

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law Receives \$2 Million Gift from Yield Giving Open Call

March 19, 2024 – Today, MacKenzie Scott's Yield Giving announced Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law as one of the [Yield Giving](#) Open Call's awardees working with people and in places experiencing the greatest need in the United States. The Bazelon Center received \$2 million. This is the largest unrestricted single contribution in the organization's history.

The [Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law](#) is a national non-profit legal advocacy organization. For over 50 years, the Bazelon Center has advanced equal opportunity and full inclusion for people with mental disabilities. Through litigation, policy advocacy, public education and technical assistance, the Bazelon Center works to protect and advance the civil rights of individuals with mental disabilities in all aspects of life.

"We are so appreciative of MacKenzie Scott's tremendous and impactful gift to the Bazelon Center. This gift will allow us to fast track and expand our groundbreaking legal advocacy work. We were stunned and humbled to receive \$1M more than we applied for," said **Holly O'Donnell, President & CEO of the Bazelon Center**.

"Right now, every day we make agonizing decisions not to take valid legal cases that could strengthen the law and change people's lives," said **Eve Hill, Chair of the Board of Trustees at the Bazelon Center and Partner at Brown, Goldstein & Levy**. "With this transformational gift, I believe the Bazelon Center will be able to expand the rights of people with mental disabilities in the areas of education, employment, health care, criminal justice, housing, voting, and more."

"The \$2M grant from Yield Giving will enable the Bazelon Center to be leaders in addressing the most challenging issues of our time for people with mental health disabilities," added **Megan Schuller, Legal Director of the Bazelon Center**. "Today, people with mental health disabilities, particularly in Black and brown communities, face life-threatening challenges, experiencing violence and incarceration instead of care. Artificial Intelligence is being used to perpetuate and entrench deep-seeded bias and discrimination. Yield's transformational grant will allow us to expand our work to address emergent challenges and to protect the rights of people with mental disabilities all the way up to the Supreme Court."

In March 2023, Yield Giving launched an Open Call for community-led, community-focused organizations whose explicit purpose is to enable individuals and families to achieve substantive improvement in their well-being through foundational resources.

The Open Call received 6,353 applications and initially planned for 250 awards of \$1 million each. In the Fall of 2023, organizations top-rated by their peers advanced to a second round of

review by an external Evaluation Panel recruited for experience relevant to this cause and underwent a final round of due diligence. In light of the incredible work of these organizations, as judged by their peers and external panelists, the donor team decided to expand the awardee pool and the award amount.

"We are excited that our partnership with Yield Giving has resonated with so many organizations," said **Cecilia Conrad, CEO of Lever for Change**. "In a world teeming with potential and talent, the Open Call has given us an opportunity to identify, uplift, and empower transformative organizations that often remain unseen."

More information on the Yield Giving Open Call and other initiatives can be found at www.leverforchange.org.

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Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law

For over 50 years, the Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, a national non-profit, has advocated for the civil rights, full inclusion and equality of adults and children with mental disabilities. The Bazelon Center played a pivotal role in expanding the civil rights movement to include fighting discrimination against, and segregation of, people with mental disabilities through numerous disability rights cases in the U.S. Supreme Court, including in *Olmstead v. L.C.* (Lois Curtis), which established that the unnecessary segregation of people with disabilities is discrimination under federal law. Through litigation, policy advocacy, public education, and technical assistance, the Bazelon Center works to protect and advance the civil rights of individuals with mental disabilities in all aspects of life, including health care, community living, employment, housing, voting, and education. To learn more, visit www.bazelon.org.

Yield Giving

Established by MacKenzie Scott to share a financial fortune created through the effort of countless people, Yield Giving is named after a belief in adding value by giving up control. To date, Yield's network of staff and advisors has yielded over \$16,500,000,000 to 1,900+ non-profit teams to use as they see fit for the benefit of others. To learn more, visit www.yieldgiving.com.

Lever for Change

Lever for Change connects donors with bold solutions to the world's biggest problems—including issues like racial inequity, gender inequality, lack of access to economic opportunity, and climate change. Using an inclusive, equitable model and due diligence process, Lever for Change creates customized challenges and other tailored funding opportunities. Top-ranked teams and challenge finalists become members of the Bold Solutions Network—a growing global network that helps secure additional funding, amplify members' impact, and accelerate social change. Founded in 2019 as a nonprofit affiliate of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Lever for Change has influenced over \$1.7 billion in grants to date and provided support to more than 145 organizations. To learn more, visit www.leverforchange.org.