

Bryan Stevenson

A graduate of Harvard Law School and the Kennedy School of Government, **Bryan Stevenson** is the founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), a private, nonprofit organization that provides legal representation to indigent defendants and prisoners who have been denied fair and just treatment in the legal system.

Based in Montgomery, Alabama, EJI litigates on behalf of juvenile offenders, poor people denied effective representation, minority defendants whose trials are marked by racial bias or prosecutorial misconduct, and others against whom the justice system may be stacked. As a staff attorney for the Southern Center for Human Rights in Atlanta (1985) and as executive director of the Alabama Capital Representation Resource Center (1989-95), Stevenson represented capital defendants.

His representation of condemned prisoners has won him numerous awards, including a MacArthur Fellowship Award, the Reebok Human Rights Award, the ACLU National Medal of Liberty, and the American Bar Association Wisdom Award. In 1996 he was named Public Interest Lawyer of the Year by the National Association of Public Interest Lawyers. Stevenson and EJI have successfully demonstrated how racial minorities are routinely excluded from jury service and have worked to develop guidelines for monitoring jury selection for use by community workers, lawyers and advocacy groups.

Stevenson also addressed Russian lawmakers and was part of the effort that succeeded in getting 800 death sentences commuted in Russia during the Yeltsin era, and has worked with advocacy groups in Eastern Europe on litigation strategies to protect oppressed groups and with lawyers in the Caribbean to reduce executions. He is dedicated to achieving a national consensus in this country for abolishing life sentences without parole for 13- and 14-year-olds. In 1998, Stevenson joined the clinical faculty at NYU Law School and is currently a professor of law there. He has also been visiting lecturer of law at Harvard, Yale, and University of Michigan Law Schools.

(A complete biography is available at <http://www.gruberprizes.org>.)