



2026 WLI Fellows

Seth Dawson
Xaxira Velasco Ponce De Leon
Coco Holbrook
Natasha Khanna
Lauren Nelson
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Joshua Volvovic
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Natasha Johnson

William H. Gates Hall Box
353020
Seattle, WA 98195-3020 Tel:
(206) 543-0346 Email:
Uwlawwli@uw.edu

**Washington
Leadership Institute
Fellows**

Profiles





Seth Dawson

**Stokes
Lawrence PS**

1420 5th Ave, Suite
3000, Seattle, WA,
98101

Seth Dawson (they/them) is an associate attorney at Stokes Lawrence, P.S., where their practice focuses on trust and estate litigation, complex civil litigation, and appeals. They previously worked for Terrell Marshall Law Group, PLLC, where they represented employees and consumers whose rights had been violated by corporations.

Before entering private practice, Seth served for three years as a law clerk for Chief Justice Debra Stephens on the Washington Supreme Court. While attending the University of Washington School of Law, Seth was a member of the Thomas E. Tang National Moot Court Team, the Associated Editor-in-Chief of the Washington Journal of Environmental Law and Policy, and a student representative on the UW Law Curriculum Committee.

Before law school, Seth served as a Legislative Assistant to Congressman Denny Heck (D-10), with a policy portfolio focused on civil rights, tribal sovereignty, and environmental law. Seth currently serves on the Community Advisory Board for UW Tacoma's Legal Pathways program, which aims to diversify the legal profession by offering opportunities and support for aspiring law students from traditionally underrepresented communities, and the WSBA Legislative Review Committee, which helps WSBA sections refine legislative proposals and seek formal support from the Board of Governors. Seth lives in Tacoma with their spouse, two cats, and an abundance of houseplants.



Xaxira Velasco Ponce De Leon

Columbia Legal Services

300 Okanogan Ave, Ste
#2A, Wenatchee, WA
98801

Xaxira (Jah-see-rah) is a perpetually curious lifelong learner and statewide legal advocate often found in deep reflection reviewing case law or outside exploring the wonderful foothills of Wenatchee, Washington. Xaxira's curiosity has led her along a diverse path learning from and supporting organizations that provide legal resources to individuals facing civil and criminal legal issues. Her current practice as a staff attorney for Columbia Legal Services (CLS) frequently surfaces access to justice and constitutional issues. For example, Xaxira successfully led multi-year advocacy challenging a state agency's failure to protect and release of sealed juvenile records information.

Xaxira represents CLS on the Access to Justice Board's Rules Committee; serves on the Advocacy, Equity, and Engagement Committee for the Chelan Douglas Volunteer Attorney Services' Board; and is a current board member for Sustainable NCW. Xaxira is a proud alumnus of Seattle University School of Law (SU), a former resident of many states, and beyond happy to call Washington state her home.

When not deep in thought with case law or frolicking in the forest, you can find Xaxira connecting with friends over coffee, lounging with her perfect children (cats), trying out a new vegan gluten free dessert recipe, or lifting heavy at the gym.



Coco Holbrook

Northwest Justice Project

300 Okanogan Ave, Suite
3A, Wenatchee, WA 98801

Coco Holbrook lives in Wenatchee, WA the apple capital of the world. They work for the Northwest Justice Project, serving Adams, Chelan, Douglas, Grant, and Okanogan County. They are the Assistant Managing Attorney for the Wenatchee and Omak NJP offices and prior to that they were a staff attorney with the same offices.

Coco is a generalist legal aid attorney, meaning they assist clients with a wide variety of legal issues including debt defense, eviction defense, Medicaid and Medicare matters, special education advocacy, criminal record vacations, and issues related to state and federal public benefits. Prior to working at NJP, Coco worked in Massachusetts doing mental health civil rights litigation and legislative work.



Natasha Khanna

**Seattle City
Attorney's Office**

701 5th Ave, Ste. 2050,
Seattle, WA 98104

Natasha Khanna is an Assistant City Attorney for the Seattle City Attorney's Office, primarily defending the city in cases involving federal and constitutional claims. Natasha previously served as a judicial law clerk for Division One of the Washington Court of Appeals and worked in private practice following her clerkship. Outside of work, Natasha serves on the board of the Center for Children and Youth Justice and just finished serving as Board President of King County Washington Women Lawyers. Natasha is also actively involved with the William L. Dwyer Inn of Court and serves as Membership Chair.

