

## SPRING SPOTLIGHT: 2024

The latest news and updates from the Center for Ethics & Public Service

### STAFF NEWS

## Lauren Madigan Retires. Welcome Dr. Kesha Merritt.

Dear Colleagues,

After a distinguished and highly productive tenure at Miami Law, Lauren Madigan will be retiring from her role as Senior Program Manager for the Center for Ethics and Public Service on April 4. Lauren joined the law school in 2011 as the Program Coordinator for LawWithoutWalls. In that role, Lauren coordinated the program's KickOffs and Composiums each year in places such as Switzerland, Spain, Ireland, and Cambridge, Mass., working with students from all over the world. Lauren also became a presenter for LawWithoutWalls as a DISC specialist, facilitating behavioral self-assessment tools that are used by organizations for training.



Lauren was with LawWithoutWalls for six years before moving to the Center for Ethics and Public Service (CEPS) in 2017 to become its Program Manager and ultimately its Senior Program Manager. With CEPS, Lauren worked closely over the years with scores of students and community members. She helped run the Community Equity Lab Health Equity Project and the Housing and Community Equity Project, as well as the Legal Profession Program and the Black Church Program. Lauren also worked with dozens of Brown University undergraduate interns in coordinating the Center's summer programs.

As Senior Program Manager, Lauren was instrumental in helping the Center secure the University of Miami's Racial Justice Grant, which focused on voting rights in Coconut Grove Village West, as well as a University U-LINK grant in which CEPS partnered with UM's School of Public Health. Lauren could often be found in the communities that CEPS serves working with stakeholders and partners of those communities. Many people who have benefited from their connection with Lauren have uniformly extolled her dedication, commitment, efficiency, and thoroughness. The School of Law is a much richer place for her having worked there.

Professor Anthony V. Alfieri, the director of CEPS, said Lauren was "universally embraced and appreciated by our faith-based and nonprofit partners, and pro bono and nonprofit law firm allies."

Since graduating from college, Lauren has had a secondary career as an [actress](#), and has been a member of the Screen Actors Guild and Actors' Equity since 1984. She is excited to be moving into a phase of her life in which she can again focus full-time on what she loves. In November, she moved with her husband, the journalist Nick Madigan, to Greenville, South Carolina, where she has already been cast in [Greenville Theatre's](#) production of "Anastasia" later this year. Their son, Sebastian Madigan, is finishing up his freshman year at UM. Lauren can be reached at [lmadigan@gmail.com](mailto:lmadigan@gmail.com) and her website is: [Laurenmadigan.com](http://Laurenmadigan.com).

Thank you, Lauren, and best wishes!

Andrew B. Dawson  
Vice Dean for Academic Affairs and  
Judge A. Jay Cristol Chair in Bankruptcy Law  
University of Miami School of Law



We're excited to announce that **Dr. Kesha Merritt** has joined the Center for Ethics & Public Service as the new Senior Program Manager. Kesha is taking over for Lauren Madigan, who will be retiring. Dr. Merritt, a UM alumna, has worked at the University of Miami for over 16 years, having served in roles in the Department of Theatre Arts, Development and Alumni Relations and the School of Communication. Kesha most recently served in an inaugural role within the Division of Student Affairs as Assistant Director of Graduate Student Engagement, where she provided support and guidance to graduate students across each of the three campuses. Kesha advised graduate student government, graduate student organizations, and the Graduate Activity Fee Allocation Committee (GAFA), which funds professional endeavor activities for graduate students. In addition to advising students, she served as a Student Affairs Crisis Coordinator and SART volunteer. Kesha, holds a Ph.D. in Human Services and is passionate about student support and advocacy.

Please join us in welcoming her to the CEPS Law School family. Kesha's office is G362, and she can be reached at 305-284-9185 or [kmerritt@miami.edu](mailto:kmerritt@miami.edu).

**MIAMILAW**  
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI SCHOOL OF LAW  
**CEPS** Center for Ethics  
and Public Service

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## Community Equity Lab Updates

The Community Equity Lab continues to advance the following initiatives: We continue working with the Intake and Enforcement Division of United States Department of Housing and Urban Development to initiate an enforcement action under the federal Fair Housing Act to address gentrification and displacement in the Coconut Grove Village West Community. We continue our research and community engagement work with the goal of formulating substantive provisions to reform zoning and land use codes in South Florida to incorporate the "Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing" framework (AFFH) advanced and elaborated by HUD (The AFFH framework establishes accountability measures for municipalities and compels them to redress lack of affordability, gentrification, and displacement.). And, we continue to aggregate housing- and health-related policy perspectives and resources to support the counter-gentrification/counter-displacement policy interventions described above.

