

## JOHN NIDIRY

Visiting Professor of Legal Writing, University of Maine School of Law  
300 Fore Street, Portland, ME 04101  
(917) 304-1257 | [john.nidiry@maine.edu](mailto:john.nidiry@maine.edu)

---

### EDUCATION

**UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SCHOOL OF LAW**, Portland, Maine May 2006  
J.D., *cum laude*

- *Ocean and Coastal Law Journal*, Case Note and Comment Editor, 2005-2006; Staff Editor, 2004-2005
- Prisoner Assistance Clinic, 2005-2006
- Legal Resources Centre (LRC), Cape Town, South Africa, Intern, Summer 2005
  - Awarded Maine Association for Public Interest Law fellowship to serve as intern at South Africa's premier human rights organization
- Independent Study, 2005-2006
  - Undertook research and writing project analyzing seminal cases interpreting South Africa's constitutional right to access adequate housing, after assisting in class action litigation designed to address Cape Town's housing crisis, as legal intern for LRC

**BOWDOIN COLLEGE**, Brunswick, Maine May 2000  
B.A., History, *magna cum laude*

- Honors thesis, 1999-2000: comparative analysis of police/community conflict and urban unrest in Detroit, Michigan and Belfast, Northern Ireland in late 1960s
- Sarah and James Bowdoin Scholar; Dean's List
- Coursework focused on race and colonialism

### TEACHING EXPERIENCE

**UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SCHOOL OF LAW**, Portland, Maine Aug. 2022-present

- Visiting Professor of Legal Writing, August 2022-May 2024
  - Teach first year law students Legal Research, Analysis, and Communication, integrating practical legal experience and critical, historically marginalized perspectives; developed curriculum for and led first year class session on using elements of narrative to center historically marginalized perspectives in legal writing; co-taught legal writing session on client-centered lawyering with clinical faculty; co-taught Lawyering Skills session on client-centered lawyering for upper-level clinic students; developing curriculum for and co-teaching legal writing component of Introduction to Race, Racism, and U.S. Law, an innovative team-taught course for first year law students; developing curriculum for advanced legal writing course on challenging racial injustice in the criminal legal system
  - Guest lecturer for Students for the Sixth Amendment group (April 2023) and summer clinic students (July 2023), focusing on capital defense representation
  - Developed professionalism module and designed programming for first year orientation in connection with service on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
  - Advise and mentor students; serve as faculty advisor for Black Law Students Association

**FEDERAL CAPITAL HABEAS PROJECT, Greenbelt, Maryland**

May 2009-May 2019

- Taught appointed counsel in federal death penalty cases at Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conferences about mechanics of federal capital post-conviction process and broad range of common issues arising in practice

**AREAS OF TEACHING INTEREST AND RESEARCH**

- Primary: Legal Research and Writing; Clinical Teaching; Criminal Law; Criminal Procedure; Death Penalty Law; Habeas Corpus; Race and the Criminal Legal System
- Secondary: Professional Responsibility, Federal Courts, Civil Procedure

**LEGAL EXPERIENCE**

**FEDERAL CAPITAL HABEAS PROJECT, Greenbelt, MD**

Oct. 2006-July 2022

*Staff Attorney*

- First attorney to join Project Director, a nationally renowned capital habeas expert, to assist in establishing nationwide program of the federal public defender system tasked with ensuring federal capital defendants pursuing post-conviction relief under 28 U.S.C. § 2255 and other remedies receive representation of the highest quality
- Represented clients in federal capital post-conviction proceedings
  - Served as lead counsel in *United States v. Lawrence*, a pending capital post-conviction case
  - Directed case investigations, strategy, research, and writing
  - Coordinated team of attorneys, investigators, and interdisciplinary experts
  - Drafted and edited pleadings for every stage of post-conviction process, in connection with litigation in federal district courts, circuit courts of appeals, and United States Supreme Court
  - Drafted and edited clemency petitions addressed to executive branch
  - Wrote letters to clients; memoranda of interviews with clients, clients' family members, school personnel, healthcare providers, acquaintances, and anyone knowledgeable about a client's life history
  - Communicated and/or negotiated with opposing counsel
  - Served as principal line editor and proofreader on team of attorneys
  - Collected, analyzed, and synthesized records pertaining to clients' life histories
  - Provided written reports to federal judges overseeing case budgets
- Provided training, consultation, and other intensive litigation support to attorneys representing individuals under federal death sentence in post-conviction proceedings
  - Trained appointed counsel on mechanics of federal capital post-conviction process and various unique issues arising in federal capital post-conviction cases, on case-by-case basis and at Federal Capital Habeas Project's annual conferences
  - Reviewed, edited, and provided constructive comments on draft pleadings
  - Produced model pleadings and other training materials on common issues arising in capital