While Natasha split her childhood between Washington, D.C. and the San Francisco Bay Area, she has called Seattle home since moving to attend the University of Washington, where she received her B.A. in Dance Performance and Political Science, and later Seattle University, where she received her J.D.



Lauren Nelson

**Davis Wright
Tremaine LLP**

920 5th Ave. Ste
3300, Seattle, WA
98104

Lauren (“Lo”) Nelson (she/her) is an accomplished attorney with active licenses in Texas, Wisconsin, and Washington. She currently is an Associate Attorney at Davis Wright Tremaine, LLP in Seattle, where she focuses on employment litigation. In this role, she drafts motions, participates in hearings, takes witnesses at trials, prepares witnesses for depositions, and conducts research on federal employment laws.

Lo serves as the current Vice President of Members Services for the Loren Miller Bar Association. In her role, Lo helps members connect with LMBA events and services. Lo earned her Juris Doctor from the University of Wisconsin Law School, where she was recognized as a top oralist in Moot Court, served as Community Service Coordinator for the Black Law Student Association, and participated in the Immigrant Law Clinic.

In addition to her legal expertise, Lauren is fluent in Spanish, proficient in Arabic, and has volunteered as a translator for the National Immigration Justice Center. She is an avid traveler, a classically trained pianist, and holds a third-degree black belt in Taekwondo.



Javiera Wood

**City of Seattle
Office of
Immigrant and
Refugee Affairs**

700 5th Ave, Seattle, WA
98104

Javiera Wood is an immigration attorney with experience in removal defense, naturalization, and immigrant and refugee policy. Javiera currently serves as a Program Manager and Policy Specialist with the City of Seattle Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs (OIRA). She joined the office as manager of the New Citizen Campaign to expand access to naturalization services for Seattle residents. In 2025, she transitioned into the role of Rapid Response Program and Policy Specialist, where she designed the office's rapid response efforts, convening public funders and legal service providers to coordinate services, policy, align resources, and strengthen systems of support.

Prior to joining OIRA, Javiera worked as an Equal Justice Works Fellow and staff attorney for Kids in Need of Defense (KIND), where she expanded access to legal and social services for unaccompanied immigrant children in Eastern Washington and represented youth in immigration and state court proceedings. She earned her J.D. from Seattle University School of Law and her B.A. from the University of Oregon. Born and raised in Santiago, Chile, Javiera immigrated with her family to Oregon in 2010.



Joshua Volvovic

Conway Law, PLLC

1014 Franklin St.,
Vancouver, WA 98660

Joshua L. Volvovic is an attorney at Conway Law, PLLC, a boutique civil litigation law firm in Vancouver, Washington. He graduated from the University of Oregon and earned his J.D from Lewis and Clark Law School, in Portland Oregon. His practice includes construction litigation, property law disputes, and landlord tenant work. He is an active volunteer with the Clark County, Washington specialty bar organizations and volunteers as an assistant basketball coach at a local high school.



Safa Peera

King County Office of Public Defense

710 Second Avenue, Seattle,
WA 98104

Safa Peera has been a public defender for the King County Department of Public Defense for 8 years and currently carries a Class A caseload. She enjoys the rigor of being in trial as well as the rewards of building trusting relationships with her clients. Public defense allows her to represent one client at a time while still having the possibility of changing law more broadly through strategic litigation at the trial level.

Safa is passionate about sharing her love for trial work and public defense with others who are interested in the law. She is an adjunct professor at the University of Washington School of Law, teaching Trial Advocacy in the Fall quarter of 2025.

Safa also values giving back to her Muslim community and currently serves on the board for the Council on American Islamic Relations (WA chapter). In 2024, she was an elected uncommitted delegate to the Democratic State and National Conventions, where she advocated for an immediate, permanent ceasefire in Gaza.

When she can make the time, she enjoys long-distance horse-riding trips around the world.

Safa graduated high school at the Dhahran Academy in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, with her bachelor's degree from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, and with her law degree from the University of Texas at Austin.



