

Kathy Purnell, Esq., Ph.D.
e-mail: kpurnell@hcrlawcenter.com Phone: 269-350-3046

EDUCATION

- J.D.** **DEPAUL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, J.D.** and Certificate in International and Comparative Law. Licensed Attorney in the State of Michigan since 2008
- Ph.D.** **CORNELL UNIVERSITY, ITHACA, NEW YORK, Ph.D.** in Government
- A.B.** **HARVARD UNIVERSITY, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS, A.B.,** Government, Cum Laude General Studies

MOST RELEVANT RECENT EXPERIENCE (Full CV available)

DIRECTOR & MANAGING ATTORNEY, Human/Civil Rights Law Center. January 2009 – present. Provides direct low-bono legal representation and advocacy services in the areas of immigration, education and community-focused economic development. Develops community programming and advocacy trainings for stakeholders and organizations to expand their capacity to empower advocates and impacted clients. Practice name changed to Human/Civil Rights Law Center in 2021.

SENIOR COORDINATOR, INTAKE AND ADVOCACY, Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan. September 2021 – January 2024 (part-time). Managed intake for housing discrimination cases in the Southwest region of Michigan. Counseled clients on Fair Housing Law and made referrals to other local agencies. Drafted housing discrimination complaints to administrative agencies. Drafted reasonable accommodation/modification requests, proposed policy and practice changes for housing providers to ensure compliance with Fair Housing Law, and advocated on behalf of clients facing housing discrimination. Delivered trainings and presentations for community-based education on Fair Housing rights to combat housing discrimination, including series with the Michigan Department of Human Rights..

STAFF ATTORNEY, Justice for Our Neighbors-Michigan. June 2018-July 2021. Served as the immigration attorney for the Kalamazoo (Southwest Michigan) Office. Represented clients in humanitarian and family-based immigration cases, removal defense, naturalization applications and adjustment of status. Developed community programming and trainings. Staffed immigration legal services clinics based in community settings. Supervised legal staff, law students and trained volunteers who supported legal work. Advised national JFON (NJFON) network leadership on racial equity initiatives. Represented JFON in local and statewide coalition & advocacy groups.

PART-TIME INSTRUCTOR, DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY. Courses: Immigration Law and Policy (2024); Modern Political Thought (2023); Contemporary Political Ideologies (2017,2018)

VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, KALAMAZOO COLLEGE. Course: “Justice and the Political Community” (Fall 2019)

COMMUNITY INSTRUCTOR, Western Michigan University Homer J. Stryker School of Medicine. Longitudinal course: “Healthcare, Law and Immigration” co-taught with WMed’s Clinical Ethics Program (Academic Year 2019-2020)

PROFESSIONAL INSTRUCTOR, SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND ADMINISTRATION, WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY. Courses: “Administrative Law and Governmental Regulation” (Summer II, 2018), “Grant Writing for Non-Profits” (Spring 2017) and Nonprofit Governance (Fall 2017, Spring 2018, Spring 2020).

RESEARCH ATTORNEY, OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH, WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY. February 2011 – August 2017. Developed review procedures for sponsored research contracts that support the research, instructional and creative activities of faculty for all academic units at WMU. Coordinated the internal review process between the Office of the VP for Research, General Counsel, and the Office of VP for Business and Finance. Directly reviewed and negotiated subawards and research contracts between WMU and a wide range of external sponsors including industry, non-profit organizations, universities and state and local governments. Ensured compliance of research contracts with federal regulations, sponsor requirements and applicable laws. Worked as part of a team to update WMU Conflict of Interest Policies and procedures for regulatory compliance. Developed presentations for, and advised faculty and graduate students on Export Control, Sponsored Research, Contract Negotiation and Professional Development, including an 8-unit series of workshops (“Contracts for Investigators”), which provides information on the review and negotiation process for

Non-Disclosure Agreements, Material Transfer Agreements, Data Agreements, International Transactions, MOUs, and HIPAA issues in Business Associate Agreements. Approved field supervisor for WMU Thomas M. Cooley Law School externs. Served on University-level committees to represent and advance interests of discovery and research. Original working job title: “Research Contracts Administrator”. Requested leave granted for writing and research projects in June 2017.

