



Legal Aid Society
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

MAKING JUSTICE REAL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Eric Angel
Executive Director
(202) 661-5957
eangel@legalaiddc.org

**LEGAL AID ESTABLISHES NEW
APPELLATE ADVOCACY FELLOWSHIP**

WASHINGTON, D.C., September 5, 2017 –The Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia (Legal Aid) is pleased to announce a new Appellate Advocacy Fellowship with the support of the law firm of Sidley Austin LLP. This one-year Appellate Advocacy Fellowship will strengthen Legal Aid’s nationally-recognized Barbara McDowell Appellate Advocacy Project. We are pleased to welcome our inaugural fellow, David Carpman, who will join Legal Aid in September 2017.

“Winning a precedent-setting case at the D.C. Court of Appeals can be a powerful tool to achieve systemic change for families and individuals living in poverty,” said Eric Angel, Legal Aid’s Executive Director. “This new fellowship will significantly increase our capacity to do more for our client community.”

The Barbara McDowell Appellate Advocacy Project, which primarily briefs and argues cases before the D.C. Court of Appeals, has been called a “model of excellence” by the National Legal Aid and Defender Association. Named after its late, first Director, a renowned appellate and U.S. Supreme Court advocate, the Project litigates precedent-setting appeals on behalf of Legal Aid clients and files “friend of the court” briefs in cases involving matters of importance to people living in poverty. Beyond litigation, the Project provides appellate instruction, consultation, and advice to the larger D.C. legal services community.

“We are very excited about this opportunity to expand Legal Aid’s appellate advocacy work,” said Kwaku A. Akowuah, a Sidley partner and Legal Aid board member. “This fellowship is a further reflection of the firm’s commitment, across many initiatives, to help increase access to justice for individuals living in poverty.”

Most recently, David Carpman served as a legislative counsel for Senator Richard Blumenthal. He is a graduate of Harvard Law School, where he was a student attorney with the Harvard Legal Aid Bureau and received the Dean’s Award for Community Leadership for completing more

than 2,000 hours of pro bono work. Upon graduation, he clerked for judges on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. At Legal Aid, David will be working closely with Jonathan Levy, the Director of the Barbara McDowell Appellate Advocacy Project and a 15-year veteran of the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Division Appellate Staff.

“In recent years, Legal Aid has worked hard to expand reach and impact of the Project, which has led to an increase in the overall workload,” said Jonathan Levy. “Our ability to handle this growing work load will undoubtedly be improved with the initiation of the Sidley Austin Appellate Advocacy Fellowship.”

About Legal Aid

Legal Aid was created in 1932 with the goal of *making justice real* – in individual and systemic ways – for persons living in poverty in the District of Columbia. For more than 85 years, Legal Aid lawyers have provided a continuum of legal services to clients in the areas of domestic violence/family, housing, public benefits, and consumer law. In addition to providing direct representation, we also help clients avoid unnecessary legal entanglements through outreach and education, and help them resolve their own disputes with advice and other brief assistance.

Legal Aid also works to identify systemic issues that on which its advocacy can have an impact beyond an individual client. In such cases, it often seek structural solutions – from changes in law or regulatory schemes to a reform of government or court practice – to benefit our client community. And its nationally-recognized Barbara McDowell Appellate Advocacy Project, which pursues an anti-poverty agenda, litigates important cases affecting persons living in poverty before the D.C. Court of Appeals every year. In all that it does, Legal Aid strives to make fair and equal access to justice possible for those who need it most.

For more information about Legal Aid and the Barbara McDowell Appellate Advocacy Project, please visit our website, www.LegalAidDC.org, and our blog, www.MakingJusticeReal.Org.