

Q&A



Interviewee: Conor Danaher, CRHLP Spring Extern



Interviewer: Kelsey Padilla, CRHLP Programs and Communication Coordinator

We're excited to highlight one of our spring externs, Conor Danaher, who recently joined the Center. A third-year law student at UCLA Law, Conor previously served as a summer associate at Ropes & Gray LLP and interned in the Housing Division of the Office of the Los Angeles City Attorney. We sat down with Conor to learn more about his path to the Center, his goals for the spring, and what's shaping his interest in reproductive health, law, and policy.

Q: Can you please tell us a bit about yourself and what initially drew you to apply for an externship with the Center on Reproductive Health, Law, and Policy?

A: I'm a third-year student at UCLA Law and I am originally from Houston, Texas. I first became interested in reproductive health law and policy in undergrad at UT Austin, when I took a course focused on Texas' restrictive reproductive health policies. That course opened my eyes to the ways the laws ostensibly meant to improve health care can not only interfere with individual patients' safety and autonomy but also undermine health care access, equity, and outcomes at the societal level. In law school, I've taken courses that have given me more insight into those legal and policy barriers and ways to fix them. When I learned about the Center's approach to advancing reproductive justice through legal and policy innovations aimed at improving access to and ending inequities in reproductive health care, I knew I wanted to be part of it.

Q: How do you hope to use what you will learn here in your future work or studies?

A: I hope to build a career in health care law and policy here in California, and I can already tell that the connections I'm making and knowledge and skills I'm building as an extern at the Center are going to be invaluable. It's been inspiring to work alongside such a smart, dedicated, and hopeful group of interdisciplinary experts all focused on advancing reproductive justice in the face of attacks at the state and federal levels.

Q: What's been the most surprising or impactful part of your externship experience so far?

A: I've been really impressed by how well the Center's interdisciplinary approach works in practice. For example, a project the Center's working on about how California's Reproductive Freedom Amendment could be used is relying on traditional legal analysis, writing, advocacy, reviews of academic literature, and rigorously designed qualitative interviews, among other approaches. It's been cool to see how the Center's legal, policy, and academic work complement each other and add a unique contribution to the reproductive justice community.

In the News



CRHLP Senior Staff Attorney Amanda Barrow was featured in the Oregon Capital Chronicle discussing new legislation aimed at strengthening Oregon's shield law protections for reproductive and gender-affirming care. House Bill 4088 would build on Oregon's existing shield laws by codifying protections against extradition for people providing, receiving, or assisting in lawful reproductive and gender-affirming care in the state. The bill would also expand privacy safeguards and limit state cooperation


with out-of-state investigations into protected health care. As Amanda explained, Oregon's legislation responds to a broader strategy by states like Texas and Louisiana to restrict abortion access "by any means"—including through criminal investigations, civil lawsuits, and attempts to haul providers into hostile courts. Amanda underscored that as of now, shield laws are operating exactly as designed to protect lawful care and reinforce states' authority to safeguard providers and patients within their borders.

Read the full article [here](#). To learn more about how states are using shield laws to protect providers and patients, visit our [Shield Law Guide](#).


Events

UCLA School of Law
Center on Reproductive Health, Law & Policy


Reproductive Justice Career Panel




AMANDA BARROW
Senior Staff Attorney at
the Center on
Reproductive Health,
Law, and Policy




DIPTI SINGH
Chief Legal Officer at
Planned Parenthood
Pasadena and San
Gabriel Valley



KATELYN WALLACE
Deputy Attorney
General, Cal DOJ
Reproductive Justice
Unit



ONYEMMA OBIEKEA
Strategic Consultant
and Policy Attorney



MARISA LONDON
Gender, Sexuality, and
Reproductive Justice Legal
Fellow, ACLU of SoCal

