



Dean Louis A. Berry

Civil Rights and Justice Institute



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About Us



Vision

The Louis A. Berry Civil Rights and Justice Institute seeks to ensure the law center's place as a center of excellence in social and restorative justice and civil and human rights research, advocacy, education and instruction. It further seeks to pursue policy initiatives and judicial outcomes that promote equal rights and justice.

Mission

The Louis A. Berry Institute for Civil Rights and Justice is committed to the advancement of civil and human rights and social and restorative justice, especially in Louisiana and the South.

News



Welcome back to what promises to be another enriching academic year! The work of the Louis A. Berry Civil Rights and Justice Institute continued during the summer of 2019. We are so happy to share all the exciting developments. The results of our spring 2019 restorative justice projects were realized. We did presentations and research. We obtained a new membership. We attended a conference and received several awards. We look forward to our continued partnership towards the ends of achieving civil and human rights and social and restorative justice locally, nationally and globally.



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News Con't

Restorative Justice Project Updates:

John Garner Team

Our Summer began with a visit to the Louisiana State Capitol where we watched Joan Garner, the daughter of the late John Garner, receive a commendation from Governor John Bel Edwards recognizing that “the affliction and sacrifice of the late John Burrell Garner contributed mightily to the desegregation of lunch counters and the integration of public facilities in the state of Louisiana and throughout the United States; and his bold actions, on behalf of the state and country, are the true essence of a patriot and hero and should be celebrated as such.” That same day, a resolution was issued from the Louisiana House of Representatives. It posthumously commended John Burrell Garner for his contributions to the civil rights movement. This represented the completion of Saba Negatu and Katherine Read’s spring 2019 restorative justice project.



Members of the Louisiana Legislature with Joan Garner, Professor Bell and SULC students Saba Negatu and Katherine Read.



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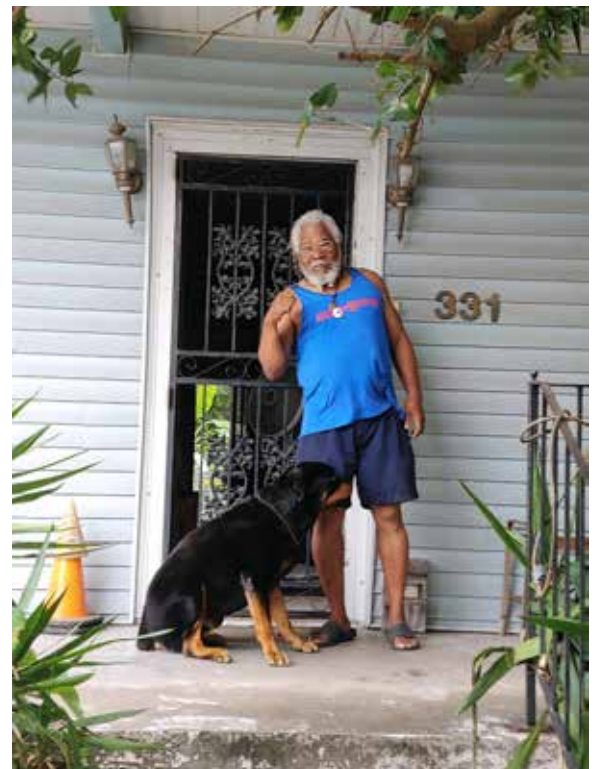


News Con't

Restorative Justice Project Updates:

The Malik Rahim Project

This summer, we also received news that Justin Bullard successfully completed his restorative justice project, which involved an attempt to have the home of Living Legend Malik Rahim recognized as a historical landmark. This historic landmark is now recognized by the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience. There's one final bit of good news related to our efforts on behalf of Mr. Rahim. The program and commemorative paper from the Institute's Living Legend Program, done in partnership with SUNO'S Center for African and African American Studies, has been accepted into the prestigious Historic New Orleans Collection.





