

Fair Chance in Housing Act Anniversary Webinar

AGENDA

1/24/2024

Moderator

Kai Durant, Community Relations
Division on Civil Rights

Opening Remarks

Sundeep Iyer, Director
Division on Civil Rights

Panelists Discussion

- **Tiffany Tillman**, Instructor
Rowan University
- **Aarin Williams**, Chief Advisor to the Director
Division on Civil Rights
- **James C. Williams**, Director of Racial Justice Policy
Fair Share Housing Center

Questions and Answers

Closing Remarks

Kai Durant, Community Relations
Division on Civil Rights

Moderator & Panelists Bios



Sundeeep Iyer *(Opening Remarks)* Director, Division on Civil Rights

Sundeeep Iyer, is the Director of the Division on Civil Rights. He previously served as Assistant Attorney General and Senior Counsel to Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin. In that capacity, he was the Attorney General's principal advisor on civil rights matters and coordinated department-wide civil rights initiatives. He also worked with the Office of the Solicitor General on appeals involving matters of constitutional law, statutory interpretation, civil rights, and criminal law.

Prior to joining the Office of the Attorney General, Iyer was a senior associate at Hogan Lovells US LLP. During his time at the firm, he served as a special attorney for the State of Minnesota in the prosecution of the four former police officers charged in connection with the death of George Floyd. He was part of the legal team that obtained a conviction of Derek Chauvin on charges of second-degree murder, third-degree murder, and second-degree manslaughter, and he briefed, argued, and won key legal motions for the State at trial.

Iyer was also part of the litigation team that obtained an injunction against President Trump's travel ban and defended that injunction before the U.S. Supreme Court. He represented federal death-row inmates in a challenge to the Trump Administration's federal lethal injection protocol. And he was one of the lead attorneys for a group of eight plaintiff organizations challenging President Trump's rescission of the Bears Ears National Monument in Utah.

Iyer previously clerked for U.S. Supreme Court Justices David H. Souter and Stephen G. Breyer, as well as for then Judge Brett M. Kavanaugh on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. He received his A.B. from Harvard College and J.D. from Yale Law School. Prior to graduating law school, Sundeeep was the Principal Quantitative Analyst at the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law, where he directed statistical research on voting rights, campaign finance, and redistricting issues.



Kai Durant *(Moderator)* Community Relations Specialist, Division on Civil Rights

Kai Durant – Moderator (DCR: Community Relations Specialist), is a community relations specialist in the Community Relations Unit (CRU) at the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights. At CRU, she works to prevent acts of discrimination and bias based harassment through education and community engagement. She co-leads topics of housing, employment, disability, and the youth ambassador program.

She completed her undergrad at Rutgers University with a focus Sociology and Gender Studies. Following

undergrad, she completed her Master's in Social Work with a concentration on policy at Columbia University. She has experience in community outreach, advocacy, and organizing from her past work at a non-profit, community health center, and campaign.



Tiffany Tillman *(Panelist)*

Instructor, Rowan University

Tiffany Tillman is a tenured instructor in the Department of Law & Justice Studies housed in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Rowan University where she has been teaching since 2011. She is also Program Coordinator of the Liberal Studies program which is part of the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies at Rowan University. Tiffany has completed certifications in Mental Health First Aid and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and serves as a member of various DEI committees and task forces at Rowan.

Tiffany holds a M.S. and B.S. in Criminal Justice, both from Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It was her time in graduate school that led to her interest in reentry and the barriers faced by returning citizens. This interest led to her volunteer work with a number of reentry organizations throughout the Philadelphia area. She has been actively involved in community outreach and the organization of events and panels raising awareness about the overlapping and intersecting barriers experienced during reentry and ensuring that the voices and experiences of returning citizens enhance and inform reentry efforts. At Rowan, Tiffany developed and teaches an intensive seminar course on reentry, highlighting many of the barriers to successful reentry and the experiences of returning citizens.



