

CENTER FOR ETHICS AND PUBLIC SERVICE

ANNUAL REPORT, 2023–2024

MISSION

Founded in 1996, the Center for Ethics and Public Service (CEPS) is a law school-housed ethics education, experiential skills training, and community engagement program devoted to the values of ethical judgment, professional responsibility, and public service in law and society. The CEPS mission is to educate law students to serve their communities as *citizen lawyers*.¹

HISTORY

For 28 years, CEPS has served as an incubator and an accelerator for numerous public service campaigns and initiatives, including clinics,² interdisciplinary programs,³ student reading groups,⁴ summer colloquia,⁵ and oral histories and documentary films.⁶

FACULTY AND STAFF

CEPS faculty and staff include Fredman Family Foundation Practitioner-in-Residence and Lecturer Alexander Rundlet, Senior Program Manager Dr. Kesha Merritt, Program Coordinators Carter Cooper (2023–2024) and Anaise Boucher-Browning, and founding Director Professor Anthony Alfieri.

PROGRAMS

CEPS operates three programs: the *Black Church Program*, the *Community Equity Lab*, and the *Legal Profession Program*. Program faculty, staff, and students collaborate with the Florida bar and bench; anti-poverty, civil rights, environmental, and public health organizations; civic and faith-based groups, nonprofit corporations, and neighborhood associations; and schools across the University of Miami.⁷

¹ In 2022, the University of Miami Faculty Senate approved the Provost’s recommended continuation of the Center for Ethics and Public Service.

² See, e.g., Children and Youth Law Clinic, Community Economic Development and Design Clinic, Community Lawyering Clinic, Environmental Justice Clinic, Health Law Clinic, and Social Enterprise Clinic.

³ See, e.g., Brown University Institute for Environment and Society, Dartmouth College Ethics Institute, Professional Responsibility and Ethics Program, Street Law Program, and Joint College of Arts and Sciences Program on Law, Public Policy, and Ethics.

⁴ See, e.g., 1L Civil Rights and Public Service Reading Group.

⁵ See, e.g., Environmental Justice, Policy, and Science.

⁶ See, e.g., Old Smokey: A Community History (2014); Someday We’ll All Be Free: The Desegregation of Miami (2013); G.W. Carver: A Community School (2012); Churches in the West Grove History: Past, Present & Future (2011); West Coconut Grove: Past, Present & Future (2010).

⁷ See, e.g., Abess Center for Ecosystem Science and Policy; College of Arts and Sciences Department of Geography and Regional Studies; Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, & Earth Science; School of Communication; School of Education & Human Development; School of Medicine’s Department of Public Health Sciences; Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center; and the UM Libraries.

Black Church Program

The *Black Church Program* is a community outreach-centered rights education, research, and law reform project operated in partnership with civic and faith-based groups, nonprofit corporations, and neighborhood associations in South Florida, particularly in the historically segregated neighborhood of Coconut Grove Village West (Village West).⁸

Community Equity Lab

The *Community Equity Lab* integrates anti-poverty and civil rights advocacy and grassroots organizing strategies with university-wide, interdisciplinary resources to advance social justice initiatives at the neighborhood intersection of race and inequality in the areas of education, health, housing, municipal equity, and the natural and built environment. The Lab houses two projects: the *Health Equity Project*⁹ and the *Housing and Community Economic Development Project*.¹⁰

Legal Profession Program

The *Legal Profession Program* includes both student-centered leadership workshops and continuing legal education seminars in cooperation with Florida bar associations, federal and state courts, law firms, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations. Program fellows and interns organize colloquia, receptions, and roundtables with leading members of the South Florida bar and bench.¹¹

⁸ See, e.g., Coconut Grove Ministerial Alliance of Black Churches, Collective Empowerment Group (a tri-county consortium of 40 churches), Grove Rights and Community Equity, Inc. (GRACE), Coconut Grove Village West Homeowners and Tenants Association (HOATA), Lola B. Walker Homeowners Association (East Gables), St. Paul Community Development Corporation, South Miami Concerned Clergy and Citizens Coalition, among others.

⁹ Launched in 2020 in collaboration with the School of Medicine’s MD/MPH Program, the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, and a coalition of community partners, the *Health Equity Project* engages in community-centered health law and policy research, advocacy, and education (e.g., climate change, maternal health, Medicaid). In 2023-2024, Project faculty, fellows, and interns presented health rights education workshops, conducted research on the public health effects of housing displacement and neighborhood resegregation, and participated in a panel on the Policy Determinants of Black Men’s Health at the Third Annual Black Health Summit sponsored by the Health Foundation of South Florida at Florida Memorial University.

