

Trainer Development Program

Our Mission

Our mission is to transform the criminal justice system by building a movement of public defenders who provide equal justice for marginalized communities.



Who We Are:

The Gideon's Promise mission is to transform the criminal justice system by building a movement of public defenders who provide equal justice for marginalized communities. Gideon's Promise is one of the nation's leading public defender education programs. Our 3-year CORE 101 program uses a comprehensive, interactive curriculum to prepare new public defenders to raise the standard of representation in challenging environments. The program teaches values, substantive knowledge, skills essential to being a public defender, and helps its lawyers develop strategies for implementing these lessons in the courthouses where they work.

The effectiveness of Gideon's Promise training is evidenced by its support from leading foundations such as the Open Society Foundation, Ford Foundation, and the United States Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance. In 2014, Gideon's Promise Founder Jonathan Rapping was awarded with the prestigious MacArthur 'Genius' Grant. Gideon's Promise has partnered with over 45 offices to provide training to young public defenders across 17 states.



Track 1

Curriculum Development

2 Days

Track 1 introduces participants to the Gideon's Promise Summer Institute core curriculum. This core curriculum maintains six key values including building community and inspiring public defender pride, reinforcing client-centered values, developing pretrial and trial skills, and helping participants learn effective storytelling and persuasion techniques. Track 1 trains attendees in how Gideon's Promise infuses these values into skill-building sessions.

Participants will learn about over twenty learning sessions and workshops and how each fits into the larger programmatic vision of Gideon's Promise. This track will teach participants the techniques used to reinforce these lessons through workshops and exercises.

Skills Topics Include:

- **Professional Ethics**
- **Preliminary Hearings**
- **Investigation**
- **Defense Theories**
- **Discovery & Brady**
- **Cross-Examination**
- **Direct Examination**
- **Openings**
- **Closings**



And More!

Track 2 Facilitation & Coaching 3 Days



Track 2 focuses on advanced training and mentoring skills that build on the lessons taught in Track 1. Using parts of the Gideon's Promise training curriculum, participants will focus more deeply on teaching methodology.

In this track, the sessions will consist of small workshop groups where participants will develop their training skills through role-playing and learning exercises. Training attendees will learn how to provide feedback to their own trainees, will work through teaching hypotheticals, and will be exposed to the Gideon's Promise model of "Closing the Gap," that is a pedagogical tool to help maintain client-centered values in difficult circumstances.

Participation in Track 1 is required before participating in Track 2. Many Trainer Development Conference attendees stay for the full five days to complete tracks 1 and 2.

"In my eight years of directing criminal defense clinics, no other conference or training program provided me with more useful teaching ideas than Gideon's Promise. Bar none, it is the best place to surround yourself with talented, kindred spirits who constantly teach young lawyers the heart-set, mind-set, and soul-set of public defense"

- David Patton, Executive Director, Federal Defenders of New York.