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Restorative Justice Project Updates:

The Intersection of Race and Rape Team and the Lemon Howard Team

The restorative justice work of these two teams ended in articles being published by the American Bar Association in its Diversity and Inclusion Section newsletter.



Meghan Matt, Chelsea Hale

The Intersection of Race and Rape Viewed through the Prism of a Modern-Day Emmett Till

The case of a modern day Emmett Till involves an African American man sentenced to serve 100 years at hard labor for a civil rights era rape involving white women and questionable evidence. This team juxtaposed the harsh reality of African American men accused of rape by white women in comparison to the lax sentences received by white men accused of raping African American women.

Published here: <https://www.americanbar.org/groups/litigation/committees/diversity-inclusion/articles/2019/summer2019-intersection-of-race-and-rape/>



Hayden Carlos,
Cameron Pontiff

Trick or Treatment?

The case of Lemon Howard was used as a springboard for a larger discussion about the interplay between race, poverty, medical ethics, mental illness and incarceration.

Published here: <https://www.americanbar.org/groups/litigation/committees/diversity-inclusion/articles/2019/summer2019-race-mental-health-poverty-incarceration-louisiana/>



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Presentations:

Teaching Youth About Civil and Human Rights and Social Justice

On May 15, 2019, we had the pleasure of speaking with youth about restorative and social justice and civil and human rights. The title of the presentation was: "Lessons on Solitary Confinement from the Man of Steel." A diagram of a solitary confinement cell was used in an effort to help these future lawyers conceptualize the problem. After, they were tasked with fashioning both legal and policy solutions to this public health and safety concern. The students left with a better appreciation for the mission of the Institute and exactly how it seeks to finish the trailblazing work of the late Louis A. Berry.





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Presentations:

Access to Justice Program

In May 2019, the Institute participated in the 2019 Access to Justice Program, which gives a law student from each of the four, Louisiana law schools a rare glimpse into the inner workings of various aspects of the government. These interns attended parole hearings, toured the state capital and met with justice-impacted individuals to learn about some of the obstacles that await returning citizens. In addition to all of this, Prof. Bell spoke with them about restorative justice law and the ongoing, Institute initiatives in this area.



Professor Listach, Professor Bell





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Presentations:

Ninth Annual National Civil Rights Conference

The Louis A. Berry Civil Rights and Justice Institute was represented at the Ninth Annual National Civil Rights Conference in Birmingham, Alabama where Professor Bell gave the keynote address. Her message was entitled: "Rise, Advocate, Educate and Cooperate: Political Participation and Silver Rights." Some of the conference activities took place inside the historic 16th Street Baptist Church where, in 1963, the church was the target of a racially motivated bombing that killed four young girls in the midst of the Civil Rights Movement.



Professor Bell, Myra Richardson



Conference attendees

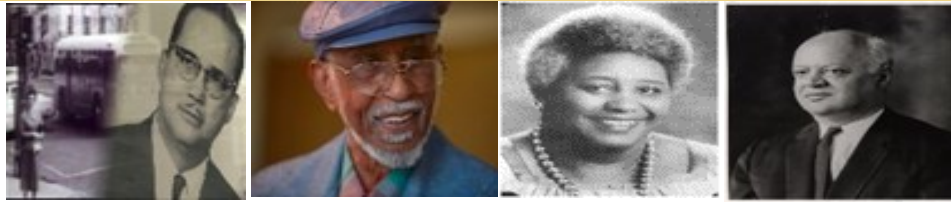


Conference attendees, Professor Bell, Conference organizer Dr. Keith D. Parker



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Presentations:

Louis A. Martinet Legal Society Annual CLE and Gala

The Lake Charles, Louisiana Chapter of the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society held it's annual CLE and gala on August 2, 2019. Professor Bell served as the keynote luncheon speaker. The event was organized and attended by many of our proud SULC alums. Professor Bell's topic was: "Did Jim Crow Die in November of 2018? The Continuing Legacy of Over 120 Years of Non-Unanimous Juries."