¹⁰ Created in 1999 initially as a joint venture with the School of Architecture’s Center for Urban and Community Design to develop interdisciplinary teaching, research, and neighborhood technical assistance models promoting municipal equity in the built environment, the *Housing and Community Economic Development Project* has grown into a broader collaboration with a coalition of community partners, including Black churches, civic associations, and tenant and homeowner organizations, seeking to (i) halt the eviction, displacement, and resegregation of vulnerable tenants and homeowners; (ii) negotiate community benefits agreements; (iii) reform segregative land use and zoning policies; and (iv) build and rehabilitate fair, affordable, and integrated housing. In 2023-2024, Project fellows and interns engaged in doctrinal and legislative research, fact investigation, and relationship-building with neighborhood groups to document the racially disparate impact and segregative effect of land use, zoning, and demolition policies and practices in the City of Miami, and, in doing so, established the factual and legal foundation for a city-wide fair housing investigation and enforcement action by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

¹¹ In 2023-2024, the *Legal Profession Program* presented continuing legal education ethics seminars in cooperation with Catholic Legal Services, the Florida Bankruptcy Bar Association and the Bankruptcy Skills Workshop, the Florida Civil Legal Aid Association, and Legal Services of Greater Miami.

RIGHTS EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND LAW REFORM CAMPAIGNS

Trolley Garage Campaign

Rights education, fact investigation, and research in support of pro se complaints filed with the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights against the City of Miami, City of Coral Gables, and Miami-Dade County under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to halt the discriminatory siting of a City of Coral Gables bus depot in Village West.¹²

Ward v. City of Miami

Rights education, fact investigation, and research in support of state litigation¹³ to halt the discriminatory siting of a City of Coral Gables bus depot in Village West.¹⁴

East Gables Trolley Access Campaign

Rights education, fact investigation, and research in support of extension of municipal trolley service to residents of the historically segregated MacFarlane Homestead Subdivision and the Golden Gates District of East Coral Gables.¹⁵

Old Smokey Incinerator Steering Committee

Rights education, fact investigation, and research in support of the investigation and cleanup of contaminated parks in the City of Miami and Miami-Dade County, including petitions filed with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry seeking a public health assessment of the harmful effects of environmental exposure to hazardous waste from the former City of Miami Incinerator No. 2 (Old Smokey).¹⁶

¹² See Clarice C. Cooper, FTA No. 2013-0131 (Oct. 28, 2013) (finding violations of Title VI by the City of Miami, the City of Coral Gables, and Miami-Dade County in failing to conduct equity and disparate impact analysis in siting of trolley maintenance facility); Jenny Staletovich, *Feds: Local Governments Violated the Civil Rights Act in Coral Gables Trolley Case*, MIAMI HERALD (Nov. 12, 2013).

¹³ The pro bono trial and appellate litigation team included Ralf Brookes, Philip Freidin, Lowell J. Kuvin, and Joel S. Perwin.

¹⁴ See Sandra Ward, Dorothy Henry, Coconut Grove Church of Christ and Evelyn Prophet v. City of Miami and Astor Trolley, LLC, No. 3D13-2794 (Fla. Cir. Ct. Sept. 12, 2013) (order granting summary judgment), appeal docketed, No. 3D13-2794 (Fla. 3d Dist. Ct. App. Oct. 31, 2013), appeal dismissed per stipulation, 162 So.3d 1024 (Table), 2014 WL 5794710 (Fla. 3d Dist. Ct. App. Sept. 30, 2014); Editorial, *The Trolley Debacle*, MIAMI HERALD (Nov. 16, 2013); Joey Flechas, *Coral Gables Settles Dispute Over Trolley Garage*, MIAMI HERALD (Aug. 4, 2014).

¹⁵ See Clarice C. Cooper, FTA No. 2014-0043 (June 17, 2014) (instructing the City of Miami to improve its Title VI Program procedures and protections for future service and fare changes affecting the trolley system); Monique O. Madan, *Gables Trolleys to Roll Out in MacFarlane Historic District*, MIAMI HERALD (July 24, 2015) (“The extension to the trolley service comes after a longtime battle between city officials and MacFarlane residents. For years the residents asked the council for the trolley stop but previous administrations did not get a trolley stop in the neighborhood. The trolley service into the MacFarlane neighborhood was part of a bigger issue involving building a city garage in the neighborhood for the Gables trolleys. Federal transportation officials concluded the garage project violated the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by using federal funds and failing to consider the impact on minority communities. Federal officials cited the cities of Coral Gables and Miami and Miami-Dade County.”).

