



*A chance meeting with Cory Booker in Military Park. From left to right: Lauren Hume, Kellie Barton, Ian Herbert, Dave Lin, Timothy Collazzi, and Megan Cunningham*

## **NYU LAW STUDENTS SPEND SPRING BREAK AT NJISJ**

For many students, spring break means sunny beaches and an escape from all things serious. One group of New York University Law School students chose instead to dedicate their vacation to social justice.

Kellsie Barton, Ian Herbert, Lauren Hume, Dave Lin, and Audrey Stern, spent the week volunteering for the New Jersey Institute for Social

Justice and learning about Newark. Organized by former summer intern and NYU second year law student, Megan Cunningham, the interns provided invaluable legal research on issues of criminal justice, employment law, and fair housing.

Their work will help the Institute's efforts to secure safer communities, improve access to jobs, reform criminal laws that have burdensome effects on the poor, and address the extended ramifications of the foreclosure crisis. Interns also had the opportunity to see the city, visit Newark City Hall, and have a photo-op with Mayor Booker.

Megan Cunningham was the Alternative Spring Break trip facilitator for the NYU interns. Cunningham herself worked as a volunteer during spring break of 2009, and she was as an intern last summer. She said, "the Institute has a sort of magnetic draw for me." When looking back at the week she concluded, "from our tour of City Hall to a serendipitous meeting with Cory Booker in Military Park, I thoroughly enjoyed sharing Newark and NJISJ with a new batch of law students whom I hope will feel that same pull that keeps me coming back."

Ian Herbert was excited about the various issues with which the Institute is involved. He said, "The work at NJISJ is so diverse. The five of us came in and were able to work on an incredible breadth of issues, from gang violence to fees attached to criminal penalties." Herbert spent his week researching difficulties facing women interested in non-traditional jobs (i.e. construction, truck driving, plumbing, etc.). Herbert was very positive when reflecting on the week, stating, "I knew nothing about these issues at the beginning of the week, and I'm leaving NJISJ feeling that these problems are some of the most important of the day."

Lauren Hume spent the week researching whether employers' concerns about the potential for negligent hiring liability, if they hire ex-offenders, have any merit. Through her intense research, she found that there is little validity to those concerns.



*Megan Cunningham, ASB trip facilitator for NYU, sitting at her desk*



*NYU Law interns with NJISJ Staff*

Hume said, "in addition to gaining new substantive knowledge about this area of law, I enjoyed the opportunity to write a memorandum on the subject for the Institute. Unlike most writing I have had an opportunity to do, this memo presented me with a unique challenge, because I needed to advocate for the Institute's preferred position, while also accurately representing the state of the law."

David Li spent his spring break at the Institute because of his interest in public policy. He exclaimed, "as a

think-and-do-tank in the heart of Newark, NJISJ was the perfect spring break destination for me." Li researched criminal fines in New Jersey, finding that NJ law requires fines for many offenses. Interestingly, Li was not completely satisfied with what he found, and was left asking, "What percentage of criminal fines are paid in full? Do criminal fines improve public safety?" Li enjoyed his time at the Institute, and ended by saying, "It was exciting to be able to

contribute to NJISJ's great work in shaping policy to ease ex-offender reentry."

## **SPEAKING AND DOING JUSTICE: NJISJ LAWYERS ON THE ISSUES AND IN THE COMMUNITY**

March was a month of knowledge, growth, and coalition-building for NJISJ's Legal Program. Executive Director Cornell William Brooks spoke as panel chair and opening commentator for a conference on Reforming the Corrections Environment, sponsored by Princeton University's Policy Research Institute for the Region. Cornell also spoke on foreclosures at a conference on the Fall of the Economy, sponsored by St. John's University Law School, as well as a major conference on prisoner reentry, sponsored by Rutgers University-Camden. Closer to home, Cornell spoke about the Institute's work before the Newark Advisory Council of Metrowest and the Hudson County Reentry Taskforce, and delivered an invocation on justice for the American Jewish Committee Learned Hand Award Dinner honoring NJISJ Trustee Douglas S. Eakeley. Our staff also participated in conferences sponsored by Yale Law School and the National Community Reinvestment Coalition, furthering our work on foreclosures and prisoner reentry. We also continued our initiatives with state and local government.

