

| Speaker First Name | Speaker Last Name | Speaker Position | Speaker Organization | Speaker Bio |
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| Aaron | Fischer | Litigation Counsel | Disability Rights California | Aaron Fischer is Litigation Counsel with the Mental Health Practice Group with Disability Rights California. The Mental Health Practice Group advocates for Californians with a mental health diagnosis, working in institutions to keep individuals free from abuse and neglect and protect their legal rights in mental health facilities, including county-funded facilities and state hospitals. The Mental Health Practice Group also works in jails, juvenile facilities and detention centers to improve conditions, eliminate unnecessary isolation and segregation and secure adequate medical and mental health treatment. He is a 2009 graduate of Columbia Law School and has a B.A. from the University of California, Berkeley. |
| AJ | Ruben | Supervising Attorney | Disability Rights Vermont | A.J. Ruben has been the supervising attorney at DRVT for 14 years. In this position he has litigated cases in State and Federal Court as well as at the Vermont Human Rights Commission involving prisoners with mental health conditions. Cases have included assertions of inadequate mental health treatment in prison, over use of segregation, uses of force and discipline for behaviors related to mental health conditions, delays in reintegration into the community based on a prisoner's need for mental health staffed, supported placements, and delays in placement in hospital-level care for prisoners and detainees identified as requiring that level of care. DRVT has also often worked with prisoners on obtaining reasonable accommodations in programming and prison employment. |
| Alison | Butler | Director of Legal Services | Disability Law Colorado | As Director of Legal Services, Alison oversees the legal work protecting the rights of people with disabilities at Disability Law Colorado. This includes investigations of abuse and neglect, individual representation in workplace, housing and public accommodation discrimination issues, assistance to students and parents with disability-related legal issues in schools and working with residents of institutions when they seek a less restrictive placement in the community, among others. Alison is active in providing trainings state-wide to other lawyers, organizations and members of the community on a multitude of disability topics, including: special education law, housing discrimination, the Americans with Disabilities Act, service and companion animals, the use of restraint in schools and general disability awareness. She also advocates for the rights of people with disabilities through legislative and committee work. Alison joined Disability Law Colorado in 2007. Prior to joining Disability Law Colorado, Alison worked in private practice protecting and defending civil rights. Alison began her career in the Public Defender's Office in Palm Beach County, Florida. She is licensed to practice law in Colorado, Florida and New York. Alison received her bachelor's degree in political science from Florida State University and her law degree from Columbia University School of Law. |
| Alison | Barkoff | Director of Advocacy | Center for Public Representation | Alison Barkoff is the Director of Advocacy at Center for Public Representation. She works on policy and litigation related to community integration and inclusion of people with disabilities, including Olmstead enforcement, employment, housing, education, and Medicaid. She helps lead numerous disability advocacy coalitions and served as an appointed member of a federal advisory committee on disability employment created by Congress. She has testified before Congress and the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights on disability rights. From 2010 to 2014, she served as Special Counsel for Olmstead Enforcement in the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice, leading efforts to enforce the right of individuals with disabilities to live, work and receive services in the community. Ms. Barkoff also worked with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and with the Department of Labor on disability policy. Prior to her time with the government, she worked at the Bazelon Center and other public interest organizations on disability policy and litigation. She speaks nationally and publishes articles on disability and civil rights issues. |
| Amanda | Lowe | Senior Public Policy Analyst | National Disability Rights Network | Since February 2015, Amanda Lowe has been a Public Policy Analyst for NDRN focusing on education, employment, and veterans issues. Before joining NDRN, Amanda served as a Policy Analyst for the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE). Prior to her work with NASDSE, Amanda worked as a special education teacher for students with emotional and behavioral disabilities. She later served as a curriculum coordinator and staff development specialist at her school. She holds a B.A. from the University of Maine in Psychology and a Master's Degree from The George Washington University in special education. |
| Amanda | Hess | Attorney/Equal Access Team Leader | Protection & Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc. | Amanda Hess is an attorney and the Equal Access Team Leader for Protection & Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc. (P&A). P&A is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to protecting the rights of people with disabilities in South Carolina. More information about P&A can be found on its website at https://www.pandasc.org Amanda is a summa cum laude graduate of Syracuse University and a magna cum laude graduate of Syracuse University College of Law. After law school, Amanda clerked for the Honorable Eugene D. Serpentelli, Assignment Judge of the Superior Court, Ocean Vicinage in New Jersey. Since 2007, Amanda has worked for P&A representing people with disabilities regarding their legal rights. She has worked on disability discrimination matters, including matters concerning the education of students with disabilities, assistive technology, effective communication, housing, accessibility, and matters involving barriers to work. |

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| Amber | McReynolds | Chief Executive Officer | Vote at Home | <p>Amber McReynolds is one of the country's leading experts on election administration and policy, and co-author of the book "When Women Vote". Amber is the CEO for the National Vote At Home Institute and Coalition and is the former Director of Elections for Denver, Colorado. During her time there, she transformed the elections division into a national and international award-winning office. She has proven that designing pro-voter policies, voter-centric processes, and implementing technical innovations will improve representation for all voters.</p> <p>Amber serves on the National Election Task Force on Election Crises, as an advisory board member for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Election and Data Science Lab, a board member for Lift Colorado, a board member for Represent Women, and serves on various advisory boards for other national organizations focused on improving election administration. Among other accolades, Amber was also named by Governing Magazine as a 2018 Top Public Official of the Year for her work. Amber holds a Masters of Science degree in Comparative Politics from the London School of Economics and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Communications from the University of Illinois.</p> |
| Amitai | Heller | Staff Attorney | Advocacy Center | <p>Mr. Amitai Heller, Staff Attorney with Disability Rights Louisiana, has expertise regarding both the Americans with Disabilities Act and Medicaid for individuals with disabilities. Mr Heller is co-counsel with the National Health Law Program on AJ v. Gee in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana and Co-Counsel with the AARP Litigation Foundation on Graff v. Heritage Manner of Slidell in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.</p> |
| Amy | Scherer | Staff Attorney | National Disability Rights Network | <p>Joining NDRN in December 2009, Amy Scherer provides training and technical assistance to the P&A network on issues related to Vocational Rehabilitation and the Client Assistance Program. She is a member of NDRN's employment team which focuses on a variety of issues related to helping individuals with disabilities achieve competitive wages and integrated jobs in the community. Prior to arriving at NDRN, Amy worked for seven years at a vocational training facility for individuals with a variety of disabilities in Atlanta, Georgia. She worked primarily with VR clients as both a case manager and as a certified vocational evaluator. Amy earned a B.A. in Psychology from Furman University, a M.S. in Rehabilitation Counseling/Vocational Evaluation from Auburn University, and a J.D. from the St. Louis University School of Law.</p> |
