



Dr. Diana Uchiyama Examines Learned Helplessness in the Legal Profession in Illinois Bar Journal Article

August 13, 2026—The Illinois Lawyers' Assistance Program's Dr. Diana Uchiyama recently published "Discontent in the Law" in the August issue of the *Illinois Bar Journal*. The article examines learned helplessness in the legal profession and how repeated stress, dissatisfaction and perceived barriers to change can affect lawyers' sense of agency and well-being.

Drawing on her experience as an attorney, Clinical and Forensic Psychologist, and Certified Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor, Dr. Uchiyama connects psychological research with the realities of legal practice. She highlights how demanding workloads, high-stakes matters and stigma around seeking help can contribute to feelings of powerlessness—and why recognizing learned helplessness is an important step toward support and change.



“LAP launched a mental health and wellness survey at the end of 2025, with the results of the survey to be released to the public later this year,” said Dr. Diana Uchiyama, Executive Director of the Illinois Lawyers’ Assistance Program. “People felt that systemic changes would never occur and that they lacked skills to do anything else, leading to higher levels of depressive attributes and symptoms.”

LAP encourages members of the legal community to read the article and reflect on how learned helplessness may appear in professional life. LAP offers confidential support and resources for legal professionals who are struggling or concerned about a colleague.

Illinois Lawyers’ Assistance Program’s mission is to help, protect and educate the Illinois legal community about addiction, mental health and wellness. If you or someone you know needs support with mental health or wellbeing, do not hesitate to contact LAP. Our services are 100% confidential with immunity.

gethelp@illinoislap.org, 312-726-6607

Press Contact: Nicole Brom
Development and Outreach Manager
nbrom@illinoislap.org

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