

Fall 2024 CPRL Student Directory



Cohort Members



Murat M. Akaydin

Murat is a JD candidate at CUNY Law. He holds an MPA in Public Policy and Administration, a BBA in IT Management, and several professional certifications. His background in public service ranges from being a Military Intelligence Specialist in 2009 to working at the NYC Campaign Finance Board in 2024. His non-professional roles include serving on Manhattan Community Board 7, including the Youth, Education, & Libraries committee, and as Board Chair of the Generation Vote Education Fund. Murat is deeply committed to youth civic engagement and education.



Jebraune Chambers

Jebraune is a second year student at Teachers College, Columbia University, where she is studying education policy with a focus on school finance and data analysis. She currently supports the TC community as a graduate assistant in the Office of General Counsel and in her capacity on the Student Senate. After receiving her B.A. in political science and Latino studies from the University of Notre Dame, she worked at the City of South Bend Legal Department and Monterrosa Law. She later joined Teach for America to serve the Baltimore community. Jebraune has a focus on building sustainable school facilities and providing teachers with supportive resources.



Daniella Dalsheim

Daniella is pursuing a Masters degree in Education Policy at Teachers College, Columbia University. She holds an M.Ed. in Instructional Practice from Lipscomb University and a B.A. in criminal justice and psychology from Northeastern University. She has worked as a professional development coach at the Center for Professional Education of Teachers in NYC. Previously, she served Multilingual Learners in Nashville, TN, developing the English Language program and teaching at her school. She specializes in K-12 education policy with a focus on multilingual learners and accessible education.



Brinda Dash

Brinda is pursuing a Master of Public Administration in development practice at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs. With a dual degree in electronics and communications engineering and economics, she has worked extensively in education and social protection. Her roles at Haqdarshak and Teach For India involved managing large-scale programs to deliver welfare schemes and enhance educational outcomes for underserved students. Brinda aims to strengthen educational systems through innovative policy, technology solutions, and evidence-based practices.



Belinda Donohoe

Belinda is a second-year K-12 education policy student at Teachers College. She graduated from Georgetown University with a B.A. in psychology, focusing on childhood psychology, and a government minor. She also competed on the swim team. As a Teach For America corps member, she taught 7th-grade math in Nashville, TN. Belinda is passionate about working within the K-12 public school system and amplifying teacher and student voices in policy debates. She enjoys high-heeled shoes, cheering on the Boston Celtics, and gin martinis.



Niko Ellison

Niko is pursuing his J.D./M.B.A., with a concentration in advertising at New York University. He holds a B.A. in philosophy from Rollins College. Following his undergraduate studies, he served as a high school English teacher in Teach for America's Dallas corps, where he also worked as a media ambassador, promoting educational policy through television campaigns. In law school, Niko has specialized in intellectual property and media law, and currently serves as an ambassador for the New York City Bar Association.



Yasmine Garay

Yasmine is pursuing her Master's in Public Administration at the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University. She graduated with her B.A. last year from the Gallatin School of Individualized Studies at NYU where she studied the intersection between child health, education reform, and public policy. During her undergraduate career, Yasmine worked in K-12 schools and education non-profits across New York City, focusing on literacy development and students' access to mental health services. She hopes to learn how to help create a more equitable and empathetic education system for all students.



Mirinda Gwin

Mirinda is a third-year student at Berkeley Law. After receiving her B.A. from the University of Virginia, she taught multilingual learners in the U.S. and Bulgaria on a Fulbright. After that, Mirinda worked for four years in Washington, D.C. as an immigration paralegal specializing in employment-based green cards. During law school, Mirinda has focused on education law and worked for the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, where she handled cases relating to disability, race, and gender discrimination in schools. Mirinda is passionate about making school better.

George Howard



George is a third-year student at Duke University School of Law. He earned his B.A. from the University of California, Irvine. After graduating, George worked in public education for several years, dedicated to improving the educational experiences of students. Motivated by his desire to address the challenges faced by under-resourced communities, he seeks to use his legal degree to enhance public education.



Nastassia Janvier

Nastassia Janvier is a third-year law student at Howard University School of Law. She holds both a Bachelor's and a Master of Science in Public Administration from Florida State University, where she made history as the first Haitian American to serve on the Board of Governors overseeing the state's public universities. A dedicated civil rights advocate, Nastassia has led efforts to safeguard constitutional protections for teachers and students and combat systemic racism through desegregation initiatives. She aims to continue her work in civil rights law, with a focus on advocacy and governance in the South.