¹⁶ See Old Smokey Steering Committee, ATSDR Supplemental Petition for Public Health Assessment and Disease Registry (Nov. 20, 2014); Old Smokey Steering Committee, ATSDR Petition for Public Health Assessment and Disease Registry (May 2, 2014); Nick Madigan, *In the Shadow of ‘Old Smokey,’ a Toxic Legacy*, N.Y. TIMES (Sept. 22, 2013).

Styles v. City of Miami

Rights education, fact investigation, and research in support of state class-action litigation¹⁷ against the City of Miami to remediate parks and properties contaminated by Old Smokey Incinerator ash, compensate damaged homeowners and injured residents, and establish a health registry for individual and community medical monitoring.¹⁸

Miller v. City of Fort Myers

Rights education, fact investigation, and research in cooperation with the Environmental Justice Clinic and in support of federal class-action litigation¹⁹ against the City of Fort Myers under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act to remove and remediate an arsenic “Sludge Dump” in the historically segregated neighborhood of East Dunbar.²⁰

Day Avenue 8

Rights education, fact investigation, administrative agency testimony, and research in cooperation with the Environmental Justice Clinic and in support of the negotiation of restrictive covenants prohibiting commercial uses and providing 14 units of affordable, workforce, and low-income housing and relocation assistance for tenants residing on eight land parcels located on Day Avenue in Village West.²¹

Housing and Community Development Task Force

Rights education, fact investigation, and research in support of a fair-and-affordable housing coalition of Black churches, civic associations, and tenant and homeowner organizations to combat the mass eviction and displacement of low-income tenants and homeowners in Village West.²²

Grove Rights and Community Equity, Inc.

Facilitated the incorporation of a nonprofit organization in cooperation with Legal Services of Greater Miami to advocate for fair housing and equitable community economic development

¹⁷ The litigation team includes Louise Caro, Aaron Modiano, and lawyers from the Downs Law Group.

¹⁸ See Yvette Styles et al. v. City of Miami & SCS Engineers, No. 17-22967CA (Fla. 11th Cir. Ct. filed Sept. 27, 2017); David Smiley, *Incinerator in black neighborhood caused cancer, miscarriages, lawsuit says*, MIAMI HERALD (Oct. 13, 2017).

¹⁹ The pro bono litigation team included Ralf Brookes, Gary Davis, and James Whitlock.

²⁰ See Miller v. City of Fort Myers, 424 F. Supp. 3d 1136 (M.D. Fla. 2020); Melissa Montoya, *South St. sludge saga cost city millions; Outside legal fees alone were \$505,000*, FORT MYERS NEWS-PRESS (May 31, 2020) (“The city of Fort Myers spent \$5.5 million to clean up and defend itself in the South Street sludge saga. The city, facing a lawsuit from residents, began to clean up the site, which contained high levels of arsenic, in October 2018. By the summer of 2019, the sludge was gone. In February, Judge Shari Polster Chappell tossed the lawsuit out of federal court because the city had cleaned up the sludge. . . . The lawsuit against the city was filed in March 2018 by a group of residents who wanted to get the sludge removed from the Dunbar area, a majority black area.”).

²¹ The pro bono negotiation and tenants’ rights team included lawyers from the Miami Office of Hogan Lovells.

²² See Felipe Rivas, *Coconut Grove: Zoned Divided*, MIAMI TIMES (Feb. 17, 2019) (“The Housing and Community Development Task Force has been advocating for the needs of the Grove’s Black residents who have been suffering from the effects of the constant construction in the neighborhood, as well as displacement propelled by unfettered development. The task force, comprised of the Coconut Grove Homeowners and Tenants Association and the Coconut Grove Ministerial Alliance, wants the city of Miami to review its compliance with the Fair Housing Act along with other remedial actions.”).

through the negotiation of community benefits agreements, land use and zoning policy reform, and federal and state litigation.²³

Grace, Inc. v. City of Miami

Rights education, fact investigation, and research in support of federal voting rights litigation in cooperation with the ACLU of Florida challenging municipal racial gerrymandering under the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.²⁴

Grace, CGVW, HOATA, CGMA, and Nnamdi v. City of Miami

Rights education, fact investigation, and research in cooperation with the Community Justice Project and in support of a civil rights administrative complaint filed with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development against the City of Miami challenging discriminatory land use, zoning, and demolition policies and practices under the Fair Housing Act.²⁵

