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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

LAS Education Advocacy Project and Homework Helpers Inc. Partner to Provide Tech Accessories to NYC Students

(NEW YORK, NY) – In response to the COVID-19 related challenges facing New York City students and their families, The Legal Aid Society’s [Kathryn A. McDonald Education Advocacy Project \(EAP\)](#) and the nonprofit organization, Homework Helpers Inc., have partnered to provide students with the equipment they need to fully participate in remote learning during the pandemic.

Homework Helpers provided hundreds of headphones, earbuds, keyboard attachments and charging accessories for distribution to EAP clients across the five boroughs. The headphones and earbuds are essential for students who do not have a quiet, private space at home where they can learn, while keyboard attachments will enable older students to complete long essay and research assignments that would otherwise be difficult to complete on an iPad screen.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated a number of issues and challenges that New York City students and families face in accessing critical educational services. With the abrupt shuttering of schools and implementation of remote learning, systemic issues facing students from majority low-income communities of color – those hit the hardest by the pandemic – were amplified.

Access to technology and internet service presented an immediate concern. The Legal Aid Society has worked with the Department of Education (DOE) to ensure that children in homeless shelters and children in foster care would have first priority to receive the over 360,000 iPads being distributed to students in need. These iPads, however, do not come with the necessary accessories to make remote instruction easily accessible.

Many EAP clients reside in cramped housing or one-room homeless shelters where there is a lack of privacy and quiet space to engage in remote learning, often needing to access classes at the same time as their siblings and when their parents are working remotely from home, adding to the noise and distraction. Headphones and earbuds are essential for minimizing noise and allowing students to focus on their schooling.

“Our clients are so grateful to have these technology accessories,” said Cara Chambers, Director of the Education Advocacy Project. “It has been very stressful for them to learn from home without the equipment that most of us take for granted. A pair of headphones or a keyboard attachment may seem like a small thing, but it transforms their learning environment and improves their chances for academic success. We are so thankful for this generous donation from Homework Helpers.”

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The Legal Aid Society's Kathryn A. McDonald Education Advocacy Project (EAP) provides early intervention, special education, general education, and school suspension advocacy for children who are involved in child protective, delinquency, and PINS cases in New York City Family Court. In addition to providing direct advocacy for individual clients, EAP provides brief consultations to a wide range of players in Family Court, educates and trains parties about relevant education laws and policies, and engages in systemic advocacy to protect and define the educational rights of our vulnerable clients.

Guided by founders Susan M. Steinhardt, David Steinhardt and Logan Steinhardt as well as Marcy Russo, Homework Helpers, Inc. is committed to providing students in underserved communities the technology tools to succeed. Working with partners, including the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, the nonprofit East River Development Alliance, the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development, and Settlement Association members, Homework Helpers created 27 computer rooms in community centers and public-housing developments. Recognizing that in the new world of remote learning many students do not have the ability to access classes, Homework Helpers has pivoted and provides chrome books and tech accessories to students in need of such assistance. Additional information can be found on the organization's website: www.HomeworkHelpers.net.

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The Legal Aid Society exists for one simple yet powerful reason: to ensure that New Yorkers are not denied their right to equal justice because of poverty. For over 140 years, we have protected, defended, and advocated for those who have struggled in silence for far too long. Every day, in every borough, The Legal Aid Society changes the lives of our clients and helps improve our communities. www.legalaidnyc.org