

## James Forman, Jr.



James Forman, Jr. is a Professor of Law at Georgetown University Law Center, where he teaches and writes in the areas of criminal procedure and education law. He is a graduate of Brown University and Yale Law School. While attending law school, he was active in the Black Law Students Association and was a book reviews editor for the *Yale Law Journal*. Following graduation, he served as a judicial clerk for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

Professor Forman worked for six years with the Public Defender Service in Washington, D.C., where he represented juveniles and adults in serious felony cases. As a lawyer principally defending kids from the District's high poverty neighborhoods, Forman soon began to confront the limits of his role as criminal defense lawyer. In the best of circumstances, he would send his clients back to the bad situation from which they came. He was able to defend them in the courtroom, but not to help them stay out of the courtroom altogether. His interest in educational programs for at-risk and court-involved youth led him to start, along with David Domenici (son of U.S. Senator Pete Domenici), the Maya Angelou Public Charter School in 1997. The school, named for James Forman, Jr.'s godmother, is recognized as one of the most successful programs of its kind in the country, combining rigorous education, job training, counseling, mental health services, life skills, and dormitory living for school dropouts and youth who have previously been incarcerated.

In 1999, he was promoted to training director for new attorneys at the agency and developed the inaugural training program for the independent CJA bar.

Professor Forman's articles and book chapters include "The Story of the Maya Angelou Academy" (with David Domenici, in progress), "Class(blindness), Race and Crime" (in progress), "Why Care About Mass Incarceration? (book review), "Exporting Harshness: How the War on Crime Helped Make the War on Terror Possible," "The Rise and Fall of School Vouchers: A Story of Religion, Race and Politics," "Do Charter Schools Threaten Public Education? Emerging Evidence from Fifteen Years of a Quasi-Market for Schooling," "The Secret History of School Choice: How Progressives Got There First," "Juries and Race in the Nineteenth Century," and "Community Policing and Youth as Assets."

James Forman, Jr. was raised on civil rights. His parents met in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), a major force in the civil rights movement in the 1960s. His father, James Forman, Sr., was SNCC's executive secretary; his mother was a civil rights activist and nurse.

Professor Forman serves on the board of the American Constitution Society, the Children's Defense Fund, the Education Trust, and the Maya Angelou Charter School.