Freedom School

Curricular research and classroom instruction in support of a youth education summer program for K-12 students in cooperation with Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, the Coconut Grove Ministerial Alliance, and other Village West stakeholders.²⁶

²³ See *G.R.A.C.E.: A powerful West Grove changemaker against gentrification and political inequity*, CAPLIN NEWS (July 26, 2024) (“GRACE dates its origins to 2019 when members of the Coconut Grove Ministerial Alliance and Community Development Task Force gathered at the nearby Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church to address strategies to address skyrocketing housing costs and the slow erosion of the area’s historic Bahamian culture. Indeed, in the decade between 2010 and 2020 the neighborhood’s black population declined roughly 26 percent.”).

²⁴ See *GRACE, Inc. v. City of Miami*, No. 1:22-CV-24066-KMM, 2024 WL 1563066, at *40 (S.D. Fla. Apr. 10, 2024); Genevieve Bowen, *Accord ends Miami’s gerrymandering lawsuit, districts set*, MIAMI TODAY (May 28, 2024) (“Miami has a new district map after city officials approved a settlement that concludes the racial gerrymandering lawsuit that has loomed over the city for a year and a half. The Miami City Commission on May 23 voted 4-1 to accept the settlement agreement with the plaintiffs in the case. The agreement will see that Miami adopts a new district map drawn on geographic boundaries rather than racial and reunites historically contiguous neighborhoods, pays the plaintiffs’ legal fees totaling over \$1.5 million, and puts a referendum on the 2025 ballot to reform the city’s redistricting process.”); Patricia Mazzei, *City of Miami Racially Gerrymandered Voting Districts, Judge Finds*, N.Y. TIMES (Apr. 10, 2024).

²⁵ See *Grace, CGVW, HOATA, CGMA, and Nnamdi v. City of Miami et al.*, Inquiry No. 734632, HUD File No. 04-24-7072-8, Title VI Case No. 04-24-7072-6, Section 109 Case No. 04-24-7072-9; Joshua Ceballos, *Coconut Grove groups accuse City of Miami of housing discrimination against Black residents*, WLRN PUBLIC MEDIA (July 24, 2024, 6:00 AM).

²⁶ Led by CEPS Senior Program Manager Dr. Keshia Merritt and Program Coordinator Carter Cooper, and supported by Brown University undergraduate interns, the Freedom School youth education pilot summer program involved more than 45 students in 2024. See Miami Law Staff Report, *University of Miami School of Law Center Partners on Freedom School Pilot Program*, NEWS@THEU (July 19, 2024) (“The comprehensive summer school is designed to promote literacy, cultural awareness, and civic engagement among children and families in Miami-Dade County, particularly those of Coconut Grove Village West. By integrating Black history and cultural studies into the curriculum, the program, open to elementary through high school, aims to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of Black collective heritage and its pivotal role in shaping our society.”).

INTERNAL AWARDS

CEPS confers the *William M. Hoeveler Award* honoring extraordinary members of the bar and bench as well as organizations distinguished by their historical dedication to ethics and public service, the *Lawyers in Leadership Award* honoring outstanding members of the bar and bench as well as organizations distinguished by their dedication to ethics and civic leadership, and the *Andrew D. Fredman Friend of the Center Award* honoring civic-minded members of the South Florida community distinguished by their contribution to the mission of the Center for Ethics and Public Service. *See Appendix A.*

EXTERNAL AWARDS

CEPS programs have won numerous local, state, and national awards, including two American Bar Association awards, three Association of American Law School awards, and both The Florida Bar and the Florida Supreme Court awards. *See Appendix B.*

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Since 1996, CEPS faculty and staff have trained more than **1,400** graduate and undergraduate fellows and interns, and collaborated with more than **50,000** civic leaders in ethics and professionalism programs as well as anti-poverty, civil rights, environmental justice, and public health campaigns. CEPS faculty also have been widely cited in law journals and in the media.

