

NEW YORK STATE PERMANENT COMMISSION ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE



REPORT OF THE PERMANENT COMMISSION'S
WORKING GROUP ON
TECHNOLOGY

NOVEMBER 2020

THE WORKING GROUP ON TECHNOLOGY

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Thank you to all our Working Group volunteers who are listed in Appendices A and B. Special recognition and gratitude goes to Matt D'Amore, Christine Fecko, Stephen Goldmeier, John Greiner, Jeff Hogue, Chris Schwartz, and Anna Steele for their extraordinary assistance with the Support Webinars and Technology Conference.

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Executive Summary

In response to the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic and in an effort to provide technology support to the New York State legal services community, the New York State Permanent Commission on Access to Justice (“Permanent Commission”) Working Group on Technology (“Working Group”) continued to advance programs to improve the quality and efficiency of legal services.

In collaboration with the New York State IOLA Fund and NYSTech,¹ the Working Group set-up a weekly free webinar series which ran for 13 weeks beginning on March 25, 2020 and ending on June 17, 2020. A complete list of the Webinar Planning Committee members and webinar presenters can be found at Appendix A. Additionally, the Permanent Commission with support from NYSTech and Cornell Tech Campus, sponsored its sixth annual Statewide Technology Conference. The virtual event on October 7 and 14, 2020 brought together directors and technology staff from civil legal aid providers, law firms, law schools, legal funders and technology service providers to share innovative ideas that can improve the delivery of civil legal services and the efficiency of provider operations. A complete list of the Technology Conference Planning Committee members and conference presenters can be found at Appendix B.

A new webpage for the Technology Working Group was added to the Permanent Commission’s website featuring three new dropdowns: [Technology Working Group](#), [Technology Support Webinars](#), and [Technology Conference](#). Past reports; the pandemic technology support webinar recordings and materials; and conference agendas, videos and materials have been posted.

The Working Group’s research, as well as its experience in seeking to implement its technology recommendations, has demonstrated the need for dedicated, stable funding for technology expansion and innovation. This year, financial support for technology became vital to maintaining basic functioning. To continue offering essential legal services during the pandemic, civil legal aid organizations were forced to make unanticipated expenditures to upgrade and build out their technology infrastructure, including IT staff support, security, licensing, new hardware and software, and all the new tools that were adopted to serve clients devastated by COVID-19 and the economic fallout. While having such core technology tools allowed providers to function during this year’s crisis, it has become clear that access to justice requires access to technology, certainly for the foreseeable future. The recent technology improvements are long-overdue, and must be maintained, reinforced, and expanded.

¹ NYSTech is a voluntary collaboration of legal services providers from across New York that convenes technology leaders regularly for information sharing and training.

The Working Group offers the recommendations listed below to the Permanent Commission. A numbered list of the recommendations corresponding to the order discussed in this Report can be found at Appendix C.

New York State Court System

Virtual Court Proceedings

- The New York State Court System should continue to permit virtual court proceedings even after the current pandemic ends and should solicit ongoing feedback from stakeholders to ensure that such proceedings are accessible and user friendly, including in town and village courts. (See [recommendation #14.](#))
- Until internet service becomes a public utility, the New York State Courts System should explore methods to guarantee access to virtual court proceedings through geographically dispersed, free, confidential, and secure video connections. (See [recommendation #15.](#))

E-Filing System

- The e-filing system in the New York State Court System should be redesigned to be more user-friendly and accessible for unrepresented litigants in every court at every level, with the goal of having a consolidated and uniform online filing system. (See [recommendation #2.](#))
- After using a DIY Form program, with one-click, an unrepresented litigant should be able to electronically file the form with the New York State Court's case management system. (See [recommendation #7.](#))
- The New York State Court System should permit affirmations in lieu of unrepresented notarized affidavits. (See [recommendation #8.](#))

Data

- The New York State Court System should not employ artificial intelligence algorithms in any way that impacts the rights of parties without analysis by outside experts of the potential for disparate negative impact on economically vulnerable people and BIPOC. The Courts should reassess its use of algorithms to the extent that they have already been implemented. (See [recommendation # 10.](#))
- The New York State Court System should improve open data access through API queries to information that would ultimately benefit the underserved, such as case information found in eCourts and NYSCEF. For example, the New York State Court System should improve access to information about current and upcoming dockets through APIs. This will benefit underserved people by enhancing the capabilities of the many existing technology tools legal aid programs use to guide, inform, and serve their clients. (See [recommendation #12.](#))

Court Navigation

- The New York State Court System should review existing court kiosks and other court navigation interfaces and apps, like the multilingual interactive artificial intelligence pilot in the New Mexico Court System, for replication in New York. Any such efforts should include participation of all relevant stakeholders and integrate user testing. (See [recommendation #3.](#))

Permanent Commission’s Technology Working Group

Providing Community Support

- The Permanent Commission should support funding for technology infrastructure, expansion, and innovation that maintains and improves the delivery of essential civil legal services.
- The Permanent Commission should continue to convene an annual statewide technology conference, with the goal of encouraging the civil legal aid community to engage in sustained collaboration, best practices development, improved security measures, training, critical analysis and revolutionary thinking around the improved use of technology to increase access to effective legal assistance by low-income New Yorkers. Stakeholder participation in the conference should be expanded to include additional representatives from technology companies. (See [recommendation #16.](#))
- The Permanent Commission’s future conferences should include presentations that provide New York State CLE. (See [recommendation #9.](#))
- The Permanent Commission should organize additional technology webinars for the civil legal aid community, as interest and schedules permit. (See [recommendation #1.](#))
- The Permanent Commission should support the development of a statewide technology forum to enable the community to stay engaged and up to date with technology opportunities and risks. (See [recommendation #11.](#))

Improving Community Practices

- The Working Group should explore partnerships with academic programs beyond law schools such as Cornell’s Urban Tech Hub in cases where the partnership aligns with academic goals of contributing to thought leadership, having lasting impact after the project completes, and engaging students. Academic partnerships offer opportunities to experiment and to extend university research into practical application. (See [recommendation #4.](#))
- The Working Group should assist the civil legal aid community in analyzing program data with an eye toward impact on communities of color and social needs, like housing, employment security, and health-related quality of life. (See [recommendation #5.](#))

- The Working Group should assist the civil legal aid community in ensuring that short-term data collection methods are debiased and accomplished with existing resources. (See [recommendation #6.](#))
- The Working Group should assist the civil legal aid community in ensuring that their websites and online tools are designed to be truly accessible to people with disabilities, for example by (1) engaging consultants or obtaining internal training on web accessibility and (2) planning for accessibility audits of any information or self-help tools published on the Internet. (See [recommendation #13.](#))

Technology Support Webinars

Overview

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, legal services organizations had to immediately come up with new remote models for the delivery of legal services. Most organizations were not technologically prepared for this. In an effort to provide technology support to the New York State legal services community, the Permanent Commission's Technology Working Group, the New York State IOLA Fund and NYSTech set-up a weekly free webinar series which ran for 13 weeks beginning on March 25, 2020 and ending on June 17, 2020.

