

## OWLS Barriers to Access to Justice Panel

### Speakers:

#### Corinna Spencer Scheurich – Northwest Workers Justice Project (NWJP)

Corinna Spencer-Scheurich is the Deputy Director of the Northwest Workers' Justice Project. For the last six years, she has represented low-wage workers in employment disputes, the majority of which are recent immigrants, and has worked to improve access to justice for low-wage workers in Oregon and nationally. Before joining NWJP, Corinna was the South Texas Regional Director of the Texas Civil Rights Project, where she practiced employment, immigration, disability, and civil rights law on behalf of low-income families living on the Texas-Mexico border.

#### Veronica Digman – Oregon Law Center (OLC)

Veronica Digman-McNassar joined the Woodburn OLC office as a staff attorney in December 2014. Before attending law school, she graduated from St. John's College in New Mexico, where she focused her studies on philosophy and political theory. In 2007, she was introduced to OLC and LASO when she worked for the Farmworker Program as an outreach worker and clerk, before going back to school. She graduated from the Willamette University College of Law in 2011, and one year later opened her own office in Woodburn, where she practiced immigration law for 2 ½ years. Veronica is originally from Portland, Oregon, and comes from a large family who taught her the value of community service and social justice through their work as organizers, teachers, and counselors.

#### Jenny Hernandez – Metropolitan Public Defender (MPD)

Jenny Hernandez is an attorney at Immigrant Defense Oregon, a project of the Metropolitan Public Defender. At IDO, she consults and represents noncitizens in removal proceedings, bond proceedings, and appeals - with a focus on the intersection of the criminal justice system and its effects on the deportation of noncitizens. She also advises public defenders on the immigration consequences their noncitizen clients face regarding their criminal charges and history. Before coming to IDO, Jenny served in the federal government in several positions, including as an attorney advisor to immigration judges at the Miami Immigration Court, where she advised judges on legal issues and wrote immigration judicial decisions; as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney at the Department of Justice, where she prosecuted federal felonies and misdemeanors; and as a Presidential Management Fellow at the Department of Labor, where she wrote policy on the enforcement of labor regulations. She attended Emory Law School and Emory's Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, GA and graduated with honors with a joint JD/Masters of Theological Studies degree in 2012.

### Jordan Bates - Youth Rights Justice (YRJ)

Jordan Bates is a staff attorney at Youth, Rights & Justice. She has been employed as a staff attorney there for seven and a half years. She previously practiced family law at St. Andrew Legal Clinic. Jordan represents children in the juvenile delinquency system and children and parents in the juvenile dependency (child welfare) system. As part of her work, she also files dependency petitions on behalf of unaccompanied minors being detained by the Office of Refugee Resettlement, in order to help them achieve Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS). Jordan grew up in Portland, Oregon and spent her undergraduate years at Pitzer College in Southern California. She graduated from University of Oregon Law School in 2009.

### **Panel Moderator:**

### Lisa LeSage, Immigration Counseling Service (ICS)

Lisa LeSage is the Executive Director of Immigration Counseling Service (ICS), Oregon's oldest and only independent nonprofit law firm serving immigrants. Prior to joining ICS in July 2017, she spent five years in the Middle East as Morocco Country Director and Senior Legal Advisor in Istanbul, Turkey for the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI), working on human rights, rule of law and refugee issues throughout the Middle East and North Africa. Before joining the ABA in 2011, she was Associate Dean at Northwestern School of Law of Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon, where she co-founded the Small Business Legal Clinic for low income women and minority small businesses, and was a Fulbright Scholar in Santiago, Chile in 2010. Before her work at Lewis & Clark, she was a trial attorney litigating prisoner's rights, fair housing, immigration, workers' rights and other civil rights cases in state and federal courts. During her career, she has continued to do pro bono civil rights cases, and has worked with lawyers, judges, ministries of justice, prosecutors, law faculties, bar associations, human rights clinics and human rights organizations in a number of countries including Turkey, Libya, Iran, Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco, Uzbekistan and Bahrain, and in several countries in Europe and in Central and South America. Fluent in Spanish and proficient in French, she has a J.D. from Lewis & Clark Law School and an LLM in Human Rights Law, with highest honors, from the University of London.