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### Spring 2024 1L Intern Spotlight



**Yelyzaveta "Liza" Aleksyeyeva, Health Equity Project Intern**

Liza is a first-year law student originally from Ukraine. She received a B.S. in 2022 from the University of North Florida in Health Administration with a minor in Public Health. She is currently a member of the Federal Bar Association. This summer Liza will be interning with the Honorable Judge Rodney Smith of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida. In CEPS, Liza is part of the Health Equity Project and is currently working on researching the presumptive eligibility of Medicaid programs and the impact of homelessness on pregnancy. Liza is hoping to pursue corporate litigation.

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**Natalie Gonzalez, Health Equity Project Intern**

Natalie is a first-year law student at the University of Miami. She graduated from the University of California Berkeley in May of 2022 with a B.A. in Legal Studies, departmental honors, and a minor in Human Rights. While at UC Berkeley, Natalie's research experiences and public service work honors thesis titled



"Frontline Work in a Time of Crisis: Child Welfare Decisions Under Pandemic Policy." After graduating, Natalie continued working as a research assistant with Berkeley Law Professor Dr. Asad Rahim and Brown University Post-Doctoral Fellow Dr. Matty Lichtenstein. Since starting law school as a first-generation student and Miami Public Interest Scholar, Natalie yielded to her passion for public service, allowing her to work alongside various organizations: Americans for Immigrant Justice, the Colorado Office of The Child's Representative, the Center for Ethics and Public Service, and Women in Distress. Natalie hopes that by continuing to integrate her passions for research and public service, she will have the tools to advocate effectively for people in challenging situations and help design better public organizations - both of which may lead to social justice.

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**Hannah "Taz" Uria LaBovick, Legal Profession Program Intern**

Hannah is a first-year law student at the University of Miami and an intern with the Center for Ethics and Public Service. Prior to law school, she served for two years in the White House as a Legislative Affairs Associate. She also spent several years on political campaigns, working with underrepresented voters in minority communities. In this capacity, she worked to ensure all voters were educated on their rights, ability, and access to voting. Her Cuban-Jewish roots have instilled in her a passion for Tikkun Olam, and she has found this meaning through ensuring underrepresented communities have access and representation in all capacities. Hannah graduated with a B.A. from Yale University. Upon graduating UM School of Law, she hopes to use her legal education to continue creating avenues, opportunities, and access for underrepresented and at-need communities.

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**Kaitryana Leinbach, Housing & Community Equity Project Intern**

Kaitryana is a first-year law student at the University of Miami. In 2022, she graduated *magna cum laude* and with College Honors from Louisiana State University with a B.S. in Industrial Engineering. Prior to law school, she worked at NASA and the Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness to help communities recover more efficiently and effectively from natural disasters.





**Minah Malik, Legal Profession Program Intern**  
 Minah is a first-year law student from New York, NY. In 2018, she received her B.A. in Political Science from George Washington University. She is currently a member of the South-West Asian North African Law Students Association, and an intern at the Center of Ethics of Public Service for the Legal Profession Program. This Summer she will work as an intern at the Public Defender's Office in Miami.

**Angela Nguyen Pope, Housing & Community Equity Project Intern**

Angela is a first-year law student from Salt Lake City, Utah. In 2020, she received her B.A. from the University of British Columbia with a double major in History and Gender, Race, Sexuality, and Social Justice Studies. She is a member of the Asian Pacific American Law Student Association and the Civil Rights and Public Service 1L Reading Group. As a CEPS intern, her work focuses on researching doctrinal and legislative histories to establish the factual and legal foundation for fair housing investigation in Miami. She is incredibly grateful to the CEPS faculty, staff, and students who have helped reaffirm her commitment to community and elevated her capacity for advocacy throughout her 1L year. Angela is excited to intern with the Miami-Dade Public Defender's Office this summer and gain valuable experience in public interest litigation.