Webinar Series Sponsors

Just-Tech and LegalServer volunteered their zoom rooms and space for the recordings.

Webinars

The technology support webinars were intended for tech responsible staff and senior management at New York State legal services organizations. The topics generally related to remote working, security and the delivery of legal services. Webinars were held every Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. and lasted up to 90 minutes to include time to ask questions, share challenges and solutions and help shape future topics and identify other support for the community. They were hosted and recorded via Zoom; the recordings, slide decks and materials are posted on the [Permanent Commission](#) and [IOLA's](#) websites, so they continue to be a resource to the New York State legal services community.

The webinars averaged around 125 attendees from organizations located all over the state; the most highly attended webinar peaked at over 330 people. Questions, answers and comments were strongly encouraged during the sessions to strengthen a feeling of a community. Indeed, most sessions generated robust and helpful chat, with attendees sharing links and contact information and offering personal assistance to their peers. Its popularity demonstrated the need for continued interaction throughout the year.

All thirty of the webinar moderators and presenters volunteered their time and expertise. The list of the topics, speakers, and session descriptions is set forth below:

- **Session 1:** March 25, 2020, [Overview of Working Remotely, Slides](#), presented by Jeff Hogue, Christopher Schwartz, Anna Steele, and Jon Snell
Description: As legal service providers begin their shift to remote work, organizations need to be prepared for their teams to make significant changes to their workflows. There are a number of tools that are available to assist with the transition to remote work, many of which legal service providers are already using. Enhancing collaboration, helping staff members create a secure workspace, and maintaining flexibility are all key components to shifting to a remote workforce.

- **Session 2:** April 1, 2020, [Getting Your Legal Program Set-up for Remote Working, Slides](#), presented by John Greiner, Glenn Baum, and Cecilia Dougherty

Description: The legal services community is in various stages of getting their staff up and running in remote environments. Some are successfully set up and doing pretty well. Some are functioning but struggling. Some are still setting up work environments and getting staff and volunteers connected. No matter what stage you are in, this nuts and bolts discussion offers best practices and tips regarding setting up the office network, cloud services, security, data privacy, and home users so that your staff can work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Session 3:** April 8, 2020, [Training Your Staff \(On-the-Fly\) to Work Remotely, Slides](#), presented by Joanne Sirotkin and Stephen Goldmeier

Description: Training is a key component in transitioning your staff to work from home. In this webinar, the presenters provide real-world advice. They share some of the specific methods they've used and their thoughts on how to meet urgent training needs for staff unexpectedly working from home, including those unfamiliar with or averse to technology. From training staff on your existing technology and practices, to helping them get familiar with rapidly deployed new systems, this webinar provides tips to manage the abrupt change.
- **Session 4:** April 15, 2020, [Covid-19 Security 101 for Home Users, Slides](#), [Sample Emergency Work From Home Policy](#), presented by John Greiner and Jon Miller

Description: Does your home computer have updated security? Are you confident that your staff's computers and phones are encrypted? What steps do you take when a staff member loses their device? Do you know how to share files with your coworkers safely? Is your router up to date? Do you use multi-factor authentication? Do you have an emergency work from home policy to govern the pandemic? This webinar answers these questions. The presenters explain the issues and demonstrate fixes in real time.
- **Session 5:** April 22, 2020, [Technology Tools for Reaching Clients During the Pandemic, Slides](#), presented by Melissa Woods, Erin L. Riker, and Sarah Galvin

Description: Legal service providers have shifted their operations to remote legal work. Technology tools are available to assist with service delivery in this new landscape. This discussion will explore best practices and tips for effectively reaching clients who do not have access to technology, such as screening tools, virtual meetings and help lines. The presentation also touches on how service models may change going forward.
- **Session 6:** April 29, 2020, [Suddenly Supervising and Managing Remote Staff, Slides, Handout](#), presented by Ellen Hemley, Rasheeda Philips, and Terrance O'Neil

Description: In the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, many legal aid and public interest law organizations have shifted to remote working arrangements for the health and safety of their staff. These sudden changes leave many staff members and their managers working out of the office and separated from each other for the first time. How can managers best support and supervise staff when they lack regular, face-to-face interaction? How can they ensure good internal communication and alignment within their teams? What can managers do to alleviate social isolation and offer encouragement and support to staff during these difficult times?

Session 7: May 6, 2020, [Using Microsoft Teams](#), [Slides](#), presented by Anna Steele

Description: Legal aid providers are deploying Microsoft Teams to help their staff members effectively communicate, collaborate, and socialize while working remotely. Teams allows you to chat one-on-one, have virtual meetings, share documents, and generally keep in touch with colleagues. This webinar will highlight some of the basic features of Teams, its price and availability, and review best practices for deployment and utilization within your organization.

- **Session 8:** May 13, 2020, [Technology Policies \(Part I\) Before you Start Cooking, Have a Recipe](#), [Slides](#), presented by Stephen Goldmeier and Mary O'Shaughnessy

Description: Now more than ever, legal services providers are seeing the importance of ensuring that everyone is using their technology safely and responsibly. And there's no better tool to help your organization do that than technology policies. But what does the process of writing policies actually look like? How do you get the right feedback while writing and implementing them? And most importantly, how do you create a culture that will buy into and follow new policies, especially if, for example, you've never had a work from home policy before? In this session, the presenters walk through the non-technical aspects of technology policy development, focused on meeting people where they are, taking things one step at a time, and making sure all voices are heard. Technology Policies (Part 2) focuses on the technical, nitty gritty of what to include in your technology policies and shares examples of the key policies all programs should have.

- **Session 9:** May 20, 2020, [Implementing Critical Technology Policies and Practices, Part 2](#), [Slides](#), presented by John Greiner and Ben Chan

Description: In our second of a two-part series on why and how to develop appropriate technology policies, this webinar focuses on the nuts and bolts of what to include in your policies. The discussion covers building priority policies, including Covid-19 work from home policies. In addition, the session discusses how to develop and adopt best practices in the use of technology by staff and volunteers.

