

## **Summary of Witness Testimony**

### **Rashad M. Young**

Rashad M. Young is the City Administrator for the District of Columbia. Mr. Young was appointed City Administrator in January 2015 and manages the District's government operations and oversight. Mr. Young ensures efficient, accountable and well-managed delivery of services to residents and visitors in the District. Mr. Young has spent his entire career in public management, including 12 years as an Assistant City Manager or City Manager in Alexandria, VA, Greensboro, NC, Cincinnati, OH, and Dayton, OH. Mr. Young is the chair of the Interagency Council on Homelessness.

At the hearing, Mr. Young will testify to the background and implementation of the District's plan to close DC General Family Shelter and replace it with Short-Term Family Housing. Mr. Young oversees, manages and governs agency operations and city administration throughout the District of Columbia. Thus, Mr. Young will further testify as to the resource allocation necessary for such a plan come to fruition. Finally, Mr. Young will discuss the community outreach conducted by the District government regarding the shelter project.

### **Chairman Phil Mendelson**

Chairman Phil Mendelson is the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia. Chairman Mendelson was first elected to the Council in 1998 as an At-Large Councilmember, serving in that role until 2012. In November 2012, District voters elected Mr. Mendelson as Chairman of the Council. He was re-elected as Chairman in 2014. As Chairman of the Council, Mr. Mendelson leads the Council on all legislative matters. Chairman Mendelson also presides over the Committee of the Whole, which has responsibility for the District's annual budget and the Council's relations with the federal government.

At the hearing, Chairman Mendelson will testify about the D.C. Council's recent legislation concerning homeless services and development of emergency shelters in the District.

### **Laura Zeilinger**

Laura Zeilinger is the Director of the District's Department of Human Services (DHS). Ms. Zeilinger was appointed as Director of DHS effective January 2015. Ms. Zeilinger has significant experience with homeless and underserved populations. Prior to being named Director of DHS, Ms. Zeilinger served as the Executive Director of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. She previously served as the Deputy Director for Programs at DHS.

Ms. Zeilinger will testify as an expert witness on homelessness and the delivery of services to assist individuals experiencing homelessness. To that end, Ms. Zeilinger will testify as an expert to the relevant components of the District's plan to close DC General Family Shelter and replace it with Short-Term Family Housing programs, including the current conditions at D.C. General. Ms. Zeilinger will further testify as to the programmatic needs for Short-Term Family Housing in the District.

## **Sharon McDonald**

Sharon McDonald is a licensed social worker with more than 25 years of experience working with low income families. Ms. McDonald currently works for the National Alliance to End Homelessness as the Director for Families and Youth. Ms. McDonald focuses on policy and program strategies that will impact the lives of families and youth experiencing homelessness. Ms. McDonald previously worked for the Richmond Better Housing Coalition where she developed social service programs for low-income families. Ms. McDonald has a Master's Degree in Social Work as well as a Ph.D. in Social Work and Social Policy, both from Virginia Commonwealth University.

Ms. McDonald will testify as an expert witness on the programmatic needs for the Short-Term Family Housing shelter, including best practices for assisting families experiencing homelessness.

**Laura Green Zeilinger, J.D.**  
Washington, DC | [laura.zeilinger@dc.gov](mailto:laura.zeilinger@dc.gov)

**AREAS OF EXPERTISE:**

- Mission, Vision & Strategic Planning
- Outcome Evaluation
- Team Development & Leadership
- Performance Measurement
- Policy Development & Operations
- Fostering Collective Impact

**EMPLOYMENT HIGHLIGHTS:**

**The Government of the District of Columbia, Department of Human Services** January 2015 – present  
**Director**

Mayor Muriel Bowser's lead official for human services and a member of her executive cabinet. Charged to provide support and assistance to families and individuals to increase their economic security and fulfill their potential. Responsible for the management of one of the largest District agencies, consisting of nearly 1,000 full-time employees and a \$460 million annual budget.

**Major Initiatives:**

- Leading efforts to ensure homelessness in the District is rare, brief and nonrecurring by ending veteran, chronic, family, and youth homelessness, and building an effective homeless crisis response system.
- Spearheading vast operational improvement strategy across the department to ensure more effective, accurate and timely service delivery, expanding transparency, using data to drive results, and instilling a customer-centered service culture.

**United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)** February 2011 – January 2015

**Executive Director**

**Deputy Director**

**Director of National Engagement and Field Support**

President Barak Obama's lead expert on homelessness. Facilitates collaboration with 19 Federal agencies, state and jurisdictional leaders to create a national partnership at every level of government and with the private sector to reduce and end homelessness. Responsible for the implementation of *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*.

**Major Accomplishments:**

- Led efforts that yielded year-after-year reductions in homelessness, including the steepest reductions in unsheltered homelessness overall and homelessness among Veterans in the nation's history.
- Spearheaded development of action plan to integrate mainstream systems with targeted homeless programs, improve efficiencies and outcomes through better targeting of existing and new resources and widespread adoption of evidence-informed practices.
- Developed partnership with Joining Forces and Office of the First Lady to broaden engagement in efforts to end homelessness for Veterans.
- Facilitated development of framework to end family homelessness.
- Designed strategy for federal action that accelerated progress to end homelessness in 25 critical cities.
- Developed performance management mechanisms to further accountability among agencies for *Opening Doors* implementation.

**District of Columbia Department of Human Services (DHS)**

**Deputy Director**

(April 2008 – December 2010)

Oversaw the Department's Income Maintenance and Family Services Administrations, comprised of approximately 700 employees and a \$320 million annual budget. Managed programs to attain administration goals and objectives. Represented DHS to local and national government, business, constituents, and community advocates.

