

## WELCOME BACK STUDENTS!



We are excited to work with you to help you shape the debate, make a positive difference in your community, and build and strengthen your progressive network! The staff at ACS is here to help you, so please reach out to us with ideas and questions at any time. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to ensuring that the law is a force to improve the lives of all people.

Best,  
Meghan, Peggy, Brian, Molly, Luke, Michelle, Zinelle, Faisal, Ashley, Emma, Kal, K.C., and Alex

## IMPORTANT DATES IN SPRING 2019

### 2019 ACS STUDENT CONVENTION

Join student leaders from around the country for ACS's Seventh Annual National Student Convention on February 22-23, 2019 at the University of Virginia School of Law. There will be two days of progressive programming and training focused on empowering the next generation of progressive leaders and helping students realize their potential for creating a constructive dialogue for change.

Programming will include discussions and trainings on combatting hate and bigotry, thinking beyond litigation to advance progressive goals, why courts matter in the battle for equity, exploring state constitutions to advance civil rights, and tips and tricks for clerkships. Featured speakers include:

- \* Hon. Cyrus Habib, Lieutenant Governor, Washington
- \* Khizr Khan, Constitutional Rights Advocate
- \* Dahlia Lithwick, Senior Editor, *Slate*, Recipient, ACS Progressive Champion Award
- \* And much more!

For more information and to register, please visit <https://www.acslaw.org/get-involved/acs-conventions/2019-student-convention/>. And follow along at #ACS2019.



## SAVE THE DATE

**National Convention:** The ACS National Convention will be on June 6-8, 2019 in Washington, DC. Check out videos from the 2018 Convention [here](#).

## FILMS

Consider hosting screenings and discussions of the following videos and films:

### 2018 ACS National Convention

Our featured speakers included U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, who engaged in a memorable conversation with her former law clerk and ACS national board member Professor Melissa Murray. New Jersey Attorney General Gurbir Grewal, Maryland Attorney General Brian Frosh, former acting U.S. Attorney General Sally Yates, and DREAMer activist Karla Quetzalli Perez also addressed attendees. Videos available [here](#).

### DARK MONEY

A political thriller, **DARK MONEY** examines one of the greatest present threats to American democracy: the influence of untraceable corporate money on our elections and elected officials. The film takes viewers to Montana to follow an intrepid local journalist working to expose the real-life impacts of the US Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision. Through this gripping story, **DARK MONEY** uncovers the shocking and vital truth of how American elections are bought and sold. This Sundance award-winning documentary is directed/produced by Kimberly Reed (PRODIGAL SONS) and produced by Katy Chevinny (E-TEAM). Check out the [trailer](#).

Check out the regularly updated [list of screenings](#). Chapters that are interested in purchasing group tickets should be in touch with the film's impact producer, Alison Byrne Fields at [alison@whatisaggregage.com](mailto:alison@whatisaggregage.com). Chapters that would like to organize their own screenings should also be in touch with Alison.

## FILMS

Consider hosting screenings and discussions of the following videos and films:

### 13th

The title of Ava DuVernay's extraordinary and galvanizing documentary refers to the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, which reads, "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States." The progression from that second qualifying clause to the horrors of mass criminalization and the sprawling American prison industry is laid out by DuVernay with bracing lucidity. With a potent mixture of archival footage and testimony from a dazzling array of activists, politicians, historians, and formerly incarcerated women and men, DuVernay creates a work of grand historical synthesis.

See Netflix's "GRANT OF PERMISSION FOR EDUCATIONAL SCREENINGS" terms [here](#).



## IMPORTANT DATES IN SPRING 2019 - CONTINUED

### 2019 ACS NATIONAL CONVENTION



The ACS National Convention will be June 6-8, 2019 in Washington, DC. Student scholarships will be available soon! Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more details!



### 2019 ACS NEXT GENERATION LEADER AND BOARD MEMBER APPLICATION AVAILABLE

ACS student members have two exciting opportunities to enhance their engagement in ACS's work: the ACS Next Generation Leaders (NGL) program and a two-year term on the ACS Board of Directors. The NGL program identifies and provides support to recent and forthcoming law school graduates who have demonstrated special leadership in their work with ACS's student chapters, and who have the interest, skills, and ability to remain vital members of the ACS community. Click [here](#) for more information and to download the application form. The submission deadline is Monday, March 11, 2019.

