

Year in REVIEW 2018

A Letter from Our President

Friend,

Consider a world where our nation's courts cease to protect core freedoms—where our government sides with special interests and large corporations, and the rights of average citizens fall by the wayside. Sadly, such a world does not require much imagination; the radical right and conservative activist groups such as the Federalist Society continue to make inroads in taking over our nation's courts and passing their conservative agendas on Capitol Hill and in statehouses across the country. And they are succeeding.

Now imagine another world—one where Americans' individual freedoms are expanded, women's rights protected, and the right of all to love and marry whomever they wish enshrined. Imagine a world where the right to vote is valued, the contributions of labor unions respected, and freedom of speech is the noble property of the citizen, not the corporation with the most money. Fortunately, this world does not require much imagination either. It's one that we continue to work toward.

Our nation's journey has always been one of expanding freedoms, even in the face of strong forces bent on denying rights to our citizens. It is this America and these values that ACS has championed and fought for since our founding 17 years ago. ACS firmly believes that the law should be a force for good for all people, and will continue to champion original scholarship, programs, and initiatives to achieve that end.

The Trump administration has proven to be a flashpoint for our democracy, and ACS is proud to have raised our voice and our network to speak up and speak out. Our work has never been more important, and we have supporters like you to thank for that. 2018 was a pivotal year for ACS, and we wanted to share some highlights of our work here. Together we will build a vision of the law that values everyone.

Thank you for standing with us.



Warmly,
Caroline Fredrickson

Caroline Fredrickson
President, American Constitution Society

2018 Highlights

 Total
Chapters:

Lawyer: 43	New Chapters in 2018: 13
Student: 180	

Total  Over
Events: 1500



25% Increase in Twitter Followers	Over 300 Blog Posts from ACS Network	Launched NEW ACS Website
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TOP RATED



All Voting
is Local



VOTE

The right to vote is in more danger today than at any time since 1965. Following the Supreme Court's decision in *Shelby County v. Holder*, which gutted the Voting Rights Act, many states with conservative legislatures have continuously attacked access to the ballot box, particularly for minority populations.

Local decisions, ranging from moving a polling place to changing voting hours to providing false information to voters, often go unchecked and unrecognized—but can have massive impact on access to the polls. And many states have passed restrictive voter ID laws in an attempt to suppress voting, especially targeting low-income residents.

In 2018, ACS partnered with several other nonprofits on a pilot project to monitor election activity in five states. All Voting is Local is developing educational materials for poll workers, volunteers, and advocates; training volunteers to monitor election administration; recruiting poll workers; connecting our members with local advocates; and educating the public on the importance of their right to vote.

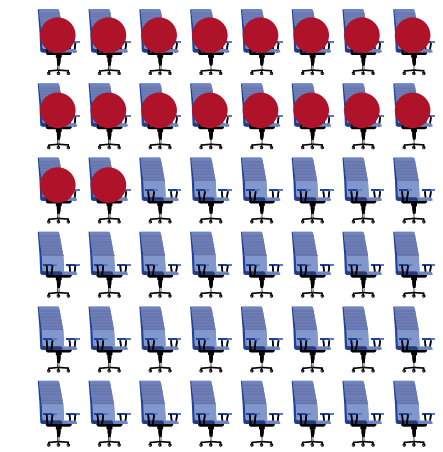
A Changing Judiciary

President Trump is remaking the federal judiciary. From the rushed and extremely troubling Supreme Court confirmation process for Brett Kavanaugh, to the confirmation of more than 65 Article III judges, to this administration's blatant attacks on and disregard for the judiciary, one thing is clear: Our rule of law is at risk.

At the Circuit and District Court levels, the Trump administration has overseen perhaps the greatest shift to the right our courts have ever seen.

ACS organized our largest ever awareness campaign surrounding the federal courts and confirmation of Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court. Some of our major efforts included:

- Compiling 17 in-depth issue area briefs for senators from ACS scholars explaining major constitutional law issues, along with over 130 potential questions for senators to ask Kavanaugh during his hearing.
- Generating more than 75 op-eds in local, regional, and national papers highlighting the concerns of our network about Judge Kavanaugh's history and the stakes of his confirmation for the environment, reproductive justice, LGBT equality, workers' rights, and other issues.
- Hosting more than 80 events in our chapters around the country to discuss



the nomination and its potential impacts on our rule of law

- Calling for a thorough, impartial investigation and hearing into the accusations of sexual assault against Judge Kavanaugh.
- Working regularly with Senate staff and advocates to urge adherence to Senate procedures and norms.
- Working with local leaders, experts, and public officials to educate their communities on the importance of the Supreme Court.

ACS firmly believes that an independent judiciary is essential to the health of our democracy and the rule of law. We will continue to educate lawmakers and the public on the judicial nominations process and the importance of the judiciary, while helping to build a progressive, diverse pipeline to ensure a future federal bench that better reflects America.

Presidential Investigation Education Project

President Trump and his enablers have engaged in a years-long smear campaign against the FBI, the Department of Justice, and Special Counsel Mueller in a clear attempt to discredit our rule of law and the results of Mueller's investigation.

ACS has partnered with Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW) to develop and disseminate legal analysis on the various investigations surrounding President Trump and his presidential campaign.

