



eNewsletter

Summer 2025

Message from the Director

Greetings from the University of Houston Law Center's Health Law & Policy Institute (HLPI). We are pleased to share that HLPI continues to be ranked among the top 10 health law programs in the nation by U.S. News & World Report, an honor we have received since the U.S. News & World Report started its ranking of health law programs over three decades ago.

HLPI is thrilled to welcome Erica Patterson, J.D., as our new research scholar. Erica replaces Leah Fowler, who joined the University of Houston Law Center faculty as an assistant professor this past fall. We are also proud to recognize several notable student achievements. The Houston Journal of Health Law & Policy celebrated its 25th anniversary, Christopher Cabrera received two national awards for outstanding student health law writing, and Craig Cormier II is currently serving as a Health Law Legislative Fellow with the Texas Senate Committee on Health and Human Services.

Finally, we extend our warmest wishes to HLPI Co-Director Valerie Koch, who is joining the DePaul College of Law faculty and will direct the Jaharis Health Law Institute. This move will bring Valerie closer to her family in Chicago. Valerie is a prolific and impactful scholar, an incredible and committed teacher, and a wonderful HLPI colleague. While we will miss her immense talents, we look forward to her continued contributions to the health law field!

Support the Health Law & Policy Institute

Say hello to a new era of HLPI by making a charitable gift today to support research, service, and other top funding priorities in Health Law. For more information, [visit us online](#).

HLPI News and Events

HLPI's Annual Symposium Workshop Explores Health Misinformation

Health misinformation poses a serious threat to public trust, safety, and equity. On November 8, 2024, HLPI and the Houston Journal of Health Law & Policy held its 12th Annual Symposium, convening legal scholars to explore the complex legal, political, and ethical dimensions of health misinformation. Authors explored how weak public messaging, limits on agency authority, and unregulated digital platforms fuel false narratives, and proposed solutions like interdisciplinary collaboration, reforming public health communication, and empowering community-based responses.

HJHLP 12th Annual Symposium November 8, 2024



Director Jessica L. Mantel

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Annual HJHLP Symposium Workshop Continued



2024 Annual HJHLP Symposium Workshop participants, (top left to right): Seth J. Chandler, April Moreno, Dorit R. Reiss, Leah R. Fowler, Jessica L. Mantel, Allison Whelan, William M. Sage, Richard S. Saver, Irina Manta, and Nathan Cortez

Symposium authors included:



Dorit R. Reiss, Professor of Law and the James Edgar Hervey '50 Chair of Litigation, University of California Law San Francisco

[Dorit R. Reiss](#), Professor of Law at University of California Law San Francisco, presented her article *CDC as a Debunker: The Limits of Government in Countering Misinformation*.

[William M. Sage](#) and [Keegan D. Warren](#), professors at Texas A&M University, presented their article *Health Truth to Power: Professional Collaboration to Bolster Trust Against Misinformation*.



William M. Sage, MD, JD, Professor of Law, Texas A&M University School of Law



Keegan D. Warren, JD, LLM, Executive Director, Institute for Healthcare Access, Texas A&M University School of Law

[Allison M. Whelan](#), Assistant Professor of Law at Georgia State University College of Law, presented her article *Bolstering the FDA's Authority to Combat Misinformation and Disinformation*.



Allison M. Whelan, Assistant Professor of Law, Center for Law, Health & Society, Georgia State University College of Law

[Irina D. Manta](#), Professor of Law at Hofstra University, [Cassandra Burke Robertson](#), Professor of Law at Case Western Reserve University, and [Zoë Robinson](#), Professor of Law at Marquette University, presented their article *Public Health Policy as Public Choice Failure*.



Irina D. Manta, JD, Professor of Law, Hofstra University Law



Cassandra Burke Robertson, JD, John Deaver Drinko - BakerHostetler Professor of Law, Case Western Reserve University School of Law



Zoë Robinson, JD, Professor of Law, Marquette University Law School

Annual HJHLP Symposium Workshop Continued



*Richard S. Saver, Arch T. Allen
Distinguished Professor of Law,
UNC School of Law*

During the symposium, the authors benefited from in-depth discussions with HLPI faculty and renowned experts [Richard S. Saver](#), Professor of Law at the University of North Carolina School of Law, and [Nathan Cotez](#), Professor of Law at SMU Dedman School of Law.