| Amy | Price | Abuse & Neglect Team Leader | Disability Rights Ohio | <p>Amy Price is the Abuse & Neglect Team Leader for Disability Rights Ohio. Compelled to fully reconnect with authentic mission-driven advocacy work, Amy joined DRO in April 2019 after serving for over 30 years in nonprofit management including positions on 6 executive leadership teams. Amy now combines her skill, passion and ethics to strategically lead investigations and monitoring projects on individual and systemic levels to preserve and expand the human, civil, and legal rights of people with disabilities in private and public facilities. Amy integrates her content area expertise in behavioral healthcare, homelessness and housing to help hold systems and service providers accountable and keep people with disabilities safe. Amy possesses a Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt in operational excellence and completed the Mental Health Executive Leadership Program at Case Western Reserve University's Weatherhead School of Management. She earned her Master's Degree in Social Work from The Ohio State University. Amy is also a Licensed Independent Social Worker with Supervisory Designation in the State of Ohio.</p> |
| Ashley | Austin | Staff Attorney | Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program | <p>Ashley started her tenure at ADAP as a law clerk in 2017. After receiving her law degree, she began working at ADAP as a law fellow and became a staff attorney in 2019. She holds three degrees from The University of Alabama: Bachelor of Arts in Psychology (2014), Master of Science in Criminal Justice (2017), and Juris Doctor (2017). Ashley works on the Community Access Team, primarily focusing on issues surrounding ADAP's on-going lawsuit on behalf of prisoners in the Alabama Department of Corrections. Ashley also has six pets - consisting of three dogs and three cats - which has made working from home much like living in a zoo.</p> |
| Beth | Mitchell | Supervising Attorney | Disability Rights Texas | <p>Beth Mitchell received her undergraduate degree from the University of Florida and her law degree from the University of Miami School of Law in 1991. Since that time Ms. Mitchell has been employed with Disability Rights Texas (DRTx), the non-profit federally authorized Protection and Advocacy agency for Texas that protects and advocates on behalf of persons with disabilities. For the past decade Beth managed and supervised DRTx's Institutional Rights and Civil Liberties issue team where her work primarily focused on representing individuals with mental illness and intellectual disabilities in obtaining community services and advocating for their rights while in mental health, state supported living centers, juvenile justice, and jail/prison facilities through system change, impact litigation, administrative proceedings, policy/rule making, and educating lawmakers during the legislative session. Beth is now managing a Team that monitors the Court's Orders related to RTC's in the <i>M.D. vs Abbott</i> case while continuing to coordinate, monitor, evaluate, and co-counsel complex or systemic litigation in hospitals, ICFs, and jails.</p> |
| Bridget | Claycomb | Staff Attorney | Disability Rights California | <p>Bridget is a staff attorney with Disability Rights California's Youth Practice Group. In just over three years of practice, she has helped over one hundred students with disabilities and their families secure accommodations under Section 504, obtain special education eligibility and appropriate services and supports under IDEA, and fight for systemic change in a number of California school districts. Before joining DRC, Bridget attended William and Mary Law School in Virginia. There, she served on her local school district's Special Education Advisory Committee, advocated on behalf of students with disabilities and their families through the law school's PELE Clinic, and was awarded the Special Education Advocacy Award upon graduation. Before law school, Bridget was a special education teacher at a dual-language elementary school.</p> |

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| Cathy | Costanzo | Executive Director | Center for Public Representation | Cathy Costanzo became the Center's Executive Director in September 2011. She has worked in the mental disability law field since 1977 and has extensive experience in providing representation to institutionalized persons throughout the country and for litigating ADA/Olmstead cases. She is the former director of the Massachusetts PAIMI Project and the former chair of National Disability Rights Network's Legal Committee. Ms. Costanzo is co-counsel in a number of class action cases in New Mexico, Massachusetts, Oregon and Ohio which seek to promote the integration and to expand the rights of persons with psychiatric and developmental disabilities. Ms. Costanzo is a graduate of Mount Holyoke College with B.A. in Psychology and earned law degree from the University of Connecticut School of Law. |
| Charlotte | Lanvers | Trial Attorney | US Department of Justice, Disability Rights Section | Charlotte Lanvers is a Trial Attorney in the Disability Rights Section of the Civil Rights Division at the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), where she enforces the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). From 2012-2014, Lanvers worked as a Staff Attorney at the Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), where she helped develop Section 504 and title II guidance about Section 504 obligations to respond appropriately to the bullying of students with disabilities. Prior to joining OCR, Lanvers worked at Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund as a Skadden Fellow and Staff Attorney on cases enforcing the rights of students with diabetes to receive insulin administration at school and in class action litigation against the Social Security Administration for failing to provide effective communication to blind and visually impaired recipients and beneficiaries. Lanvers holds a bachelor's degree from Princeton University and a juris doctorate from Cornell Law School. |
| Cheryl | Bates-Harris | Senior Disability Advocacy Specialist | National Disability Rights Network | Cheryl Bates-Harris is a Senior Disability Advocacy Specialist for National Disability Rights Network where she has worked for over 24 years. Her experience and expertise working with people with disabilities has always involved employment. She has an in-depth knowledge of cross disability issues and continues to focus on employment issues of people with disabilities, including Vocational Rehabilitation, Social Security Return to Work, TANF, DOL OneStops, sheltered workshops and other employment programs that impact people with disabilities. By default she has developed a working knowledge of Schedule A hiring authorities and continues to answer questions on this from applicants, professionals, and hiring managers. She provides technical assistance and training to the Protection and Advocacy/Client Assistance Programs nationwide and has given presentations at many other national conferences including Partners in Policy Making. |
| Courtney | Holthus | Advocacy Director | DisAbility Rights Idaho | Courtney R. Holthus is the Advocacy Director as well as an attorney with DisAbility Rights Idaho (DRI), where she has worked out of DRI's Boise office since March of 2012. In addition to representing clients in guardianship, disability discrimination, and Medicaid appeal cases, she has also worked on various public policy issues and has provided legal representation on behalf of students in special education cases. Since 2017, Courtney has worked on investigating allegations of abuse and neglect at Idaho's state-run ICF/IID facility, resulting in DRI's first public report which was published in 2018. In recognition of these efforts, DRI was awarded with the National Advocacy Award at the 2019 National Disability Rights Network Conference in Baltimore, Maryland. She has served as DRI's PAVA Coordinator since September of 2019. Courtney completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and graduated with law degree from the University of South Dakota in 2010. Prior to moving to Idaho, she worked as a Deputy States Attorney as well as an Associate in a private practice law firm in small town in western South Dakota. In addition to being an avid Nebraska Cornhuskers fan, (GO BIG RED!), she spends her free time enjoying the Idaho outdoors with her husband, son, and 3 obnoxious dogs. |
| Dan | Stewart | Legal Director | Minnesota Disability Law Center/MMLA | Dan Stewart is the Legal Director of the Minnesota Disability Law Center (DLC), which is part of Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid. DLC is the Minnesota's designated federal Protection and Advocacy (P&A) organization for representing individuals with disabilities statewide. For over 15 years, Dan has represented children with disabilities in public school and has advocated for their interests in Minnesota's special education policy processes including rulemaking, legislative proposals, and state policy advisory groups, councils and task forces. Dan has a Master's Degree in Educational Policy, a law degree, and a Ph.D in Social Work. He has presented on a wide range of topics for a variety of audiences in Minnesota and nationwide. He enjoys hockey, running, and, along with his wife and daughter, hiking in national and state parks. |
