

FOREWORD

Tia Koonse and Kyle Todd***

Welcome to the third volume of the Los Angeles Public Interest Law Journal! There are five things that make us unique. First, we are comprised of students from five law schools throughout Los Angeles, including Loyola, Pepperdine, USC, UCLA, and Southwestern, who maintain complete autonomy from our respective administrations. Second, we advance our mission of furthering public interest law and social justice in the Southland and beyond by publishing *practitioner-written* articles. We believe scholarship by and for practicing social justice advocates provides the most timely, accurate and interesting stuff out there—and we know you do, too. Third, we believe legal practice and scholarship shouldn't be lead by lawyers but rather by clients and community. Our articles are written by lawyers *and* organizers and we anchor every piece with “Community Voices,” written by clients and community affected by the topic of the article. Fourth, we foster community and personal support by publishing “Letters to a Young Public Interest Attorney,” written by new and seasoned practitioners in the field who provide us with encouragement, inspiration and ideas for how to lead

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professional lives we're proud of. Fifth, we hold a symposium each year whose topics are suggested by our Advisory Board, comprised of L.A.-based public interest attorneys, who help us determine the most pressing issues facing our communities.

This year, our Symposium explored "The Hidden Faces of Unemployment." The Symposium featured panelists who work with multiply-marginalized communities already facing barriers to employment, including people who are gay, lesbian or trans, and/or formerly incarcerated, and/or low-wage immigrant workers. The Symposium also featured a panel about the impact of firm deferrals on the public interest legal community. Panelists included: keynote speaker Shayla Myers from the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center; prisoner re-entry activists Josh Kim from A New Way of Life and Stephanie Sauter from the Law Project of LA (moderated by Professor Laurie Levenson); low-wage immigrant rights advocates Megan Beaman from California Rural Legal Assistance and Matt Sirolly of the Wage Justice Center (moderated by Professor Niels Frenzen); and representatives from the legal hiring world who shed light on the process and impact of firm deferrals, including Paul Freese of Public Counsel, Chancela Al-Mansour of Neighborhood Legal Services, Charles Song from Howrey LLP, and David Ackerly from the Inner City Law Center.

We hope you enjoy the collection of articles in this year's volume and look forward to working alongside you in the future!