The authors' pieces are important scholarship contributions that shed light on the legal and governance challenges of health misinformation and offer strategies for protecting the integrity of, and restoring public trust in, public health discourse. The [Houston Journal of Health Law & Policy](#) will publish their work, along with a foreword by Assistant Professor Leah Fowler, in a forthcoming volume.



*Nathan Cortez, Co-Director of the Tsai
Center for Law, Science and Innovation,
and Adelfa Botello Callejo Endowed
Professor of Law in Leadership and
Latino Studies*

Distinguished Speakers Visit UHLC

This year's spring UHLC Colloquium Speaker Series featured three speakers presenting on topics related to health law and policy. Professor [Joan H. Krause](#) of the University of North Carolina School of Law, presented her article *Health Care Fraud and the End of Chevron*, which examines whether the Supreme Court's Loper Bright decision overturning Chevron deference may destabilize health care fraud enforcement.

Professor [Summer Chavez](#) of the University of Houston Tilman J. Fertitta Family College of Medicine, presented her study on the rise in firearm-related injuries among women, highlighting racial disparities and calling for policy reforms to address the intersecting risks of race, gender, poverty, and violence.

Professor [Leslie C. Griffin](#) of the University of Nevada Las Vegas Boyd School of Law spoke about neuroplasticity, using her personal story of recovering from two traumatic brain injuries to challenge assumptions about prognosis, capacity, and disability and to highlight the value of narratives in legal and ethical discourse.



*Joan H. Krause, Dan K. Moore Distinguished
Professor of Law, University of North Caro-
lina School of Law*



*Summer Chavez, Clinical Assistant Profes-
sor, Department of Health Systems and
Population Health Sciences, University of
Houston Tilman J. Fertitta Family College
of Medicine*



*Dr. Leslie C. Griffin, William S. Boyd Pro-
fessor of Law at the University of Nevada,
Las Vegas, William S. Boyd School of Law*

HLPI Speaker Series

Bartha Knoppers

Professor Bartha Knoppers, Founding Director of the Centre of Genomics and Policy at McGill University, met with UHLC students on March 20, 2025, to discuss the legal and ethical challenges of genomic data sharing, highlighting the tension between innovation, privacy, and equity.



Bartha Knoppers, Founding Director of the Centre of Genomics and Policy at McGill University

Elena M. Marks, J.D., M.P.H



Elena M. Marks, Senior Fellow in Health Policy Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy, presented "Moving Upstream to Improve Health Outcomes."

On March 25, 2025, HLPI and the Tilman J. Fertitta College of Medicine co-hosted Elena Marks, Senior Fellow at Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy and former CEO of the Episcopal Health Foundation. Marks advocated for reorienting U.S health-care policy toward upstream investments that address the root causes of poor health, like preventive care and housing assistance. According to Marks, these reforms would align spending with interventions that produce measurable, long-term health benefits.

David S. Cade, AHLA's Executive VP/CEO



(Above: David S. Cade, Executive View President and CEO of the American Health Law Association.

On February 18, 2025, David S. Cade, Executive View President and CEO of the American Health Law Association, spoke with UHLC students about careers in health law, the evolving policy landscape, and AHLA's commitment to mentorship, professional development, and diversity in the field.



(Left to right): Jessica L. Mantel, Leah R. Fowler, Erica Patterson, David S. Cade, Andrea Guardiola (2L), Shruthi Murali(3L), Claire Shelton (2L), Sarah Douglas(3L), Mariela Arreola, (2L) Adam Pena (JD, LL.M '22), Leah Nadel Leibow (JD '22)

HLPI Co-Hosts American College of Legal Medicine's Annual Conference



UH Tilman J. Fertitta Family College of Medicine

From February 28 to March 2, 2025, HLPI and the University of Houston Law Center co-hosted the 65th Annual Conference of the American College of Legal Medicine with the University of Houston College of Medicine and the UTHealth School of Dentistry. The conference brought together experts in law, medicine, and dentistry to examine emerging legal-medical issues. The event featured a career panel moderated by Dean Leonard Baynes, and presentations by University of Houston Law Professor Laura Portuondo on reproductive health and conscience, Valerie Koch on state physician aid-in dying laws, and HLPI Advisory Board Member Professor Lex Frieden on the Americans with Disabilities Act's transformative impact on health care.

