

Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia Director, Barbara McDowell Appellate Advocacy Program

Position Announcement

The Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia seeks an experienced appellate specialist to work on litigation and pursue an affirmative anti-poverty law reform agenda before D.C.'s highest court, the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. The Director will work closely with each of Legal Aid's practice units, with other legal services programs, and with pro bono counsel to influence the development of decisional law in a manner favorable to litigants living in poverty.

The Legal Aid Society was formed in 1932 to "provide legal aid and counsel to indigent persons in civil law matters and to encourage measures by which the law may better protect and serve their needs." Legal Aid is the oldest general civil legal services program in the District of Columbia. Over the last 70 years, tens of thousands of the District's neediest residents have been served by Legal Aid staff and volunteers. In pursuit of our mission, Legal Aid employs a range of strategies to address the legal needs of our clients and our client community. The largest part of our work is direct client service in our legal and social work programs. From the experiences of our clients, we identify opportunities for law reform, public policy advocacy and systemic reform litigation.

The Appellate Advocacy Program was founded in 2004 in an effort to help the civil legal services community to develop a concerted law reform agenda before the D.C. Court of Appeals. The Project is named for its first Director, Barbara McDowell, who joined Legal Aid after having served as an Assistant Solicitor General. She was a well respected appellate advocate who had argued 18 cases before the Supreme Court of the United States and numerous others before federal appellate courts. At Legal Aid, Ms. McDowell became the leading anti-poverty voice in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. Ms. McDowell passed away in January at far too young an age.

Tasks and Duties

The Director of the program will lead this law reform effort. The attorney will draft briefs and present oral arguments on cases of importance to persons living in poverty. Through close work with Legal Aid's practice units and careful monitoring of the courts and administrative tribunals, the Director of the Program will help identify significant emerging or unresolved issues for presentation before the Court. In addition to serving as lead counsel on matters, the attorney will also help develop cases at the trial level that may present law reform issues, participate as amicus, coordinate the work of volunteer attorneys, coordinate the development of issues and the filing of briefs with other legal services providers, and act as a resource to anti-poverty advocates with cases in the Court of

Appeals. The position may also involve supervisory responsibility over staff attorneys, fellows, and/or pro bono counsel.

Qualifications

The ideal candidate will have the following:

- * Strong research, writing, and appellate advocacy skills;
- * The ability to supervise and work collaboratively with other staff and volunteer attorneys;
- * Significant appellate litigation experience; and
- * A demonstrated commitment to social and economic justice.

Salary and Benefits

The attorney will be paid in accordance with Legal Aid's attorney salary scale. Legal Aid offers a generous benefits package.

To Apply

Legal Aid encourages all interested persons regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion or disability to apply.

Interested persons should send a letter of interest, resume and legal writing sample to:

Director, Appellate Advocacy Program Search
Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia
1331 H Street, N.W., Suite 350
Washington, D.C. 20005

Or e-mail: aaps@legalaiddc.org

Position remains open until filled.