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FOREWORD

The UCLA Women's Law Journal has long appreciated the value and unique contributions of law students in advancing legal scholarship in the areas of gender, sexuality, and race and the law. Not only does legal writing help law students develop the communication and research skills needed for practice, but it also provides an opportunity for students to analyze and explore areas of the law that often do not get much attention. Thus, this issue of WLJ is a celebration of the rich, high-quality scholarship of law students. After pouring through many interesting submissions, the following two articles stood out as timely, unique, and outstanding student-written pieces.

Tasha Hill's Article, *Sexual Abuse in California Prisons: How the California Rape Shield Fails the Most Vulnerable Populations*, is an example of student work that explores before-ignored aspects of the law. Writing on how the California rape shield law fails to protect inmates in state facilities or jails, despite inmates' high risk of sexual assault, Hill's article is an important contribution to understanding the real world consequences of how the law helps to shape violence and sexuality in carceral environments.

Claire Rollor, our second student author, provides a timely argument for the expansion of opportunities for women in her piece, *Narrowing the Gender Pay Gap by Providing Equal Opportunities: The Need for Tenured Female Professors in Higher STEM Institutions in an Effort to Recast Gender Norms*. Just weeks ago, in April 2014, Republicans in Congress blocked a Senate bill that would decrease the gender pay gap between men and women. Rollor's article contributes to the debate around eliminating the pay gap, by arguing that women face structural barriers when they try to access higher-paying ("male track") jobs, particularly in the areas of science and technology, and thus that rules and regulations need to be changed to provide more accessibility to women candidates.

The issues addressed in the student works above are important in understanding the relationship between the law and equal opportunities for two often unprotected populations: women and inmates. The articles also have racial implications, in that prison populations in the U.S. are disproportionately composed of racial minorities, and access to higher-paying jobs and tenure track positions often are not available for racial groups that historically have been discriminated against based on race. In including both articles in this issue of WLJ, we not only celebrate outstanding student-written legal scholarship, but we also reaffirm our commitment to social and racial justice for various disadvantaged groups in the U.S.

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JULIA HIGH

Editors-in-Chief

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