### 2019 ACS WRITING COMPETITIONS

ACS's [Constance Baker Motley National Student Writing Competition](#) honors the legacy of Constance Baker Motley as a civil rights leader, elected official, and the first African-American woman appointed to the federal bench. ACS welcomes all student papers furthering and promoting a progressive vision of the Constitution, law, and public policy. The winner will receive \$3,000 and an offer to publish in the [University of Pennsylvania Journal of Constitutional Law](#). The two runners-up will receive \$1,000. The deadline to apply is February 10, 2019.

ACS's [Richard D. Cudahy Writing Competition](#) on Regulatory and Administrative Law honors the late Judge Cudahy's contribution to the field. The competition is open to practicing lawyers, policymakers, academics, and law students. A winner will be selected in both the lawyer and student categories. Each winning author will receive a cash prize of \$1,500. The deadline to apply is February 3, 2019.

# GET ENGAGED!

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## ACS VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Consider volunteering with ACS! ACS is looking for volunteers interested in upcoming research and community education projects. Projects include teaching your network about the importance of the federal judiciary through the Love our Constitution program this February and participating in ACS's Notice and Comment project. If you are interested in getting involved with a pro bono project, Love Our Constitution, or our Notice and Comment Project, please email [LCEmails@acslaw.org](mailto:LCEmails@acslaw.org).

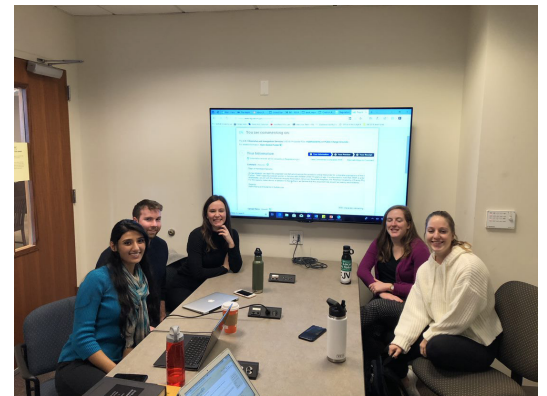


## LOVE OUR CONSTITUTION

Love Our Constitution is a chance for ACS members to engage with their community through discussions both large and small. In past years, members hosted more than 30 programs involving over 1100 people across the country to discuss the Constitution and its impact on current events. Our 2019 Love Our Constitution curriculum will be available in January. If you are interested in hosting a Love Our Constitution program in your community, please complete the sign-up form [here](#) or email [LCEmails@acslaw.org](mailto:LCEmails@acslaw.org) with the subject line "Love Our Constitution." For more information about the initiative, see [here](#).

## NOTICE AND COMMENT PARTY

This initiative identifies opportunities to comment on key regulations put forth by federal and state agencies. Submitting a comment for a federal or state notice of proposed rulemaking is one of the simplest and essential ways for the public to participate in the rulemaking process. Consider hosting a Notice and Comment Party to encourage your members to write and submit comments. Check out ACS's [Notice and Comment Webinar](#). If you are interested in hosting a Notice and Comment party, email [LCEmails@acslaw.org](mailto:LCEmails@acslaw.org) with the subject line "Notice and Comment." We are excited to work with you to help your members get engaged with federal and state rulemaking.



## CLASS CANCELLATION

Several law schools have either cancelled classes or allowed for class accommodations on Election Day to encourage law students to engage in the election process and to promote civic engagement on campus. These initiatives give students the time (and a reminder) to vote. More importantly, these changes encourage students to engage with the election process in a meaningful way, which can be hard if students have limited availability on Election Day. For more information on Class Cancellation on Election Day, see "Democracy on the Ground Floor: Law Schools Lend a Hand on Election Day" [here](#). If you are interested in pitching class cancellation to your school, let us know by emailing [mgreene@acslaw.org](mailto:mgreene@acslaw.org).