| David | Boyer | Managing Attorney | National Disability Rights Network | Dave Boyer provides training and technical assistance in the areas of abuse and neglect in community settings, access authority, housing, monitoring and investigations, associational standing, veteran issues, and traumatic brain injuries. Additionally, he provides assistance to the network on issues related to the Protection and Advocacy for Traumatic Brain Injuries (PATBI). Prior to joining NDRN, Dave was the Director of Investigations at the Florida P&A, Disability Rights Florida. Dave has litigation experience in the areas of criminal justice, fair housing, community integration, and education. He obtained his B.A. in psychology from THE Ohio State University, his M.A. (A.B.D) in clinical psychology from Ohio University, and his J.D. from Florida State University. |

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| David | Hutt | Deputy Executive Director for Legal Services | National Disability Rights Network | David Hutt oversees the work of the NDRN Legal Services Unit which addresses numerous legal issues impacting the rights of persons with disabilities and the Protection and Advocacy System and Client Assistance Program. David provides training and technical assistance to the P&As on legal management and organization, P&A statutory authorities, and supported decision making and guardianship among other issues. Prior to his current role, David assisted P&As on organizational standing, abuse and neglect investigations and monitoring, human trafficking, and conducted trainings on Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act, and other employment laws. He was involved in international disability rights issues, especially the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and led NDRN's effort to produce four reports for the National Council on Disability on the enforcement of disability rights law by federal agencies. David previously worked to create and manage the first iteration of the Representative Payee Review Project, and provided training and technical assistance on vocational rehabilitation law for the Client Assistance Program. David was a staff attorney at Legal Services of Central New York before joining NDRN, representing clients in employment discrimination, vocational rehabilitation, Medicaid, consumer debt, and accessibility cases. David earned a B.A. from Le Moyne College in Syracuse, N.Y., holds a J.D. and Ph.D. in political science from the State University of New York at Buffalo, and is licensed to practice law in New York State and the District of Columbia. |
| David | Zoellner | Managing Attorney | Protection & Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc | Mr. Zoellner is the Managing Attorney of South Carolina's Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities (P&A). He has been an attorney with P&A since 1994. Previously, he worked in a private law firm in Charleston for two years and was in the Judge Advocate General's Corps, US Navy, for twenty years. He received his BA with distinction (economics) from the University of Michigan, where he was selected to the Phi Beta Kappa national honor society. He graduated, cum laude, from the University of Michigan Law School. He is a member of the South Carolina Bar and serves as a member of the Community Association Law committee. He is also a member of the Charleston Bar Association and a member of the Michigan Bar (emeritus status). Mr. Zoellner is a member of the Board of Directors of the following organizations: Family Resource Center, Charleston, Lowcountry Phi Beta Kappa Association, Charleston SC affiliate of the Huntington's Disease Society of America |
| Diane | Howard | Managing Attorney | National Disability Rights Network | A litigator with 24 years of experience in juvenile and education law, Diane Smith Howard's work at NDRN focuses on conditions for children, youth and adults with disabilities in institutional systems. Specifically, youth in the juvenile justice, child welfare, education, and refugee resettlement systems, and adults with disabilities in the criminal justice and mental health systems. Diane provides training and technical assistance to the P&As on these issues. In addition, she advocates on these issues within the Administration and on the Hill, and works with a number of coalitions, including the Civil Rights Roundtable. Diane holds a B.A. with honors from Colby College in 1986, and a J. D. from Wayne State University Law School, Detroit, MI. She retains active bar licenses in Michigan and Maine. She has taught at the graduate and high school level and has published a number of legal articles. In addition to working previously as a senior staff attorney for education law at NDRN's earlier iteration, NAPAS, she has also provided direct client representation, including systemic case representation, at the P&As in Maine and Michigan and for a legal services office in rural Michigan. |
| Donald | Chee | Advocate | Native American Disability Law Center | Donald Chee, Navajo, is an Advocate with the Native American Disability Law Center in Farmington, New Mexico. Donald has extensive experience working with native communities providing culturally and linguistically appropriate education and outreach in the areas of community and public health. Currently, he advocates for positive outcomes for native students with disabilities in the juvenile justice system and schools in the Four Corners area. |
| Dustin | Rynders | Supervising Attorney | Disability Rights Texas | Dustin Rynders is the Supervising Attorney of the Education Team at Disability Rights Texas. Dustin has worked with DRTx since 2005. While working from Houston, Dustin supervises a team of attorneys, advocates, and policy specialists throughout Texas. Dustin also maintains his own case load. Dustin has created and obtained funding for special projects focused on educational needs of foster youth, probation involved youth, transition age youth with disabilities, and students with disabilities who are also English Language Learners. Dustin led DRTx's work uncovering, publicizing and bringing cases to challenge the Texas Education Agency's illegal 8.5% cap on the percentage of students who could receive special education in Texas. That work lead to the Department of Education conducting monitoring visits throughout Texas and implementing a statewide corrective action plan. Dustin also works as Adjunct Professor of special education law at the University of Houston Law Center. Dustin is licensed to practice in the State of Texas and has been admitted in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas. Dustin received a Bachelor of Arts from Pepperdine University, cum laude (2001), a M.P.Aff. from the L.B.J. School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas (2003), and a J.D. from The University of Houston Law Center (2006). |

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| Elizabeth | Priaulx | Senior Disability Legal Specialist | National Disability Rights Network | Elizabeth Priaulx provides assistance to P&As related to community integration, with a focus on Medicaid litigation and the implementation of the Olmstead v. L.C. Supreme Court Decision. Additionally, Elizabeth is responsible for the NDRN initiative to support and encourage P&A advocacy on behalf of senior citizens with disabilities. As part of this effort, Elizabeth manages the NDRN contract with the Administration for Community Living and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging to provide training and technical assistance to managed care organizations on quality, participant directed, Medicaid long term services and supports; and to help seniors and persons with disabilities play a significant role in the development and implementation of these services and supports. Additionally, Elizabeth serves as a Technical Expert on Olmstead compliance for the NDRN contract with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and Advocates for Human Potential to provide training and technical assistance to mental health block grant programs and PAIMI Councils. Elizabeth began working formally as a disability advocate in 1986, at United Cerebral Palsy Associations and also worked as a researcher at the U.S. Government Accountability Office. She has served as Vice-Chair on the Board of Directors of both the Endependence Center of Northern Virginia and the Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy. Priaulx received a B.A. from Emory University and a J.D. from the Washington College of Law at American University in Washington, DC. |