- **Session 10:** May 27, 2020, [Virtual Court Hearings & the Electronic Document Delivery System \(EDDS\)](#), [Slides](#), [EDDS Handout](#), presented by Christine Sisario and Jeff Carucci

Description: The presenters discuss the technical and personnel aspects of the Court’s efforts, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, to transition from in-court appearances to virtual appearances and to launch the new Electronic Document Delivery System. This includes statewide adaptation and training on Skype for Business for court staff, attorneys, government agencies and litigants, widespread VPN usage, security and confidentiality concerns, mass notifications to litigants, and the technology that legal services programs and litigants need to use these tools effectively.

- **Session 11:** June 3, 2020, [Practical Considerations for Attorneys in the Virtual Courtroom](#), [Slides](#), presented by Anna Marie Diamante and Nicole Parshall
Description: The transition from a live in-courtroom practice to the virtual courtroom presents challenges to even the most seasoned attorneys. This webinar provides practitioners with tips for appearing and conducting hearings in the virtual courtroom, preparing clients for the virtual courtroom, and protecting the record. The presenters will also discuss the challenges of offering testimony and admitting evidence in the best manner to preserve the integrity of the proceedings and protect the litigants’ due process rights.
- **Session 12:** June 10, 2020, [Take a Breath: Self-Care During Times of Uncertainty](#), [Slides](#), presented by Morgan Siegel, Veronica Gonzalez, and Judi Cohen
Description: Technology tools can be both a source of comfort and frustration, especially now. Social work professionals from NMIC and Her Justice review strategies and lessons learned from implementing structures to emphasize organizational and personal wellness with a mindful awareness of the role of technology. The session concludes with a short online mindfulness meditation led by Judi Cohen, a lecturer at Berkeley Law School who helps legal practitioners integrate mindfulness solutions into their work.
- **Session 13:** June 17, 2010, [Operating Legal Services Offices in the Time of COVID: NYS Leaders Talk about What Work Now and Later May Look Like for their Legal Staff and Clients](#), [Materials](#), presented by Amy Barasch, Lynn M. Kelly, Lillian Moy, and Carla Palumbo
Description: Legal Services leaders from around the state close out our webinar series with a candid discussion of what their workplaces look like now and will look like going forward, the steps they are taking to support and protect their staff, and how they are adapting service delivery during the transition back to “normal” -- whenever that may be.

Recommendation:

1. The Working Group recommends that additional technology webinars should be organized for the civil legal aid community, as interest and schedules permit.

2020 NY Statewide Civil Legal Aid Technology Conference

Overview

The 6th Annual New York State Civil Legal Aid Technology Conference, convened by the Permanent Commission on Access to Justice in partnership with NYSTech and Cornell Tech, was held remotely on October 7 and 14, 2020, over two half day sessions. The conference brought together members of the legal services community, private law firms, law schools, technology companies and the Judiciary to promote collaborative and innovative uses of technology to move New York closer to ensuring effective assistance to 100% of those in need. The virtual conference focused on the impact of the pandemic on the use of technology in the delivery of legal services and access to the courts, providing ample opportunity for information sharing, Q&A, and virtual social networking, while learning about the latest in legal tech innovation.²

Chief Judge Janet DiFiore delivered opening remarks, recognizing the challenges that legal aid clients face and praising the conference’s focus on working together, as providers, to leverage technology in our efforts to increase access to justice. Judge DiFiore made special note of the rapid implementation of virtual court proceedings in response to the pandemic and acknowledged that “virtual hearings are a major component of how our courts will deliver justice for the foreseeable future.”

The Conference was attended by executive directors, technology managers and other leaders representing dozens of civil legal aid providers from around the State, technology directors and staff from law firms, technology leaders from law schools, administrators from the New York State Court System, major funders and technology service providers. 443 people registered for the conference, including 338 people from New York State representing every judicial district. Out-of-state registrants included people from 23 states plus Canada, Guatemala, India, and Mexico. 282 registrants, or 64%, reported that this was their first time attending the conference. A majority of attendees identified themselves as working in legal services (e.g. as legal services managers, staff, attorneys, technologists, or executive directors). About a quarter of registered attendees (115) identified as legal services attorneys. There were 39 legal services executive directors. Four judges and 38 court staffers registered for the conference.

Out-of-state attendees were welcomed in all plenary sessions. New York State attendees had the option to attend additional sessions, including “Ask an Expert” and Networking/Affinity sessions. Attendees worked collaboratively throughout the conference to document the most

² This year’s conference, originally scheduled to be held in June 2020 at Cornell Tech in New York City, was postponed to October 2020 due to the pandemic.

useful information shared. In total, the agenda boasted eight plenary panels, Ask an Expert small group discussions on eight topics, five rapid-fire technology presentations and Q&A session, and six topical break-out sessions. [Recordings, materials and complete agenda](#) are available on the Permanent Commission's website.

The conference employed an array of technology software, which included: Eventbrite for registration; Sched for an online agenda; Padlet for collaborative conference notes; Crowd.live for a legal tech trivia game; SurveyMonkey for a post-conference survey; Zoom Webinar for plenary sessions; and Zoom Meeting for smaller break-out sessions. The conference could not have happened without assistance from the Technology Planning Committee and conference sponsors: Simpson Thacher, Cornell Tech, LegalServer and Just-Tech.

At the end of the conference, the Planning Committee collected feedback from conference attendees to use as part of conference follow up and planning for the following year. Feedback was collected from two sources, Sched and Survey Monkey. Of the 201 session reviews in Sched, 167 were positive, 27 were neutral, and only 7 were negative. Of the 43 Survey Money post-conference survey reviews, 98% of respondents rated the overall conference experience as Excellent or Good, and 98% said that the virtual experience was Excellent or Good. Areas of improvement identified this year include additional documentation around how to use the conference tools (Sched, Padlet, and Zoom), allowing out-of-state attendees to have admission to all sessions, and being clear about what presentations will be available by video and when. Feedback results are set forth in Appendix D.

Day One October 7, 2020

Welcome and Opening Remarks

The conference began with a welcome from Helaine M. Barnett, Chair of the Permanent Commission, who recognized that this conference was unlike any other one we have done in the past; a virtual conference over two half days. Ms. Barnett highlighted and shared the incredible response to the pandemic that the New York State legal services community had by immediately coming up with new remote models for the delivery of legal services. Ms. Barnett introduced Chief Judge Janet DiFiore and Cornell Tech Dean and Vice-Provost Greg Morrisett, who provided opening remarks.

