



EDITOR'S NOTE

THE INTERSECTION OF LEGAL TECHNOLOGY & JUSTICE

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ince this is our technology-themed issue, the Q&A interview on page 32 with Shon Hopwood—the 2019 AALL Annual Meeting keynote speaker—serves as a nice juxtaposition to the excellent articles on artificial intelligence, chatbots, privacy, open source ERM, and more. An associate professor of law at Georgetown, Hopwood became interested in the law when he worked in a federal prison library as an inmate. His journey began with traditional print resources, but his work in prison, and now as a law professor and co-owner of Prison Professors LLC, is an access to justice story.

The intersection of evolving legal technology and access to justice issues is where, perhaps, the most dramatic impacts of legal technology on our justice system will occur in the coming years.

Clearly, the technological changes we are experiencing are having profound changes on the legal industry and society in general. Artificial intelligence, machine learning, the IoT (internet of things), and legal analytics are just a few of the technologies changing the practice of law and the administration of justice, as well as our traditional notions of privacy. (Be sure to read Shane Dempsey's article on GDPR on page 18.)

Most technological developments come with a hefty price tag for early adopters. However, there are many efforts underway to use technology to solve access to justice issues. For example, A2J Author, a joint project of CALI (The Center for Computer-Assisted Legal Instruction) and Chicago-Kent College of Law, is used by countless legal aid organizations, courts, and others to create guided interviews to assist self-represented litigants to complete forms or start the intake process. Many of you may also be aware of projects such as the DoNotPay app that started out as a free, guided process to dispute parking tickets. The developer, Joshua Browder, provided his code for free to assist institutions trying to design systems to help legal consumers.

In February and March, Global Legal Hackathon 2019 took place at venues around

the world. The event brings together people from the legal industry with technologists to solve problems that have either a private or public benefit. The private benefit projects are designated as benefiting the “business and practice of law” while the public benefit projects are targeted at “good government, legal systems, and A2J.” A small sample of the first-round hackathon winners gives an idea of how technology can be deployed to solve access to justice issues. From Brazil, winners “e-Defensoria” created a system to connect public defenders and citizens. Team “Granite Apple” won in New York City for City Alert, which alerts users to crimes in the area and helps them connect with legal assistance. In Hong Kong, “Access our Community” won for creating a platform that matches lawyers with pro bono cases. These three are a very small sample of the solutions created in one weekend when the right people came together.

As you read this issue and learn about chatbots, data privacy, and open-source ERM software, think about ways we can use technology to provide solutions in the justice system, both privately and publicly.

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