

Advocate Resources and Training for Economic and Racial Justice

Overview of Programs and Offerings for Organizations

**Shriver
Center on
Poverty
Law**



Advocate Resources and Training for Economic and Racial Justice

Advocates working to change laws and policies need specialized training, a space to connect with peers, and leadership development.

The Shriver Center on Poverty Law connects and trains lawyers, community leaders, and activists nationwide to build the skills that are vital to equal justice advocacy. Our Advocate Resources and Training programs strengthen the capacity of advocates working on behalf of low-income people so that they may obtain bigger, better, and bolder gains for people and communities living in poverty.

Our founder Sargent Shriver understood the role of the law and of lawyers in the movement for economic and racial justice. Sarge believed that lawyers should be rooted in the communities they serve and engaged in advocacy to yield broad, systemic relief.

Customized Training, Consulting, and Coaching

The Shriver Center works with legal aid and public interest law organizations to offer programs and training geared toward specific organizational interests and needs. Grounded in our four principles, we draw from our curriculum to design a training program that meets your team's specific needs. We have contracted with nonprofits, legal aid providers, law schools, bar foundations and government agencies to train more than 5,000 advocates from hundreds of organizations across the country, including:

- the Housing Justice Leadership Institute at New York Law School
- the Committee on Regional Training
- the Association of Pro Bono Counsel
- the Law Firm Antiracism Alliance
- the Washington Office of Civil Legal Aid, Seattle University School of Law





The Shriver Center offers trainings in multiple formats—online, onsite, and through a mix of online and onsite sessions—your staff can learn when, where, and how you want. Many of our courses can be delivered remotely through our online campus. We can tailor training to meet your organization’s needs and schedule, and we can help you determine the best format for your organization.

Contact Ellen Hemley at ehemley@povertylaw.org or 617.905.8302 to learn more about how we can help build the skills and capacities of your staff.

“I highly recommend the Shriver Center’s Supervising for Quality and Impact training. The format was really conducive to learning, and you walk away with practical materials related to delegating, constructive feedback, and other necessary supervisory tasks.”

— Heather McKimmie, Director of the AVID Program, Disability Rights Washington, Seattle, WA



Principles That Anchor Our Curriculum

Our curriculum, offered through public courses, customized training sessions, and consulting and coaching on staff development, is anchored by four, interconnected principles essential to this work:





Racial Justice

A commitment to race equity is an integral and essential part of anti-poverty advocacy. Legal aid and public interest lawyers and advocates are key to achieving important systemic changes in their clients' communities.



Leadership Development

Our collective strength as advocates for people living in poverty is driven by the leaders within our community, who drive us toward our mission. The Shriver Center is committed to building a broad and diverse coalition of advocacy leaders for the next generation.



Community Power

Lasting change toward social justice is only possible when lawyers and advocates support community-identified and -led initiatives and work to build power among directly impacted individuals and groups.



Affirmative Advocacy

Effective advocacy for meaningful change is broad-based and strategic. Affirmative advocacy transforms communities by getting at the root causes of poverty and racial injustice. Affirmative advocacy uses the full range of legal and non-legal tools in the advocate's toolbox.

Advocates grounded in these principles are better equipped to work with people and communities of color to build power and create long-term change. Racial justice requires shifting power in communities of color, and community lawyering practices support that type of power-building. Affirmative advocacy works to further systemic racial and economic justice. And leadership in public interest law organizations seeking to move toward models that prioritize racial justice, community-led advocacy, and affirmative advocacy, must understand these strategies and have the skills to lead their organizations through transition and evolution.

Training Offerings

The Shriver Center's training offerings are built around a set of core competencies and learning objectives essential to equal justice advocacy that are aligned with the four principles anchoring our program. We prepare advocates to be community-engaged, visionary leaders equipped to transform systems in the pursuit of justice.

Training for Advocates for Racial Justice

We envision a nation where advocates and community stakeholders work collaboratively and successfully to ensure equitable opportunities and outcomes for all people, and race is not an impediment to self-determination. To effectively develop a practice centered on race equity, advocates need to learn key race equity concepts and how to use specialized skills and tools in their work.



“The Racial Justice Institute has given me a set of tools that have sharpened my race equity work.”

— Steven Sharpe, Legal Aid Society of Southwest Ohio, Cincinnati, OH

“For me, being part of the Racial Justice Institute is a very hopeful space.”

— Marika Dias, Legal Services of New York City, New York, NY

Training components include:

- **Structural racialization**, a framework for understanding institutional and public policies that, whether intentionally or not, create and perpetuate fundamental barriers to economic and social equity for communities of color and opportunities for white individuals and communities.
- **Social cognition and implicit bias**, including the ways in which bias impacts the various systems within which social justice advocates work, as well as concerns and implications for advocates.
- **Systems thinking**, a vehicle for recognizing component parts of complex systems, how these work together over time to distribute advantage and disadvantage along racial lines, and how to identify strategic points of intervention in complex systems that achieve longer term systems change.
- **Organizational alignment and leadership**, including an overview of the leadership needed to align organizations to prioritize and support racial equity advocacy by assessing an organization's structure, collective competency, and capacity to engage in race equity advocacy.
- **Racial anxiety and stereotype threat**, characterized by the pressure and fear people feel that their performance may confirm a negative stereotype about their group and the discomfort about the experience and potential consequences of interracial interaction.
- **Mitigating bias** by identifying and applying techniques and interventions to reduce the impact of bias at key decision points in organizational and advocacy processes to optimize decision making.

