

2020
BAZELON CENTER FOR
MENTAL HEALTH LAW
VIRTUAL ANNUAL AWARDS

*Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Americans
with Disabilities Act*

NOVEMBER 17, 2020

Welcome!

We are so pleased that you are here tonight for our 2020 Virtual Annual Awards!

This event is a celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the leaders whose work has made such a difference in the lives of people with disabilities, and, by doing so, has made a difference in the lives of all of us.

The Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law has been championing the rights and dignity of people with disabilities since 1972. We advocate for the civil rights, full inclusion and equality of children and adults with mental disabilities. Through high-impact litigation, policy advocacy, and technical assistance, the Bazelon Center works to improve systems of Health Care & Mental Health Care; Education;

Employment; Housing; Criminal Justice; and Access to Community Services. As our Legal Director, Ira Burnim, put it succinctly, “Our ideas are pretty simple. Kids should grow up in families and have access to a meaningful education. People should be able to stay in their own homes and get services in their communities. People need jobs - just like people who don’t have disabilities. That’s what we’re fighting for.”

Showing your support by joining us this evening means a great deal, as we and our special guests take time to recognize the **Honorable Tony Coelho**, a primary sponsor of the ADA, who is receiving our Lifetime Achievement Award.

We also honor Advocate of the Year, **Allisa Fernandez**, Advocate of the Year, **Chacku Mathai**, Outstanding

Pro Bono Lawyer, **Jeff Goldman**,
and Outstanding Pro Bono Partner,
**Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton &
Garrison LLP**. Through tonight's
program, we hope you will learn
more about the Bazelon Center's
important and impactful work and
that you will continue to support our
movement to protect and advance
the rights of people with mental
disabilities.

Congratulations to our honorees.
Thank you to tonight's sponsors and
donors. And a special thank you
to **Amna Nawaz**, Senior National
Correspondent, PBS NewsHour, for
making this evening special.

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Mission & Vision

Our ideas are pretty simple. Kids should grow up in families and have access to a meaningful education. People should be able to stay in their own homes and get services in their communities. People need jobs – just like people who don't have disabilities.

That's what we're fighting for.

—IRA BURNIM
Bazelon Center
LEGAL DIRECTOR

The mission of the Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law is to protect and advance the civil rights of adults and children with mental illness or developmental disabilities.

We envision a society where Americans with mental disabilities live with autonomy, dignity, and opportunity in welcoming communities, supported by law, policy, and practices that help them reach their full potential.

The Center works on issues relating to:

- Health Care & Mental Health Care
- Education
- Employment
- Housing
- Criminal Justice
- Access to Community Services
- Immigration

2020 Select Achievements

Doe v. State of Ohio

Ground-breaking settlement agreement with State of Ohio in longstanding special education class action lawsuit that will improve the academic achievement of students with disabilities, in part by supporting their inclusion in regular classrooms.

Katie A. v. Bontá

After an 18 year battle, foster children and youth in Los Angeles County get the intensive home and community-based mental services they need.

Baltimore, Maryland

Large advocacy effort, working with partners, including the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and the ACLU of Maryland, to ensure that the City of Baltimore and its police department effectively implement reforms required by a 2017 Consent Decree with the U.S. Department of Justice.

COVID-19 Advocacy

Ensuring that people with disabilities are treated fairly during the COVID-19 crisis in the United States.

2020 Select Achievements Continued

Alameda County, California

In July 2020, Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law and our partners filed a federal lawsuit under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) against Alameda County and Alameda Health System. The lawsuit challenges the unnecessary and illegal segregation of people with mental health disabilities -- especially Black people with disabilities -- in psychiatric institutions and the failure to ensure people with disabilities are provided the services they need. Watch [this video](#), [read the complaint](#) and the [press release](#).

Read about our other 2020 Achievements at <http://www.bazelon.org/newsroom/press-releases/>

Past Awardees

2019

Keynote Speaker

VANITA GUPTA

President & CEO, Leadership Conference on Civil & Human Rights

Outstanding Pro Bono Lawyer

AARON M. PANNER

Partner, Kellogg, Hansen, Todd, Figel & Fredrick, PLLC

Outstanding Pro Bono Partner

STEPTOE & JOHNSON, LLP

Advocate of the Year

KATHY FLAHERTY

Executive Director, Connecticut Legal Rights Project

Emerging Young Advocate

NYAMUON “MOON” NGUANY MACHAR

Cultural Strategist and Advocate, Disability Rights Maine

Corporation of the Year

ERNST & YOUNG LLP

Past Awardees

2017

Outstanding Public Service Award

KENNETH FEINBERG

Pro Bono Service Award

SCHULTE ROTH & ZABEL LLP

Excellence in

Advocacy Award

SENATOR PATTY MURRAY

(D-WA)

Excellence in

Leadership Award

ROBERT BERNSTEIN, PH.D.