Next, Jeff Hogue introduced Padlet, a tool that was used to document the information and help shape the recommendations as the conference progressed, and Mary O'Shaughnessy instructed attendees on how to play our online legal tech trivia game.

Rapid Fire Tech Presentations

Moderator: Anna Steele

The NY Statewide Civil Legal Aid Technology Conference has included Rapid Fire Tech Talks for the past three years. Rapid Fire Tech Talks allow for different technology topics to be quickly introduced outside of the classic panel-style presentation.

This year, the program included the following Rapid Fire Tech Talks:

- **NYS Courts Electronic Filing in the NYC Housing Court** – presented by Antonella Barbieri
- **How to Stay Safe: Security Tips for Working from Home** – presented by Celia Matos
- **New Mexico Judiciary’s Human-Computer-Interaction (HCI) Voice-User-Interface (VUI) Clara Applications Family** – presented by Paula Couselo-Findikoglu
- **Service Dog Advisor** – presented by Marc Vainrib
- **Fast-Track Tech: Finding Tech Solutions for a Suddenly Remote Legal Services Office** – presented by Suzanne Tomatore

Due to the format of this session, there was no time for questions during the panel. A separate breakout session was held in the afternoon allowing for Rapid Fire panelists to expand upon their presentations and for attendees to ask follow-up questions. The presentation on the New Mexico Judiciary’s Human-Computer-Interaction (HCI) Voice-User-Interface (VUI) Clara Applications Family generated significant interest. This multilingual tool is an avatar, equipped with artificial intelligence to help visitors navigate the courthouse, answer FAQs, and provide court forms and was developed in collaboration with the New Mexico Judiciary, the UNM School of Law, and various advocacy organizations.

Recommendations:

2. The Working Group recommends that the e-filing system in New York State Court System should be redesigned to be more user-friendly and accessible for unrepresented litigants in every court at every level, with the goal of having a consolidated and uniform online filing system.
3. The Working Group recommends that the New York State Court System review existing court kiosks and other court navigation interfaces and apps, like the multilingual interactive artificial intelligence pilot in the New Mexico Court System, for replication in New York. Any such efforts should include participation of all relevant stakeholders and integrate user testing.

Cornell Tech’s New Urban Tech Hub & Connections to Civil Legal Aid

Presented by: Prof. Michael Samuelian

Today pervasive technologies are changing cities before our eyes, even before COVID lockdowns made us even more dependent on online delivery services and remote working technologies. But tech industries often move too fast and cities often move too slow to absorb the impacts of new digital technologies, especially with respect to disenfranchised or low-income

populations. Historically top-down planning attempted to shape urban environments, often with disastrous and discriminatory results such as urban renewal and redlining. Urban technologies are just beginning to shape the future of our cities in ways that can be more equitable, transparent and resilient, and ensuring (and improving) access to justice throughout these transformations is critical. The new Urban Tech Hub at Cornell Tech addresses these urban challenges by bridging the gap between city leaders and local communities.

Recommendation:

4. The Working Group recommends exploring partnerships with academic programs beyond law schools such as Cornell's Urban Tech Hub, where the partnership aligns with academic goals of contributing to thought leadership, having lasting impact after the project completes, and engaging students. Academic partnerships offer opportunities to experiment and to extend university research into practical application.

Concurrent with the Plenary Session relating to Cornell Tech's Urban Hub, New York State attendees had the option to attend one of the following sessions:

Session Title: 1A Metrics in Our New Service Models

Moderator: Mary O'Shaughnessy

Presented by: Christopher O'Malley, Renee L. Danser, Hamra Ahmad

In the wake of the pandemic, providers have been moved to think critically about how they measure their work. So much has changed in the way they interact with clients, colleagues and the court. In this interactive session, a funder, a service provider, and a researcher discussed more effective metrics to capture the impact of the work.

The panelists agreed that a systematic understanding of data, and organizational learning, can surface outcomes that demonstrate impact over time. Examples included client increased feelings of safety in the months and years after receiving an order of protection, or increased stability after prevention of an eviction. These kinds of metrics are important to understanding outcomes, but are presently difficult to collect given the emphasis on cases.

Recommendations:

5. The Working Group recommends assisting the civil legal aid community in analyzing program data with an eye toward impact on communities of color and social needs, like housing, employment security, and health-related quality of life.

6. The Working Group recommends assisting the legal aid community in ensuring that short-term data collection methods be debiased and accomplished with existing resources.

Session Title: 1B From Document Assembly to E-Filing: Fast-Track Collaborations with Courts

Moderator: Tim Baran

Presented by: Quinten Steenhuis, Caroline Robinson, Hon. Jean Schneider, Johanna Santos Bassetti

In this dynamic session, two collaborative projects presented their efforts during COVID: the Document Assembly Line Project in Massachusetts and JustFix.nyc tools for tenants in New York. Both projects rapidly created tech solutions from assembly of forms to filing with the courts. Attendees learned what it takes to replicate a successful tech project from four different perspectives: Court System, Legal Services Provider, Vendor, and Law School Innovation & Tech Lab.

Presenters discussed the essential elements that made these partnerships successful; how they circumvented bureaucratic obstacles; how they staffed the projects at no cost; and how they created new ways to navigate the legal system to solve their problems. All stakeholders need to work together to address the need; collaboration is key within and across sectors. Attendees discussed the difficulty that unrepresented litigants encounter in printing, notarizing, and scanning their court papers and recommended streamlining the process.

Recommendations:

7. The Working Group recommends that after using a DIY Form program, with one-click, an unrepresented litigant should be able to electronically file the form with the New York State Court's case management system.
8. The Working Group recommends that the New York State Court System should permit affirmations in lieu of unrepresented notarized affidavits.

Session Title: 1C Tackling the Real Challenges Behind Document Management

Moderator: Stephen Goldmeier

Presented by: Sally Fisher Curran and Joanne Sirotkin

This session discussed how a successful document-management strategy comes from not just a change in technology, but also a change in modes of thinking and working.

Presenters shared how they develop realistic plans for document-management transition; how to think about document storage structures; the challenges of creating user friendly protocols, managing document cleanup and the creation of new systems and tools to organize case work. The team also shared steps attendees could implement now to make

their work easier in the future; and discussed the importance of management, supervision, and training in shifting staff behavior. The session emphasized that training for supervisory staff should include how to manage technology and how to encourage its proper use by senior and experienced staff members.