HLPI Webinar Explores Executive Order on Hospitals Documenting Expenditures for Undocumented Immigrants

In the fall of 2024, HLPI hosted a webinar on the legal and policy implications of Governor Abbott's Executive Order GA-46, which requires Texas hospitals to report expenditures on inpatient and emergency care for undocumented im-

migrants. Panelists included Professor Seth Chandler (University of Houston Law Center), Kristin Etter (Texas Immigration Law Council), and Dr. Cedric Dark (Baylor College of Medicine), with Director Jessica Mantel moderating. The discussion explored the order's policy aims, its intersection with federal laws such as EMTALA and HIPAA, and its potential impact on hospital operations and immigrant access to care.

Texas Healthcare: Requiring Public Hospitals to Report Expenditures for Undocumented Immigrants



HLPI Virtual Webinar held on October 29, 2024.



From top left across to bottom right: Jessica L. Mantel, Dr. Cedric Dark, Seth J. Chandler, and Kristin Etter

HLPI and UH Population Health Host Interdisciplinary Population Health Case Competition

On February 7, 2025, HLPI co-hosted the inaugural UH Interdisciplinary Population Health Case Competition with UH Population Health. Graduate students from eight UH colleges, including Law Center students Morgan Mitchell, Abel Chacko, and Mariela Arreola, formed three teams to address a simulated public health crisis—a category 5 hurricane causing widespread damage in Houston and surrounding areas. Over three rounds, teams presented policy recommendations and responded to questions posed by a faculty panel, including Director Jessica Mantel. The competition showcased students' cross-disciplinary collaboration and real-world problem-solving abilities.



Left to right: Abel Chacko (3L), Jessica L. Mantel, Mariela Arreola (2L), and Morgan Mitchell (2L)



HLPI Co-hosted the inaugural UH Interdisciplinary Population Health Case Competition with UH Population Health held at the UH Law Center.

Faculty News and Publications

New Faculty Roles



Erica Patterson

Erica Patterson Joins HLPI

We are delighted to welcome Erica Patterson, the new research scholar for HLPI. Erica joins us from Georgetown Law, where she earned her LL.M. in National and Global Health Law. She brings extensive expertise in health law, particularly in mental health, HIV, global health law, and agricultural law.

Erica will lead the Texas Tobacco Grant Project as Principal Investigator and support other HLPI research and programming.

Faculty Updates



Seth J. Chandler

Seth Chandler, a Law Foundation Professor Law, has presented and written extensively about artificial intelligence and its impact on health care and the legal profession. His article *Compared to What?: The Paramount Question in the Regulation of Medical AI* was published by the [Houston Journal of Health Law & Policy](#). He has started a new blog [legaled.ai](#) exploring use of AI in legal education. Two shorter publications involving regulation of AI discrimination are forthcoming in the new Encyclopedia of AI and Law.



Leah R. Fowler

Leah Fowler, assistant professor of law, co-authored *Influencer Speech-Torts* with Professors Max Helveston and Zoë Robinson, which was published in the [Georgetown Law Journal](#). She also published *Lies, Damn Lies, and Privacy Promises*, co-authored with Andy Rash, in the Santa Clara Law Review.

Valerie Koch, assistant professor of law and former Co-Director of HLPI, published *Reimagining Informed Consent: From Disclosure to Comprehension* in the UC Irvine Law Review 894, *Previvorship and Medical Uncertainty* in the Harvard Journal of Law & Technology, and *Two Physician*

Certification in End-of-Life Decision-Making, co-authored with Peter Angelos, Andrew Hantel, and Abigail Sneider, in *Lancet Oncology*. Koch was also interviewed on *Houston Matters*, *What Recent Stories from Houston Hospitals Tell Us About the Questions Doctors Ask Themselves*.