2020 Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient

The Honorable Tony Coelho

The Honorable Anthony “Tony” Coelho has spent his entire adult life helping advance the lives of people with disabilities. He calls this his “ministry” while those in the disability community call him their “voice” and “champion.”

Diagnosed with epilepsy when he was 22 years old, Mr. Coelho’s ministry is marked by significant milestones: primary author and sponsor of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) — the most important piece of civil rights legislation in the last 30 years; advocating for the ratification of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and convincing President Bill Clinton to establish the Office of Disability Employment Policy at the U.S. Department of Labor.

Mr. Coelho is a former six-term United States Congressman from California, elected in 1978 and serving until 1989. In 1986, Mr. Coelho was elected House Majority Whip, the third most powerful position in the House of Representatives.

After leaving Congress, Mr. Coelho joined Wertheim Schroder & Company, Inc., an investment-banking firm in New York, where he served as a Managing Director and then as President and CEO of Wertheim Schroder Investment Services, a firm that he grew from \$400 million to \$4 billion in managed investments.

In 2018, Mr. Coelho founded The Coelho Center for Disability Law, Policy and Innovation at Loyola Marymount University. The Coelho Center

convenes thought leaders to pursue positive change on disability issues; leverages technology to advance the lives of people with disabilities; and creates a pipeline of lawyers with disabilities to populate the bench and hold elected office.

A native of California, Mr. Coelho earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science in 1964 from Loyola University in Los Angeles (now Loyola Marymount University), where he served as Student Body President during his senior year. Mr. Coelho has served as a member of Loyola Marymount University's Board of Trustees and received an Honorary Doctorate in 1987. Mr. Coelho currently serves on the Board of Directors of both the Epilepsy Foundation and the American Association of People with Disabilities.

2020 Outstanding Pro Bono Lawyer Award Recipient Jeff Goldman | Morgan, Lewis, & Brockius LLP

Jeff Goldman is of counsel to Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP, where he focuses on securities litigation. Jeff has had frequent successes representing companies and individuals in securities fraud cases and in sales practice disputes. Jeff also represents clients in other types of complex litigation and is regularly asked to assist clients in presenting difficult legal issues to courts, and in preparing critical motions. As a versatile advocate and explainer, Jeff has a history of success in front of jurors, judges, and arbitrators. Jeff often appears before regulatory agencies such as the Securities and Exchange Commission where he presents understandable, common-language explanations of sophisticated trading strategies and difficult accounting guidance. As a longtime resident of Maine, Jeff has also assisted Morgan Lewis clients in a wide range of matters in Maine federal and state courts, and in state regulatory agencies. Prior to entering private practice, Jeff served as a law clerk for Judge Kermit V. Lipez of the First Circuit Court of Appeals and for Margaret H. Marshall, Chief Justice of Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court.

2020 Outstanding Pro Bono Partner Award Recipient

Paul, Weiss

Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP is a firm of more than 1,000 lawyers with diverse backgrounds, personalities, ideas and interests who provide innovative and effective solutions to our clients' most complex legal and business challenges.

Paul, Weiss represents some of the world's largest publicly and privately held corporations, financial institutions and asset managers, and clients needing pro bono assistance. The firm is widely recognized as having market-leading practices in public M&A, private equity, litigation, white-collar & regulatory defense, and restructuring, along with equally strong practices in employee benefits & executive compensation, intellectual property, personal representation, real estate and tax law.

Paul, Weiss is committed to providing impactful pro bono legal assistance to individuals and organizations in need. Our program is all-encompassing, spanning the core issues facing our society. Throughout our firm's history, we have maintained an unwavering commitment to providing pro bono legal assistance to the most vulnerable members of our society and in support of the public interest. This commitment is a part of the firm's identity, and is embraced by every member of the Paul, Weiss community, from the most senior leaders across all departments to the summer associates who join us each year.

From helping Thurgood Marshall reverse the doctrine of "separate but equal" in *Brown v. Board of Education* to representing Edith Windsor in

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From helping Thurgood Marshall reverse the doctrine of "separate but equal" in *Brown v. Board of Education* to representing Edith Windsor in challenging the Defense of Marriage Act in *United States v. Windsor*, our attorneys have achieved landmark victories in civil rights cases that have changed society for the better. Paul, Weiss lawyers participate in all levels of pro bono work, working directly with individual clients, non-profits and small businesses in a wide range of substantive areas, as well as handling appeals and drafting key amicus briefs before the Supreme Court.

Pro bono and public service are central tenets of the firm. These values are reinforced throughout every lawyer's career at Paul, Weiss.