| Elizabeth | Edwards | Senior Attorney | National Health Law Program | Elizabeth Edwards is a Senior Attorney in the National Health Law Program's North Carolina offices. In addition to working with the National Health Law Program's litigation team to advance the health rights of low income and underserved individuals, Elizabeth's work includes policy advocacy and legal education. Elizabeth joined the National Health Law Program after five years with Disability Rights North Carolina, where she used the Medicaid Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and public policy to ensure equal access and community integration for individuals and groups, along with other ADA issues such as voting rights and accessibility. A graduate of the law school at UNC-Chapel Hill, Elizabeth obtained her bachelor's in environmental science and policy from Duke University. |
| Elizabeth | Johnson | Trial Attorney | US Department of Justice, Disability Rights Section | Elizabeth Johnson is a senior trial attorney in the US Department of Justice (DOJ), Civil Rights Division, Disability Rights Section and, since 2005, the coordinator of the US Attorney's program for ADA enforcement. Johnson investigates and litigates claims under the ADA involving voting, transportation, employment, and health care, and coordinates ADA work with approximately thirty-five US Attorneys' offices. From 1999 to 2005, Johnson served as deputy chief of the Special Litigation Section, supervising investigations and litigation under the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act, with a primary focus on persons in nursing homes, mental health facilities, and facilities for persons with developmental disabilities. Johnson has also served as chief of the voting section, supervising investigations, litigation, and the enforcement of the federal observer provisions under the Voting Rights Act, the DOJ's defense of minority-majority districts challenged under the 14th Amendment, and the DOJ's enforcement of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993. Prior to joining the DOJ, Johnson clerked for the Honorable Harold Baker, Chief Judge of the US District Court for the Middle District of Illinois and, for five years, served as the assistant legal director at the Southern Poverty Law Center, where Johnson litigated lawsuits under an array of civil rights statutes, including the Voting Rights Act and Section 1983, and the First Amendment. Johnson obtained a BA from Michigan State University and JD from the University of Michigan Law School. |
| Emily | Munson | Senior Attorney | Indiana Disability Rights | Emily Munson is an Indianapolis attorney with a passion for disability rights and health law. Currently, she serves as Indiana Disability Rights' Senior Attorney for Health Care and Policy, conducting litigation for individual clients and systemic advocacy projects. Prior to that, she led the agency's Employment practice group. Earlier still, Munson was an attorney and administrative law judge for Indiana's Family & Social Services administration. In 2017, Munson graduated with distinction from Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law with her LL.M. in Health Law, Policy & Bioethics. Her thesis addressed patient autonomy in the context of traumatic, disabling injury. In 2010, Munson earned her J.D. with a health law concentration and M.A. in Philosophy. She graduated with honors from Hanover College in 2006. In 2019, Munson spoke about disability employment at TEDxIndianapolis. She was recognized by The Indiana Lawyer as an Up & Coming Lawyer in 2015 and was Ms. Wheelchair Indiana 2009. She has published articles in numerous periodicals and is regularly invited to speak on health policy issues and work incentives. In her spare time, Munson enjoys playing power soccer (in a specialized wheelchair) and kicking butt in board games! |

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| Emily | Cooper | Legal Director | Disability Rights Oregon | <p>Emily leads a team of attorneys and advocates who work to uphold the rights of Oregonians with disabilities. She spearheads DRO's class-action litigation, including the Wyatt v. Brown lawsuit seeking a safer foster care system that provides children the services they need to thrive, as well as our ongoing monitoring of the Lane v. Brown case aimed at closing sheltered workshops so that individuals with developmental disabilities get competitive jobs in their communities.</p> <p>Emily has also testified before the Oregon legislature multiple on issues involving the rights of jail inmates with mental health conditions and successfully banning the use of canines for cell extractions.</p> <p>Previously, she served as a Senior Attorney at Disability Rights Washington since 2006. She was the lead attorney in the Trueblood v. DSHS class action lawsuit that resulted in \$85 million dollars in contempt fines aimed at diverting individuals with disabilities from jail. In addition to working on class-action litigation, Emily monitored facilities that serve people with disabilities, investigated abuse and neglect, and testified in front of the legislature.</p> <p>Emily was also an Adjunct Law Professor at Seattle University School of Law from 2014 to 2017, served on the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Washington's Board of Directors from 2011 to 2017, and served as the Director of Advocacy for the Washington Attorneys with Disabilities Association (WADA) from 2013 to 2016. Emily graduated from Seattle University School of Law in 2003.</p> |
| Erica | Molina | CAP & PABSS Director | Disability Rights New York | <p>Erica has been practicing law in New York State since 2013, and has been Director of the Disability Rights New York (DRNY) Client Assistance Program (CAP) since that time. Erica has also been the Director of the Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security program (PABSS) since January 2019. Erica has led DRNY's efforts in addressing various barriers to employment for disabilities, both on an individual and systemic scale.</p> <p>Erica holds a BA in Journalism from New Jersey City University, and a JD from Albany Law School. In her spare time, she enjoys listening to audiobooks while creating mixed media.</p> |
| Erin | Haire | Director of Voting and Outreach | Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities, SC | <p>Erin Haire is the Director of Voting and Outreach at South Carolina's Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc.&nbsp;She is a graduate of the Georgia State University College of Law and recently returned to the Upstate from Atlanta, where she worked with Atlanta Legal Aid's Disability Integration Team, the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation, and the Georgia State Center for Access to Justice.</p> |
| Fred | Nisen | Supervising Attorney for Voter Rights | Disability Rights California | <p>Fred Nisen is the Supervising Attorney for Disability Rights California, working out of its Oakland office. He coordinates DRC's voting work and leads a team of attorneys and advocates seeking to improve voting accessibility statewide. He is a co-chair of the Secretary of State's Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee and serves on the local VAAC in at least six counties in the Greater Bay Area. Nisen is a member of the Future of California Elections and is on the steering committee of Voter's Choice California, a network sponsored by FoCE, working with counties and community-based organizations to ensure the smooth implementation of the Voter's Choice Act.</p> |
| Heather | Hoechst | Staff Attorney | Native American Disability Law Center | <p>Heather Hoechst is a Staff Attorney at the Native American Disability Law Center in Farmington, NM. Created for the protection and advocacy of Native Americans with disabilities, the Law Center serves individuals located within the geographic area known as the Four Corners and beyond. Since beginning at the Law Center in April 2018, Heather's primary area of focus is working with Native American students in special education and school discipline related matters. She has experience representing students in both Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) and public school systems. Prior to joining the Law Center, Heather was a Medical-Legal Partnership attorney for a legal services provider on the Navajo Nation. She also has experience representing survivors of domestic violence in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Born and raised in Georgia, Heather has lived in six states and two countries but now considers the mountain west her home. In her free time, she enjoys running through the beautiful mountains and deserts that she is lucky enough to call her backyard.</p> |
| Heather | Ansley | Associate Executive Director of Government Relations | Paralyzed Veterans of America | <p>Heather L. Ansley is the Associate Executive Director of Government Relations at Paralyzed Veterans of America. Her responsibilities include managing the organization's efforts on Capitol Hill and working with the Administration to promote legislation and policies that ensure veterans with catastrophic disabilities receive the health care and benefits that they have earned and the civil rights protections that they deserve. She also works to promote collaboration between disability organizations and veterans service organizations by serving as Chair of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities. Prior to joining PVA, Ms. Ansley served as Vice President of VetsFirst, a program of United Spinal Association, and as the Director of Policy and Advocacy for the Lutheran Services in America Disability Network. She also served as a Research Attorney for the Honorable Steve Leben with the Kansas Court of Appeals. Ms. Ansley holds a BA and MSW from the University of Missouri-Columbia and a JD from the Washburn University School of Law in Kansas.</p> |

