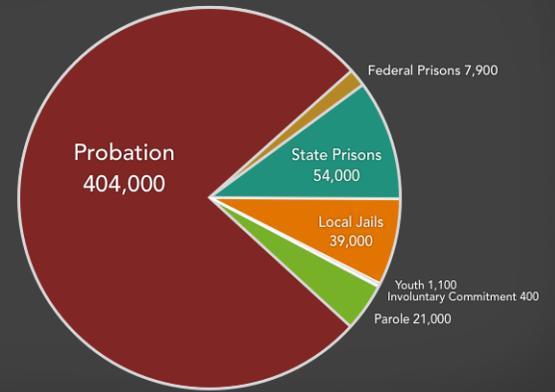
investigators Maya Chaudhuri, Caitlin Childs, and Alicia Rabideau spent months tracking down as many potential class members as possible. Ultimately, 479 individuals opted into the class.

In December 2018, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia held a fairness hearing and granted final approval to the settlement.

In its prime, Sentinel was one of the largest probation companies in the country and had contracts with 71 courts in Georgia. Today, due to the restrictions of recent laws and the lawsuits that have held this company accountable, Sentinel no longer operates in Georgia.

How many people are in Georgia’s criminal justice system?

527,000 Georgia residents are behind bars or under criminal justice supervision.



PRISON POLICY INITIATIVE

Sources and data notes: See <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/correctionalcontrol2018.html>

Of the 527,000 Georgia residents behind bars or under criminal justice supervision, 404,000 are on probation.

Photo Credit

“Correctional Control 2018: Incarceration and Supervision by State”, Prison Policy Initiative

SCHR attorneys Sarah Geraghty and Akiva Freidlin discovered Sentinel was charging a \$20 “enrollment fee” in addition to monthly, court-ordered supervision fees.

HIGHLIGHT

SCHR Co-Presents Inaugural Training on Litigating Expert Testimony in Georgia

On March 8-9, SCHR, in conjunction with the Innocence Project, the National Criminal Defense College, and the Georgia Public Defender Council, hosted the first-ever forensic evidence-focused trial training in Georgia, entitled “Litigating Expert Testimony in Georgia: Making Harper Motions & Cross-Examining Experts.”

The motivation for the training was a statute that renders Georgia unique among all states. The statute says that in criminal cases, where a client’s life and liberty are at stake, expert forensic evidence—regardless of its reliability—“shall always be admissible.” Meanwhile, in civil cases, where a wealthy defendant’s money is at stake, forensic evidence must be proven reliable pursuant to the multi-factor *Daubert* test to be admissible. The effect of this unjust criminal/civil distinction is that in Georgia, indigent criminal defendants face trials for their lives involving “poor people science,” whereas corporate Georgia enjoys trials that only permit real science. This is a critical problem because misapplication of forensic science is a contributing factor to almost half of all DNA exonerations in this country.

The two-day training was the first step in an effort to abolish the criminal/civil distinction through litigation and legislation. It brought together more than 100 defense attorneys from all over Georgia and more than 20 faculty members, including Barry Scheck (co-founder of the Innocence Project) and Linda Kenney Baden (attorney for Aaron Hernandez).

SCHR attorney Mark Loudon-Brown, along with Willkie Farr partner Jim Dugan, lectured on how to make due process and equal protection challenges to the disparity between the criminal and civil standards, and they distributed a model motion created with the assistance of SCHR fellow Joe Loveland. Participants also practiced cross-examining forensic experts played by local actors.

SCHR hopes that this training will be a springboard to correct Georgia’s unjust criminal standard and change the narrative statewide in the ongoing challenge to unreliable forensic science.



Faculty of Litigating Expert Testimony in Georgia: Making Harper Motions & Cross-Examining Experts

FEATURE



A WEEK AT THE SOUTHERN CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

ALABAMA

- 1 Interviewed witnesses in a capital case in Northwest Alabama.
- 2 Met with a journalist to discuss allegations of misconduct in a jail.
- 3 Successfully advocated for a client's release at a hearing in front of the Alabama parole board.
- 4 Assisted a state senator in shaping the language of a piece of legislation to increase sheriff accountability.
- 5 Visited an Alabama jail to continue SCHR's monitoring of jail conditions.
- 6 Visited the elementary school of a client in order to obtain client's records.
- 7 Visited a client on death row.