David Tran

**Starbucks Coffee
Company**

2401 Utah Ave S., Seattle, WA
98134

David Tran is a Corporate Counsel at the Starbucks Coffee Company. As a part of Starbucks real estate legal team, he serves as a trusted advisor and counsels internal real estate and business teams on all aspects of the store lifecycle. Before joining Starbucks, David was a senior associate at Helsell Fetterman, focusing on real estate and business transactions, and previously clerked for Judge Linda CJ Lee of the Washington State Court of Appeals, Division II.

Beyond his legal practice, David chairs the Starbucks Law & Corporate Affairs Department's internal mentorship program—a department-wide initiative he led the design of and launched last year. He also serves as a national board member and Programming Lead for the Starbucks Pan-Asian Partner Network, an employee resource group. In the broader community, David is a board member and Secretary of the Asian Bar Association of Washington, where he served as President in 2023, and actively contributes to the Vietnamese American Bar Association of Washington.

David is a PNW native, earning his bachelor's degree in architecture from the University of Washington, and his law degree, magna cum laude, from the Seattle University School of Law.



Cade A.P. Jones

**King Co.
Prosecuting
Attorneys Office**

516 3rd Ave., Seattle, WA
98104

Cade A.P. Jones is a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney with the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office. Since 2022, he has practiced litigating felonies and gross misdemeanors including Unlawful Possession of a Firearm, Assault in the Third Degree and Driving While Under the Influence. Currently, he practices in the Special Assault Unit working with Failure to Register cases. A first-generation lawyer from Iowa, he received his bachelor's degree and graduated cum laude from Iowa State University in 2016. In 2018, he received his master's degree from Saint Louis University. He received his law degree from the University of Missouri in 2022.

While in law school, Cade was a Shook, Hardy & Bacon Teaching Fellow. In this position, he tutored and mentored a group of first year law students enrolled in Civil Procedure I and II. Additionally, he was the Associate Editor in Chief for the Journal of Dispute Resolution and participated on the Black Law Student Association Mock Trial Team. In addition to his work as a prosecutor, he serves on the Washington State Bar Association Court Rules and Procedures Committee, volunteers as a coach for the University of Washington Student Trial Advocacy Competition team and volunteers judging mock trial competitions at the University of Washington. In his free time, Cade is a high school wrestling official for the Pacific Northwest Wrestling Officials Association. An avid runner, he has completed a total of 10 marathons. Cade's future goal in the legal profession is to become a judge.



Shawn Ashkan Shariati

United States Courts

1717 Pacific Ave., Tacoma,
WA 98402

Shawn Ashkan Shariati is a litigator. He worked as a public defender with the Department of Public Defense in King County, Washington, and The Legal Aid Society in Kings County, New York. He clerked for the Washington State Supreme Court, the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, and the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington. He has also served as Vice President of the Middle Eastern Legal Association of Washington.

Shariati earned his B.A. from CUNY Queens College, his M.Sc. from the London School of Economics, and his J.D. from Columbia Law School. He is also pretty good at Tetris.



Natasha Johnson

Administrative Office of the Courts

1112 Quince St. Southeast,
Olympia, WA

Natasha Johnson is a Washington-licensed attorney dedicated to strengthening communities and public institutions through law, service, and principled leadership. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Human Services from the University of Phoenix, a Juris Doctor from Regent University School of Law, and a Master's in Communication with an emphasis in Servant Leadership from Gonzaga University. Her legal career has spanned family law, public defense, and nonprofit legal aid, including work with the Sexual Violence Law Center in Seattle supporting survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence. Natasha currently serves as a staff attorney with the Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts, where she analyzes legislation, develops statewide court forms, and collaborates with judges, court staff, and policymakers on issues ranging from mental health law to court procedures.

Beyond her professional role, Natasha provides governance leadership to community-based organizations, including HopeSparks Family Services in Tacoma, where she serves as both Secretary and Governance Chair, and Eileen & Callie's Place in Kent, where she serves as Vice President. A lifelong learner, she values deep listening, careful observation, and thoughtful decision-making, and once completed the challenge of reading a fiction book every day for a year. Natasha values time with her family, remains active in her faith community, and finds inspiration in long drives and spontaneous adventures. Her ongoing mission is to mentor emerging attorneys and contribute to a more accessible, responsive legal system in Washington.