Join UCLA Law's Center on Reproductive Health, Law, and Policy, PILP, and the UCLA If/When/How chapter, for a discussion on careers **within the field of reproductive justice**. Students will learn and get advice from attorneys from a variety of areas, including **impact litigation, state government, policy, in-house general counsel, and more**. Panelists will discuss their career paths, offer insights for students interested in similar careers, and field questions from students. **Lunch will be provided!**

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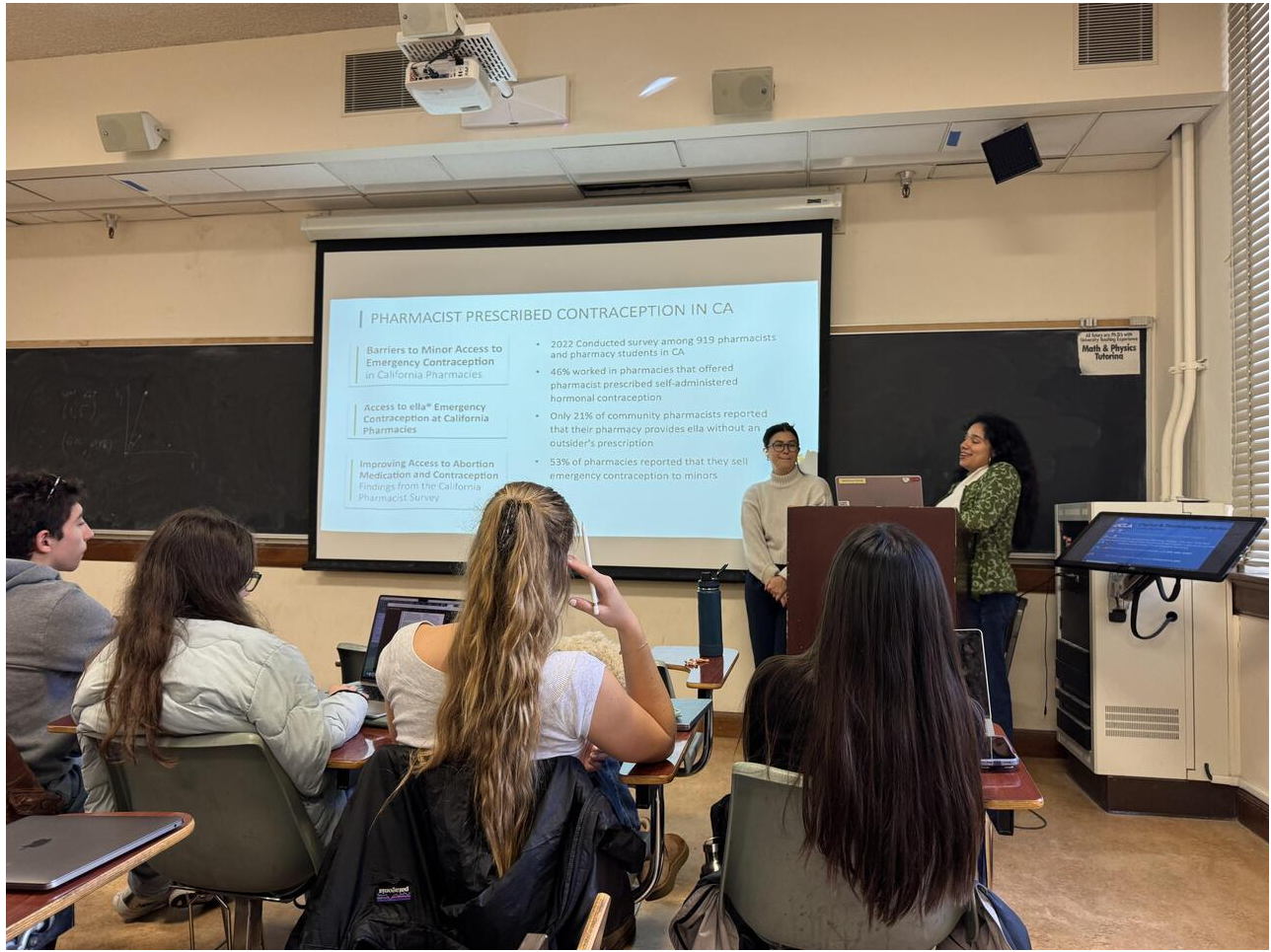
**if
when
how**
Lawyering for Reproductive Justice