NJISJ Legal Director, Craig Levine, presented the Institute's preliminary research on juvenile waiver to the state-wide Juvenile Detention Alternatives working group. The research, developed in partnership with the Public Catalyst Group and the Yale Alumni Association of Metropolitan New York, will be published later this spring. March also witnessed a benchmark in the Institute's ongoing work in the development of the Newark Community Court, which formalized its contract with the Center for Court Innovation, a non-profit think tank providing expert support for problem-solving in the courts. The Newark court is the first community court instituted in New Jersey, and will serve as a model for the state.

The Institute also continued its commitment to developing young public interest attorneys (and drawing on their tremendous talent). The legal program hosted four interns from New York University Law School who volunteered on their spring break (see *NYU Law Students*).

Additionally, the Legal Program is pleased to announce its intern class for the summer of 2010: Josh Avratin (University of Chicago); Bob Brown (Yale School of Management; J.D. University of Notre Dame, 2006); Irene Hsieh (Columbia University); Lucy Joffe (New York University); and Kyle Smiddie (Rutgers University).

**CRAIG LEVINE SPEAKS  
AT NYU HIGH SCHOOL  
LAW INSTITUTE  
GRADUATION**

The NYU Law School's High School Law Institute (H.S.L.I.) is a program for New York City high school students who are eager to learn more about the legal system and prepare for higher education. Students spend their Saturdays participating in classes taught by NYU and Columbia Law students, culminating in a mock trial. One of the biggest days of the year for the H.S.L.I. students is Graduation. This year's graduation speaker was Craig Levine, New Jersey Institute for Social Justice Senior Counsel and Policy Director and a graduate of NYU Law School. Levine's speech addressed the alleged overabundance of lawyers. He commented that while there may be enough lawyers, there are not enough of the right kind of lawyers, those fighting for a more just society. "We'll need no more lawyers when we have no more injustice," he concluded. Craig also recently participated in the selection of the next Child and Family Fellowship class at the Annie E. Casey Foundation in Baltimore, MD.



*Craig Levine speaking to this year's graduates of the NYU High School Law Institute*



*Sarah Hinger, NJISJ's newest staff attorney*

**SARAH HINGER  
BECOMES NJISJ'S  
NEWEST STAFF  
ATTORNEY**

It is with great pleasure that we announce that Sarah Hinger has recently joined the Institute as a staff attorney. While new to this position, Sarah is not new to NJISJ. She's been with us since last September as one of the inaugural winners of Columbia Law School's Social Justice Fellowship. This prestigious

fellowship provided her with eight months of support. We're delighted that she'll be remaining with the Institute. In her short time with NJISJ, Sarah has made invaluable contributions across a broad range of our work. She provided real-time legal research that was crucial to our ability to move the three prisoner reentry-related bills that became law in January. Sarah also has researched women's access to nontraditional jobs. Additionally, she has delved deeply into waiver of children from the juvenile to the adult criminal justice system, and she has done all of this with

remarkable dedication and constant good cheer.

Given the quality of her work, it always surprises us when we recall that Sarah graduated law school less than a year ago. Despite her recent graduation, Sarah's commitment to public interest work is deep and long-standing. While still a student, she worked at the Immigration Unit of the New York Legal Aid Society; at the A.C.L.U.'s Racial Justice Program; and at Interights, The International Center for the Legal Protection of Human Rights.

Sarah brings an impressive academic record to the Institute. She graduated from University of Virginia with a B.A. in Political and Social Thought, Phi Beta Kappa and with high distinction.

She received a M.Phil. in Sociology from Cambridge University. At Columbia she was named a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar and received several awards for her writing. She already has published several pieces, including *Finding the Fundamental: Shaping Identity in Gender and Sexual Orientation Based Asylum Claims*.

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- Congratulations to Grizel Ubarry, NJISJ trustee, who will be honored with the Medal for Meritorious Service by The Newark Museum at its Gala on May 1, 2010.
  - Congratulations to Douglas Eakeley, Esq., founding trustee of NJISJ, for receiving the Learned Hand Award from the American Jewish Committee at the Short Hills Hilton on April 21, 2010.