Following the panel discussion sessions, New York State participants had the option to attend virtual social networking affinity breakouts to allow for information sharing while also building relationships with like-minded colleagues.

- **BIPOC in Legal Services (Black, Indigenous, People of Color)**, facilitated by Christopher Schwartz and Lillian Moy
- **Program Managers**, facilitated by Sateesh Nori and Sally Fisher Curran
- **Program Staff**, facilitated by Melissa Woods
- **Technologists**, facilitated by Ben Chan

Concurrent with the networking affinity breakouts, all participants had the option to attend a session to provide feedback on the day or the Q&A with the Rapid Fire presenters.

Day Two October 14, 2020

Welcome

Day two of the conference began with a welcome from Helaine M. Barnett. Christopher Schwartz then reviewed the collaborative conference notes on Padlet.

Algorithmic Bias in Artificial Intelligence Tools

Retired Federal Judge Katherine Forrest gave a New York State CLE presentation³ on what artificial intelligence (AI) is and how its algorithmic tools are being used, as well as examined how human bias can be reflected by AI in ways harmful to historically discriminated-against populations.

Recommendations:

9. The Working Group recommends future conferences should include presentations that provide New York State CLE.
10. The Working Group recommends that the New York State Court System should not employ artificial intelligence algorithms in any way that impacts the rights of parties without analysis by outside experts of the potential for disparate negative impact on economically vulnerable people and BIPOC. The Courts should reassess its use of algorithms to the extent that they have already been implemented.

³ This presentation was the first occasion of the Technology Conference providing New York State CLE credit.

25 Apps in 50 Minutes for Remote Work and Virtual Legal Services

Presented by: Jeanne Ortiz-Ortiz, Ilenia Sanchez-Bryson, Amanda Warner, Melissa Woods, and Tim Baran

This session acknowledged that there is nothing normal about life in the midst of a global pandemic. Workers thrust into a remote environment have had to adopt new technologies and processes, as have courts, law firms, legal aid organizations and communities in need of legal help. This is the “new normal” for the foreseeable future. Some tools and processes are simply accelerated change, while others represent brand new ways to work and serve.

This session presented top applications to support legal staff working remotely and serving clients virtually and demonstrated how crucial it is to share technology updates, ideas and experiences because there is not a “one-size fits all” approach for what is needed to be successful.

Recommendations:

11. The Working Group recommends that the Permanent Commission support the development of a statewide technology forum to enable the community to stay engaged and up to date with technology opportunities and risks.

Concurrent with the **25 Apps** presentation, New York State participants had the option to attend the **Ask an Expert** small group discussions on eight topics. The following discussions offered the opportunity to dive deeply into a particular issue with experts and peers.

- **Securing & Managing Mobile Devices** with Joseph Melo and Peter Lesser
- **Virtual Office Best Practices** with Ben Chan and Pavita Krishnaswamy
- **Microsoft Teams** with Joanne Sirotkin and Anne Malak
- **Managing Client Collaborations: e-Signatures & Document Sharing** with Mary O'Shaughnessy and John Greiner
- **VOIP Set up & Integration** with Michael Hernandez and Sara Solfanelli
- **Online Intake** with Anna Steele and Lisa Rivera
- **Single Sign-on: What's the Fuss & How Do I Do It?** with Jeff Hogue and Mike Donnelly
- **Overview of Document Management Systems** with Michelle Peterson and Sally Fisher Curran

Executive Directors Discuss Technology and Other Leadership Challenges During and Post Pandemic

Presented by: Lillian Moy, Carla Palumbo, Beverly Tillery, Lynn M. Kelly

In this session, executive directors shared what they experienced within their programs as they suddenly started working remotely during the pandemic. They discussed how they faced difficult

technology challenges, worked to institutionalize support for staff, and increased self-care to keep their programs functioning. The repeated advice was to maintain a dialogue with the Courts, funders and your staff. Communication is key.

Concurrent with the Plenary Session of Executive Directors, New York State attendees had the option to attend one of the following sessions:

Session Title: 2A Better Data Access Through API Integrations

Moderator: Christopher Schwartz

Presented by: Mallory Curran and Georges Clement

More and more vital information that can be used in the zealous advocacy of marginalized populations has become available online thanks to open data initiatives. In a growing number of cases, access to this data is being facilitated through an Application Program Interface, or API. The panelists explored the possibilities of using APIs to pull case relevant data from disparate sources into a single location to simplify data collection for advocates through a case study in New York City where Justfix.nyc developed an API to assist tenants in cases against their landlords.⁴ This collaboration with LegalServer's case management system allows an advocate to seamlessly view the WhoOwnsWhat summary for the case file they are viewing all within LegalServer.

The panelists spoke about the possible future development of this tool, and asked the attendees to explore what open data sources pertinent to their own practices might provide API access for similar integrations that can save their advocates time and effort. The panelists also discussed data that isn't currently available online through API queries, such as case information found in eCourts and NYSCEF, and how more open data access might ultimately benefit the underserved.

Recommendation:

12. The Working Group recommends that New York State Court System should improve open data access through API queries to information that would ultimately benefit the underserved, such as case information found in eCourts and NYSCEF, should be made available. For example, the New York Court System should improve access to information about current and upcoming dockets through APIs. This will benefit underserved people by enhancing the capabilities of the many existing technology tools legal aid programs use to guide, inform, and serve their clients.

⁴ Justfix.nyc's tool, "WhoOwnsWhat," makes an API call out to more than five city and state agencies to provide information on building ownership, housing violations, and regulatory status on one website, saving the tenant from having to inquire with each of those agencies separately.

Session Title: 2B Making Online Tools Accessible to All

Moderator: Jeff Hogue

Presented by: Marcel Appelman, John Sullivan, Ilenia Sanchez-Bryson

Providers are delivering more client services using online tools, and this panel provided information about the shared responsibility to make these services accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired, or have other disabilities. Online tools afford an opportunity to democratize access and level the playing field. Accessibility has the added benefit of creating tools that are better and easier for everyone. Presenters demonstrated how content must be laid out thoughtfully in order to be accessible to people with vision or hearing impairments. The panel emphasized that user interfaces should be designed, at a structural level, with accessibility in mind.

Recommendation:

13. The Working Group recommends assisting the civil legal aid community in ensuring that their websites and online tools are designed to be truly accessible to people with disabilities, for example by (1) engaging consultants or obtaining internal training on web accessibility and (2) planning for accessibility audits of any information or self-help tools published on the Internet.