Director Jessica L. Mantel

Jessica Mantel, Director of HLPI and professor of law, was appointed the Hunton Andrews Kurth Professorship. She presented *Shifting from Market Competition to Value-Based Governance* as part of the Saint Louis University School of Law's Health Law Distinguished Speaker Series, and *Coordination, Not Competition: Achieving Value-Based Care Through Shared Governance* at Case Western Reserve University's Zaremski Law Medicine Forum. Mantel also published *Healthcare Finance Law's Relationship Bias* in the recently published book [HEALTH LAW AS PRIVATE LAW: PATHOLOGY OR PATHWAY](#) (Christopher Robertson, Wendy Netter Epstein, I. Glenn Cohen, Susannah Baruch, Carmel Shachar, eds.).

Publication Spotlight



Laura Portuondo

Professor Laura Portuondo's latest scholarly article, *Gendered Liberty*, is forthcoming in the [Georgetown Law Journal](#).

In the article, Professor Portuondo explores

recent developments in First and Fourteenth Amendment jurisprudence to argue that they have adopted a distinct theory of liberty: one that protects the freedom to enforce traditional ideas about gender and denies the freedom to challenge them. This article won the 2024 Haub Law Emerging Scholar Award in Women, Gender, & Law and was selected for inclusion in various constitutional law conferences.



Valerie Gutmann Koch

Student News

HJHLP Celebrates 25th Anniversary

On April 3, 2025, the Houston Journal of Health Law & Policy celebrated its 25th anniversary with a banquet at Norton Rose Fulbright Tower. Dean Leonard Baynes highlighted the Journal's accomplishments; the Journal's faculty founder Professor Mark Rothstein shared a memorable reflection on its history; and Director Jessica Mantel closed the evening with a toast to its enduring impact on health law and policy scholarship.



From left to right: Colleen Pert (JD '23), Parker Jamison (JD '23), and LaTheena "Bebe" Thomas (JD '23)



From left to right: Dean Baynes, Laura Rothstein, Mark Rothstein, Jessica L. Mantel, Leah R. Fowler, Erica Patterson, and Ken Janda



From left to right: Hiba Loya (3L), Sunnia Khan (3L), Andrea Malikian (2L), Kara Taylor Curran (3L), Irene Younan (2L), Kourtney Phillips (2L), Naseem Shahlaee (2L), Amber Meghani (2L), Dilari Cooper (3L), and Abel Chacko (3L)

Chris Cabrera Wins National Student Health Law Writing Awards

Christopher Cabrera (3L) won the American College of Legal Medicine's 2025 Hirsh Writing Competition for his article *Conflict Preemption and the State of the Art*, which delves into the motivations of drug companies. Cabrera also earned second place in the Food and Drug Law Institute's 2024 H. Thomas Austern Writing Competition for his article *GLP-1s and an Indication to Reconsider Loss Exclusion*, which advocates for regulatory reforms to expand access to GLP-1s.

"I chose to attend law school at UHLC because of its health law program" Cabrera shared, "and because I wanted to understand legal issues as they relate to health care." A former pharmacist, he hopes to use his pharmaceutical and legal training to shape health policy and promote equitable access to care.



Christopher Cabrera (3L)

HLPI Sends Three Students to the Texas Health Law Conference

Last October, three UHLC health law students attended the Texas Health Law Conference. Catherine Cleary (2L) and Tam Flola (2L) received scholarships to attend the conference from the Health Law Section of the State Bar of Texas, and Shruthi Murali (3L) was sponsored by HLPI.

Student News

UHLC Student Craig Cormier II Excels as Health Law Legislative Fellow

Craig Cormier II (3L), a dual J.D./M.P.H. candidate at the University of Houston Law Center and UTHealth Houston School of Public Health, is serving as a Health Law Legislative Fellow with the Texas Senate Committee on Health and Human Services. Working alongside Chairwoman Sen. Lois W. Kolkhorst, Cormier has gained hands-on experience in shaping health policy with one of the state's most influential legislative committees.

"What really drew me to this fellowship was the chance to see health policy in action—before it becomes law," he said. "It's one thing to study health law in the classroom, but this gives me the opportunity to be in the room where these decisions are shaped."