Taylor Jones

Taylor is a second-year student at Columbia Law School. After receiving a B.A. from Elon University, Taylor worked with the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault, assisted under-resourced African immigrants at an immigration law firm, and helped formerly incarcerated individuals find jobs, transportation, and counseling. Taylor has also served as a campaign manager in local politics and worked as part of the leadership team in the Minnesota State Senate. Taylor is passionate about criminal justice reform and spent his first summer internship working with the Public Defender's Office in New Orleans, LA.



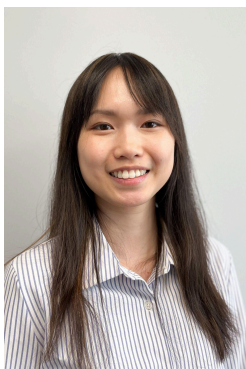
Katja Krieger

Katja is pursuing her Master's in education policy at Vanderbilt University. After receiving her B.A. from Ithaca College, Katja conducted research at the School District of Philadelphia and supported school leaders and teachers in developing professional development tools and resources to best support students. Katja then became a director at Education Voters of Pennsylvania, where she facilitated training sessions for advocates on the impact of Pennsylvania's school funding lawsuit. As a consultant at the local, state, and national levels, she advocates for more adequate and equitable school funding for all students.



Ashiley Lee

Ashiley is a second-year student at NYU School of Law. After receiving her B.A. in government from Harvard College, she taught middle school history in Los Angeles. Ashiley earned her M.A. in urban education from Loyola Marymount University, concentrating in educational policy and administration. She was also a Policy and Advocacy Summer Fellow for the Association of American Educators, developing courses on culturally responsive social and emotional learning. At NYU Law, Ashiley is interested in education law and is dedicated to improving outcomes for first-generation students as an AnBryce scholar.



Kim Ly

Kim is a third-year law student at the University of Michigan. She holds a B.S.A. from the University of Texas. She has worked as an advocate for children at the Children's Defense Fund and at Stop Abuse for Everyone. During law school, she volunteers as a creative writing teacher for elementary school children as part of 826 Michigan and defends children's rights to public education with the Student Rights Project.



Dana Mandler

Dana is pursuing her Master's in education policy at Teachers College, Columbia University. After receiving her B.A. from New York University in democratic education, she continued her studies at the Hebrew University Law Faculty, receiving an M.A. in human rights and transitional justice. Over the past decade, Dana has worked on a number of educational projects including co-founding a cooperative cafe and community space and directing a leadership development program for young activists. Dana's dedication to youth-led education to foster a more just society continues to guide her work and studies.



Anesu Masakura

Anesu is a second-year student at the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University. He holds a B.A. in economics from Carleton College. During his time there, Anesu supported a community-based learning program at the Center for Community and Civic Engagement and founded a grassroots non-profit to equalize access to education for underprivileged students in Zimbabwe. Following graduation, he spent three years at a Minneapolis-based non-profit, co-designing various social impact initiatives, including an out-of-school program for youth of color. Anesu is excited to leverage his varied experience to help transform educational systems through CPRL.



Avery Moody

Avery is a second-year student at the Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service. She has a B.A. in public management, leadership, and policy from The Ohio State University (Go Bucks!). After earning her degree, she joined Teach For America in Houston, TX, as an eighth grade ELA teacher. Throughout her time in Texas, she volunteered with BakerRipley as a digital literacy instructor and developed a passion for serving others through the education space.



Annie Nelson

Annie is pursuing her Master's of Public Administration at NYU Wagner School of Public Service, with a focus in policy analysis. She holds her B.A. in American studies from Yale University and a Master's in teaching from the Relay Graduate School of Education. Annie's passion for educational equity stems primarily from her experience as a fifth grade teacher; however, she has also worked in non-profit management and state and local politics. After pursuing her M.P.A., Annie hopes to shape and advance public policies that close the achievement gap.



Phuong Pham

Phuong, a Fulbright scholar from Vietnam, is pursuing a Master's in international education development at Columbia University's Teachers College. Previously, she was a founding staff member in Admissions and Financial Aid at Fulbright University Vietnam, the country's first independent liberal arts institution. There, she developed equitable admission procedures, supported by U.S-Vietnam bilateral cooperation. Phuong's experience with vulnerable children in nonprofit education drives her passion for equity and inclusivity. Her work aims to ensure equal educational opportunities for all students.