COURSE DIRECTOR AND INSTRUCTOR, HUMANITIES FOR EVERYBODY, WMU CENTER FOR THE HUMANITIES. Taught courses: “Freedom and Empowerment” (2013) and “Introduction to Political Philosophy” (2014) for community-based adult education program (collaboration between WMU Center for the Humanities and two local non-profit organizations). Supervised Graduate Assistant (H4E Program Manager) and outreach consultant (2014-2015). Provided support for faculty colleagues volunteering to teach in the program (2014-2015), and developed collaborations with community-based organizations.

UNIVERSITY SERVICE-LEARNING COORDINATOR, WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY. February 2010-February 2011. Launched new office at Western Michigan University to support and coordinate service-learning initiatives to integrate graduate and undergraduate student engagement with academic programs. Hired and supervised four student service-learning coordinators. Collaboratively created new initiatives and events to link service to academic curricula such as “Pre-Law for the Public Interest” events (included workshops with attorneys Jay Kaplan, ACLU and Maura Hagen, Catholic Diocese of Kalamazoo), and the Michigan Service Scholars Program (applied for and received support from Michigan Campus Compact and Americorps). Served as a representative for WMU with local non-profits to build partnerships and coordinated with organizations as varied as Michigan Department of Transportation (Safe Routes to Schools Program), Michigan Prisoner re-entry Initiative (Creative Expressions Program), and Kalamazoo Valley Museum/Kalamazoo Public Schools (Race Exhibit Volunteer Guides) on service-learning initiatives. Planned and developed WMU’s first annual “Community Partnership Breakfast” co-hosted by Mayor Hopewell and the WMU Provost.

IMMIGRATION DETENTION FELLOW, ACLU FOUNDATION OF GEORGIA, Atlanta, GA, April – December 2009. Interviewed immigrants in detention in the state of Georgia to document and investigate due process and human rights violations. Researched and presented findings on behalf of ACLU on human rights and immigrant detention. Wrote fact summaries for the Legal Director and Legal Committee for review to facilitate the recruitment of ACLU cooperating counsel. Developed strategies for advocacy on behalf of immigrants with international organizations such as UNHCR, national consulates, and federal agencies. Engaged in outreach and educational activities to raise public awareness of the rights of the detained. Assisted in the supervision of law students and interns.

LEGAL AID OF WESTERN MICHIGAN, Kalamazoo, MI. Student Staff Attorney, Summer 2007 & Part-time legal intern, Fall 2007. Conducted legal research and drafted legal memoranda on landlord-tenant, subsidized housing and public housing issues. Interviewed witnesses, drafted court documents, and developed supporting materials for administrative proceedings/formal hearings. Advised potential clients seeking legal advice in court (landlord-tenant docket) under Michigan Court Rule 8.120. Analyzed tenant selection criteria for federally subsidized housing. Explored eviction diversion program with the Kalamazoo Affordable Housing Partnership and Kalamazoo County’s 8th District Court.

SELECTED, RECENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES, MEMBERSHIPS AND AWARDS

Governor’s Black Leadership Advisory Committee (BLAC). Appointed by Governor Whitmer (2020-2024) to serve on Michigan’s inaugural Black Leadership Advisory council as a leader in law with expertise in immigration law/policy. Co-authored recommendations from the Community Safety and Justice subcommittee for criminal justice reform.

Trustee, Kalamazoo Valley Community College, January 2024 - present

Governance Advisory Board Member, Michigan Transformation Collective, March 2024- present

Racial Healing Circle Practitioner, Kalamazoo, January 2020 – present. Facilitated racial healing circles both in-person and virtually to advance racial equity goals of organizations (including Kalamazoo Valley Community College Police Academy; Mid-America Athletic Conference (“MAC”), and other local nonprofit events (ERAACE & National Day of Racial Healing).

Member, Law Design Team, Truth, Racial Healing and Reconciliation, Kalamazoo, August 2019-present

“Digest of Recent Literature” (co-Author) in *Journal of Affordable Housing and Community Development Law* Vol 31:1 (2022)

American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) -Michigan, Chair, Pro Bono Committee. July 2023 – present