



Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law Appoints New Legal Director

For immediate release

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(Washington, D.C.) -- The Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, a national legal advocacy organization advancing the rights of people with mental disabilities, today announced the appointment of Megan Schuller as the organization's new Legal Director. Ira Burnim, the Bazelon Center's longtime Legal Director, will remain on staff as a Senior Counsel.

"Megan brings the right combination of intellect, energy and leadership to guide the future of the Bazelon Center," said **Eve Hill, the Bazelon Center's board chair**. "We are excited to have her join the Center's outstanding team. On behalf of the Bazelon Center, we can't thank Ira enough for his tireless and successful efforts over the past 30 years to move the law forward for people with disabilities, and we are delighted that he will be staying on as Senior Counsel."

Schuller joins the Bazelon Center from the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), where she spent over a decade focused on disability rights, systemic reform of public service systems, and high-impact litigation. Throughout her successful career, the majority of Schuller's cases involved discrimination against people with mental disabilities. She also served as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney in the District of Columbia. Prior to law school, Schuller worked as Chief of Staff and Senior Paralegal at McAllister Olivarius LLP, in London, United Kingdom.

Burnim, and Holly O'Donnell, President and CEO, are looking forward to Schuller joining the Bazelon Center in May.

"Megan has deep experience in advancing legal advocacy under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). I look forward to working with her and her bringing fresh

perspectives and strategies that will strengthen the Bazelon Center's impact on law, policy, and the lives of people with mental and other disabilities," said **Burnim**.

"Megan is joining the Bazelon Center as mental health law experiences a critical time in the United States, and she will extend the reach of the Bazelon Center's legal advocacy on critical issues including racial justice, immigrant rights and technology," said **O'Donnell**.

"The Bazelon Center has changed the legal landscape for people with mental disabilities for the better," said **Megan Schuller**. "Many challenges remain in the fight for equality, justice and autonomy; I am honored and humbled to join Bazelon in that fight. I will most certainly be standing on the shoulders of giants as we look toward a future free from discrimination, prejudice and bigotry for people with mental and other disabilities."

Joining the DOJ as a trial attorney through the Honors program, Schuller has litigated novel legal issues and high-impact cases under the ADA. She has negotiated landmark agreements with State and local governments and large corporations to enact lasting systemic reform for people with disabilities. Schuller has served on White House panels and interagency working groups addressing diverse civil rights issues, and has been recognized with numerous DOJ awards for her work protecting and advancing the rights of people with disabilities. Schuller received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Yale University and her Juris Doctor from the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law. She currently resides in Washington, DC with her spouse and two children.

About the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law: Since 1972, the Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law has advocated for the civil rights, full inclusion and equality of adults and children with mental disabilities. The Bazelon Center was pivotal in expanding the civil rights movement to include fighting discrimination against, and segregation of, people with mental disabilities. Today, the Bazelon Center accomplishes its goals through a combination of litigation, public policy advocacy, public education and technical assistance.

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