GEORGIA

- 1 Advocated for a detained man who needed glasses and was not provided them by the jail until SCHR's intervention.
- 2 Met with clients held in Georgia's SMU to ensure compliance with the terms of a settlement agreement regarding solitary confinement.
- 3 Testified at a committee hearing at the Capitol, successfully convincing legislators to amend key provisions of a bill.
- 4 Watched court in Northwest Georgia as part of our ongoing investigation into private probation companies.
- 5 Observed court proceedings in several Southeast Georgia courts as part of an investigation of the criminalization of poverty.
- 6 Investigated multiple complaints of police misconduct and overcrowding in a jail in North Georgia.
- 7 Partnered with a local organization to host a criminal justice reform education and advocacy training.

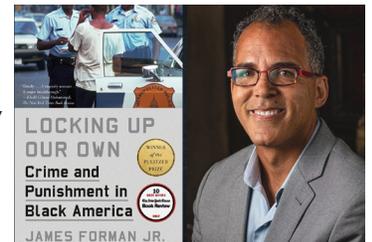
SOUTHERN CENTER EVENTS

06/06

SPEAKER SERIES | ATLANTA | JUNE 6 @ 6:30 PM
James Forman, Jr., author of *Locking Up Our Own*

In partnership with the Auburn Avenue Research Library, The Baton Foundation, and Gideon's Promise

Location: Auburn Avenue Research Library



James Forman, Jr. is a leading critic of mass incarceration and its disproportionate impact on people of color. In *Locking Up Our Own*, he seeks to understand the war on crime that began in the 1970s and why it was supported by many African American leaders in the nation's urban centers.

09/11

DECRIMINALIZING RACE & POVERTY SYMPOSIUM
ATLANTA | SEPT. 11 @ 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Location: Georgia State University College of Law



SCHR's Decriminalizing Race & Poverty Symposium explores the impact of the criminalization of race and poverty and ways to end these policies and practices. Panelists will explore individual and organizational approaches to challenging mass incarceration, strategies to dismantle bail, arrest policies that negatively impact the poor, and more.

11/07

SAVE THE DATE

2019 FREDERICK DOUGLASS AWARDS DINNER
WASHINGTON, DC

THURS., NOV. 7 @ 6:00 PM

Location: Conrad Washington DC Hotel



The Frederick Douglass Awards Dinner is SCHR's flagship gala to recognize and celebrate those who demonstrate exceptional courage and tenacity in the defense of human rights and equal justice.

To RSVP for future events, please visit ww.schr.org.

2018 Frederick Douglass Awards Dinner

October 23, 2018



2018 San Francisco Benefit & Reception

December 8, 2018



2019 New York Benefit

March 13, 2019



2019 Justice Taking Root Benefit Reception

May 7, 2019



You can find more event photos on our Facebook page!



Donor Spotlight

Carol F. Lee & David J. Seipp

SOUTHERN
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RIGHTS

Street NW • www.schr.org



Carol F. Lee is Special Counsel at Taconic Capital Advisors, and **David J. Seipp** is a legal historian and Professor of Law at Boston University School of Law.

Carol and David have been married for over 20 years and donors to SCHR for just as long.

Q How did you first become interested in supporting the work of the Southern Center for Human Rights?

A (Carol Lee) The path led from one social justice icon to another. I clerked for Judge J. Skelly Wright of the D.C. Circuit, who had desegregated the New Orleans public schools against fierce local resistance and wrote landmark opinions on the D.C. Circuit on consumer protection, tenants' rights, and environmental law. After Judge Wright died, his widow Helen selected Yale as the place for his memorial, because at a time when the Judge was ostracized and embattled in New Orleans, Yale had awarded him an honorary degree that meant a great deal to him. A public interest fellowship was established at Yale Law School in Judge Wright's name, with the goal of bringing public interest lawyers working in the trenches to the ivory tower to teach and inspire the students. A graduate of YLS, I was a member of the donors' committee. At the suggestion of philanthropist Phil Stern, Steve Bright was one of the first J. Skelly Wright Fellows we recommended to YLS. Steve was (and still is) an inspirational teacher and champion of justice. Yale has invited him back again and again to teach a seminar on the death penalty. In appreciation of Steve Bright's work, I started contributing to SCHR in 1995.