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| Jane | Perkins | Legal Director | National Health Law Program | Jane Perkins is the National Health Law Program Legal Director. As such, she leads the organization's efforts to ensure that health care protections are implemented nationally and at the state level as the law requires. Jane also manages the National Health Law Program's litigation docket. She has served as counsel in more than 30 high profile lawsuits across the country to protect and advance the health rights of low income and underserved individuals. Jane has written numerous manuals, fact sheets and trade and scholarly articles on Medicaid, child health, civil rights, and federal court access. Before joining the National Health Law Program, Jane served as an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Maryland and litigated on behalf of not-for-profit hospitals at a California law firm. She has taught health law and policy at the University of North Carolina- Chapel Hill School of Law and served as a Clinical Associate professor in health policy at the UNC School of Social Work. Jane earned her M.P.H. from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1982; her J.D. from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, in 1981; and her B.A. from Davidson College in 1978. |
| Jennifer | Mathis | Director of Policy and Legal Advocacy | Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law | Jennifer Mathis is Director of Policy and Legal Advocacy at the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law. The Center is a national non-profit legal advocacy organization that advances the rights of people with mental disabilities. Jennifer's work focuses primarily on the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) and the Medicaid rights of adults and children with disabilities. Jennifer uses litigation as well as legislative and administrative policy advocacy to promote equal opportunity for people with disabilities in all areas of life, including community living, health care, housing, employment, education, parental and family rights, voting, and other areas. Jennifer played a key role in coordinating strategy and briefing when the Olmstead case was heard by the Supreme Court, and has litigated numerous community integration cases before and after. She has been at the Bazelon Center since 1999, with the exception of one year during which she left to work as a Special Assistant to Commissioner Chai Feldblum at U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, helping to draft regulations implementing the ADA Amendments Act and the Genetic Information Non-discrimination Act. |
| Jessica | Weber | Partner | Brown, Goldstein & Levy, LLP | Jessica P. Weber is a partner at Brown, Goldstein & Levy, LLP (BGL), where she works on a range of civil litigation matters nationwide, with a focus on civil rights, including disability and LGBTQ rights, workplace justice, and appellate litigation. She has successfully litigated or resolved cases involving voting rights, accessible technology and document formats, access to health care, employment discrimination, and wage and hour violations. Before joining BGL, Ms. Weber was a Francis D. Murnaghan, Jr. Appellate Advocacy Fellow at the Public Justice Center where she worked on issues affecting marginalized communities. Before that, she served as a law clerk for Judge Catherine C. Blake of the US District Court for the District of Maryland. She has served on the boards of the ACLU of Maryland and FreeState Justice. Ms. Weber obtained her BA from Princeton University and her JD from Yale Law School. |
| Julia | Bascom | Executive Director | Autistic Self Advocacy Network | Julia Bascom serves as Executive Director at the Autistic Self Advocacy Network. The Autistic Self Advocacy Network seeks to advance the principles of the disability rights movement with regard to autism. ASAN believes that the goal of autism advocacy should be a world in which autistic people enjoy equal access, rights, and opportunities. We work to empower autistic people across the world to take control of our own lives and the future of our common community, and seek to organize the autistic community to ensure our voices are heard in the national conversation about us. Nothing About Us, Without Us! |
| Karen | Rosenberg | Senior Staff Attorney | Disability Rights Center - NH | Karen, a Senior Staff Attorney at the Disability Rights Center - NH, represents children and adults in a variety of areas including special education, access to medically necessary services and access to Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver Services. In addition, Karen has led investigations involving abuse and neglect of children and adults in residential facilities. Karen serves on New Hampshire's State Advisory Committee for the Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities, New Hampshire's Medical Care Advisory Committee, the New Hampshire Home and Community Based Services Advisory Task Force and the New Hampshire Brain Injury Association's Provider Council. |
| Kari | Branham | CAP Director | Illinois Client Assistance Program | Kari Branham is the Illinois CAP Director and has served in this role since 2017. Kari has worked in the public social service arena for the majority of her career. She has over 25 years of service with the Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services. She has been involved in various Federal Disability Program initiatives and has served on a variety of workgroups and committees to better serve the needs of individuals with disabilities in the community and the workplace. Kari has also been the recipient of two Social Security Administration, Disability Program, national honor awards. |
| Kathryn | Rucker | attorney | Center for Public Representation | Kathryn Rucker began her legal career with the Center for Public Representation in August of 1999. Ms. Rucker's individual representation and system reform work focus on serving adults and children with serious mental illness, as well as individuals with Acquired Brain Injury. She is co-counsel in several of the Center's class action lawsuits, advocating for the development and expansion of integrated community service systems. Ms. Rucker received her undergraduate education from the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, and went on to participate in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. She is a graduate of Northeastern University School of Law, where she volunteered in the domestic violence clinic and worked in co-op positions with Greater Boston Legal Services, the Department of Justice, and the Federal District Court for the District of Columbia. |

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| Katrina | Ringrose | Program Director | Disability Rights Maine | Katrina Ringrose is the Program Director of Children's Advocacy at Disability Rights Maine (DRM). She oversees the delivery of advocacy services to Maine's children with disabilities by providing guidance and support to a team of attorneys and advocates. Under Katrina's leadership, the children's advocacy team conducts outreach, monitoring, and individual and systemic case work to protect the rights of hundreds of children each year. Since joining DRM in 2006, Katrina has held a variety of roles. For years, she advocated for youth who were not receiving an appropriate education or inpatient or community treatment. In 2012, Katrina led the transition of DRM's newly-formed Developmental Service Advocacy (DSA) Program, which provides advocacy services to adults with Autism and Intellectual Disabilities. Katrina is a graduate of the University of Maine at Augusta, where she earned her B.S. in Mental Health and Human Services. |
| Kelly | Darr | Legal Director | Disability Rights Pennsylvania | Kelly has represented clients in special education, Medicaid, and disability discrimination cases. Prior to joining DRP in 2009, she represented children with disabilities at the Education Law Center. After graduating from law school at the University of Pennsylvania, she clerked for Judge Reed in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. |