Attorney Ashley Freeman, Professor Bell
and Attorney Amariha Fort



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Membership:

International Coalition of Sites of Conscience

The Louis A. Berry Civil Rights and Justice Institute sought membership to the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, a worldwide network of historic sites, memorials, museums and initiatives that activate the power of places of memory to engage the public with a deeper understanding of the past and inspire action to shape a just future. It's the only global network of historic sites, museums and memory initiatives that connects past struggles to today's movements for human rights. We are ecstatic about joining the ranks of its 250 members who exist in 65 countries.

Awards:



On May 1, 2019, our director was recognized by the Girl Scouts Louisiana East as a 2019 Woman of Distinction. She was selected because of her "remarkable achievements as community leader and because she is a positive role model for the girls and women in our communities." With great pride, Chancellor John Pierre delivered a rousing introduction. Many members of our Southern University Law Center family were in attendance.

View Professor Bell's acceptance speech: https://www.dropbox.com/s/8ympzko7s3csur5/IMG_7136.MOV?dl=0



Professor Bell



Chancellor John Pierre



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Awards:

2019 Women of Distinction Awards (continued)





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Awards:

2019 Women of Distinction Awards (continued)



Justin Bullard, Professor Bell,
Hayden Carlos



Professor Bell, Tiffany Rainey



Professor Bell, the Kennon
Sisters



Professor Poydras, Professor Shea,
Professor Bell, Professor Listach





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Awards:

2019 Urban League Award



In June 2019, our director was selected as an Urban League 2019 gala honoree for the "key role" she played in the successful passage of Amendment 2, which ended the use of non-unanimous juries in criminal trials in Louisiana. She was recognized with Louisiana State Senator Jean-Paul "J.P." Morrell, Ed Tarpley and Norris Henderson of the Unanimous Jury Coalition. The gala's theme was: "Empowering Communities through Collective Impact." Other honorees included the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus, Louisiana Youth Justice Coalition, New Orleans Parks and Recreation Partners, Together Baton Rouge and Youth Force NOLA.

View the acceptance remarks here:

<https://vimeo.com/345143387/e925750c2b>



Norris Henderson, J.P. Morrell, Urban League President & CEO Judy Reese-Morse, Ed Tarpley, Professor Bell



Members of Together Baton Rouge, Members of the Unanimous Jury Coalition, Governor John Bel Edwards, Urban League President & CEO Judy Reese-Morse



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Awards:

2019 Urban League Award (continued)



**SULC Student Claire Stevenson,
Professor Bell**



**Attorney Rubiante Brown,
Professor Bell**



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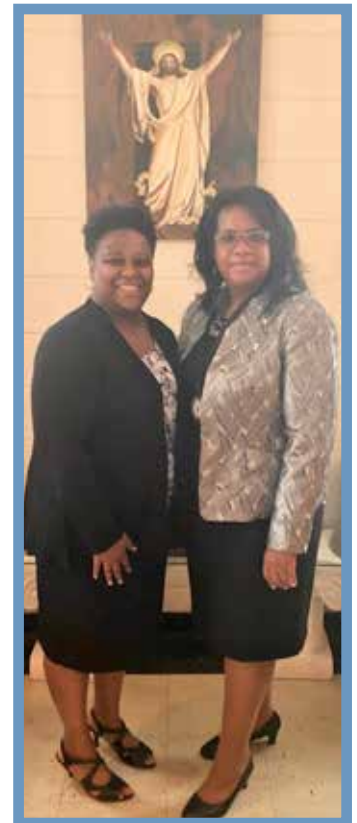


News Con't

Awards:

55th Anniversary Commemorative Service for Slain Civil Rights Workers

Chancellor Pierre and Professor Bell attended the 55th Anniversary Commemorative Service for James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner in Philadelphia, Mississippi. During the ceremony, Professor Bell was awarded the 2019 Civil Rights and Social Justice Award. Her selection was "based on a body of work in support of human dignity, civil rights and/or social justice." Representatives also presented the 2019 Civil Rights and Social Justice Award to Ernest Sickey, chairman of the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana, and the Alliance of Concerned Men.