## READINGS

Consider hosting discussions on the following readings:

- \* [Letter From a Birmingham Jail](#) by Martin Luther King, Jr.
- \* [The Hour of the Attorneys General](#) by Rachel M. Cohen
- \* The 1968 Kerner Report
  - [Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders](#)
  - See “Race & Inequality in America: The Kerner Commission at 50” conference for additional resources [here](#)
- \* [Keeping Faith with the Constitution](#) by Pamela S. Karlan, Goodwin Liu & Christopher H. Schroeder
- \* [It Is a Constitution We Are Expounding: Collected Writings on Interpreting Our Founding Document](#)
- \* Check out additional readings on the Analysis section of the ACS website: <https://www.acslaw.org/analysis/>

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FALL

- \* The U.S. SCOTUS Vacancy and What’s at Stake
- \* The Russia-Collusion Investigation: Obstruction of Justice, Pardons and Impeachment
- \* How Cities are Holding Pres. Trump Accountable
- \* Prisoners’ Human Rights feat. Middle Ground Prisons Reform
- \* Civil Rights Panel Discussion - Police Brutality
- \* Trump v. Hawaii & the Shadow of Korematsu
- \* Update on Family Separation Litigation
- \* Janus v. AFSCME & the “Weaponized” First Amendment
- \* HATE: Why We Should Resist it with Free Speech, Not Censorship
- \* The Landscape of LGBT Rights in the Aftermath of the Masterpiece Cakeshop Case
- \* Judicial Clerkship Panel
- \* Constitution in the Classroom
- \* Community Lawyering and Community Development
- \* Life on the Other Side of the V: A Career Panel on Plaintiff-Side Law Firms
- \* How to Amicus: Lessons in How to Be a Friend of the Court
- \* Surviving 1L Year
- \* Women in Politics: Campaigning and Serving in Office
- \* Pathways to the Bench: The Changing Shape of the Modern Judiciary
- \* How to Ruin Thanksgiving
- \* #FreetheHair: Locking Black Hair to Civil Rights Movements
- \* Understanding Implicit Bias
- \* SFFA v. Harvard: Affirmative Action Panel
- \* Ramifications of Perez: A Look at Texas Gerrymandering
- \* Secure Democracy Secure Voting: Law, Policy, and Technology
- \* Voting Rights Restoration Training with Alabama Voting Rights Project
- \* Citizens United: Campaign Finance in 2018 and Beyond
- \* Election Protection Poll Monitor Training
- \* #MeToo in the Judiciary, Then and Now
- \* Burden of Proof: A Town Hall on Sexual Assault & The Law
- \* Abortion 101: SCOTUS, Symbolism, & Reproductive Justice
- \* Mental Health & The Law
- \* The Fight for Clean Energy in Trump’s America
- \* Homelessness in Cincinnati
- \* Eight Vital Court Decisions Affecting Native Americans and Tribes
- \* Residential Racial Segregation

## PROGRESSIVE FEDERALISM

Nearly a century ago, Justice Brandeis famously wrote that “[i]t is one of the happy incidents of the federal system that a single courageous state may, if its citizens choose, serve as a laboratory; and try novel social and economic experiments without risk to the rest of the country.” This notion of states as “laboratories of democracy,” is rooted in the Tenth Amendment’s directive that “[t]he powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.” At a time when the federal government seems single-mindedly dedicated to revanchist policies, these laboratories of democracy offer a path toward more progressive policies in a range of areas. ACS’s 2019 Program Guide discusses how federalism can be used to further progressive policies, specifically, in immigration, voting rights, environmental policy, and police accountability.

The Program Guide will be released in January 2019 on our [Student Chapter Resources Page](#).

We strongly encourage our chapters to cover these important issues and cosponsor these events with other diverse and progressive law student organizations. For additional resources on programming, please see the [Student Chapter Resources page](#) [here](#).

## WHY COURTS MATTER

Under the Trump administration, the composition of the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals and the U.S. District Courts is transforming rapidly. Since 2017, the Senate Majority has confirmed more nominees to lifetime appointments than during the first two years of President Obama’s Administration. To reach such break-neck speed, the White House and Senate broke the very process used to identify and confirm well-qualified nominees. See this [fact sheet](#) on how the White House and the Senate disregarded usual standards and norms for confirming nominees. For more information on why courts matter, the importance of an independent judiciary, and judicial nominations generally, please check out ACS’s Judicial Nominations page [here](#).