| Kenneth | Shiotani | Senior Staff Attorney | National Disability Rights Network | Ken Shiotani provides training and technical assistance to the P&As on ADA Title I, II & III, fair housing and federally assisted housing, employment law and provides legal support to the P&As Help America Vote Act Project. He is also responsible for LegalEase, the monthly publication to the P&As which highlights significant court decisions and federal agency regulations and guidance that affect P&A advocacy. Ken also is the NDRN Amicus Coordinator. Prior to joining NDRN in 2005, Ken provided representation to low income people in housing and public benefits, including cash assistance, Food Stamps, and Medicaid as well as unemployment benefits in urban and rural civil legal programs in New York and Maryland. His work ranged from defending evictions in local justice courts to public benefits hearings to appeals and involvement in impact litigation in the federal courts. He began his legal services career in 1980 as a VISTA volunteer and then as a Reginald Heber Smith Fellow. Ken received his undergraduate degree in history from New York University and his J.D. from Brooklyn Law School. |
| Kristine | Sullivan | Supervising Attorney | Disability Rights North Carolina | Kristine Sullivan joined DRNC in 2007. She serves as the Supervising Attorney for the Investigations and Monitoring unit. Her work includes investigating allegations of abuse, neglect or suspicious deaths; monitoring the care and treatment provided at facilities throughout the state; and advocating for policy changes to protect the rights and dignity of people with disabilities. Kristine earned her bachelor's degree in Deaf Education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and her law degree from UNC School of Law. She is conversant in American Sign Language and is the author of a manual for attorneys and advocates who represent students in matters related to seclusion and restraint in schools. |
| Lauren | Lystrup | Staff Attorney | Disability Rights California | Lauren Lystrup is a Staff Attorney with Disability Rights California (DRC). She focuses on special education and juvenile justice issues, addressing the school-to-prison pipeline and intersections of race and disability. She represents individual students and families to ensure youth receive the services and supports they need. She also works on systemic advocacy to change the ways government systems serve people with disabilities. Prior to working with DRC, Lauren worked as a UC Berkeley Public Interest Fellow for the National Center for Youth Law. She graduated from UC Berkeley School of Law. |
| Lisa | Grafstein | Legal Director | Disability Rights North Carolina | Lisa Grafstein is currently the Legal Director at Disability Rights North Carolina, and has been with the P&A since 2011. Prior to joining DRNC, Lisa was in private practice for 16 years, working primarily in the area of employment law. She served as President of the NC Association of Women Attorneys, Chair of the North Carolina Bar Association Labor and Employment Section, and as a Commissioner on the NC State Personnel Commission. Lisa has been included in Business North Carolina's "Legal Elite" Super Lawyers (top 50 women lawyers, 2011), and Best Lawyers in America since 2007. She graduated Northwestern University in 1988, and from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Law in 1995. |
| Liz | Logsdon | Managing Attorney, Investigations Unit | Disability Rights California | Elizabeth (Liz) Logsdon is the Managing Attorney of the Investigations Unit at Disability Rights California (DRC). DRC's Investigations Unit addresses the abuse and neglect of people with disabilities in all settings, including long term care facilities, state hospitals, developmental centers, community-based settings, jails, and immigration detention facilities. The IU pursues non-litigation systemic advocacy solutions with a focus on public policy. Liz joined DRC in July 2018 after working for Disability Rights Tennessee, the Tennessee P&A, for over five years. She obtained her law degree from Vanderbilt University Law School in 2011 and holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Central Florida. Liz lives in Los Angeles with her partner, dog Peaches, and cat Mr. Kitters. |

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| Lori | Augino | Director of Elections | Office of the Secretary of State - Washington | <p>Lori Augino is the Director of Elections for the Washington Office of the Secretary of State. Ms. Augino was appointed by Secretary of State Kim Wyman in January, 2013. In this position, Ms. Augino oversees federal, state, and local elections conducted by the 39 county elections officials in Washington State.</p> <p>The Director of Elections supervises voter outreach and voter registration and is responsible for the maintenance of a statewide voter registration database. This office certifies voting equipment and software for Washington elections and manages the certification and training program for county and state election administrators. The Director develops election-related legislation and provides leadership over all aspects of election administration in Washington State.</p> <p>Lori serves as President of the National Association of State Election Directors (NASED), a member of the Election Assistance Commission's Technical Guidelines Development Committee (TGDC), a member of the Council of State Government's Election Technology Working Group, and serves on the executive committee of the Department of Homeland Security's Elections Critical Infrastructure Government Coordinating Council.</p> <p>Prior to serving as Director of Elections, Lori worked for the Pierce County Auditor's Office for nearly 18 years, serving the citizens of Pierce County as the Chief Deputy Auditor from 2010 to 2013, overseeing the county's elections, licensing, recording, and animal control divisions. Lori served as Pierce County Elections Manager from 2000 to 2010. Lori managed the closest election (and two recounts) in Washington's history during the 2004 General Election in Pierce County. In 2009, Lori was named County Election Employee of the Year by former Secretary of State Sam Reed. She's a graduate of the University of Washington, holding a BA in politics, philosophy, and economics.</p> |
| Lou Ann | Blake | Deputy Executive Director, Jernigan Institute | National Federation of the Blind | <p>Prior to law school Lou Ann Blake, J.D. was an environmental engineer for almost twenty years, focusing on environmental protection, but she found that her workplace was not properly accommodating her disability. She has retinitis pigmentosa, and her vision has gradually deteriorated over the years. She uses screen magnification software and closed circuit TV to accommodate her impairment. She attended law school at Widener University Law School (Wilmington, DE), where she was on law review. Lou Ann Blake is currently Deputy Director of the Jernigan Institute at National Federation of the Blind, leading their efforts on nonvisual voter access and coordinating the Jacobus tenBroek Disability Law Symposium.</p> |
| Lynn | Grosso | Director of Enforcement | Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, HUD | <p>Lynn Grosso is the Director of Enforcement in HUD's Office of Fair Housing. In this capacity, she oversees the administration of HUD's national fair housing enforcement and compliance operations. With over 25 years' experience in fair housing enforcement, Lynn has been a key leader on many of the Department's highest profile fair housing initiatives, particularly in the area of disability rights and accessible housing. Lynn recently negotiated and executed HUD's landmark 10-year agreement with the City of Los Angeles covering over 800 affordable multifamily developments and has provided expert testimony in precedent-setting fair housing litigation on the subjects of disability discrimination and reasonable accommodation. She also has expertise at the intersection of fair housing enforcement and disaster recovery, sparked largely by her deployment to the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina to tackle issues in emergency housing and long term recovery.</p> |
| Maggie | Hart | Counsel | Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights | <p>Maggie Hart is Counsel at the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs where her practice focuses on litigation to uphold and expand the rights of individuals with disabilities to participate in civic activities, the economy, and the social life of the community. Prior to joining the Committee, Ms. Hart was a staff attorney at Disability Rights DC at University Legal Services, practiced special education law in New York City, and interned at the Disabilities Rights Network of Pennsylvania during law school. She has handled cases arising under the American with Disabilities Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Ms. Hart attended Temple University, Beasley School of Law and Fordham University where she earned a Bachelor of the Arts in International Political Economy.</p> |
