

PANEL 2 | CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM :

Are proposed reform efforts enough to make the criminal justice system more just?



NATALIA CORNELIO

Criminal Justice Reform Program Director | Texas Civil Rights Project

Natalia Cornelio is the Director of Criminal Justice Reform at the Texas Civil Rights Project. Since joining the project, Natalia has settled TCRP's debtor's prison lawsuit against the City of El Paso, has expanded the project's investigations against the Texas Department of Criminal Justice and its unlawful and, at times, unconscionable treatment of its prisoners, and has begun a program to grow police accountability across the state of Texas. Natalia has also worked with local partners to improve conditions for and decrease criminalization of juveniles who interface with the criminal justice system, and has advocated for parents and children in the immigration system along the United States-Mexico border to be reunified after being forcibly separated from one another by the U.S. government in 2018.

Prior to joining TCRP, Natalia defended the constitutional rights of those impacted by the criminal justice system as an attorney in Houston, Texas for the Federal Public Defender for the Southern District of Texas, and also previously worked on criminal and immigration appeals at the United States Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco, California.

Natalia is a Chicago native who graduated from the University of Chicago Law School. She is currently licensed to practice law in the State of Illinois, and in Federal Court for the Southern and Western Districts of Texas.



JAY JENKINS

Harris County Project Attorney | Texas Criminal Justice Coalition

Jay Jenkins graduated from Wake Forest University in 2005, earning a B.A. in Biology and Classical Languages. He received his J.D. from Northwestern University School of Law, graduating magna cum laude in 2009. While at Northwestern, he worked at the Bluhm Legal Clinic's Children and Family Justice Center, focusing on a number of juvenile justice issues. In his third year, Jay was the lone law student at the newly formed Juvenile Post-Dispositional Clinic, where he promoted policy reform throughout Chicago while also advocating on behalf of juvenile clients. After graduating in 2009, Jay was admitted to practice law in the State of Illinois and worked as a civil litigator in the private sector for three years. Most recently, Jay worked in Washington, D.C., for the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund, assisting the United States Department of Justice in its evaluation of claims and implementation of legislation passed in 2010. Jay serves as TCJC's Project Attorney in Harris County (Houston), where he continues TCJC's efforts to support the work of the local Public Defender's Office while assisting TCJC in promoting broader criminal and juvenile justice reforms throughout that county.



KRISTIAN CABALLERO

Community Outreach Coordinator | Texas Appleseed

Kristian Caballero is the Community Outreach Coordinator of Texas Appleseed, who helps to develop partnerships and coordinate efforts on a variety of projects — with the intention to engage, activate and empower the community to create social change. She is an expert in community engagement, diversity outreach, grassroots organizing, coalition building, advocacy, and campaign strategy. She has a Bachelor's degree in Political Science and Legal Reasoning from the University of Texas at El Paso.



SHANNON BALDWIN

Harris County Judge | Criminal Court No.4

Shannon Baldwin has practiced law for over 21 years and is licensed in Georgia and Texas. She practiced law in Atlanta, Georgia for four years before returning to Texas. Shannon is a former prosecutor and opened her law practice in Texas in 2003. As a Partner at Baldwin Williams & Associates, PLLC she has tried cases before a jury from traffic violations up to capital murder. Shannon joined the U.S. Army Reserves on September 23, 1987. When she graduated from college, she was commissioned as an officer, 2nd Lieutenant. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Law Enforcement and Police Science at Sam Houston State University and went on to graduate Cum Laude from John Marshall Law School in Atlanta, Georgia. Shannon is an active member of several professional organizations and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Shannon is a wife and a foster mother. In November 2018, Shannon was elected Judge of Harris County Criminal Court No. 4.