



MARYLAND LEGAL AID

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Kristen Pisani-Jacques and Katherine Gillespie join Maryland Legal Aid as New Deputy Legal and Advocacy Directors

BALTIMORE, MD., January 9, 2024 – Maryland Legal Aid (MLA) is pleased to announce Kristen Pisani-Jacques, J.D., CWLS and Katherine Gillespie, Esq., as new Deputy Legal & Advocacy Directors.

Kristen joins MLA after serving as Director of Training at the National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC), where she developed training programs for legal services and other family law attorneys across the country. She led the vision, objectives, and direction of NACC's training department to effectuate NACC's strategic plan goals of promoting excellence in the child welfare field, prioritizing race equity and authentic engagement of individuals with lived expertise. Prior to NACC, Kristen served as the Deputy Director of the Guardian ad litem (GAL) Project at the Children's Law Center in Washington, D.C. where she helped to lead GAL program design, management, and evaluation, guided appellate strategy, and ensured high-quality representation of clients in the D.C. child welfare system. Kristen earned her law degree at Georgetown University, where she participated in the Street Law and Domestic Violence clinics.

Katherine comes to MLA from the Center for Reproductive Rights, where she was Acting Director of Federal Policy and Advocacy, helping guide U.S. reproductive health policy and advocacy work. She also held senior roles at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) enforcing consumer laws and protections during the agency's creation. Before joining the CFPB, Katherine litigated civil rights cases, focusing on housing discrimination, at Relman, Dane & Colfax in Washington, D.C. She also worked as a litigator at WilmerHale and was awarded a fellowship at the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs. Katherine clerked on the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit for Chief Judge Mary Schroeder. Katherine earned her law degree at Georgetown University, where she participated in the International Women's Human Rights Clinic and the Women's Legal Alliance.

MLA Chief Legal & Advocacy Director Somil Trivedi noted, "together, Kristen and Katherine bring a wealth of substantive knowledge in MLA's key areas of focus, and decades of combined supervisory, training, impact litigation, and policy experience. We are thrilled to have both of them on the team!"

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About Maryland Legal Aid: Maryland Legal Aid (MLA) is a statewide private, nonprofit law firm that provides free, civil legal services to low-income and vulnerable people to address their most fundamental legal problems. From its 12 offices around the state and through its many community-based clinics, we help our clients preserve and access safe and affordable housing, maintain custody of their children, and be safe from domestic violence. MLA increases our clients' economic security by defending against consumer debt, including foreclosures and tax sales, removing barriers to employment, and accessing critical income supports such as unemployment, food stamps and other vital public benefits. Through special projects, we represent seniors, nursing home residents, children in alleged abuse and neglect cases, migrant farmworkers, and those in mental health institutions. In its advocacy, MLA seeks systemic change through impact litigation, policy advocacy, and storytelling.