

(July 24, 2016, Connecting Cook County – July 2016 Civic Consulting Newsletter)

Reimagining training at the Cook County Public Defender's Office

Pro bono partners:

[DLA Piper](#)
[Jenner & Block](#)
[Kirkland & Ellis](#)
[Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila](#)

The Cook County Public Defender is charged with providing a quality criminal defense for individuals who cannot afford legal representation. This is no small feat: the Public Defender's Office handles nearly 90 percent of cases going through Cook County's court system each year.

When Amy Campanelli stepped into her role as Public Defender last year, she challenged the organization to perform like a top-tier criminal defense law firm. To help achieve this goal, Amy identified advocacy training – helping her attorneys achieve the best outcomes for their clients – as a critical priority and began looking for new perspectives in training.

With the support of Civic Consulting, four pro bono partners – Chicago law firms highly skilled in advocacy, litigation, and criminal law – developed a unique aspect of the training curriculum:

- [DLA Piper](#): legal writing
- [Jenner & Block](#): appellate knowledge
- [Kirkland & Ellis](#): advocacy training
- [Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila](#): criminal investigations.

“Part of what is so exceptional about this project is that four of Chicago’s law firms came together with a common purpose: to equip the Public Defender to better serve the public.”

Amy Campanelli
Cook County Public Defender

This unprecedented collaboration between four firms has paved the way for a new approach to advocacy training at the Public Defender's Office. The partnership not only created new training materials for priority advocacy needs, but also developed a sustainability playbook to allow these firms to provide ongoing support. This work has empowered the Public Defender's Office to continue to develop like a top-tier law firm and provide the best counsel to its clients.

For more information on this project, please contact [Mark Van Grinsven](#).