

Serious Games for Self-Represented Litigants

NuLawLab

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Description:

Back in 2014, we thought self-represented parties could benefit from an online interactive

“serious game” simulating aspects of an actual legal proceeding. Games have proven to make a

positive impact on cognition and behavior because they are experiential learning environments

that allow users, through trial and retrial, to attain the necessary (virtual) experience to help

guide future action in reality.

Thanks to two grants from LSC’s Technology Initiative Grant Program, we’ve developed,

launched, and evaluated two games designed to help people without lawyers represent

themselves in court. RePresent, originally launched in 2015 and now in its second iteration, prepares litigants for the basics of self-representation. It is available in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine. RePresent: Renter (2018) focuses on summary process eviction proceedings, and is available in Connecticut and Maine. Both games are available via native mobile phone apps, and through web browsers. You can learn more, and access both games, at www.representgames.org.

Our most recent LSC-TIG grant included funds specified for an independent evaluation. That effort, undertaken by Professor Jack Tsai of Yale University's psychology department, concluded that "the RePresent games have potential to have population- level effects on legal outcomes . .

. ." We now seek to introduce LSC-funded entities (and others) to the promise of serious games in the legal aid space, and specifically to how organizations can use Northeastern's StudyCrafter platform to easily modify the games for their jurisdiction, or create entirely new games that

help close the access to justice gap. Our presentation will cover:

- The rise of serious games and their application to legal aid;
- The RePresent suite of games and Dr. Tsai's evaluation of same;
- The StudyCrafter platform, and how to access and use it to modify either RePresent game, or to build entirely new games.

Panelists:

Kathy Daniels, IT Administrator at [Statewide Legal Services in Connecticut](#)

Kate Frank, Website and Publications Manager at CTLawHelp.org

Jack Haycock, attorney at [Pine Tree Legal Assistance](#)

Eduardo Gonzalez, Access to Justice Tech Fellow at [Georgetown Law School Institute for Technology Law & Policy](#) and the [Self-Represented Litigation Network](#)

Dan Jackson, director of [NuLawLab](#) at [Northeastern University School of Law](#)

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[Self Represented Litigant](#)

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