

## **Welcome Melissa Goodman as CRHLP's Inaugural Executive Director**



**March 23, 2023-** The Center on Reproductive Health, Law, and Policy is thrilled to announce Melissa Goodman as our inaugural executive director. Melissa will begin her tenure in August 2023.

CRHLP Faculty Director Cary Franklin said, "I cannot imagine a better person than Melissa Goodman to lead CRHLP. She is a brilliant lawyer, deeply knowledgeable about reproductive law and policy and highly attuned to the ways in which reproductive justice intersects with other key social issues. She's one of the most dynamic leaders and advocates out there, and she's a great person too—generous, funny, down-to-earth. I am so excited to work with her to expand and implement the Center's vision, which could hardly be more important and necessary right now."

For the past five years, Melissa has been the Legal and Advocacy Director at the ACLU of Southern California. In this role Melissa has led the affiliate's 60 attorneys, policy advocates, organizers, and support staff across offices in Los Angeles, Orange County, the Inland Empire, and Kern County. She has led the department's visioning and strategy, strategic planning, intersectional issue and

cross-team collaboration, resource allocation, and helped lead statewide legislative, electoral, and organizing strategy amongst ACLU California affiliates and offices. She has also co-chaired the national ACLU's Gender Justice Task Force.

Before that, Melissa spent a decade leading and doing reproductive justice, LGBTQ, and gender equity litigation and policy advocacy campaigns as the ACLU SoCal's Audrey Irmas Director of the LGBTQ Gender & Reproductive Justice Project, and as a Senior Litigation and Policy Counsel for Reproductive & LGBTQ Rights at the New York Civil Liberties Union. In those roles, Melissa led or supported policy and legal advocacy campaigns to expand access to abortion and contraception, sex education, paid family and sick leave for working parents; marriage equality; stop workplace discrimination and harassment in male dominated fields such as Hollywood; end gender-based violence and harassment in schools, workplaces, and carceral and law enforcement institutions; decriminalize sex work and HIV status; stop LGBTQ discrimination; expand economic justice; and shrink the role of police and the criminal legal system.

Some of the cases Melissa has led or co-counseled include:

Garza v. Hargan, a successful challenge to the federal government's policy preventing pregnant unaccompanied immigrant minors from obtaining information about their pregnancy options, coercing them to carry their pregnancies to term, and obstructing them from accessing abortion; *ACLU v. Hargan*, a challenge to the Trump Administration's rule allowing employers and universities to deny their employees and students insurance coverage for contraception if the employer has a religious or moral objection; *McKibben v. McMahon*, a class action case challenging discriminatory treatment of gay, bisexual and transgender prisoners in San Bernardino County, *American Academy of Pediatrics v. Clovis Unified School District*, a case that successfully challenged medically inaccurate, non-comprehensive and biased sex education; and *Windsor v. United States*, a case that successfully challenged the Defense of Marriage Act which forbid the federal government from recognizing marriages of same-gender couples.

Melissa is a former law clerk for the Hon. Judge Frederic Block of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York. She graduated magna cum laude from New York University's College of Arts and Science in 2000 and she earned her J.D. from New York University in 2003, where she was awarded an Arthur Garfield Hays Civil Liberties Fellowship, the John Perry Prize Award in Civil Rights and Civil Liberties and was an articles editor for the Review of Law and Social Change.

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*The Center on Reproductive Health, Law, and Policy at UCLA Law is an innovative new center engaging with community organizations, scholars, lawmakers, practitioners, and advocates on reproductive health, law, and policy.*