Kuala C. Chambers,
Professor Bell



Honorees



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Awards:

Director Recognized by Louisiana House of Representatives

Finding that Professor Bell "merits a special measure of commendation for her unwavering determination to fight injustice," the Louisiana House of Representatives passed House Resolution No. 248, which commends Professor Bell "for her achievements as a legal scholar" and recognized and recorded "for posterity the tremendous pride and honor that she brings to this state."



SU's Robyn Merrick, members of the Louisiana House of Representatives, Professor Bell and her daughters





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News Con't

What is Professor Bell Up To Now? Answer to be Revealed to Subscribers Only

Starting in October 2019, we will only share our newsletter with subscribers. If you wish to continue receiving newsletters, use this link to subscribe:

<http://www.sulc.edu/berryinstitutenewsletter>



We will reveal the answer in our October 2019 newsletter. Become a subscriber!



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DID YOU KNOW?



that the fight for African American voting rights started long before the civil rights era...

"Once slaves obtained freedom with passage of the Thirteenth Amendment, they intended to participate actively in the political process and help advance their interests. Before emancipation, blacks residing in five New England states could vote. Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont, which contained only 6 percent of the northern black population, had extended the right to vote to blacks. In New York, blacks owning \$250 in freehold property could also cast a ballot; however, the same property qualification did not apply to whites. In the South, where the overwhelming number of African Americans labored as slaves, the right to vote was limited to whites.

Even before the end of the Civil War, African Americans organized to campaign for the right to vote. In 1864, free blacks gathered in Syracuse, New York, to form the National Equal Rights League (NERL). One of those in attendance was Abraham Galloway, a fugitive slave, abolitionist, and Union spy. He and a delegation of blacks met with President Lincoln to endorse the suffrage for all African Americans. The president did not commit himself and was assassinated in April 1865 before the issue came to a resolution. After the war, Galloway moved to North Carolina and started chapters of the NERL to voice the political concerns of the state's African American population...In Wilmington, the NERL chapter demanded 'all the social and political rights of . . . white citizens' and insisted 'that blacks be consulted in the selection of policemen, justices of the peace, and county commissioners....'

Throughout the South in 1865 and 1866, ex-slaves and free blacks convened statewide conventions to agitate for their political rights. At these assemblies, speaker after speaker argued that the suffrage was 'an essential and inseparable element of self government,' and the delegates invoked the spirit of the Declaration of Independence to justify their cause.... Racism was a national problem and not confined to the South. Between 1865 and 1868, white voters in Connecticut, Kansas, Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Wisconsin rejected referenda extending the ballot to blacks. The Fifteenth Amendment, adopted in 1870, for the first time guaranteed protection against racial discrimination in voting for all African Americans throughout the nation. However, something of a compromise, the amendment did not affirmatively grant universal suffrage to male adults, but only banned discrimination on the basis of race. Left out from coverage were supposedly non-racial qualifications such as literacy tests and poll tax payments. This omission would prove devastating to African American political freedom in the decades to come.... By 1870, although blacks continued to vote and participate politically, they increasingly encountered resistance....The experience of African American protest for the suffrage demonstrates that the power of the right to vote comes, not from the formality of individuals casting their ballots, but from the purposeful, collective will of the electorate. The vote furnished a necessary, but insufficient, instrument for achieving black equality in practice as well as theory...."

Learn more:

Civil Rights in America: Racial Voting Rights https://www.nps.gov/subjects/tellingallamericansstories/upload/CivilRights_VotingRights.pdf



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Reading Assignment



‘Angela Site’ Uncovers Details on One of the First Enslaved Africans in America

Of the nine enslaved Africans who lived in Jamestown in 1625, only one “Negro Woman” was identified by name after she arrived on a slave ship in 1620. Her name was Angela.