Session Title: 2C Virtual Hearings Challenges and Benefits: Three Perspectives, Bench, Bar and Tech

Moderator: Rochelle Klempner

Presented by: Hon. Erik Pitchal, Anna Maria Diamanti, and Christine Sisario

Building on the success and interest in the two virtual hearing webinars held in the pandemic technology support series, this session presented the viewpoint of a practitioner, the court system, and the bench for a discussion of the unique challenges and benefits in conducting virtual court proceedings. Panelists talked about the tech tools they utilized, unique client considerations, and appropriate procedures to ensure fairness and due process.

Panelists also discussed their expectations for the future given how greatly the pandemic highlighted the disproportionate availability of the internet to disadvantaged communities. However, in response to a poll, no attendees wanted to eliminate virtual hearings; all agreed that remote access to the courts should continue even absent the COVID-19 threat.

Recommendation:

14. The Working Group recommends that the New York State Court System continue to permit virtual court proceedings even after the current pandemic

ends and that the New York State Court System solicit ongoing feedback from stakeholders to ensure that such proceedings are accessible and user friendly, including in town and village courts.

15. The Working Group recommends that until internet service becomes a public utility, the New York State Court System should explore methods to guarantee access to virtual court proceedings through geographically dispersed, free, confidential, and secure video connections.

Closing Plenary

Presented by: Christine Fecko, Christopher Schwartz, and Helaine Barnett

The Closing Plenary invited the moderators from each breakout session to report out (a) one key takeaway from the panel discussions, (b) how the conversation related to the larger community and (c) a recommendation for the next step. This Plenary also reiterated the conference themes, by highlighting projects that had been featured, including those aimed at improving internal efficiency, making use of public data, speeding client services, integrating client voices, and empowering clients.

Ms. Barnett closed the Conference by thanking all the presenters and Working Group members for their important work making the Conference a success. She thanked the participants for their enthusiastic participation and encouraged everyone to continue these conversations.

Recommendation

16. The Working Group recommends that the Permanent Commission continue to convene an annual statewide technology conference, with the goal of encouraging the civil legal aid community to engage in sustained collaboration, best practices development, improved security measures, training, critical analysis and revolutionary thinking around the improved use of technology to increase access to effective legal assistance by low-income New Yorkers. Stakeholder participation in the conference should be expanded to include additional representatives from technology companies

Appendix A: Webinar Series Planning Committee Members and Presenters

Webinar Planning Committee

- Helaine Barnett, Chair, NYS Permanent Commission on Access to Justice
- Hamra Ahmad, Her Justice, Director of Law & Policy
- Tim Baran, Pro Bono Net, Technology Innovation Manager
- Glenn Baum, Data and Technology Manager, Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc.
- Ben Chan, Information Technology Manager Queens, Center for Family Representation
- Matt D'Amore, Cornell Tech, Associate Dean
- Cecilia Dougherty, Sanctuary for Families, Deputy Director of Data, Evaluation & Impact
- Christine M. Fecko, NYS IOLA Fund, General Counsel
- Stephen Goldmeier, Just Tech, Consultant
- John Greiner, Just-Tech, CEO
- Jeff Hogue, LegalServer, Director of Operations
- Rochelle Klempner, NYS Permanent Commission on Access to Justice, Staff Counsel
- Lillian Moy, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern NY, Executive Director
- Mary O'Shaughnessy, Her Justice, Director, Information Services
- Lisa Rivera, Managing Attorney, New York Legal Assistance Group
- Christopher Schwartz, LegalServer, Customer Implementation Specialist
- Joanne Sirotkin, Services of the Hudson Valley, Attorney-in-Charge
- Anna Steele, Just-Tech, Director of Consulting
- Suzanne Tomatore, City Bar Justice Center, Deputy Director & Co-Director of the Immigrant Justice Project
- Melissa Woods, Center for Elder Law and Justice, Senior Financial Safety Tool Project Coordinator
- Deborah Wright, UAW Region 9A, Political Director

Webinar Presenters

- Amy Barasch, Esq., Executive Director, Her Justice
- Glenn Baum, Data and Technology Manager, Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc.
- Jeff Carucci, Director and Statewide Coordinator of E-filing, New York State Court System
- Ben Chan, Information Technology Manager Queens, Center for Family Representation
- Judi Cohen, Warrior One
- Anna Marie Diamante, Esq., Director, Family and Matrimonial Practice, Her Justice
- Cecilia Dougherty, Manager of Data, Evaluation, and Impact, Sanctuary for Families
- Sarah Galvin, Senior Staff Attorney, Justice in Aging
- Stephen Goldmeier, Consultant, Just-Tech

- Veronica Gonzalez, LMSW, Social Work Manager, Her Justice
- John Greiner, Founder and President, Just-Tech
- Ellen Hemley, Vice President of Advocate Resources and Training, Shriver Center on Poverty Law
- Jeff Hogue, Director of Operations, LegalServer
- Lynn M. Kelly, Esq., Executive Director, City Bar Justice Center
- Jon Miller, Technology Director, Legal Assistance of Western New York
- Lillian Moy, Esq., Executive Director, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York
- Terrance O'Neil, Director of Online Learning, Shriver Center on Poverty Law
- Mary O'Shaughnessy, Director of Information Services, Her Justice
- Carla Palumbo, Esq., President & CEO, Legal Aid Society of Rochester
- Nicole Parshall, Supervising Attorney, Center for Elder Law & Justice
- Rasheeda Philips, Senior Advocate Resources & Training Attorney, Shriver Center on Poverty Law
- Erin L. Riker, Staff Attorney, Center for Elder Law & Justice
- Christopher Schwartz, Customer Support and Implementation Specialist, LegalServer
- Morgan Siegel, LMHC, Assistant Director for Case Coordination, NMIC
- Christine Sisario, Director of Technology, New York State Court System Division of Technology and Court Research
- Jon Snell, Lead Developer, LegalServer
- Anna Steele, Director of Consulting, Just-Tech
- Joanne Sirotkin, Attorney-in-Charge, White Plains Office, Legal Services of Hudson Valley
- Melissa Woods, Staff Paralegal, Center for Elder Law & Justice

