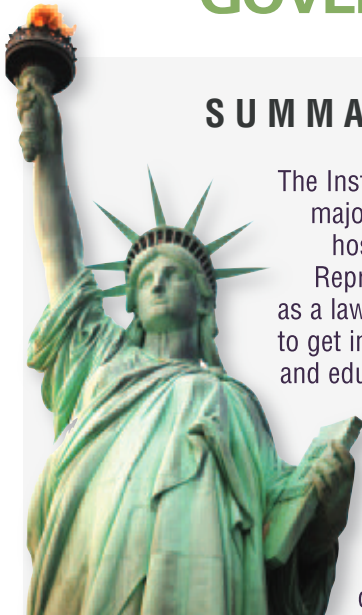


# INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

By Professor Arthur D. Wolf, Director



## SUMMARY OF EVENTS FOR SPRING 2016

The Institute for Legislative and Governmental Affairs presented three major events during the spring semester, 2016. The Institute co-hosted, with the Latino/a Law Student Association, Connecticut State Representative Juan Candelaria (right), who spoke on his experiences as a lawmaker leading efforts to empower youth and Latinos statewide to get involved in the democratic process through voter registration drives and education. Having served since 2002, in 2013 Rep. Candelaria was elected by his colleagues to be chair of the Black and Latino Caucus to lead their legislative agenda in the legislature. In that role, he has sought to pass legislation that would allow undocumented immigrants to apply for Connecticut driver's licenses. Additionally, he was instrumental in passing Connecticut's in-state tuition legislation in 2011 to allow students without legal documentation to pursue their educational dreams.



Representative Juan Candelaria

- With the unexpected death of Justice Antonin Scalia, the Supreme Court, the Senate, and the country were thrown into political turmoil over the vacancy. Ten days before Justice Scalia died, Chief Justice Roberts, speaking at New England Law School, stated that the Senate should "ensure that nominees are qualified and leave politics out of it." The Institute invited Professors Bruce Miller, Sudha Setty, and Art Wolf to address the wide-ranging issues related to "replacement politics," historically and currently.

Among other topics, the panel discussed the history of replacing justices during an election year, the factors that may inform President Obama in his selection, the Republican opposition to holding confirmation hearings until after the presidential election, and the Senate's institutional practice of holding hearings. The presentation gave rise to a lively discussion with the overflow audience, largely composed of students, staff, and faculty.

- The School of Law and the Institute were again cosponsors of the annual **New England Civil Rights and Fair Housing Conference**, which has grown to an annual gathering of over 500 attendees. This year was no exception to the varied workshops, plenary sessions, and other scheduled events that the Conference offers to its participants. The entire program was devoted to cutting-edge current topics relating to civil rights and fair housing.

Among the many distinguished speakers this year was Ernest Green, one of nine African American students to integrate Central High School, Little Rock, AK, in 1957. When the Governor refused to admit them, President Eisenhower sent federal troops to Little Rock to ensure compliance with the federal court order requiring their admission. Green is the first African American to graduate from Central High School and served in the Carter administration as assistant secretary of labor for training and employment. President Clinton appointed Green to chair the African Development Foundation by President William J. Clinton. Professor Wolf had the honor of working with Green in Cleveland many years ago.

Jonathan Kozol, a *New York Times* best selling author, educator, and activist, also addressed the Conference. He is well known for his books on public education in the United States. Kozol has devoted nearly his entire life to the challenge of providing equal opportunity to every child in our public schools.

The Conference also had the honor of hearing Attorney P. David Lopez, who was sworn in as general counsel of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in 2010. He was nominated by President Barack Obama. Prior to this appointment as General Counsel, Attorney Lopez had a distinguished career at the EEOC. For example, he won significant jury verdicts against Alamo Rent-a-Car (the first "post-9/11 backlash" religious accommodation case brought by the EEOC), and Go Daddy (a national origin, religion, and retaliation case).

Conference participants also greeted Attorney Carmen M. Ortiz, whom President Obama nominated as the United States Attorney for the District of Massachusetts in 2009. She is the first Hispanic and the first woman to represent Massachusetts as U.S. Attorney. She oversees the work of more than 200 attorneys and support staff in Boston, Worcester, and Springfield. Among her many accomplishments, U.S. Attorney Ortiz implemented the District's first civil rights initiative. Through extensive community outreach efforts, she reinvigorated enforcement efforts of federal civil rights laws and increased visibility among affected communities.

The Conference annually invites high-ranking officials from the federal government who are critical to the implementation of our fair housing programs. This year we had the privilege of presenting the Honorable Gustavo Velasquez, the assistant secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. He leads the President's efforts to combat housing discrimination through the affirmative action command of the Fair Housing Act of 1968. Prior to his nomination, Assistant Secretary Velasquez was executive director of the Latino Economic Development Center (LEDC), a nonprofit organization based in Washington, DC. LEDC serves thousands of Latinos and other immigrants and underserved populations, helping them to gain the necessary skills and capital to start and maintain their own businesses. ♦



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