Aarin Michele Williams, Esq. *(Panelist)* Chief Advisor to the Director, Division on Civil Rights

Aarin Michele Williams, Esq. (she/her) is an experienced and versatile attorney who works to champion the principles of equity, justice, and opportunity, over civility or respectability. She is barred in New Jersey, New York and the Southern District of New York but has appeared in various jurisdictions around the country. She is an experienced civil rights litigator, social, racial and reproductive justice movement lawyer and proud criminal defense attorney. She is Principal Consultant of AMW Strategy Solutions, LLC – a consulting agency that provides legal commentary, participates in various speaking engagements, and provides strategic high-impact solutions on a range of contemporary social justice issues. Simultaneously, Aarin is currently the Chief Advisor to the Director

of the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights. She has held various roles with the Division on Civil Rights and has led teams in a landmark mortgage redlining matter with the DOJ, published civil rights reports on issues including the spread of white supremacy and bias in the state, promulgated our nation's first of its kind Fair Chance in Housing Act and heads the Divisions home appraisal task force, and much more.

In her immediate past position, she was a Senior Staff Attorney for National Advocates for Pregnant Women (now known as Pregnancy Justice), a national legal non-profit that advocates for, and represents, pregnant people who were charged with crimes or faced punishment related to their pregnancies. In her role she provided legal advice, developed case strategies, organized forums and spoke about the criminalization of pregnancy, advocating to shift culture around drug policy, bodily autonomy and state-sanctioned violence, advised on various advocacy campaigns, federal and local policies and legislation and educated on the connections between carceral systems and the Black maternal health crisis. Aarin's work as a reproductive justice legal advocate brought her to the national stage in 2019 when she appeared on CNN's United Shades of America Show, hosted by W. Kamau Bell. Aarin appeared on the "Body Politics" episode which amplified the importance of the Black women created and led reproductive justice movement. Thanks in part to Aarin's explanation of the framework and her legal cases representing pregnant people around the country, the show won a 2019 Emmy Award for "Outstanding Unstructured Reality Programming".

In prior positions Aarin was a zealous trial attorney as a New Jersey State Public Defender where she was a trial strategy trainer and lead lawyer handling complex felony criminal cases, including infamous homicide cases. She has also served as an Adjunct Professor at the New Jersey Institute of Technology and Seton Hall Law School. At Seton Hall Law School she developed and co-taught the course "Incarceration and Social Inequality in the Law", a critical race theory course that highlights the vast inequities in the legal system that future lawyers should be prepared to confront and commit to remedying.

Aarin is originally from Jonesboro, Georgia and considers herself a lifelong Southerner. She is a proud graduate of Howard University and attributes much of her passion for community-building and advocacy to her alma maters. During her tenure at Rutgers School of Law-Newark she was a member of the Rutgers Law Review, Vice-President of the Association of Black Law Students (serving as the co-lead for Jazz for Justice) and served in a myriad of other leadership roles; she was also a Marsha Wenk Fellow working with the ACLU of NJ and held an internship with the NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund and Federal District Court Judge, the Honorable Katherine S. Hayden. Immediately after graduation Aarin served as a law clerk to the Honorable Carolyn E. Wright of the New Jersey Superior Court (Family Division).

Aarin strongly believes that her community is owed and deserving of the benefits and fruits of her education and she works hard to ensure that it receives the same. In her community, she mentors and volunteers through several organizations. Aarin attributes her success to the opportunities provided by her proud, hardworking, no-nonsense parents, supportive and equally dynamic circle of friends and all ancestors who have led the charge towards liberation and justice.

She lives by the adage: I am exceptional without being an exception.



James C. Williams IV *(Moderator)* Director of Racial Justice Policy, Fair Share Housing Center

James C. Williams IV (Fair Share Housing: Director of Racial Justice Policy), "I try to never forget the legacy of civil rights giants who created a space for me to exist. They created lanes not only through voting rights, housing, and education, but also through the ability to advocate for my community."

James is Director of Racial Justice Policy at Fair Share Housing Center. He joined the organization in 2019 after working for Philadelphia Works and the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice.

He attended Fayetteville State University in North Carolina where he received both his B.A. and M.S. degrees. He continues to be an advocate for civil rights and social justice