| Mark | Murphy | Senior Attorney | Center for Public Representation | <p>Mark Murphy is a Senior Attorney with the Center for Public Representation. He has represented people with disabilities and disability rights organizations in a wide range of legal matters for more than 30 years, including cases involving the right to integrated, community-based services and the enforcement of rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Fair Housing Act, and Title XIX (Medicaid).</p> <p>Prior the joining CPR, Mr. Murphy was the Managing Attorney at the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law. He has also held senior positions at both the New York and Pennsylvania protection and advocacy programs, including serving as the Legal Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Disability Rights Network of Pennsylvania and as the Executive Director of the Disabilities Law Project, based in Philadelphia. For several years, Mr. Murphy also worked as an adjunct professor at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, where he taught courses on the Law of Disability Discrimination and Mental Health Law.</p> <p>Mr. Murphy is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Pittsburgh School of Law.</p> |
| Michelle | Bishop | Voting Rights Specialist | National Disability Rights Network | <p>Michelle Bishop provides training and technical assistance to the P&A network regarding voting rights and access for voters with disabilities. Michelle also works in coalition with the civil rights community in Washington, DC to ensure strong federal policy regarding voting rights and election administration. Previously, Michelle worked as the Assistant Director of Public Policy & Advocacy at Paraquad Center for Independent Living in St. Louis, where she led their voting rights and GOTV activities for eight years.</p> |

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| Morgan | Whitlatch | Legal Director | Quality Trust for Individuals with Disabilities | Morgan K. Whitlatch is the Legal Director of Quality Trust for Individuals with Disabilities, an independent, non-profit advocacy organization that has advanced the interests of people with developmental disabilities since 2002. She is also the Lead Project Director of the National Resource Center for Supported Decision-Making (NRC-SDM). Morgan has devoted her legal career to working with and on behalf of people with disabilities and older adults in matters involving capacity, guardianship and alternatives, and the right to self-determination; community integration; living life free from abuse and neglect; and accessing public benefits and services. She has extensive experience in implementing systemic policy, practice, and training initiatives, including those of the NRC-SDM and the Jenny Hatch Justice Project (JHJP). Notably, Morgan co-represented the JHJP namesake in fighting for her right to engage in Supported Decision-Making as an alternative to permanent plenary guardianship. Morgan also served as Project Director under cooperative agreements with the National Council on Disability that resulted in two ground-breaking reports, "Beyond Guardianship: Towards Alternatives That Promote Greater Self Determination for People with Disabilities" (2018) and "Turning Rights into Reality: How Guardianship and Alternatives Impact the Autonomy of People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities" (2019). Prior to joining Quality Trust in 2009, Morgan was an attorney at Disability Rights Rhode Island, the state's protection and advocacy system for people with disabilities. Morgan graduated with honors from Georgetown University Law Center, and with honors, Phi Beta Kappa, from Wesleyan University. While in law school, she worked on disability-related policy and legislative issues by interning with former U.S. Senator Tom Harkin's Counsel on Disability Policy and participating in the Georgetown Federal Legislation Clinic, then led by Chai Feldblum, former Commissioner of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Morgan has been recognized by Georgetown University, Human Rights Action - Amnesty International, as making outstanding contributions through her work as a human rights practitioner, and is a member of the Disability Rights Bar Association. |
| Philip | Fornaci | NDRN | National Disability Rights Network | Philip Fornaci is a NDRN staff attorney who provides training and technical assistance on adult criminal justice issues for persons with disabilities as well as on abuse or neglect of persons with disabilities who reside in institutional settings. Prior to joining NDRN in March 2020, Philip spent more than twelve years as an advocate and litigator in Washington, DC on behalf of prisoners and formerly incarcerated people. He developed particular expertise around prison conditions, as well as around access to medical care and parole decision-making, with a specialized focus on issues affecting prisoners with disabilities. For five years, Philip served as the Executive Director for the Maryland P&A, now called Disability Rights Maryland, and later as Executive Director for a legal services program providing employment advocacy for low-income workers. He received his B.A. in Philosophy from Columbia University and a J.D. from the George Washington University School of Law. |
| Rebecca | Bond | Chief | Disability Rights Section, U.S. Dept. of Justice | Rebecca B. Bond currently serves as the Chief of the Disability Rights Section in the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department. In that capacity, Ms. Bond supervises all aspects of the office's work, including investigations and litigation, the provision of technical assistance, and the development of regulations under the Americans with Disabilities. Ms. Bond previously served as Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights and was responsible for oversight of the Division's disability rights enforcement, educational civil rights enforcement, and Title VI interagency coordination. Ms. Bond also has experience supervising and litigating Fair Housing Act cases, involving sexual harassment, race discrimination, and disability discrimination. Ms. Bond clerked and practiced in Puerto Rico and California. She is a graduate of Harvard Law School and Yale University. |
| Robert | Borrelle | Supervising Attorney | Disability Rights California | Robert Borrelle is a Supervising Attorney in Disability Rights California's Youth Practice Group. In this role, he advocates on behalf of students with disabilities for equal educational opportunities, access to services in the most integrated settings, and appropriate special education and supports. He received his B.A. from Boston College and his J.D. and M.S.Ed. from Syracuse University. |
| Ron | Hager | Managing Attorney | National Disability Rights Network | Ron Hager provides training and technical assistance to the P&As on special education and assistive technology, and assists in overseeing training and technical assistance to CAP. He has specialized in disability law, particularly special education, since 1979, when he started his legal career in Buffalo as a VISTA attorney. After that, he was a Clinical Professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo Law School for nine years, supervising the Education Law Clinic. In 1991, Ron moved to Neighborhood Legal Services (NLS) where he represented clients in a wide variety of disability-related cases. As part of NLS's National AT Advocacy Project, Ron also was a frequent author on disability-law-related issues. He was co-chair of the New York State Bar Association's Committee on the Rights of People with Disabilities for four years, and was the President of the Board of Directors of Autistic Services, Inc., in Western New York, for ten years. Ron earned a B.A. in Psychology from the State University of New York at Binghamton and a J.D. from the State University of New York at Buffalo Law School. |
| Ronald | Lospennato | Director of Legal Services & Litigation | Disability Rights Louisiana | Ron Lospennato is the legal director for Disability Rights Louisiana. In that capacity, Ron provides supervision for all of the DRLA litigation which includes systemic work in a variety of settings, both institutional and community-based. Previously, he worked at the Southern Poverty Legal Center as the Director of their School to Prison Pipeline in an effort to reform the education system for the intersectional benefit of children with disabilities and children of color. Before that, Ron was the first attorney hired by the New Hampshire protection and advocacy system. Ron is considered an expert in the network on a number of important areas such as P&A standing, access authority, and systemic litigation. He received his law degree from the University of New Hampshire. |

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| Samantha | Reed | Staff Attorney & Dentons Fellow | Equip for Equality | Samantha has been a staff attorney on the Civil Rights Team at Equip for Equality since 2018, advocating for the rights of prisoners with disabilities. As a Dentons fellow, Samantha works primarily on the <i>Rasho v. Jeffreys</i> class action seeking improved mental health care in the Illinois Department of Corrections. She also works on individual and systemic matters involving other disability issues in prison. Samantha earned her J.D. from Berkeley Law in 2015 and has a B.S. in Social Policy from Northwestern University. Prior to joining at EFE, Samantha was a staff law clerk at the US Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit and worked at a private law firm. |