For more information: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/angela-site-reveals-daily-life-enslaved-african-american825701>

The Hidden History of Anna Murray Douglass

Anna Murray Douglass, the late wife of Frederick Douglass, has remained a mystery until now. She was largely illiterate and left behind few physical traces of her life whereas Frederick wrote thousands of letters and multiple books. But without Anna, Frederick may never have achieved such fame for his abolitionism-or even escaped slavery.

For more information: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/hidden-history-anna-murray-douglass-180968324/>



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Reading Assignment Con't



Jim Crow Returns to the Supreme Court

It's not often that the Supreme Court gets the chance to strike down a Jim Crow law these days, but one such opportunity is fast approaching. In October, the justices will hear *Ramos v. Louisiana*, a case involving the Sixth Amendment right to a trial by a jury of one's peers. In almost every state in the Union, those peers must unanimously agree to convict someone of a serious crime.

The Hopefulness and Hopelessness of 1619

Marking the 400-year African American Struggle to Survive and to be Free of Racism

Instead of David and Goliath, African America is the story of the petite Angela hopefully and hopelessly fighting off the giant John from 1619 to 2019 for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. She was, perhaps, the beginning of hope, the North Star essential to anti-racism. He was, definitely, the beginning of all that makes her hopeless, the eclipse essential to racism. African Americans have every reason to be hopeful and every reason to be hopeless on this 400th anniversary of our birth in this land.

For more information: <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/08/historical-significance-1619/596365/>



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Giving

The Louis A. Berry Civil Rights and Justice Institute is seeking monetary donations to support the continuation of our work. If you wish to contribute, use this link and select the Louis A. Berry Institute from the list of options: <https://secure.acceptiva.com/?cst=416825>

Payments can also be mailed to:

Office of Development

PO Box 9294

Baton Rouge, LA 70813

We are also soliciting donations of civil rights era documents, memorabilia and/or artifacts. If you wish to donate, please email our director at: ABell@sulc.edu.

Announcements:

September 17-November 7, 2019

Jobs for Life

Jobs for Life is an 8 week faith-based program designed to help people who are unemployed and underemployed. Participants will be mentored regarding finding a career. It will also teach participants the importance of work from a scriptural perspective. It is open to anyone 18 years or older. This could be especially beneficial to people formally incarcerated and those with a criminal record.

Tuesdays—Hope Bible Institute—2024 Main Street, Baker, LA

Thursdays—Baker Library—3501 Groom Road, Baker, LA

Dinner Provided

5:30p.m.—7:30p.m.

Free and open to the public

Contact: Michel Woods (225) 802-6710 michelbwoods@gmail.com or

Mike Lavaspere (225) 324-3429 lavesperem@yahoo.com

September 26, 2019

Coffee and Conversation with Johnnie Jones

The Louis A. Berry Institute for Civil Rights and Justice presents “Coffee and Conversations” with civil rights legend Johnnie Jones who earned his law degree from Southern University Law Center over sixty years ago. Attorney Jones has to his credit a record of precedent-setting legal victories, an unwavering commitment to social justice and lifetime of service to the nation, the Baton Rouge community and the state of Louisiana at large. Come hear this battle-tested, legal giant share some of his legal, professional and social experiences.

Southern University Law Center

2:00p.m.—3:30p.m.

Free and open to the public



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Announcements Con't:

October 4, 2019

Daughters Beyond Incarceration

Daughters Beyond Incarceration (DBI), a group led by two women who have experienced parental incarceration, seeks to break the cycle of poverty and crime amongst daughters with incarcerated fathers. DBI advocates for girls with incarcerated dads by pursuing policy and legislative improvements. In addition to providing mentorship services, DBI works directly with daughters of the incarcerated on leadership and character development. Please attend their legislative agenda reveal. The Louis A. Berry Civil Rights and Justice Institute is a proud partner.

