



INSTITUTE *for the* ADVANCEMENT  
*of the* AMERICAN LEGAL SYSTEM



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**Contact:** Kelsey Montague  
Associate Director of Marketing and Public Relations  
(303) 888-0393  
[kelsey.montague@du.edu](mailto:kelsey.montague@du.edu)

## IAALS Announces David Yellen as New CEO

*(DENVER, February 1, 2021)* — IAALS, the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System at the University of Denver, announced today that it has named Professor David Yellen as its new chief executive officer. Yellen will take over leadership from IAALS' interim executive director Sam Walker on June 1, 2021.

“While serving a combined 14 years as law school dean at Hofstra University and Loyola University Chicago—and as president of Marist College—David forged a reputation for innovation and creativity,” said Walker, who has led IAALS for the past six months, while continuing to serve on its executive committee and fulfilling his role as Executive in Residence at the Office of the Colorado Attorney General. “His candidacy emerged following a comprehensive search with international executive search firm Heidrick & Struggles. This was the most comprehensive search for a leader in IAALS’ fifteen-year history, involving contacts with nearly 400 potential candidates and stakeholders, befitting a pivotal time for the American legal system and the rule of law. There is no more important time than now to realize IAALS’ mission. David’s uncommon energy, passion, and leadership experiences empower him to lead IAALS in its next chapter.”

IAALS was founded in 2006 by University of Denver Chancellor Emeritus Daniel Ritchie, Denver attorney and bar leader John Moye, business leader and philanthropist Charles C. Gates, and Rebecca Love Kourlis, who stepped down from the Colorado Supreme Court to serve as the founding executive director. Driven by concern over a legal system increasingly under attack from outside forces—a system that was often failing to deliver justice—the group established IAALS to focus on independent, non-partisan, research-based reform for the nation’s civil justice system.

"IAALS has a powerful, influential voice in efforts to improve the justice system and it gets results," said Yellen. "The organization is positioned for continued success at a time when its mission has never been more critical. I am wholly aligned with that mission and I believe that IAALS can truly reshape the future of our legal system and increase access to it through

innovation, inclusion, data-driven research, and deep partnerships. I am delighted to join this outstanding team and to contribute to this urgently important work."

Yellen served as Dean and Professor of Law at Loyola University Chicago School of Law for 11 years, from 2005–2016. He is a former faculty member of Hofstra Law School, where he held the Max Schmertz Distinguished Professorship and served as Dean. He has also been the Reuschlein Distinguished Visiting Professor at Villanova University School of Law and served as a visiting professor at Cornell Law School in 2000.

After Loyola, Yellen served as President of Marist College from 2016–2019. Before beginning his academic career, he clerked for a federal judge, practiced law in Washington, D.C., and served as counsel to the Judiciary Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives. Yellen is currently serving as a visiting professor at Cornell Law School.

"The University of Denver and the Sturm College of Law have long valued our partnerships with IAALS. By advancing excellence, innovation, and trust in the American legal system, IAALS undertakes work that is vital to the legal profession, American legal education, and our nation" said University of Denver Sturm College of Law Dean Bruce Smith. "I cannot imagine an individual better suited than David to take on this important leadership role. As a law dean, David earned widespread respect as an innovator, a collaborator, and a model for visionary and dedicated leadership. As a member of the Standards Review Committee of the American Bar Association Section on Legal Education from 2006–2012, David distinguished himself through his fresh ideas, pragmatism, and exceptional communication skills. My faculty colleagues and I at the Sturm College of Law look forward to working closely with David in his new role."

When his visiting professorship at Cornell ends, David will relocate to Denver to begin his full-time role as IAALS' CEO in June. In addition, he will have an affiliated faculty appointment in the Sturm College of Law.

### **About IAALS**

*IAALS, the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System at the University of Denver, is a national, independent research center dedicated to facilitating continuous improvement and advancing excellence in the American legal system. Our mission is to forge innovative and practical solutions to problems within the American legal system.*

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