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

## ***The Legal Aid Society Celebrates its 47th Annual Servant of Justice Awards***

### ***LAS Raised Over \$2.8 Million from NYC's Legal and Business Communities to Support Client Advocacy Efforts***

(NEW YORK, NY) - **The Legal Aid Society** held its 47th Annual Servant of Justice Awards Dinner this past Thursday at Cipriani 42nd Street. The annual celebration was attended by over 600 guests, representing New York City's legal and business communities, and raised over \$2.8 million.

This year, the Servant of Justice Award was presented to Mary Eaton, Partner and Co-Head of Securities & Shareholder Litigation at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer US LLP and DeMaurice Smith, Former Executive Director, National Football Players Association for their life-long dedication to justice and lasting impact on the legal community.

Ms. Eaton was recognized for her pro-bono work and her fierce advocacy on behalf of low-income New Yorkers. Mr. Smith was honored for his staunch commitment to addressing injustice throughout his career. Two-time Super Bowl Champion Zak DeOssie presented Mr. Smith with his award, and he was joined on stage by former players who worked alongside Mr. Smith during his time at the NFL Players Association.

"Our staff is fiercely committed to the communities we serve. Our direct representation keeps families together in their homes and communities, bolsters New Yorkers' access to life-saving medical care, assists our newest neighbors obtain work authorization, and so much more" said **Attorney-in-Chief and Chief Executive Officer of The Legal Aid Society Twyla Carter**. "Additionally, our impact litigation and policy work are dedicated to dismantling the systems that perpetuate oppression, racism, poverty, and incarceration. Every role at Legal Aid represents a critical piece of the puzzle to effectively serve low-income New Yorkers."

"For nearly 150 years, The Legal Aid Society's direct representation and advocacy have provided stability and united low-income families and communities facing service gaps, misguided policies and civil rights abuses. This Servant of Justice Awards, we are proud to celebrate Legal Aid staff for their unrelenting commitment towards improving the lives of New Yorkers, and our two honorees for their staunch dedication to the pursuit of justice," said **President of The Legal Aid Society's Board of Directors Alan Levine**.

**Chair of The Legal Aid Society's Board of Directors Zachary Cater** added: "The Legal Aid Society and its Civil, Criminal Defense and Juvenile Rights practices have been a strengthening force in neighborhoods

throughout New York City. Our work strives to keep families together, to shield New Yorkers from homelessness, and to decarcerate our communities. I am proud to serve as its Chair of such a storied institution.”

“It’s an honor to receive this award from such a prestigious organization. The work The Legal Aid Society has done throughout the years for New Yorkers in need of assistance is truly commendable and I’m proud to be a part of that mission.” said **Mary Eaton, Partner and Co-head of Securities & Shareholder Litigation at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer US LLP.**

“I am honored and humbled to be receiving this recognition from The Legal Aid Society, an organization that is indispensable to our justice system given its constitutional duty to provide representation and advocacy for millions of low-income New Yorkers over its nearly 150-year history,” said **DeMaurice Smith, Former Executive Director of the National Football Players Association.** “The attorneys and staff members not only provide their clients with the highest standard of public service, but they ensure that the justice system that we believe in works in the daily lives of our citizens. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to celebrate with Legal Aid and its supporters tonight and I look forward to continuing the work alongside this organization as we continue the fight for equal justice for all New Yorkers.”

### **Mary Eaton Biography:**

Mary Eaton is Partner and Co-head of Securities and Shareholder Litigation at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer US LLP. She has extensive experience in complex commercial litigation, with a focus on securities class actions, shareholder derivative claims, and other complex business disputes. In addition to her substantial trial experience, Mary regularly counsels clients on litigation avoidance and corporate governance matters.

Mary is a firm believer in giving back to the community through pro bono service and has dedicated thousands of hours to managing and supervising various pro bono matters—often in partnership with The Legal Aid Society. She is an eight-time recipient of the Pro Bono Publico Award from The Legal Aid Society, and in 2019, the American Bar Association awarded Mary the Stonewall Award for her contributions to the advancement of LGBT individuals and issues thanks to her involvement in expanding trans healthcare for New Yorkers on Medicaid.

She is a graduate of Queen’s University and Columbia Law School and clerked for Justice Bertha Wilson of the Supreme Court of Canada. She currently lives in New York City.

### **DeMaurice Smith Biography:**

DeMaurice Smith is the former Executive Director of the National Football League Players Association (NFLPA), the labor union for Players of the National Football League (NFL). He served in the position during some of the most important issues confronting sports including concussion related issues, First Amendment challenges to Anthem Protests, athletes’ responses to social and community issues, drug testing, gambling, privacy issues regarding player data, managing worker rights in a pandemic, and international expansion.

Prior to his post at the NFLPA, DeMaurice was a distinguished prosecutor with the United States Attorney’s Office in the District of Columbia where he was awarded the Attorney General’s Directors Award. He served as Counsel to the Deputy Attorney General as well as a Partner at Latham & Watkins LLP and Squire Patton Boggs LLP.

DeMaurice is currently a Visiting Professor at Pepperdine Law School. He is the author of numerous articles and a frequent commencement and international public speaker on the topics of leadership, ethics, sports, law, and high-stakes negotiation.

DeMaurice, a native Washingtonian resides in the Washington DC metropolitan area with his family.

For the list of sponsors and photos, visit: [47th Annual Servant of Justice Awards.](#)

*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 145 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](http://www.legalaidnyc.org)*