Major Accomplishments:

- Designed and implemented the Mayor's "Housing First" initiative, which provided permanent supportive housing to more than 1,010 households in two years. Produced a 15% reduction in street homelessness along with significant reduction in emergency shelter stays.
- Guided reforms of public benefit system to enhance services and outcomes for households receiving cash assistance while achieving agency budget targets.
- Crafted Agency's strategy for accessing American Reinvestment and Recovery Act Programs.

**District of Columbia, Executive Office of Mayor Adrian Fenty**

***Program Analyst, Health and Human Services***

(March 2007 – April 2008)

Aide to Mayor and City Administrator focusing on Department of Human Services and Office of Disability Rights. Led budget development and monitored budget execution for both agencies. Worked with agencies to develop and implement performance plans, priority initiatives and define key performance indicators. Earned support of advocacy community for key initiatives.

Major Accomplishments:

- Established Office of Disability Rights with full support of advocacy community.
- Restructured program to enable 150 families to move from emergency shelters to mainstream housing with supportive services, in less than three months.
- Led the evolution of the District's Interagency Council on Homelessness into a working body that earned the trust of those who were experiencing homelessness as well as service providers, community partners and advocates.

**International Center for Not-For-Profit Law, Washington, DC**

***Legal Consultant***

(March 2006 – January 2007)

Advanced environment for freedom of association and speech and a stronger civil society in Azerbaijan, Egypt, Iraq and Russia by providing technical assistance on draft legislation and regulations.

Major Accomplishments:

- Performed a comprehensive assessment of the legal climate in Azerbaijan and functioning of civil society.
- Authored resource guide on best practices for public financing of non-governmental organizations.

**International Management and Communications Corporation (IMCC)**

***Regional Manager for Central Asian Republics***

(December 1996 – January 2001)

***Project Administrator***

Managed initiatives in Central Asia to ensure the quality and maximize business opportunities. Responsible for budgeting and tracking expenditures for multimillion dollar financial sector development contracts. Provided targeted assistance from policy design to implementation.

Major Accomplishments:

- Directed technical assistance project that advised the Government of Kazakhstan on transforming a pay-as-you-go pension system to one of individual accounts.
- Established three international field offices
- Managed new business development

**LEGAL INTERNSHIPS/CLERKSHIPS**

Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs, Washington, DC

National Women's Law Center, Washington, DC

District of Columbia Office of Human Rights, Washington, DC

**EDUCATION/ PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:**

**American University, Washington College of Law, J.D., *Cum Laude* (2004)**

**Sarah Lawrence College, Bachelor of Arts (1995)**

**Maryland State Bar, Member**

**District of Columbia Bar, Member**

**National Alliance to End Homelessness, Leadership Council**

**100,000 Homes, Faculty/ Innovations Team**

**State Early Child Development Coordinating Council, Member**

**National Alliance to End Homelessness Leadership Council, Chair**

**APHSA Leadership Council, Member**

**District of Columbia Interagency Council on Homelessness, Executive Committee Member**

**Age Friendly DC Task Force, Member**

# Sharon McDonald

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Washington, DC 20002  
(202) 486-5983

## Education:

- Ph.D. Social Work and Social Policy, Virginia Commonwealth University, May 2004. Dissertation title: *Utilizing a structruation perspective to examine perceptions of labor market opportunities and constraints in a distressed urban neighborhood.*
- MSW Virginia Commonwealth University, August 1988.  
Concentration: Clinical, Child and Family Welfare
- BSW Virginia Commonwealth University, May 1986.
- LCSW State of Virginia, 1992 – Present (Inactive status).

## Employment/Work Experience

<u>National Alliance to End Homelessness</u>	2001 - Present
Director for Families and Youth	2010 - Present
Senior Policy Analyst	
Policy and Program Analyst /Senior Policy Analyst	

In conjunction with national and local partners, develop legislative proposals and educate congressional staff and key stakeholders on the impact of proposed policies on the lives of families and youth at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness. Educate local non-profit and public officials about family and youth homelessness and emerging best practices.

<u>Office of Senator Paul Wellstone</u>	1999-2000
Council on Social Work Education/National Association of Social Workers (NASW/CSWE) Congressional Fellow	

Developed and evaluated legislative proposals on housing and welfare related issues. Collaborated with state and national advocacy organization representatives, congressional staff and constituent groups.

<u>Richmond Better Housing Coalition</u>	1997 - 2000
Social Work Consultant	1998 - 1999
Researcher	1997 - 2000

Assisted in the development of a social service program in a housing development serving low-income families. Served as a co-investigator for a community needs

assessment using a participatory research methodology that informed program services, provided supervision to BSW/MSW students who delivered supportive services, and served as a primary investigator for a program evaluation.

<u>Virginia Commonwealth University</u>	1995 - 1999
Adjunct Instructor	1997 - 1999
Graduate Research Assistant (GRA)	1995 – 1997

As GRA, assisted in the design, development and implementation of a survey assessing the impact of welfare reform in Richmond; collected data for a study of service integration among local service providers; and developed a comprehensive database compendium of specialized social service practitioners in the Commonwealth of Virginia. As an adjunct instructor, taught four sections of an introductory social work course.

<u>Daily Planet</u>	1989 - 1995
Program Director	1991 - 1995
Living Room Social Worker	1989 – 1991

As a Living Room Social Worker, provided direct services, outreach, counseling, assessment and referral, crisis intervention, support, group work, community building and advocacy in a seven day a week, community drop-in center serving approximately 350 homeless adults daily. As program director, responsible for the hiring, training and supervision of program staff, part-time workers, and BSW/MSW students working in community Living Room program.

### **Publications in Peer-Reviewed Journals**

Pollio, D.; McDonald, S. & North, C. (1996). Combined strengths based approach and feminist theory in group work with persons 'on the streets'. Social Work with Groups 9, 5-20.