For over seven years, the Shriver Center's **Racial Justice Institute (RJI)** has prepared and supported advocates working to achieve real change in their communities. Following six months of intensive training, Fellows join a national network of alumni who are advancing race equity throughout the country.

In addition to RJI, the Shriver Center also provides customized programming to advocacy organizations on several topics important to understanding racial justice and developing a race equity practice.

Training for Emerging Leaders

Effective equal justice leaders need to learn how to work in highly diverse settings, how to navigate and succeed in increasingly complex policy environments, and how to understand and address the high-stakes challenges facing the clients and communities they serve.

Emerging leaders need support and training to effectively:

- **Deliver on strategic intent**, including how to communicate individual and institutional values, vision, and mission, and how to motivate and engage others in pursuit of a shared purpose.
- **Communicate direction and build consensus** among diverse stakeholders by engaging in problem-solving and solution development in ways that build, maintain, and develop relationships of trust and respect.
- **Achieve workable unity** when taking on high-stakes challenges facing clients and communities by learning how to view situations from various perspectives and build consensus in highly diverse settings.
- **Cultivate self-awareness** by identifying personal values, behaviors, and styles, including how these are perceived by others, along with insights into their potential impact on leadership effectiveness.
- **Build a stronger and more effective organization through effective supervision.** Supervisors and management systems should nurture leadership, support diversity and inclusion, and reward innovation and hard work. Effective managers understand how to supervise across lines of difference, such as race and gender.
- **Resolve conflict.** Supervisors must have the skills to recognize and manage conflict to ensure the work environment runs smoothly and that staff work effectively with each other. Although conflict is not inherently negative, when not managed, disagreements or other contentious situations can arise in the workplace and reduce productivity, harm staff relationships, and damage morale.





The Shriver Center's **Leadership for Justice** training equips new and emerging equal justice leaders with the skills and competencies needed to lead and advance social change agendas.

Our **Supervising for Quality and Impact** course helps participants hone their supervision style to build a stronger and more effective organization. Topics examined include:

- **Supervisory Ecosystem and Three Roles** – Introduces the organizational ecosystem—policies and practices, funding deliverables, staff demographics, and more—within which supervision is carried out. Within this ecosystem, the supervisor fulfills three core roles in areas of support, education, and quality/effectiveness and utilizes a range of tools that build and support the capacity of those they supervise to fulfill their roles.
- **Supervising Across Differences** – Examines the importance of supervision in building and sustaining a diverse workforce and introduces specific practices for mitigating identity anxiety and stereotype threat within the supervisory relationship.
- **Stages and Situational Supervision** – Explores the four stages of the supervisory cycle: relationship building, assessment, ongoing work supervision, and performance review. Includes an examination of the four styles of supervision, with a focus on adapting supervision styles to readiness levels.
- **Delegation** – Provides an introduction to the practice of delegation including the challenges, opportunities, and consequence of poor delegation, as well as a framework for successfully delegating assignments.
- **Constructive Feedback** – Introduces best practices related to constructive feedback—the process of sharing information with another person for the purpose of reinforcing or changing his/her behavior. Provides opportunities to apply constructive feedback best practices to prepared case scenarios in small groups.
- **Motivation & Burn-out** – Examines factors that impact motivation and burnout such as organizational culture, compassion fatigue, and vicarious trauma. Provides a number of strategies to address these factors.



“The Shriver Center’s Affirmative Litigation training was wonderful. The written materials and online resources helped tremendously, and our presenters consistently showed knowledge, dedication and compassion for our client base.”

— Thomas Alongi, former Senior Staff Attorney,
Community Legal Services, Phoenix, AZ

Training for Advocates Working with Communities for Change

Effective equal justice advocates build strong relationships with impacted individuals, work alongside the community groups they serve, and enhance community members' power to make change. Skilled advocates working for broad-based impact know how to:

- **Garner and activate issues identified by the community** by helping groups build relationships and develop and sustain good processes for making decisions and working together.
- **Facilitate community leadership** and help community groups build power.
- **Drive effective policy advocacy** in support of community-led initiatives.
- **Leverage strategic communications** to shift the narrative around issues affecting the community.
- **Wield the unique power of litigation** and leverage individual cases into systemic impact and real change for low-income clients and communities of color.

The Shriver Center's Community Lawyering course teaches advocates how to work in partnership with the communities they serve to achieve real change. We can also build customized training for your program designed to build and strengthen your relationships with local community leaders. And our Affirmative Litigation Training equips advocates to engage in broad-based and strategic advocacy that gets at the root causes of poverty and inequality.

“The Community Lawyering Training taught me tools and skills to understand my client's needs and help them accomplish their goals. Community lawyering ensures we promote our clients' power and avoid becoming part of the system that too often oppresses our clients.”

— Anne Sweeney, Managing Attorney, Legal Aid Society of Cleveland, Cleveland, OH