APPENDIX A: AWARDS CONFERRED

HON. WILLIAM M. HOEVELER AWARD, 2002-2024

Patricia A. Redmond, 2024
Dr. Marvin Dunn, 2023
The Honorable Michael A. Hanzman, 2022
The Honorable Adalberto Jordan, 2021
Julie K. Brown, 2019
Patricia Borns & Jenny Staletovich, 2018
Friends of the Everglades, 2017
The Honorable Marcia G. Cooke, 2016
George Knox, 2015
The Honorable Barbara J. Pariente, 2014
The Honorable Jay Cristol, 2013
The Honorable Justice R. Fred Lewis, 2012
Katherine Fernandez Rundle, 2011
The Honorable Joseph W. Hatchett, 2010
The Honorable Donald L. Graham, 2009
The Honorable Mario P. Goderich, 2008
The Honorable Peter T. Fay, 2007
Janet Reno, 2006
The Honorable Rosemary Barkett, 2005
Walter H. Beckham, Jr., 2004
The Honorable Daniel S. Pearson, 2003
The Honorable William M. Hoeveler, 2002

LAWYERS IN LEADERSHIP AWARD, 2000-2024

Civil Rights Collective, 2022
Tiffani G. Lee, 2021
The Honorable Jacqueline Becerra, 2019
Florida Justice Institute, 2018
Monica Vignes-Pitan, 2017
Charles E. Elsesser, Jr., 2016
The Honorable Darrin P. Gayles, 2015
Elizabeth Schwartz, 2014
Patricia Redmond, 2013
Carlos J. Martinez, 2012
Joseph Centorino, 2011
Marcia K. Cypen, 2010
Kathleen Williams, 2009
Cheryl Little, 2008
The Honorable Peter R. Palermo & Edna Shalala, 2007
M. Minnette Massey, 2006
Jeannette F. Hausler & The Honorable Patricia A. Seitz, 2005
H. T. Smith, 2003
Carlos M. de la Cruz, The Honorable Joan A. Lenard, & Richard C. Milstein, 2002
Ellen Catsman Freidin, Joseph P. Klock, & The Honorable Henry Latimer, 2001
President Emeritus Edward T. Foote II, 2000

ANDREW D. FREDMAN FRIEND OF THE CENTER AWARD, 2001-2024

D. Porpoise Evans, Edith Georgi, Jane Moscovitz, John O’Sullivan, & Dwayne Robinson, 2023
Natalie Barefoot & Daniela Tagtachian, 2019
Cynthia McKenzie & Jan Jacobowitz, 2016
Ralf Brookes, Philip Freidin, Lowell J. Kuvin, & Joel S. Perwin, 2014
Cristina Favretto, Laverne Pinkney, & Beatrice Colastin Skokan, 2013
Coconut Grove Ministerial Alliance & Donald A. Cramp, Jr., 2012
Karen Throckmorton, 2011
JoNel Newman, Bernard P. Perlmutter, & Kele Stewart Williams, 2010
John M. Barkett, 2009
Neal R. Sonnett, 2008
Dennis O. Lynch & Jessi Tamayo, 2007
Sandford L. Bohrer & Charles E. Elsesser, Jr., 2006
Arturo Brito, M.D., Lawrence Friedman, M.D., & JoNell Efantis-Potter, R.N., Ph.D.,
Hy Shapiro, & Gwen Wurm, M.D., 2005
Louis J. Chiavacci, Dr. Susan Mullane, & Samina Quraeshi, 2004
Ed Asper, Juan C. Enjamio, Adrian J. Parry, & Laura C. Walker, 2003
Steven E. Chaykin & Holly R. Skolnick, 2002
Elinor Catsman, 2001

APPENDIX B: AWARDS RECEIVED

CENTER AWARDS

2023 Public Service Award, South Florida Caribbean Bar Association
2017 Community Service Award, Coconut Grove Ministerial Alliance of Black Churches
2016 Award for Social Justice, Coconut Grove Drug-Free Prevention Partnership
2014 Miami People, Miami New Times
2014 Community Recognition Award, G.W. Carver High School Alumni Association
2012 E. Smythe Gambrell Professionalism Award, American Bar Association
2012 Public Interest Innovative Service Award, UM School of Law
2011 Appreciation Award, Coconut Grove Ministerial Alliance of Black Churches
2009 Innovative Service in the Public Interest Award, UM School of Law
2007 Innovative Service in the Public Interest Award, UM School of Law
2007 William Pincus Award, AALS Section on Clinical Education
2007 Father Robert Drinan Award, AALS Section on Pro Bono and Public Service
2004-2005 Gary Bellow Scholar, AALS Section on Clinical Education
2002 UM Omicron Delta Kappa National Leadership Honor Society
2001 *Arete* Award, Miami-Dade County Commission on Ethics and Public Trust
2000 Seventh Annual Professionalism Award, The Florida Bar
1999 Faculty Professionalism Award, Florida Supreme Court
1998 E. Smythe Gambrell Professionalism Award, American Bar Association