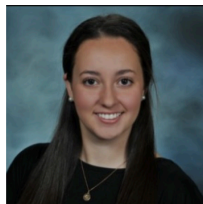


**Emma Rice, Housing & Community Equity Project Intern**

Emma is a first-year law student from Coral Springs, Florida. She graduated from the University of Florida with a double major in Political Science and Marketing. Prior to coming to law school, she was a legal assistant at the Broward Public Defender's Office where she worked in the Juvenile and Major Crimes Departments. She is excited to be a part of CEPS and gain experiential skills while engaging in the local community.

**Aaron Rissman, Health Equity Project Intern**

Aaron is a first-year law student from Boca Raton, Florida. In 2020, he received his B.A. in Public Policy with a minor in Psychology from Duke University. Prior to law school, Aaron worked in health policy as a contractor with the CDC. On campus, Aaron is a member of the Public Interest Leadership Board. This summer, Aaron will join the Miami-Dade Public Defender's Office as a legal intern and HOPE Summer Public Interest Fellow.

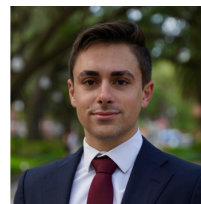


**Carolina Sanchez, Health Equity Project Intern**

Carolina is a first-year law student from Miami, Florida. In 2020, she received her B.A. in English and Pre-Medical Studies from the University of Notre Dame. She is currently a member of the Hispanic Law Student Association. This Summer she will work as judicial intern for The Honorable Judge Kathleen M. Williams of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida. Currently, she serves as intern with Center for Ethics and Public Service and is deeply passionate about the intersection of social justice and the healthcare industry, particularly advocating for equal access to quality healthcare for all individuals. She is excited to continue her work with CEPS and be a valuable contributor to the CEPS central mission.

**Quinten Smith, Housing & Community Equity Project Intern**

Quinten is a first-year law student originally from Palm Harbor, Florida. He graduated from the University of Florida in 2022 with a B.A. in Political Science, before moving to Miami to work at a local litigation boutique. He started at the University of Miami School of Law in August 2023 and quickly became involved with the Center for Ethics and Public Service, beginning with the Civil Rights and Public Service 1L Reading Group. Currently, he is an intern with the Housing & Community Equity Project focusing on issues facing the Coconut Grove Village West community. This upcoming summer he will be a judicial intern for the Hon. Darrin P. Gayles at the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida.

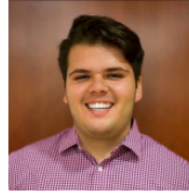




**Kyle Spohn, Health Equity Project Intern**  
 Kyle is a first-year law student from Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He graduated from the University of Florida in 2023 with a B.S. in Business Management and a minor in Communication Studies and Spanish. He is currently a member of the Environmental Law Society and the First-Generation Law Association. This Summer he will be serving as a HOPE Summer Public Interest Fellow as a law clerk with the People's Economic and Environmental Resiliency Group.

**Fernando Yzquierdo, Housing & Community Equity Project Intern**

Fernando is a first-year law student from Miami, FL. He graduated from Florida State University in 2022 with a B.A. in Criminology and Creative Writing. Before starting law school, Fernando taught English to high school sophomores and juniors, where he developed a passion for combatting education inequality. He is eager to contribute to CEPS's housing equality project.



**Upcoming Legal Profession Program Event**  
**April 17th, 6pm**

Are you still seeking summer employment? Are you concerned you're not conforming to the "ideals" you had coming into law school? There's no one set path of perfection to becoming the successful lawyer you want to be. Join the Center for Ethics and Public Service Legal Profession Program for a chat with professionals and administrators to learn about how to market yourself beyond what the paper says.

Please register below with the link or QR code.  
[https://umiami.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_aic9KMsD1oqupvo](https://umiami.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_aic9KMsD1oqupvo)



**WHAT'S THE RIGHT NEXT STEP?**  
**NAVIGATING PERSONAL UNCERTAINTY IN THE LEGAL FIELD, BOTH ACADEMICALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY**

**APRIL 17**  
**6 PM TO 7:30 PM**  
**ALMA JENNINGS STUDENT LOUNGE**



Register Here



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 GRAY ROBINSON, PA



**MICHELLE SIX,**  
 GUNSTER



**RODNEY RAWLS,**  
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