2020 Advocate of the Year Award Recipient

Allilsa Fernandez | Northwell Health

Allilsa Fernandez graduated magna cum laude from Stony Brook University in December 2018 with a B.A. in psychology, despite being told she would never be able to attend school because of her struggles with psychosis. Allilsa is currently a volunteer member with Sylvia Rivera Law Project working in Shelter Organizing, which meets with the Department of Homelessness to address policies surrounding Trans, Gender non-conforming and disability.

She is also a volunteer member with Met Council, working on addressing Housing insecurities and tenants rights, especially at the intersections of poverty, people of color, and disability, and she works as a Peer Specialist in Lenox Hill Hospital.

She is also a consultant for Facebook on Mental Health and Disability Policies and currently is working with district attorney candidate Janos Marton on mental health policies and the carceral system. She founded Peer Mental Health Alliance, an organization that provides resources, peer-to-peer support and creative arts programming, which aims to end the stigma.

Through her activism, Allilsa fought for and assured ADA compliance at Stony Brook University. In 2020 she completed a law fellowship with the Coelho Center for Disability Law, Policy and Innovation, and during the pandemic Allilsa created a Facebook group called Mental Health Pandemic to address the mental health needs surrounding COVID-19, and helped found Disability Underground which addresses healthcare advocacy

Through her activism, Allilsa fought for and assured ADA compliance at Stony Brook University. In 2020 she completed a law fellowship with the Coelho Center for Disability Law, Policy and Innovation, and during the pandemic Allilsa created a Facebook group called Mental Health Pandemic to address the mental health needs surrounding COVID-19, and helped found Disability Underground which addresses healthcare advocacy and mutual aid surrounding COVID-19. Her work has been featured in mainstream media such as Forbes Magazine.

2020 Advocate of the Year Award Recipient

Chacku Mathai,

Center for Practice Innovations at Columbia University

Chacku is an Indian-American, who became involved in consumer/survivor/ex-patient advocacy and peer support when he was 15 years old. Chacku's personal experiences with racism, xenophobia, racialized trauma, suicide attempts, and disabling mental health and substance use conditions, including psychosis as a youth and young adult, launched Chacku and his family towards a number of efforts to advocate for improved services, social conditions, and alternative supports in the community.

He has since accumulated 35 years of experience in a variety of roles including youth leadership, community organizing/advocacy, direct service, training, and program leadership in Community Mental Health Centers, residential programs, and peer support, as well as international, national, statewide, and local board governance and executive leadership roles.

This Evening's Emcee

Amna Nawaz

Amna Nawaz serves as senior national correspondent and primary substitute anchor for the PBS NewsHour.

Prior to joining the NewsHour in April 2018, Nawaz was an anchor and correspondent at ABC News, anchoring breaking news coverage and leading the network's livestream coverage of the 2016 presidential election. Before that, she served as a foreign correspondent at NBC News, reporting from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Syria, Turkey, and the broader region. She is also the founder and former managing editor of NBC's Asian America platform, built to elevate the voices of America's fastest-growing population.

At the NewsHour, Nawaz reports on politics, education, climate change, health care, national security, culture, and sports. She's interviewed heads of state, senior Administration officials, and entertainment icons. Her reporting has taken her to border communities along the US-Mexico border and into Central America, to remote parts of the Brazilian Amazon, and to big cities and small towns in every corner of America.

In 2019, her reporting as part of a NewsHour series on global plastic pollution was the recipient of a Peabody Award, and was turned into an hour-long, primetime special, *The Plastic Problem*, for PBS. In 2019, Nawaz also co-hosted the *Broken Justice* criminal justice podcast, examining the role of public defenders and the story of one man wrongfully imprisoned for decades.

While at ABC News, Nawaz reported the documentary, "Roberts County:

A Year in the Most Pro-Trump Town,” following four families’ lives over President Trump’s first year in office, and hosted the podcast series, “Uncomfortable,” featuring in-depth, one-on-one conversations with thought leaders on the issues dividing America.

Nawaz has also been honored with an Emmy Award for the NBC News Special “Inside the Obama White House,” a Society for Features Journalism Award, and was a recipient of the International Reporting Project fellowship in 2009. She earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of Pennsylvania, where she captained the varsity field hockey team, and later earned her master’s degree from the London School of Economics.

She lives with her husband and two daughters in the Washington, D.C. area.

History Of Bazelon Center For Mental Health Law

The Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law was founded in 1972 by a group of committed lawyers and professionals in mental health and mental disabilities. Known until 1993 as the Mental Health Law Project, our name today honors the federal appeals court judge whose watershed decisions pioneered the field of mental health law.

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