Q What part(s) of SCHR's work is the most compelling to you?

A (Carol and David) The Southern Center's tireless, courageous death penalty defense work and, more recently, its efforts to end the criminalization of poverty.

Q Why have you chosen to support SCHR so consistently?

A (Carol and David) The needs are so great, and SCHR uses its resources so effectively and efficiently.

Q Would you encourage others to support SCHR? If so, what would you tell them?

A (David Seipp) Thinking about SCHR, I recall some words that Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., said more than a century ago. One may "live greatly in the law," Holmes said, may practice law with "heroism," may "wear one's heart out after the unattainable." ("The Profession of the Law", Feb. 17, 1886). But many of us trained in the law don't live up to Holmes's challenge. Equal justice for all is a goal that looks unattainable in every age, and many of us immersed in the legal profession can see little beyond the next deadline and the assignment after that. The lawyers and staff of SCHR do live greatly in the law. They do engage in this noble work of equal justice. By learning about the work that SCHR does, by giving encouragement to that work, we supporters can feel that we assist and share a little bit in their dedication and commitment. SCHR is an exceptionally worthy [organization] that deserves your support. Meet the staff and hear them talk about their work. You will be inspired and will, if only in a small and vicarious way, live greatly in the law.

FUND OUR MISSION

GOAL



SCHR is waging a campaign to end extreme drug sentences. To date, we have persuaded prosecutors and judges to resentence over 20 people to terms that would allow them to immediately be released from prison.

We are expanding this campaign to include other felony offenses for which the sentence is disproportionate to the crime committed.

THE CHALLENGE

Many of our clients are released **without any official state identification** sufficient to obtain a job, housing, public benefits, or other necessities.

Formerly incarcerated people are almost **10 times more likely to be homeless** than the general public.

Formerly incarcerated people are **unemployed at a rate of over 27%** — higher than the total U.S. unemployment rate during any historical period.

OUR SOLUTION

SCHR will **hire a full-time advocate** to help our clients access critical social services that are vital to establishing independence and staving off homelessness and recidivism.

GOAL

We need **your help** to raise **\$100,000** to fund this position.
Make your contribution at www.schr.org/fundreentry today!

STAFF

We are pleased to welcome **Mike Admirand, Ebony J. Brown, Ruby-Beth Buitekant, Caitlin Childs, Princeton Hynes, Ben Minor, and Alicia Rabideau** to our team!



Sara J. Totonchi
Executive Director



Mike Admirand
Staff Attorney



Nick Barber
Richardson Postgraduate
Public Service Fellow



Ira Berkley
Intake Specialist



Ebony J. Brown
Staff Attorney



**Ruby-Beth
Buitekant**
Public Policy Fellow



Caitlin Childs
Investigator



**Marissa
McCall Dodson**
Public Policy Director



Sarah Forte
Senior Investigator



Terrica Redfield Ganzy
Deputy Director



Sarah Geraghty
Managing Attorney
Impact Litigation



Patricia Hale
Administrative Assistant



Atteeyah Hollie
Senior Attorney



Princeton Hynes
Noah Parden &
Styles Hutchins Fellow



**Mary Sidney
K. Harbert**
Operations Manager



Aaron Littman
Staff Attorney



Mark Loudon-Brown
Senior Attorney



**Corina
Minden-Birkenmaier**
Intake Specialist



Ben Minor
Foundation Relations
Manager



Katie Moss
Staff Attorney



Patrick Mulvaney
Managing Attorney
Capital Litigation



Ryan Primerano
Staff Attorney



Alicia Rabideau
Investigator



Hannah Riley
Communications
Manager



Julia Robinson-Hicks
Finance Director



Kristen Samuels
Investigator



Gerry Weber
Senior Attorney



Tiffany Williams Roberts
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Movement Building Counsel



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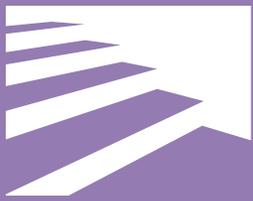
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