ACS encourages chapters to invite local, state, or federal judges to speak to their chapter. Judges can discuss their path to the bench, discuss clerkships, speak on a topic of their choosing, or discuss diversity in the judiciary. See ACS’s [The Path to the Bench](#) for more information. Also, check out ACS’s [Gavel Gap report](#) ([www.gavelgap.org](http://www.gavelgap.org)) where, for the first time, researchers have gathered data on the demographics of state court judges in all 50 states. Reach out to your local lawyer chapter, faculty advisor, and ACS for assistance in locating speakers.

## IMMIGRATION

Immigrants are under attack. From detaining migrant children; separating families at the border; attacking sanctuary cities, birthright citizenship, refugees, asylum seekers, and DREAMers; proposing changes to the definition of “public charge”; shutting down the government for wall funding; and demonizing immigrant communities, the Trump Administration has made immigration a central focus of its agenda. We encourage our chapters to engage in constructive discussions on immigration and use this programming to build solidarity and inclusion on your campus. Don’t forget to cosponsor this event with local student organizations and community groups. For more resources, check out the [Immigration section of the ACS website](#) and [ACS Volunteer Opportunities](#), including [Notice and Comment](#) opportunities.





## SAFEGUARDING THE RULE OF LAW

The rule of law is “a principle of governance in which all persons, institutions and entities, public and private, including the State itself, are accountable to the laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated.” Among these principles of governance within the U.S. constitutional regime are separation of powers, democratic accountability, transparency, and norms that guide officials in their use of political power. ACS encourages chapters to host events examining the rule of law in the federal system. Click [here](#) to view the 2018 Program Guide and Speakers List on Safeguarding the Rule of Law. See ACS’s [“Safeguarding the Rule of Law”](#) from the [2018 ACS National Convention](#). Also, check out the [Presidential Investigation Education Project](#) for more information and resources on the Mueller investigation and Russian interference in the 2016 election.

## VOTING RIGHTS

Much of the narrative around voting and representation over the last decade has focused on efforts to shrink the electorate and gerrymander political districts, and the progressive response to those efforts. Yet, innovative ideas have been proposed to expand the electorate and to ensure that representatives better resemble their state constituents. Some propose expanding voter rights at the local level for certain populations typically denied that right, while others suggest an aggressive congressional agenda to pass voting rights legislation or strengthen the legitimacy of our political representation by changing the way we vote for our elected officials. We encourage our chapters to consider programming to explore these proposals.

For more information on voting rights and election law, review the [Democracy and Voting Section](#) of the ACS website and ACS’s [2016 Guide: Are All Voters Created Equal?](#).

In January, 1.4 million Floridians with prior felony convictions regained their right to vote. ACS is engaging in this important issue through the [Florida Rights Restoration Coalition](#) and our [All Voting is Local](#) project. We encourage you to spread the word to your Florida networks to make sure everyone who is now eligible to vote gets registered. If you would like to learn more and volunteer to help with these efforts, please email [LCEmails@acslaw.org](mailto:LCEmails@acslaw.org).

For other ways to engage on the issue of voting rights, plan programming, consider pitching class cancellation on Election Day to your law school (email [mgreene@acslaw.org](mailto:mgreene@acslaw.org) to get started!), work with ACS on our [Voter Pre-registration Initiative](#), and partner with a 501(c)3 organization that specializes in voter registration to conduct a voter registration drive.



## ROADBLOCK TO REFORM

ACS is pleased to release [Roadblock to Reform](#), a report by Megan T. Stevenson and Jennifer L. Doleac. Roadblock to Reform examines how politicized systems of judicial selection in Kentucky and Virginia have created incentives for state court judges (principally, to appear “tough on crime”) that have undermined criminal justice reforms in those states. The report examines how judges in those states have applied risk assessments, an increasingly popular but still controversial algorithm-based reform that legislators have hoped would reduce incarceration rates. It concludes that risk assessments have not meaningfully reduced levels of incarceration, because judges – responding to political incentives – have often not followed recommendations under the systems, opting instead for harsher measures.

The report serves as an important warning that the pressures placed on judges by politicized selection and retention systems are a barrier to any meaningful criminal justice reform—effective, sustainable criminal justice reform must include judicial selection reform. See the report and additional resources [here](#). See an ACSblog on the report [here](#).



