



The Yale Law Journal

2023-2024 Yale Law Journal Public Interest Fellowship

Overview

In an effort to unite legal scholarship and legal practice, and to advance the public interest, in 2016 the *Yale Law Journal* partnered with the Yale Law School to provide three one-year public interest fellowships annually. The Fellows, after completing their year of public service, will publish reflections on their experience in the *Journal's* online component, the *Forum*. By sponsoring these Fellows, and by incorporating their legal insights into the *YLJ's* scholarship, the *Journal* seeks to foster a closer relationship between legal scholarship and practice.

Named Fellowships

The three *YLJ* Public Interest Fellowships are named after three graduates of the Yale Law School: Jane Matilda Bolin, Justine Wise Polier, and Shirley Adelson Siegel.

- In 1931, Jane Matilda Bolin was the first African-American woman to graduate from Yale Law School. She went on to become the first African-American woman to join the New York City Bar Association, the first to join the New York City Law Department, and the first to serve as a judge in the United States. Her judgeship began in 1939 when she was sworn into the bench of the New York City Domestic Relations Court, and she served in this capacity until she retired at the age of seventy. Throughout her career, Ms. Bolin remained committed to civil service, and worked closely with the NAACP, serving on its executive committee.
- Justine Wise Polier was an editor of Volume 37 of the *Yale Law Journal* and graduated from Yale Law School in 1928. Prior to law school, she advocated for labor rights at a woolen mill in Passaic, New Jersey. After graduating, she became the first woman to hold a judicial office above magistrate in New York. She served for thirty-eight years as a New York State Family Court judge. Throughout her career, Polier was seen as a brilliant judge and activist who championed the rights of children and the civil rights of African Americans. After retiring from the bench, she served as director of the Juvenile Justice Division of the Children's Defense Fund.
- Shirley Adelson Siegel was an editor of Volume 49 of the *Yale Law Journal* and graduated from Yale Law School in 1941. She was the only woman in her law school class and went on to work in public housing and civil rights, ultimately becoming the head of the civil-rights bureau of the New York City Law Department in 1959. There she worked to break up discriminatory apprenticeship requirements in the building trades. She also served as general counsel of the Housing and Development Administration and as New York State's solicitor general. After taking a few decades off from practicing law in order to teach, she returned to foreclosure prevention work in 2008.

The recipients and host organizations of the YLJ Fellowships for 2022-2023 are:

Kate Hamilton '22 – Shirley Adelson Siegel Fellow, Campaign Legal Center, Washington D.C.
Nina Oishi '22 – Justine Wise Polier Fellow, New York Legal Assistance Group, New York, NY
Molly Petchenik '21 – Jane Matilda Bolin Fellow, Texas Civil Rights Project, Austin, TX

Application and Selection

The application for the fellowship opens on January 3, 2023 and closes on February 2, 2023. The application deadline for the *YLJ Fellowship* tract of the YPIF Fellowship are exactly the same and students should review the information for the YPIF Fellowship, including the list of materials required for submission. The YPIF application information on the [CDO Public Interest fellowship website](#) within the “YLS Fellowships” tab. Click [here](#) for instructions on using the online system.

Selections are made in a two-step process. First, the faculty committee selects a group of nine fellows. Then, a committee comprised of the current Editor-in-Chief and several additional board members will designate the three *YLJ* Fellows from among the Fellows chosen by the faculty selection committee.

Students interested in applying for a *YLJ* fellowship must meet with Norma D’Apolito, Director of Public Interest & Fellowships, to discuss the scope and details of their fellowship proposals prior to applying. Questions about the fellowship and the application process can be directed to her at norma.dapolito@yale.edu.

Yale Non-Discrimination Policy and Your Host Organization

Your host organization must certify compliance with Yale Law School’s Non-Discrimination Policy. For instructions on confirming organization compliance, please click [here](#).

Terms of the Fellowship

Fellowships are funded for one year, and generally begin in late summer or fall after the selection process through summer/fall of the following year. Each *YLJ* fellowship provides a one-year stipend of \$50,000 and a health-care contribution of up to \$5,000 in cases where health care benefits are not provided by the host organization. In recognition of the additional writing component, *YLJ* fellows will receive an additional \$5,000 payment upon submission of the required reflection piece at the end of the fellowship.

Questions

For further information, please contact Norma D’Apolito, Director of Public Interest & Fellowships at norma.dapolito@yale.edu.