In 2018, the project issued four joint reports, led briefings on Capitol Hill, and generated over 15 op-eds in *The New York Times*, *Politico*, *The Washington*



Post, and other media outlets. We held events around the country to educate the public on the importance and legality of the Mueller investigation and to help avert a constitutional crisis. It's clear that this is no "witch hunt," and we have helped provide legal analysis and public pressure to protect these investigations.

2018 National Convention

Our 2018 National Convention brought together nearly 1,000 of our country's top legal scholars, lawyers, judges, law students, and activists to Washington, D.C. Featured speakers included U.S. Supreme Court Justice

Sonia Sotomayor, former Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates, Dreamer and law graduate Karla Quetzalli Perez, New Jersey Attorney General Gurbir Grewal, and dozens of other legal luminaries.

Select panels from this year activated the legal community on “#MeToo, Ustoo. Can Lawyers Take the Lead?,” “Religious Freedom v. Anti-Discrimination Laws: Can Rights be Reconciled,” and “Under Pressure: Immigrants and the Trump Administration.”



Former Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates delivers impassioned keynote address telling attendees that “this is not a time to be passive”



Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor in conversation with ACS Board Member and Board of Academic Advisors Melissa Murray



New Jersey Attorney General Gurbir Grewal notes in his keynote address that “states must lead the way in advancing progressive values”



ACS members gather for our Members of Color reception

SAVE THE DATE! 2019 National Convention
in Washington, DC: June 6-8, 2019

State Attorneys General Project

State attorneys general are uniquely positioned to confront the challenges posed by the Trump administration and a Department of Justice intent on targeting vulnerable communities. We are building a strong infrastructure for these public officials, many of whom are filing suit after suit to challenge executive orders, administrative changes, and other efforts to restrict the rights of individuals.

In 2018, ACS established coalitions of AGs and legal experts to focus on issue priorities, including immigration, labor, criminal justice, and the 2020 census. ACS worked with AG staff from 18 states, coordinating a series of in-person meetings and conference calls to discuss strategy, exchange best practices, and share resources. State AGs will continue to play a critical role in protecting the rule of law, and ACS is proud to have built a coalition ready to tackle the many issues we face.

2018 ACS Student Convention



ACS students gathered for Convention

Nearly 200 students from 34 states and the District of Columbia joined us in Chicago for the 2018 ACS Student Convention. Speakers included Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan, President and CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights Vanita Gupta, and President of Let America Vote Jason Kander.

Our students explored implicit bias, next steps for advancing local progress, mobilizing around issues on #MeToo in the legal profession, protecting the First Amendment, guaranteeing access to justice, and more. ACS student chapter members demonstrated how ACS's vision is alive and well among our next generation of leaders in law.

Save the date for our 2019 ACS Student Convention: February 22-23 at the University of Virginia School of Law in Charlottesville.

Member Reviews from GreatNonProfits.org

“ACS was so helpful when I was starting law school; it instantly connected me with like-minded law students.”

“When I think of progressive leadership in the U.S., ACS is at the forefront.”

“ACS has been a real anchor for me, helping me in my career, opening doors, and making connections.”

Constitution in the Classroom

Each year, ACS sends members of our network into elementary, middle, and high-school classrooms across the country to teach lessons based on the Constitution.

Working with local and state bar organizations, ACS members have taught thousands of students in the decade since we began the program. In conjunction with Constitution Day, Law Day, and our new Valentine's Day initiative to Love Our Constitution, our network has helped excite young minds about their constitutional rights and responsibilities. Our Constitution in the Classroom series is one of our many volunteer activities available to members. Email LCEmails@acslaw.org to learn more about volunteer opportunities in your area.



ACS staff and volunteers teaching our Constitution in the Classroom curricula at local area school

Immigrants and the Trump Administration



President Trump made immigration policy a central focus of his agenda from Day One when he issued his first executive order barring admission into the U.S. from certain predominantly Muslim countries and suspending all refugee admissions. Continued attacks have made clear that this administration is committed to blatantly discriminating against refugees, asylees, and other immigrants. The administration's heinous targeting, treatment, and imprisonment of minors and children crossing the border is uniquely horrific.

ACS has activated our network at every critical juncture to help protect the most vulnerable in our country. ACS helped secure amicus briefs for lawsuits against the travel ban; coordinated with our networks to identify volunteers to help review petitions; connected major law firms with volunteer opportunities for their attorneys; and published dozens of blog posts and op-eds highlighting the dangerous precedents this administration is setting.

#MeToo and the Legal Community



The impact of the viral #MeToo campaign has revealed the pervasiveness of sexual assault, harassment, and misconduct on campuses, in the media, and in the workplace, including among the legal profession. This movement has brought "silence breakers" to the forefront of the discussion to expose how secrecy has enabled this culture to fester and what we can do to prevent and end it.

ACS has been proud to foster discussions on the #MeToo movement at events in our student and lawyer chapters throughout the country, as well as at our 2018 National Convention. ACS remains firmly committed to continuing the conversation and proposing solutions about how our network and the entire legal profession can address issues of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sex and gender discrimination.

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Join our LinkedIn group:
American Constitution Society

Read our blog: [ACSblog.org](https://www.acslaw.org/blog)



Top Hashtags of 2018

#ACS2018

#SaveSCOTUS

#KavanaughHearing

#HaltTheHearing

#WhatsAtStake

#ACSTalks



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For a list of upcoming events in your area, visit [ACSLaw.org/events](https://www.acslaw.org/events).