St. Bernard Center

1500 Lafreniere Street

New Orleans, LA

6:00p.m.—9:00p.m.

Free and open to the public

October 19 & October 22, 2019

30th New Orleans Film Festival

For many months, local film director Ben Donnellon followed members of the advocacy team who successfully fought to end the use of non-unanimous juries in Louisiana criminal trials. His film, "Non-Unanimous" was selected in the "Louisiana Shorts" category and it will have its world premiere at the 2019 New Orleans Film Festival this October. Ben Donnellon is co-founder of the non-profit organization, The Filmshop, a group of independent filmmakers and media producers dedicated to developing new, groundbreaking work through collaboration and collective development. Ben has filmed short documentaries all over the world including Israel, Cuba, Morocco, Poland, Czech Republic, and the Ukraine. He served as cinematographer on the documentary "The Revival of Jewish Poland," winner of Best Feature Documentary at The Los Angeles Cinema Festival of Hollywood.

Saturday, October 19, 2019 4:00p.m.

Contemporary Arts Center Ranch Theater 900 Camp St, New Orleans, LA 70130

OR

Tuesday, October 22, 2019 6:00p.m.

CAC Black Box Theater

Tickets & details: <https://neworleansfilmsociety.org/attend/>

Tickets are required

October 24, 2019

Law & Policy Speaker Series

Valdry Center for Philanthropy

3:00p.m.



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Announcements Con't:

February 3, 2020

Charles Frye Memorial Lecture

The Center for African and African American Studies (CAAAS) at Southern University at New Orleans will commence its African American History Month Celebration with Professor Bell's presentation: "*When Law & Injustice Become Bedfellows: Justice Becomes the Business of the People.*"

SUNO

New Orleans, LA

11:00am-2:00pm

February 7, 2020

Disrupting the Injustice Narrative: The Inaugural Underground Railroad to Justice Summit

At this advocacy summit, grassroots activist will teach people to navigate obstacles that they face as victims of Louisiana's criminal justice system or advocates for justice-impacted individuals.

Southern University Law Center

2 Roosevelt Steptoe Drive

Baton Rouge, LA 70813

Jointly Hosted By: Louis A. Berry Civil Rights and Justice Institute and
Center For African And African American Studies





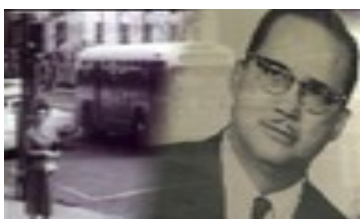
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“[I]f one really wishes to know how justice is administered in a country, one does not question the policeman, the lawyers, the judges, or the protected members of the middle class. One goes to the unprotected—those who need the law’s protection most—and listens to their testimony. Ask any Mexican, any Puerto Rican, any black man, any poor person—ask the wretched how they fare in the halls of justice, and then you will know not whether or—not the country is just—but whether or not it has any love for justice, or any concept of it. It is certain, in any case, that ignorance, allied with power, is the most ferocious enemy justice can have.”

James Baldwin





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Contact Us:

Angela A. Allen-Bell
Associate Professor
Director of Louis A. Berry
Civil Rights and Justice Institute
B.K. Agnihotri Endowed Professor
Southern University Law Center
Post Office Box 9294
Baton Rouge, LA 70813-9294
Phone: 225-771-4900
Fax: 225-771-5913
Email: Abell@sulc.edu
Twitter: [@AngelaAllenBell](https://twitter.com/AngelaAllenBell)



Tiffany Rainey
Institute Facilitator
Trainey@sulc.edu



Eleanor Collins
Research Fellow



Justin Bullard (3L)
Research Assistant



Chelsea Hale (3L)
Research Assistant



Desni Scaife (3L)
Research Assistant