During the fellowship, Cormier has applied his legal and public health training to drafting and analyzing legislation, and working with stakeholders. His focus has included licensing and scope of practice laws, health workforce policy, and the integration of artificial intelligence into health care.

Reflecting on the experience, Cormier remarked, "Policy shapes public health. Law determines access. Together, they can change how people experience care."



Craig Cormier II, HLPI legislative fellow for the Texas Senate Committee on Health and Human Services in Austin.

University of Houston Moot Court Teams Compete in Health Law Competition



Erica Küntz (3L) and Sebastian Turet (3L)



Emma Brose (3L) and Shruthi Murali (3L)

Last fall, two student teams represented the University of Houston Law Center at the 2024 Southern Illinois University School of Law's Health Law Competition. Team 1, comprised of Erica Küntz (3L) and Sebastian Turet (3L), advanced to the semifinals, with Küntz earning recognition as Fourth Best Oralists overall. Team 2 featured Emma Brose (3L) and Shruthi Murali (3L). The teams were coached by Gabriella Gonzalez-Brown (J.D. '22), an Associate at Daw & Gray, LLP, and Emily Hall Bergeron (J.D. '21), Associate Legal Officer at MD Anderson Cancer Center. Later in the season, Mariela Arreola (2L), Sarah Douglas (3L), and Rosel Flores (2L) competed in the Maryland Carey Health Law Regulatory & Compliance Competition. The team was coached by Autumn Brehon (J.D. '23). The teams enjoyed the opportunity to connect with health law professionals and students from across the country.



Left to right: Autumn Brehon (J.D. '23)(Coach), Rosel Flores (2L), Sarah Douglas (3L), and Mariela Arreola (2L).

Health Law Students Receive Writing Awards and Scholarships

Health Law Writing Awards

This year, HLPI recognized three deserving students with writing awards. The Ewer-Oren J.D. Health Law Writing Award went to Amber Meghani (2L) (1st place) for her paper, *When Wall Street Plays Doctor: The New Face of Medicare Fraud in the Era of Private Equity*, and Jalen Edwards (3L) (2nd place) for her paper *Combating Maternal Health Disparities: The Essential Role of Black Doulas and the Challenges of Regulation*.

Professor Laura Oren, Ph.D., J.D., established this writing award in honor of Dr. Michael Ewer and her mother, Grace Oren, for the best health law papers written by a J.D. student.

Irene Younan (2L), received the 2025 Dr. Alvin Goldstein Health Law Writing Scholarship for her paper *Caring For Our Caregivers: Addressing Physician Burnout in the U.S. Through Legislative Pressure and Specialty-Based Regulations*.

The Dr. Alvin Goldstein Health Law Writing Scholarship was established by Wendy C. Goldstein-Feldman (JD '92). The scholarship honors the memory of her father, who was a pharmacist and physician. The writing award recognizes an outstanding paper, prepared by a J.D. or LL.M. student on a current health/life sciences law topic, that embodies the professional spirit of Dr. Goldstein.



18th Annual Ewer-Oren Health Law Writing Award second place winner, Jalen Edwards (3L)

Health Law Scholarships

With the help of generous donors, we awarded scholarships to several outstanding health law students. Last April, we awarded scholarships to several outstanding health law students. Abel Chacko (3L) and Alexa Koerth (3L) received the Prudential Scholarship; Bryan LaVergne (2L) received the John B. Neibel Scholarship; Erin Carroll (3L), Chris Cabrera (3L), and Craig Cormier (3L) were awarded the Health Law Scholarship; and Jane Foreman (3L) won the Lex Freidan Award.

If you are interested in sponsoring a scholarship or writing award, please email healthlaw@uh.edu.

Stay in Touch

Don't say goodbye just yet. Learn more about our research, [events](#), and how to stay involved at our website: law.uh.edu/healthlaw. Together, our most ambitious hellos are ahead of us.

If you would like to support us and our students, you can give safely and securely online at <https://giving.uh.edu/law/> by selecting Health Law & Policy Institute from the drop down menu.

The University of Houston is a Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university and an EEO/AA institution.