UCLA LAW CLASSROOM 1327 MARCH 4TH, 2026 12 PM - 1 PM PT
RSVP AT: [HTTPS://BIT.LY/REPROCAREERS](https://bit.ly/reprocareers)

UCLA law students, join UCLA Law's Center on Reproductive Health, Law, and Policy, PILP, and the UCLA If/When/How chapter for a discussion on careers within the field of reproductive justice. Students will learn and get advice from attorneys from a variety of areas, including impact litigation, state government, policy, in-house general counsel, and more. Panelists will discuss their career paths, offer insights for students interested in similar careers, and field questions from students.

Lunch will be provided! [RSVP today to secure your spot.](#)

Event Recap



CRHLP Research Analyst Leslie Serrano and CRHLP Legal Fellow Sofia Espinoza were guest speakers this week for a UCLA undergraduate course titled Reproductive Health Policy and taught by Professor Julie Elginer. Sofia and Leslie spoke to students about the reproductive health policy and research work done at the Center.

Policy News



For the first time since Texas enacted its near-total abortion ban, and after years of confusion and well-[documented harms](#), including patient deaths, the Texas Medical Board [has issued](#) a training instructing physicians on when they may legally terminate a pregnancy under Texas's narrow medical emergency abortion ban exception. The training, required under the state's 2025 Life of the Mother Act, outlines some scenarios in which abortion is permissible, including preterm rupture of membranes and incomplete miscarriage. But, while some medical and legal experts say the training could provide clarity in straightforward cases, they [caution](#) that it does not address many important real-world scenarios such as complex high-risk pregnancies or pregnant patients with chronic conditions. Nor does the training do much to alleviate providers' concerns about aggressive enforcement by state officials where potential violations of the law carry a penalty of up to 99 years in prison. To learn more about pregnancy criminalization and the risks caused by unclear abortion ban exceptions and vague guidance, watch our webinar [Opposition to Pregnancy Criminalization Across Professions](#).



Photo credit: Shutterstock

A new [report](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention finds that early prenatal care is declining nationwide. The share of U.S. births in which care began during the first trimester fell from 78.3% in 2021 to 75.5% in 2024, while second-trimester starts rose from 15.4% to 17.3% and third-trimester or no care increased from 6.3% to 7.3%. The decline was steeper among Black mothers, whose first-trimester care dropped from 69.7% to 65.1%, potentially widening existing gross racial disparities in maternal health outcomes. [Experts](#) point to growing maternity care deserts, as well as hospital labor and delivery closures, insurance barriers, and post-Dobbs abortion restrictions that may be influencing where clinicians practice. Delayed prenatal care limits opportunities to identify complications early and could contribute to rising maternal morbidity and mortality if the decline continues.

Food for Thought



With so much going on in the world of reproductive health, law, and policy, every week we'll share articles, books, and media you might have missed.

[Delayed And Turned Away: How Access To Abortion Can Depend On Your Weight](#)

[Judges Decry Treatment Of Nursing And Pregnant Detainees In ICE Custody](#)

[Tens Of Thousands Of Mothers Were Flagged To Police Over Flawed Drug Tests At Childbirth](#)

[Community Networks Sharing Free Abortion Pills Expand To States Where Abortion Is Legal But Out Of Reach](#)



Reimagining the future of reproductive health, law, and policy.

UCLA Center on Reproductive Health, Law, and Policy is a think tank and research center created to develop long-term, lasting solutions that advance all aspects of reproductive justice, and address the current national crisis of abortion access.

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