## FIRST AMENDMENT

The Trump Administration has challenged a number of “core principles associated with the First Amendment. These principles, and the values they support, are not partisan. They benefit us all, and so threats against them ought to concern us all.” In Professor Timothy Zick’s ACSblog post, [“President Trump: Challenging Core First Amendment Principles,”](#) Zick discusses the following: the importance of the press for sustaining our democracy; President Trump’s attack against critics, the press, and kneeling athletes; and President Trump’s use of non-disclosure agreements to silence critics of the administration.

For more resources on the First Amendment, review ACS’s [2017 Program Guide: Fighting for Our First Freedoms](#); the [First Amendment Section of the ACS website](#), [“Religious Freedom v. Anti-Discrimination Law: Can Rights Be Reconciled?”](#) from the [2018 ACS National Convention](#), [“How Conservatives Weaponized the First Amendment”](#) by Adam Liptak and [“Janus: Weaponized First Amendment Shoots at Democracy”](#) by Catherine Fisk.

## ACS'S STATE ATTORNEYS GENERAL PROJECT

In recognition of the unique and expanding role state attorneys general play in our system of government, ACS established the State Attorneys General Project (AG Project). In an ACSblog titled, "State Attorneys General Impact our Everyday Lives; Their Elections Matter," Zinelle October and Faisal Sheikh note that, "State attorneys general have always played a significant role on issues of national importance, as they hold a unique and powerful position in our federalist system of government. They exercise an independent authority separate and distinct from other organs of state government, including the governor. As states' chief legal officers, they are charged with upholding the state and federal constitutions and enforcing state and some federal laws in furtherance of the public interest. This includes holding accountable government institutions at the local, state and federal levels that may not be fulfilling their mandates or may be overstepping their bounds."

For more information on State Attorneys General, check out ACS's State AG Project website, Jim Tierney's Intro to State AGs, and Bill Marshall's Yale Law Review article, Break Up the Presidency? Governors, State Attorneys General, and Lessons from the Divided Executive. Also, check out Last Week Tonight with John Oliver's segment on State Attorneys General. If your chapter is interested in planning an event involving the state AG office and would like our guidance, e-mail us at [campus@acslaw.org](mailto:campus@acslaw.org).







## POSTING EVENTS AND REQUESTING FUNDING

Remember to post ALL the events your chapter hosts or co-sponsors onto the ACS National website. Posting instructions are available here. Make sure to also email us your event pictures and sign-in sheets at campus@acslaw.org.

In order to access ACS funding and receive reimbursement for approved Student Chapter expenses, you must follow the instructions here.

## ELECTIONS, CHAPTER UPDATES, AND BOARD POSITIONS

Update your board? Planning Elections? Please make sure to get your updated ACS Board information to us by emailing campus@acslaw.org. Please don't forget to include each board member's name, email address, graduation year, and board position.

At ACS, we give chapters a lot of flexibility in designing its board. We understand that there may be unique positions created based on the desires and needs of your students and community. We highly recommend that you have the following positions on your board: a 1L Representative, a Historian, a Lawyer Chapter Liaison, a Community Engagement Chair, and a Diversity and Inclusion Chair. More information on these positions available on pages 5-6 of the Student Chapter Handbook.



## BECOME AN ACS MEMBER

Membership to the national organization is \$10. Students can sign up for \$10 here. All board members should be national members. National members have access to our job bank, members-only conference calls, and ACS Convention scholarships. For the job bank, if you see any jobs that interest you, let us know. We are happy to provide networking help.

## 501(C)3 GUIDELINES

ACS is a non-partisan, non-profit 501(c)(3) educational organization. For specific guidance on what this means for your programming, please read pages 6-7 of the Student Chapter Handbook, and feel free to email us anytime with additional questions. Also, check out our speaker release form.



## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

At ACS, we believe that the law should be a force to improve the lives of all people. Our members—our lawyers, law students, judges, professors, and policymakers—aim to build inclusion and equity. The best way to ensure that we meet this goal is to be explicit and direct, and to have a board member committed to executing this goal. As we know, despite our best intentions, our behavior and choices are often influenced by biases that operate outside of our conscious awareness. When we think of judges and speakers, many automatically think of white male speakers, who often get more press coverage than women or people of color. We need to interrupt these biases, be strategic, and be mindful.

