PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

The Advocacy Institute Is Pleased to Present

Reducing Bias to Improve Outcomes for DCF Deputies

November 21, 2024
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

WEBINAR

Program Summary

This program will explore how implicit bias can impact DCF litigation. The presenters will provide DCF deputies with bias reduction strategies to enhance the fairness of the decision-making process, provide effective and impartial counsel and representation, and improve outcomes. DCF deputies will gain a greater appreciation for the significance of becoming attuned to the needs and sensibilities of the diverse communities they serve, and the importance of practicing respect and understanding when engaging with people of different cultures, abilities, and identities.

Eligibility

This program is only open to Deputy and Assistant Attorneys General in the DCF practice group and DCF agency attorneys invited to attend.

Faculty

AAG Lora Fong is the Chief Diversity Officer of the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety, where she is responsible for developing and implementing the department's strategic diversity and inclusion initiatives. Before joining LPS, AAG Fong counselled and advised corporate clients on diversity and inclusion, worked as a commercial litigator at private practice firms and served as in-house counsel in the technology sector. AAG Fong has served as a Trustee of the New Jersey State Bar Association and as a member of the New Jersey State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and the New Jersey Supreme Court Committee on Women in the Courts. She currently serves as a Director of the New Jersey Women Lawyers Association. AAG Fong earned a B.A. in Political Science and Certificate in Women's Studies from Douglass College at Rutgers University and a J.D. from Rutgers University School of Law in Newark.

DAG Melvina D. Fennell is a member of the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety's Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (ODEI), and is part of the team responsible for planning, developing, and implementing the Department's diversity, equity, and inclusion ("DEI") programs and initiatives. Prior to joining ODEI, DAG Fennell served in the Division of Criminal Justice, Office of the Insurance Fraud Prosecutor, where she successfully investigated and prosecuted complex insurance and financial fraud offenses. She also previously served as a Deputy Attorney General with the Division of Law's Department of Children and Families Section, where she tried guardianship cases involving child abuse and neglect and advocated before the Appellate Division. DAG Fennell holds an undergraduate degree in Social and Community Psychology from The College of New Jersey and a J.D. from Seton Hall Law School, where she earned the distinction of being named a Samuel J. Heyman Fellow for public service.

CLE Credit

NJ CLE Credit: This program has been approved by the Board on Continuing Legal Education of the Supreme Court of New Jersey for 1.2 hours of total CLE credit. Of these, 1.2 qualify as hours of credit for ethics/professionalism in the Diversity, Inclusion and Elimination of Bias category.

Registration

Those who are eligible to apply should use the Zoom Webinar registration link in the Program Announcement email. Students who are registered will receive a confirmation email with a link to access the program.

Students must download Zoom before the webinar in order for the AGAI to record polling responses that are required for attendance verification and CLE credit.

The AGAI will be unable to verify attendance or grant CLE credit to students who have not downloaded Zoom before the webinar.