| Samuel | Bagenstos | Professor | University of Michigan Law School | Samuel Bagenstos is the Frank G. Millard Professor of Law at University of Michigan School of Law and specializes in constitutional and civil rights litigation. From 2009 to 2011, he was a political appointee in the U.S. Department of Justice, where he served as the principal deputy assistant attorney general for civil rights, the No. 2 official in the Civil Rights Division. His accomplishments included the promulgation of the 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act regulations—the first comprehensive update of those regulations since they were first promulgated in 1991—and the reinvigoration of the Civil Rights Division’s enforcement of the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in <i>Olmstead v. L.C.</i> , which guarantees people with disabilities the right to live and receive services in the most integrated setting appropriate. He led the negotiations of significant <i>Olmstead</i> settlements with the states of Delaware and Georgia, which guarantee appropriate, community-based services to thousands of people with disabilities. He also personally argued major cases in federal district courts and courts of appeals. Professor Bagenstos frequently consults with civil rights organizations and remains an active appellate and U.S. Supreme Court litigator in civil rights and federalism cases. He has argued four cases before the Supreme Court, including <i>Young v. United Parcel Service</i> , 135 S. Ct 1338 (2015), which established new protections for pregnant workers, and <i>United States v. Georgia</i> , 546 U.S. 151 (2006), which upheld, as applied to his client’s case, the constitutionality of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Professor Bagenstos also has testified before Congress on several occasions, including in support of the Fair Pay Restoration Act, the ADA Amendments Act, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, as well as on the application of the ADA to advancing technology and the problem of mental illness in prisons. Professor Bagenstos was appointed by Michigan Gov. Whitmer, to be chair of the Michigan Employment Relations Commission, the state agency that enforces the rights of public employees to unionize and collectively bargain. He was also appointed by Ann Arbor Mayor Taylor to serve as a member of the Ann Arbor Housing Commission. He is a frequent cooperating attorney with the ACLU of Michigan. From 2007 to 2008 Professor Bagenstos was a professor of law and associate dean for research and faculty development at Washington University School of Law. He has been on the faculty of Harvard Law School and was a visiting professor at UCLA Sarah Somers is Managing Attorney of the National Health Law Program’s North Carolina offices. She specializes in litigation and litigation support to advance access to quality health care for low income and other underserved people. Working with health and poverty law advocates across the country, she engages in litigation, research, writing, and training on the Medicaid program, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Affordable Care Act, among other issues. Before joining the National Health Law Program, Sarah worked for the Native American Protection and Advocacy Project on the Navajo Nation, where she represented children in special education and Medicaid cases. She also worked for the Legal Aid Society of Alameda County and American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Southern California. She began her legal career as a judicial clerk for Justice James Brickley on the Supreme Court of Michigan. Sarah is a graduate of Wellesley College. She received her J.D. from the University of Michigan Law School and her M.P.H. from the University of North Carolina Gillings School of Global Public Health. |
| Sarah | Somers | Managing Attorney | National Health Law Program | |
| Sarah | Beebe | Supervising Attorney | Disability Rights Texas | Sarah Beebe is a Supervising Attorney with Disability Rights Texas (DRTx) for the Juvenile Probation Education Advocacy Program. Sarah supervises a team of Education Specialists and a Legal Fellow who provide education advocacy services to probation-involved youth, as well as technical assistance and advice to individuals working for and with the juvenile justice system. In this role, Sarah maintains her own caseload and also develops and delivers trainings to probation-involved youth and families, as well as probation officers, court staff, and community organizations. Sarah also directs and manages the systemic advocacy projects of the team in an effort to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline. Before entering law school, Sarah was a social worker who worked with children with disabilities in the foster care and juvenile justice systems. Sarah began her legal career as an Equal Justice Works Fellow with DRTx (then Advocacy, Inc.). As a Fellow, Sarah operated a Special Education Clinic where parents of students with disabilities could learn about their rights and receive technical assistance and advice from volunteer advocates and attorneys. After her Fellowship, Sarah transitioned to the role of staff attorney with DRTx during which time she provided direct representation to hundreds of students with disabilities and their families. Sarah received a Bachelor of Arts from Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana, Magna Cum Laude (2003), a Masters in Social Work from Tulane School of Social Work (2004), and a Juris Doctor from William & Mary School of Law in Williamsburg, VA (2009). |

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| Steven | Schwartz | Legal Director | Center for Public Representation | Steven J. Schwartz is the Center's Litigation Director. He began practicing mental disability law in 1971 after graduating from Harvard Law School and served as the Center's Executive Director for 38 years, until September 2011. He has extensive experience litigating class action cases challenging issues related to the institutional confinement and community integration of persons with disabilities and has successfully resolved a number of damage cases for individuals with disabilities. Mr. Schwartz has authored a number of law review articles, testified before Congress on P&A authorizing legislation and abuse and neglect issues, and served on the faculty of the Harvard and Western New England Law Schools. |
| Susan Ann | Silverstein | Senior Attorney | AARP Foundation Litigation | Ms. Silverstein is a Senior Attorney for AARP Foundation where she litigates impact and systemic change cases in the areas of fair housing, disability rights and low-income issues. Ms. Silverstein has litigated significant cases establishing the rights of people with disabilities to age in place in public and private housing, including assisted living, retirement communities and in the context of community planning and redevelopment. Ms. Silverstein received her BS from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and her JD from Columbia University School of Law. She was a Community Builder Fellow with the Department of Housing and Urban Development in conjunction with the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. She began her career as a Reginald Heber Smith Fellow at Southern Tier Legal Services in Bath, NY, and worked for other legal services offices in Western New York. |
| Thomas | Nichols | Legal Director | Disability Rights Arkansas, Inc. | Thomas Nichols is the Director of Advocacy and Legal Services at Disability Rights Arkansas. Thomas has been a practicing attorney for 11 years, having first been in private practice. Thomas first joined the Arkansas P&A in 2015 as a staff attorney, where he practiced primarily in CAP and Medicaid advocacy. Since that time, Thomas has served as a managing attorney over the Education, Employment, and Medicaid teams before becoming Legal Director in 2019. Thomas has handled a wide variety of CAP cases, including issues such as institutional bias, access to effective communication, and efforts to cap services. |
| William | Van Der Pol, J | Senior Trial Counsel | Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program | Bill leads ADAP's Community Access Team. He holds a B.S. from Indiana University - Bloomington (1981) and a J.D. from Indiana University - Indianapolis (1984). Prior to joining ADAP in 2013, he practiced for 29 years in Indiana, primarily in the areas of criminal defense and mental health law. At ADAP, his primary areas of responsibility is in advocating for, and protecting the interests of individuals with mental illness or intellectual disabilities in institutions or community settings. He is currently ADAP's lead counsel in two pending class actions lawsuits in federal court; Braggs v. Dunn, a lawsuit filed on behalf of all inmates in the Alabama Department of Corrections, and Hunter v. Beshear, a lawsuit filed on behalf of inmates awaiting competency evaluations or competency restoration. |