

Families in Crises: The Impact of the Pandemic on Families in the Wake of Covid19 - NAWJ's 15th Annual Meeting with the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues



VANESSA BATTERS-THOMPSON develops and nurtures innovative collaborations to address the civil legal needs of people living on low incomes. She joined the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Center in 2014 as their Managing Attorney for Family Law Programs. In this role, she helped launch, and now directs, the Family Law Assistance Network, a joint endeavor of several legal service providers to offer low-income parents or caregivers free and confidential family law services through a single, accessible, intake point. She also spearheads a partnership with the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, and other key stakeholders, to produce and maintain an extensive library of pleadings and resources for self-represented family law litigants.

As co-manager of the Pro Bono Center's Advocacy & Justice Clinic, Attorney Batters-Thompson oversees intake and placement of clients with pro bono attorneys from private law firms and the public sector. She additionally provides guidance and direction to the Pro Bono Center's training program, which last year prepared more than 500 new volunteers to serve their community. An experienced mentor and public speaker, she frequently presents to diverse audiences on a variety of topics related to lawyering, public service, and litigation skills.

Prior to joining the Pro Bono Center, Attorney Batters-Thompson worked for Bread for the City, an anti-poverty organization. She provided direct representation to clients and systematic advocacy regarding child support issues. From 2009 through 2011, she served as a Friedman Fellow for the George Washington University Law School, teaching and supervising students handling domestic violence and family law cases through the Jacob Burns Community Legal Clinics. While in law school, she clerked for the Mental Health Division of the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, as well as the Humane Society of the United States.

She obtained her J.D. from the George Washington University Law School, and her B.A. from American University with a certificate in Women, Policy, and Political Leadership. She currently lives and works in Silver Spring, Maryland with her husband, daughter, and dog.