



SQUIRE
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ADVANCING JUSTICE FOR 25+ YEARS

March 2026

Greetings, Friends of the Foundation,

One reliable sign that spring is coming is the commencement of the selection of the Fellowship class for the coming summer.

We are pleased to tell you that is well underway. As of now, we have welcomed to the Class of 2026 all seven Sustained Impact Fellows and four Public Policy Fellows. They and classmates from our other Fellowship law schools will receive \$5500, drawn from your contributions.

Selection of the Sustained Impact Fellows is a very competitive process. Nominations are invited from our twenty Fellowship law schools. This year there were 45 nominees for the seven Sustained Impact Fellowships. Fifteen nominees competed for one of the Fellowships.

The 2026 Sustained Impact Fellows are students at seven law schools:

- * Rural Justice - Ohio State
- * Advancing Justice
 - Voting Rights - George Mason
 - Juvenile Justice - Arkansas
- * Joe Brand Human Rights - University of California, San Francisco
- * Human Rights Watch - Georgetown
- * Veterans' Justice - Loyola of Los Angeles, and Arizona State.

We also invite each Fellowship law school/ public policy institute to nominate a Public Policy Fellow on a non-competitive basis. American, Colorado, Loyola, SMU, Howard and Yale have done so, and we have welcomed their nominees to the Class of 2026.

In this newsletter, we have the pleasure of introducing you to Madie Strauss, who will be the Foundation's first Rural Justice Fellow, and Nick Bellavance, who will be one of our Veterans Justice Fellows.

For those interested in looking back over the Foundation's first 25 years, here is a link to the 25th Anniversary brochure. ([click here](#))

Rodney Slater, Chairman and John Oberdorfer, President

Meet Two of Our 2026 Sustained Impact Fellows



Nick Bellavance

A U.S. Army veteran who served as a Battalion Operations Officer, Executive Officer and Platoon Leader, Loyola Law School's **Nick Bellavance** is one of two Veterans' Justice Fellows who will be working with Swords to Plowshares this summer. As the President of Loyola Law's Veterans Law Association, Nick aspires to use what he learns this summer "to create a durable, student-led organization capable of providing meaningful assistance to Los Angeles veterans, particularly with discharge statuses, disability payments, and homelessness." Upon learning of his Fellowship award, Nick wrote us that "I can't wait to make a real impact in veterans' lives."



Madie Strauss

Our inaugural Sustained Impact Rural Justice Fellow is **Madie Strauss** of the Ohio State University Moritz College of Law. Madie will be spitting her time between Chillicothe and Columbus, working with the Legal Aid Society of Southeast and Central Ohio, focusing on community economic development in the low-income rural areas of southeastern Ohio, using both her legal training and undergraduate expertise as a B.S. in City and Regional Planning. A native of rural Montana, Madie told us, "I want this Fellowship because it directly relates to my passions for helping disadvantaged or underserved communities with development and growth."



DID YOU KNOW?

This year marks the 25th Anniversary of Board Chair Rodney Slater's joining the firm, after his service and exemplary leadership as US Secretary of Transportation. Shortly thereafter, we welcomed Rodney to the Foundation board, and he succeeded Jim Patton as board chair in 2015. Rodney's years as Board Chair have taken the Foundation to one new height after another.

COMING NEXT MONTH: A tribute to firm members and Fellowship alums who have served as mentors.