A Diversity and Inclusion Chair is vital to ensure that membership is diverse, that speakers are diverse, and that communities see themselves represented at ACS. We all see the world through our own unique lens and experience. A diverse membership provides our chapters, members, and the national organization with vital points of views to broaden and strengthen our strategies for emerging issues. It provides us with more tools in our toolbox!

If you have any questions or need assistance building diversity and inclusion at your chapter, please let us know! We are here to help you! The ACS Chapters team hosted a Fall 2018 Diversity and Inclusion Roundtable in November. A Spring 2019 Diversity and Inclusion Roundtable is tentatively scheduled for March 2019.

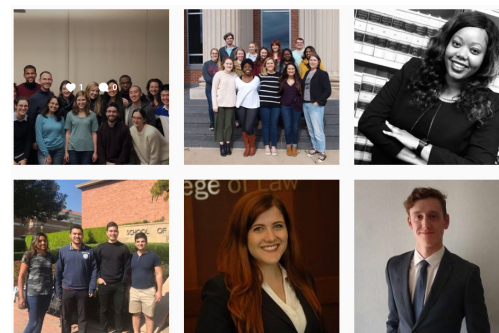


## COSPONSOR EVENTS

Cosponsor events with other student groups on your campus. These shared events broaden your programming, increase your student audience, and allow for more networking opportunities. Reach out to your Faculty Advisor(s) for ideas and assistance. Remember to meet with your Faculty Advisor(s) at the beginning of each semester and after board elections. Don't forget to also cosponsor events with your local ACS Student Chapter(s) and local ACS Lawyer Chapter!

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Please email [campus@acslaw.org](mailto:campus@acslaw.org) for tips on increasing your social media presence, growing your chapter, and learning how to best advertise your events online. Also, check us out on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#).



## ACS RESOURCES

On our [Student Chapter Resources Page](#), ACS has prepared a list of [Visiting Professors](#) and [Conferences and Conventions](#). Some exciting scholars, practitioners, and judges will be in your city soon! We encourage you to check both documents and invite speakers to engage with your chapter!

We can provide you with speaker and event suggestions and talk through event ideas with your chapter. Contact your chapter's national liaison or our general inbox at [campus@acslaw.org](mailto:campus@acslaw.org). You should also check out the [Student Chapters webpage](#) and [Resource Page](#) for downloadable materials and other helpful resources, such as the updated [Student Handbook](#), [2018-2019 ACS Model Calendar](#), and [2018 Program Guide](#) and [Past Program Guides](#). We also have tips on how to recruit and build a chapter, sample invitation letters, an event checklist, a flyer template, and much more!



## JOBS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



ACS Leaders: Would you like ACS's help with your summer/post-grad employment search? If so, please email [campus@acslaw.org](mailto:campus@acslaw.org) with your resume and a brief description of what you are interested in. We would love to connect you with opportunities shared with our network.

Let us know where you will be next summer/post-grad so that we can connect you with ACSers in your summer/post-grad city. Complete your designated Student Chapter Historian Document (see your chapter historian for more information) or complete the form [here](#).

ACS National Members should also check out ACS's Job Bank [here](#).



## GRADUATING ACS LEADERS

Please don't forget to stay in touch with ACS. We need you now more than ever!

- Consider joining your local ACS Lawyer Chapter. Please reach out to [campus@acslaw.org](mailto:campus@acslaw.org) if you need help meeting ACSers in your region.
- If there is no active lawyer chapter in your area, let us know. We'd love to work with you to help you grow a new ACS Lawyer Chapter!
- ACS is launching an At-Large Lawyer Chapter in 2019! If you are located in a rural community or outside of a major metropolitan area, we'd love to have you on our At-Large Lawyer Chapter Steering Committee. Join us to help make an impact in your local community and beyond! For more information, please email [LCEmails@acslaw.org](mailto:LCEmails@acslaw.org).
- ACS offers a [Discounted Young Lawyer Membership](#) rate of \$10 to 2019 graduates (Click law student on our [join](#) page, and be sure to put 2019). Your [membership](#) will be good through December 2020!
- Join us at the 2019 ACS National Convention in Washington, D.C., June 6-8, 2019.

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CONVERSATION!**

