

# LIMAN AT 20: PUBLIC INTEREST(S)



Participants at the 19th Annual Colloquium, "Moving Criminal Justice," in Spring 2016

## THE ARTHUR LIMAN PUBLIC INTEREST PROGRAM CELEBRATES TWO DECADES OF COMMITMENTS TO EQUAL JUSTICE

During April 6-7, 2017, the Arthur Liman Public Interest Program will celebrate and honor two decades of commitments to equal justice with a twentieth anniversary colloquium, "Liman at 20: Public Interest(s)." Invited are 13 current and 101 former Liman Fellows to reflect on their work and to consider the efforts needed in the decades to come.

Liman Fellows, law students, and faculty will be joined by Justice Sonia Sotomayor '79, who has had a long career in public service. After working as assistant district attorney in the New York County District Attorney's Office (1979-1984) and then litigating international commercial matters in private practice (1984-1992), Justice Sotomayor was appointed to the federal bench, where she was a trial and appellate judge for seventeen years before being nominated and confirmed to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court in 2009.

The twentieth anniversary colloquium will consider how public interest lawyering is entrepreneurial in its engagement with institutions, both in creating new organizations and in changing existing legal regimes. The sessions will also consider how public interest lawyers sustain and are sustained by the work that they do and by institutions such as Yale Law School.

The Liman Program funds graduates of Yale Law School to work for a year on projects sponsored by host organizations focused on a variety of issues related to access to justice—including criminal defense, disability rights, veterans' assistance, prison reform, juvenile justice, civil rights, workers' rights, civil legal services, immigration and refugee assistance, and LGBTQ rights. The kinds of work Liman Fellows do is as varied as the fields in which they practice. Liman Fellows have provided direct services to populations in need; worked in government and in the private sector on policy issues at the state and local level; helped grassroots organizing to build and support coalitions; researched and issued reports on pressing social justice issues; and brought lawsuits to challenge inequality.

Beginning in 1997, when the Liman Program funded its first Fellow, and continuing with the current cohort of thirteen new and continuing Fellows, the Liman Program has strived to support innovative projects that respond to needs in the justice system and leave a lasting imprint. Of the 114 Fellows funded, about 90 percent continue to work for public interest nonprofits, government, or academia. Y