



January 18, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Michelle Nicolet, Marketing Director
312.368.2675, mnicolet@povertylaw.org

**Former ACLU Leader Named New Vice President of Advocacy at the
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law**

Jennifer Riley-Collins to Lead Policy & Racial Justice Agenda, Growth of National Networks

CHICAGO—John Bouman, President of the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, has announced that Jennifer Riley-Collins has joined the organization as its new Vice President of Advocacy. In this position, Riley-Collins will lead the Shriver Center's talented advocacy staff in advancing justice and opportunity for people living in poverty. She will also join the organization's senior management team.

"Jennifer is a seasoned lawyer who brings an unusual and extensive blend of knowledge and experience to the Shriver Center," said Bouman. "She is uniquely suited to lead the Shriver Center's advocacy team in its multifaceted policy advocacy, while continuing to deepen our commitment to racial equity."

Riley-Collins has nearly twenty years of legal experience, having most recently worked as the executive director of the ACLU of Mississippi. While at the ACLU, she led legal and legislative advocacy efforts resulting in significant criminal justice reforms. She has been at the forefront of efforts to de-institutionalize at-risk youth. Jennifer has successfully championed protections for public benefit recipients and equal rights for LGBT community members. As trusted advisor to state leadership, she has helped craft initiatives to increase voter access to the polls. Her prior experience includes work as a staff attorney at both the Southern Poverty Law Center's Mississippi Youth Justice Project and the Mississippi Center for Justice.

Parallel to her legal career, Riley-Collins had a decorated military career in the United States Army. Rising to the rank of Colonel, her positions included Military Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Battalion commander, Command Inspector General, and Senior Intelligence and Security Officer. In 2002, she was mobilized and served for a year as an intelligence and plans and operations officer in Kuwait. More recently, she was again mobilized and served at the Pentagon focused on issues related to national security. She will retire in the coming months after over 30 years of service.

"The Shriver Center has an outstanding track record as an advocate for people and communities faced with the interrelated issues of poverty," said Riley-Collins. "With the transition in federal leadership, we are entering a new frontier in the struggle for social justice and race equity. I look forward to leading the Shriver Center's important advocacy agenda, including the continuing growth of its national networks, and joining its dynamic team of advocates during this critical, pivotal, and yet still possible time of change."

Riley-Collins will be based at the Shriver Center's headquarters in Chicago, Illinois.

####

The Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law provides national leadership in advancing laws and policies that secure justice to improve the lives and opportunities of people living in poverty. We specialize in practical solutions. We advocate for and serve clients directly, while also building the capacity of the nation's legal aid providers to advance justice and opportunity for their clients. www.povertylaw.org