- post-conviction litigation
  - Conducted case-specific legal research and broad, cross-jurisdictional survey-style research
  - Drafted case-specific pleadings
  - Met regularly with death-sentenced individuals represented by other attorneys, requiring careful navigation of confidentiality and conflict-of-interest issues
- Supervised and taught law students, defense investigators, and paralegals in connection with research and writing projects
- Monitored policy developments and advocated for policies that protect interests of death-sentenced prisoners
  - Drafted and edited white papers for federal judges and other reports for Administrative Office of the United States Courts, and legislative hearing testimony

## **PUBLICATIONS**

John Nidiry & Ruth Friedman, *Haunted Oak: The Continuing Influence of Race in the Administration of the Federal Death Penalty* (working title) (forthcoming 2024 publication in Twentieth Annual Wiley A. Branton Howard Law Journal Symposium issue focused on race and capital punishment)

John Nidiry & Michael Meyers, *Our Public Schools Are Still Separate and Unequal*, 41 SOCIETY 12 (2004) (co-authored publication addressing the legacy of *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954))

John Nidiry & Michael Meyers, *Kenneth Bancroft Clark: The Uppity Negro Integrationist*, 62 ANTIOCH REVIEW 265 (2004) (co-authored publication about Dr. Clark's ground-breaking social science research on harmful effects of segregation on children, and the evidentiary support it provided for the U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v. Bd. of Educ.* decision)

Opinion, *CUNY Trustees: Let Free Speech Flourish*, NEWSDAY, Oct. 19, 2001 (authored op-ed defending students and faculty members who were labeled "seditious" and threatened with censure by university trustees for speeches delivered at anti-war teach-in in wake of 9/11 terrorist attacks)

## **SERVICE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SCHOOL OF LAW**, Portland, Maine

August 2022-present

- Member, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
- Faculty Advisor, Black Law Students Association

**MAINE INSIDE OUT**, Lewiston, Maine

Feb. 2019-present

Member of Board of Directors for organization that supports incarcerated and formerly incarcerated youth; engages in leadership development, mutual aid, and community dialogue through youth-created theater productions; and models transformative justice and restorative justice practices as alternatives to incarceration

**PORTLAND ADULT EDUCATION**, Portland, Maine

Feb. 2018-May 2022

Writing Tutor/Mentor for two individuals; taught one individual, who had basic English-speaking skills, essay writing, grammar, spelling, and vocabulary, and supported his pursuit of employment aspirations and other life goals; also taught graduate student, who recently emigrated from East Africa, how to organize research and write term papers

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SCHOOL OF LAW, Portland, Maine

Oct. 2018-Sept. 2020

Mentor in Mentor/Mentee Program for student during her second year and third year of law school; advised and supported student with career goals, reviewed and edited student's cover letters and CV

### **SELECTED PRESENTATIONS**

**Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conference**, Miami, FL

May 2019

*Federal Clemency Process*—co-presented on panel with former Acting U.S. Pardon Attorney on mechanics of federal clemency process

**Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conference**, Philadelphia, PA

May 2017

*Execution and Clemency-Focused Litigation*—co-presented on panel with other capital habeas practitioners on federal execution date-setting protocols, clemency regulations, and creative legal challenges pursued in state jurisdictions

**Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conference**, Philadelphia, PA

July 2015

*Federal Clemency: How it Works, and Doesn't*—co-presented on panel with other capital habeas practitioners on federal clemency process and how to mount a successful clemency campaign

**Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conference**, New Orleans, LA

May 2014

*Trauma & The Prison Experience*—co-presented on panel with individual formerly incarcerated on death row and psychologist with trauma expertise about the deleterious effects of solitary confinement

**Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conference**, Indianapolis, IN

May 2011

*Putting Together a Clemency Campaign*—co-presented on panel with other capital habeas practitioners on nuts and bolts of effective clemency strategies employed in state jurisdictions and how they might be adapted to the federal system

**Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conference**, Indianapolis, IN

May 2011

*Inside the Federal Capital Clemency Process*—co-presented on panel with two attorneys who represented capital clients in the federal capital clemency process

**Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conference**, Indianapolis, IN

May 2010

*Making Experts a Part of the § 2255 Team*—moderated panel, consisting of mental health expert, capital habeas practitioner, and clinical social worker, that discussed practical and strategic considerations in working with mental health and other mitigation experts

**Annual Capital § 2255 Training Conference**, Indianapolis, IN

May 2009

*Persuasive Pleading: Presenting Your Changed Picture as a Compelling Story In All Your Pleadings*—moderated panel of capital habeas practitioners discussing strategies for using § 2255 motions and other pleadings as vehicles for advancing compelling narratives throughout the duration of § 2255 proceedings

### **PROFESSIONAL LICENSES, ADMISSIONS, & MEMBERSHIPS**

Massachusetts, 2007

United States Supreme Court, 2010

United States District Court for the District of Maryland, 2013

United States District Court for the District of Columbia, 2019

United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio, 2021

Legal Writing Institute, 2022-present (member)