Appendix B: Technology Conference Planning

Committee Members and Presenters

Planning Committee Members

- Helaine M. Barnett, Chair, NYS Permanent Commission on Access to Justice
- Hamra Ahmad, Her Justice, Director of Law & Policy
- Tim Baran, Pro Bono Net, Technology Innovation Manager
- Matthew D'Amore, Cornell Tech, Associate Dean
- Cecilia Dougherty, Sanctuary for Families, Deputy Director of Data, Evaluation & Impact
- Christine Fecko, NYS IOLA Fund, General Counsel
- Stephen Goldmeier, Just Tech, Consultant
- John Greiner, Just-Tech, CEO
- Jeff Hogue, LegalServer, Director of Operations
- Rochelle Klempner, NYS Permanent Commission on Access to Justice, Staff Counsel
- Lillian Moy, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern NY, Executive Director
- Sateesh Nori, Queens Neighborhood Office-The Legal Aid Society, Attorney in Charge
- Mary O'Shaughnessy, Her Justice, Information Services
- Christopher Schwartz, LegalServer, Customer Implementation Specialist
- Joanne Sirotkin, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley, Attorney-in-Charge
- Anna Steele, Just-Tech, Director of Consulting
- Suzanne Tomatore, City Bar Justice Center, Deputy Director & Co-Director of the Immigrant Justice Project
- Melissa Woods, Center for Elder Law and Justice, Senior Financial Safety Tool Project Coordinator
- Deborah Wright, UAW Region 9A, Political Director

Conference Presenters

- Janet DiFiore, Chief Judge of the State of New York
- Helaine M. Barnett, Chair of the Permanent Commission
- Hamra Ahmad, Esq., Director of Law and Policy, Her Justice
- Marcel Appelman, Web Developer, Network Ninja
- Tim Baran, Pro Bono Net, Technology Innovation Manager
- Antonella Barbieri, NYSCEF Resource Center Court Clerk Training Specialist, NYS Office of Court Administration
- Johanna Santos Bassetti, Director of Product, JustFix.nyc
- Ben Chan, Information Technology Manager Queens, Center for Family Representation

- Georges Clement, Executive Director, JustFix.nyc
- Judi Cohen, Warrior One
- Paula Couselo-Findikoglu, Sr. Statewide Program Manager, NM Administrative Office of the Courts
- Mallory Curran, Principal, Mallory Curran Consulting
- Sally Curran, Executive Director, Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County, Inc.
- Matthew D'Amore, Associate Dean, Cornell Tech
- Renee Danser, Esq. Associate Director of Research and Strategic Partnerships, Access to Justice Lab at Harvard Law School
- Anna Marie Diamante, Esq., Director, Family and Matrimonial Practice, Her Justice
- Michael Donnelly, CIO, Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP
- Christine Fecko, General Counsel, IOLA Fund of the State of New York
- Katherine Forrest, Partner, Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP
- Stephen Goldmeier, Consultant, Just-Tech
- John Greiner, Founder and President, Just-Tech
- Michael Hernandez, Director of Client Service, Just-Tech
- Jeff Hogue, Director of Operations, LegalServer
- Lynn M. Kelly, Esq., Executive Director, City Bar Justice Center
- Rochelle Klempner, Staff Counsel, NYS Permanent Commission on Access to Justice
- Pavita Krishnaswamy, Director of Litigation, Brooklyn Legal Services
- Peter Lesser, Director of Global Technology, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP
- Anne Malak, Managing Attorney, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York
- Celia Matos, Tech Support Specialist, Just-Tech
- Joseph Melo, Director of Engineering, Just-Tech
- Greg Morrisett, Dean and Vice Provost, Cornell Tech
- Lillian Moy, Esq., Executive Director, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York
- Sateesh Nori, Attorney in Charge, Queens Neighborhood Office- The Legal Aid Society
- Christopher O'Malley, Esq., Executive Director, IOLA Fund of the State of New York
- Jeanne Ortiz-Ortiz, Pro Bono & Strategic Initiatives Manager, Pro Bono Net
- Mary O'Shaughnessy, Director of Information Services, Her Justice
- Carla Palumbo, Esq., President & CEO, Legal Aid Society of Rochester
- Michelle Peterson, Sr. Training / IT Manager, Empire Justice Center
- Erik Pitchal, Judge, Kings County Family Court
- Lisa Rivera, Managing Attorney, New York Legal Assistance Group
- Caroline Robinson, Co-director Massachusetts Legal Aid Websites Project, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
- Michael Samuelian, Director, Cornell Tech Urban Tech Hub
- Ilenia Sanchez-Bryson, Chief Information Officer, Legal Services of Greater Miami
- Jean Schneider, Housing Court Judge, NYS Unified Court System

- Christopher Schwartz, Customer Support and Implementation Specialist, LegalServer
- Christine Sisario, Director of Technology, New York State Court System Division of Technology and Court Research
- Sara Solfanelli, Chief Operating Officer & General Counsel, Urban Justice Center
- Anna Steele, Director of Consulting, Just-Tech
- Joanne Sirotkin, Attorney-in-Charge, White Plains Office, Legal Services of Hudson Valley
- Quinten Steenhuis, Clinical Fellow, Suffolk University Law School
- John Sullivan, Assistant Deputy Counsel, New York State Unified Court System
- Beverly Tillery, Executive Director, Anti-Violence Project
- Suzanne Tomatore, Deputy Director & Co-Director of the Immigrant Justice Project, City Bar Justice Center
- Marc Vainrib, Esq. Cornell Tech
- Amanda Warner, Director of Pro Bono Programs, Center for Elder Law & Justice
- Melissa Woods, Staff Paralegal, Center for Elder Law & Justice

Appendix C: Numbered List of Recommendations in the Order Raised in the Report

1. The Permanent Commission’s future conferences should include presentations that provide New York State CLE. (See [recommendation #1.](#))
2. The e-filing system in the New York State Court System should be redesigned to be more user-friendly and accessible for unrepresented litigants in every court at every level, with the goal of having a consolidated and uniform online filing system. (See [recommendation #2.](#))
3. The New York State Court System should review existing court kiosks and other court navigation interfaces and apps, like the multilingual interactive artificial intelligence pilot in the New Mexico Court System, for replication in New York. Any such efforts should include participation of all relevant stakeholders and integrate user testing. (See [recommendation #3.](#))
4. The Working Group should explore partnerships with academic programs beyond law schools such as Cornell’s Urban Tech Hub, in cases where the partnership aligns with academic goals of contributing to thought leadership, having lasting impact after the project completes, and engaging students. Academic partnerships offer opportunities to experiment and to extend university research into practical application. (See [recommendation #4.](#))
5. The Working Group should assist the civil legal aid community in analyzing program data with an eye toward impact on communities of color and social needs, like housing, employment security, and health-related quality of life. (See [recommendation #5.](#))
6. The Working Group should assist the civil legal aid community in ensuring that short-term data collection methods are debiased and accomplished with existing resources. (See [recommendation #6.](#))
7. After using a DIY Form program, with one-click, an unrepresented litigant should be able to electronically file the form with the New York State Court’s case management system. (See [recommendation #7.](#))
8. The New York State Court System should permit affirmations in lieu of Unrepresented affidavits. (See [recommendation #8.](#))
9. The Permanent Commission’s future conferences should include presentations that provide New York State CLE. (See [recommendation #9.](#))
10. The New York State Court System should not employ artificial intelligence algorithms in any way that impacts the rights of parties without analysis by outside experts of the potential for disparate negative impact on economically vulnerable people and BIPOC. The Courts should reassess its use of algorithms to the extent that they have already been implemented. (See [recommendation # 10.](#))