Ashiqur Rahman

Ashiqur Rahman is a J.D. candidate at NYU School of Law, Class of 2026. He holds a B.A. in political science and economics from the University of Miami, where he excelled in debate. Ashiqur has experience at the Embassy of Bangladesh in Washington, D.C., worked on a political campaign, and tutored children. At NYU, he is a staff editor on the Moot Court Board and treasurer of the South Asian Law Students Association. He is passionate about the intersections of law, education, and public policy on childhood development and socioeconomic mobility.



Rachel Ann Roddy

Rachel is pursuing her J.D. from Columbia School of Law. She is concurrently pursuing an LL.M. at The Institute of Law and Finance in Frankfurt. In her first year of law school, she participated in the High School Law Institute, where she taught high schoolers constitutional law on Saturdays. She is from Northern California, where she was homeschooled from K-9 before attending public high school online. At age 11, she attended primary school in France and, at 12, a Waldorf school in Germany. In 2022, she received a B.A. with honors from the University of California, Davis, in classical civilizations.



Myrna Reyes Santos

Myrna is a second-year student at Columbia Law School. She holds a B.A. in human rights from Columbia University. Before graduate school, she was a SEO Law Fellow at Morrison and Foerster LLP, where she researched educational rights of undocumented students. During her undergraduate studies, she wrote her thesis on substantive equality in higher education and served as a college access mentor for first-generation students from low-income neighborhoods through the Double Discovery Center. Myrna is passionate about increasing access to quality education.



Alexis Stoll

Alexis Stoll is a 3L at USC Gould School of Law. She earned a B.S. in liberal arts from Excelsior College in 2020, graduating summa cum laude. She is passionate about education and taught honors precalculus and Algebra II for three years prior to law school. She is currently a member of her law school journal and is a Saks Scholar. Alexis will be working at Hunton Andrews Kurth NYC when she graduates in 2025.



Jacob Turner

Jacob is a second year student at Columbia Law School. After receiving his B.A. from Rutgers University he joined Teach for America as a caseload manager and eighth grade special education math and English teacher at a charter school in Philadelphia. During this time, Jacob earned his M.S. in education from University of Pennsylvania. After doing Teach for America, Jacob taught high school music at a public school. Coming from a family of educators, Jacob is passionate about education reform in urban areas.



Ashley Waiters

Ashley is a second-year student at New York University School of Law. She holds a B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania in philosophy, politics and economics (PPE). Ashley is passionate about promoting educational equity and has dedicated substantial time to tutoring, mentoring, and fundraising for scholarships to benefit students from low-income, first-generation college backgrounds. Ashley spent the time between undergraduate and law school working in financial compliance and operations at Goldman Sachs.



Natalie Ward

Natalie is a third-year student at The University of Maryland Carey School of Law. While receiving her B.S. in applied learning and development with an emphasis on early childhood emergent bilingual education, Natalie taught fourth grade. During law school, Natalie has worked with Public Defenders in the Youthful Defendant Unit, where she assists with the representation of juveniles who are charged as adults. Natalie has focused on juvenile and education law with a special interest in juvenile defense and special education representation.



Ben Wise

Ben is a third-year student at Berkeley Law. He holds a B.S. in public affairs and a B.A. in visual and performing arts from the University of Texas at Dallas. He has participated in the East Bay Community Law Center's Education Justice Clinic and tried cases as an intern for the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office. In law school, Ben has focused on education policy, criminal law, and arts law.



Mykael Wright

Mykael is in the M.P.A. program at NYU Wagner. He earned a bachelor's degree in communications from the University of Missouri. Upon graduation, he began his career in education through the Teach for America program. He has worked as a teacher and administrator at charter, private, and public schools in Phoenix, AZ, and also holds an M.B.A. After finishing his program, he hopes to pursue a Ph.D. and work at the intersection of education policy and democracy.



Lu Zhang

Lu Zhang is a Master's student in education and social policy at NYU's Steinhardt School. After earning a Bachelor's degree in economics and management, Lu worked at an educational group in China for several years, initially focusing on teaching and later transitioning to management and organizational roles. During the summer of 2024, Lu interned as a summer associate at CPRL. Passionate about the education sector, Lu is particularly interested in educational equity, international education policies, and qualitative research methods. Lu aims to leverage these interests to contribute to policy development and improve educational practices globally.



Lulu Zhou

Lulu is pursuing her MPA, with a concentration in public policy analysis, at NYU Wagner School of Public Service. She earned her B.A. in sociology from Middlebury College and subsequently served as a teacher at a migrant NGO in Thailand. Later, she worked on early childhood research and intervention, organizational behavior research, and nonprofit program evaluation. As a first-gen student and immigrant, Lulu is committed to broadening educational opportunities for marginalized students and advancing school systems.