

PRESS RELEASE

Wiley and ACLU-MD Receive WLC Award for Successfully Fighting Racial Discrimination in Pocomoke City, Maryland

WILEY ALSO HONORED BY WLC FOR DEFENDING INMATES' RIGHTS AT A VIRGINIA WOMEN'S PRISON

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Washington, DC – Wiley Rein LLP and the ACLU of Maryland (ACLU-MD) have received a 2020 “Outstanding Achievement Award” from the Washington Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs (WLC) for bringing a high-profile racial discrimination case to a successful resolution in Pocomoke City, MD. The WLC is also honoring Wiley with a separate Outstanding Achievement Award for its longtime work on behalf of inmates at Virginia’s Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women (FCCW).

In the Maryland case, Wiley and the ACLU-MD partnered with the WLC in 2016 to represent the plaintiffs – three Black officers, including the first Black police chief of Pocomoke City – in a federal civil rights suit against the Pocomoke City Police Department. Last year, the team secured a favorable \$1.5 million settlement on behalf of the officers, who had challenged a conspiracy of racial discrimination and retaliation among Pocomoke City officials. The Consent Decree also mandates reforms with respect to the city’s hiring, promotion and retention practices affecting minority police officers. The case has garnered significant media attention and Wiley is proud to have played an important role in resolving the matter. For more history on the case, please [click here](#).

The Virginia case dates back to 2012, when Wiley – in partnership with the WLC and the Legal Aid Justice Center of Charlottesville – filed a class action lawsuit on behalf of women prisoners at FCCW. The suit alleged that the Virginia Department of Corrections and its

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private, for-profit medical care contractors violated the inmates' constitutional rights by failing to provide adequate medical care. Wiley helped secure a landmark 2016 settlement providing a framework for significant reforms – and has since worked tirelessly to ensure the facility implements those requirements. The team has also been working in response to COVID-19 to protect the women at FCCW, including asking Governor Northam to release and/or pardon certain inmates. Additional details on the case can be found [here](#).

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 and rich 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.