11. The Permanent Commission should support the development of a statewide technology forum to enable the community to stay engaged and up to date with technology opportunities and risks. (See [recommendation #11.](#))
12. The New York State Court System should improve open data access through API queries to information that would ultimately benefit the underserved, such as case information found in eCourts and NYSCEF. For example, the New York State Court System should improve access to information about current and upcoming dockets through APIs. This will benefit underserved people by enhancing the capabilities of the many existing technology tools legal aid programs use to guide, inform, and serve their clients. (See [recommendation #12.](#))
13. The Working Group should assist the civil legal aid community in ensuring that their websites and online tools are designed to be truly accessible to people with disabilities, for example by (1) engaging consultants or obtaining internal training on web accessibility and (2) planning for accessibility audits of any information or self-help tools published on the Internet. (See [recommendation #13.](#))
14. The New York State Court System should continue to permit virtual court proceedings even after the current pandemic ends and should solicit ongoing feedback from stakeholders to ensure that such proceedings are accessible and user friendly, including in town and village courts. (See [recommendation #14.](#))
15. Until internet service becomes a public utility, the New York State Courts System should explore methods to guarantee access to virtual court proceedings through geographically dispersed, free, confidential, and secure video connections. (See [recommendation #15.](#))
16. The Permanent Commission should continue to convene an annual statewide technology conference, with the goal of encouraging the civil legal aid community to engage in sustained collaboration, best practices development, improved security measures, training, critical analysis and revolutionary thinking around the improved use of technology to increase access to effective legal assistance by low-income New Yorkers. Stakeholder participation in the conference should be expanded to include additional representatives from technology companies. (See [recommendation #16.](#))
17. The Permanent Commission should support funding for technology infrastructure, expansion, and innovation that maintains and improves the delivery of essential civil legal services. (See [Executive Summary.](#))

Appendix D: Technology Conference Feedback

Conference feedback was collected from two sources, Sched and Survey Monkey.

Sched Feedback Results

Of the 201 session reviews in Sched, 167 were positive, 27 were neutral, and only 7 were negative. The Sched surveys were built into each session. At the end of each session, an attendee could indicate whether they liked the session through a simple feedback button and a comment box.



201 feedback responses were received from 71 different attendees. Of the 201 session reviews, 167 were positive, 27 were neutral, and only 7 were negative. Details are set out below:

Session Title	Positive	Neutral	Negative
1A Metrics in Our New Service Models	14	2	0
1B From Document Assembly to E-Filing: Fast-Track Collaborations with Courts	5	0	0
1C Tackling the Real Challenges Behind Document Management	7	0	0
1D Cornell Tech’s new Urban Tech Hub & Connections to Civil Legal Aid	5	2	0
25 Apps in 50 Minutes for Remote Work & Virtual Legal Services	18	0	0
2A Better Data Access Through API Integrations	1	0	0
2B Making Online Tools Accessible to All	4	0	1
2C Virtual Hearings Challenges and Benefits: Three Perspectives, Bench, Bar and Tech	3	0	0
2D Executive Directors Discuss Technology and Other Leadership Challenges During and Post Pandemic	8	1	0
Algorithmic Bias in Artificial Intelligence Tools - NYS CLE available	12	1	2

Ask the Experts Breakouts	3	0	1
Closing Plenary	9	3	0
Day Two Welcome	4	1	0
Feedback From Today	5	3	0
Introduction to Our Collaborative Conference Notes	15	2	0
Rapid Fire Q&A	3	1	0
Rapid Fire Tech	28	2	0
Take a Breath with Judi Cohen of Warrior One	9	3	1
Virtual Social Networking Affinity Breakouts	5	3	0
Welcome and Opening Remarks	9	3	2
Grand Total	167	27	7

Notable feedback from Sched included:

Executive Directors Discuss Technology and Other Leadership Challenges During and Post Pandemic

“Best session of the entire conference. Loved the interactive, conversational style of this panel rather than the scripted speeches and powerpoint slide reading. It felt human, practical, and addressed real-world problems we're all currently experiencing.”

From Document Assembly to E-Filing: Fast-Track Collaborations with Courts

“Enjoyed hearing how courts were willing to collaborate to make things more accessible for pro se litigants and court users”

25 Apps in 50 Minutes

“Excellent presentations. Very thoughtful and wide ranging selection of tools and very focused comments by presenters. Top notch session.”

Algorithmic Bias in Artificial Intelligence Tools

“Great presentation. Must see for every legal aid advocate and professional.”

Survey Monkey Feedback Results

A post-conference survey was sent out to all conference attendees, with 43 responses, mostly from New York State civil legal aid providers. This year's survey focused on the virtual format, the content as a whole, suggestions for the future, and what the predominant takeaways were.

Overall, the survey indicated that attendees found the conference valuable. 98% of respondents rated the overall conference experience as **Excellent** or **Good**. Additionally, 98% of respondents said that the virtual experience was **Excellent** or **Good**. Respondents generally liked using Sched and appreciated the shorter sessions to avoid Zoom fatigue.

Respondents indicated that they were engaged with the conference programming by sharing some of the most pressing needs of their organization that they identified as a result of the conference. Some examples included:

“Designing efficient remote work systems for the long haul for staff and shifting perceptions around technology. We need to continue to explore additional technology that is user friendly for our clients to reach their attorneys.”

“Making sure the tech solutions we come up with continue to center our clients and can help those with only very low access to technology, such as only using landlines.”

“Ensuring confidentiality and information security for our organization and our clients”

Areas of improvement identified this year include additional documentation around how to use the conference tools (Sched, Padlet, and Zoom), allowing out-of-state attendees to have admission to all sessions, and being clear about what presentations will be available by video and when.