

PRESS RELEASE

# Wiley Honored with ‘Outstanding Achievement Award’ from Washington Lawyers’ Committee for Work on Behalf of Unaccompanied Immigrant Children

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## FIRM ALSO RECOGNIZED FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO DC COMPASSIONATE RELEASE CLEARINGHOUSE PROJECT

June 16, 2021

Washington, DC – Wiley Rein LLP was honored today by the Washington Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs (WLC) with a 2021 “Outstanding Achievement Award” for the firm’s high-profile work on behalf of unaccompanied immigrant children detained at the Shenandoah Valley Juvenile Center in Virginia.

Wiley also shared in the 2021 “Alfred McKenzie Award” for its contributions in a separate matter – the DC Compassionate Release Clearinghouse Project. Wiley Pro Bono Partner Theodore A. Howard accepted both recognitions on behalf of the firm during the WLC’s Wiley A. Branton Awards luncheon, held virtually this year.

In *John Doe 4, et al. v. Shenandoah Valley Juvenile Center Commission*, Wiley partnered with the WLC in representing a class of unaccompanied immigrant minors who are confined to the facility. Mr. Howard argued the case before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, which ruled in January 2021 that the children may have been wrongfully deprived of adequate mental health care, and that the district court employed the wrong legal standard in rejecting that claim. In a 2-1 decision, a three-judge panel reversed the district court ruling that had granted summary judgment to the facility. Additional details on the case can be found [here](#).

## Related Professionals

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Wiley also made significant contributions to the DC Compassionate Release Clearinghouse Project, as the firm's pro bono team quickly responded to help vulnerable inmates apply for "compassionate release" following onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The "compassionate release" statute was enacted in April 2020 to address the risks of exposure to COVID-19, and prevent its spread, in jails and prisons. A small coalition came together to help support the Project, including a cohort of legal professionals at Wiley who stepped up as leaders in the effort, quickly screening the hundreds of requests for representation that flooded in.

The Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs works to create legal, economic and social equity through litigation, client and public education and public policy advocacy. It partners with individuals and communities facing discrimination and with the legal community to achieve justice.

Wiley prides itself on a strong tradition of service to the local and global community, and encourages its attorneys and legal assistants to participate in pro bono activities. A key part of Wiley's pro bono mission is to provide equal access to the justice system for individuals and groups otherwise unable to afford it. We do this primarily by taking cases referred through the WLC and numerous other local legal service providers with whom we have forged close ties.