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CJJ Announces New Executive Director

The Coalition for Juvenile Justice is pleased to announce that Naomi Smoot, J.D. has been named new Executive Director. As Executive Director, she will be responsible for the execution of CJJ's strategic goals, cultivating external relations, and fundraising and resource development. Ms. Smoot is excited to lead CJJ through this period of transition and rebirth.

"The Executive Board is extremely pleased to have Naomi return to CJJ in this critical role," said CJJ Board Chair Cecely Reardon. "We are confident that her significant institutional knowledge of the organization and its constituents as well as her experience working with a variety of juvenile justice stakeholders, will ensure our forward momentum. We are inspired by her passion and impressed with her vision for a stronger and more versatile CJJ. We look forward to our work together."

CJJ's Executive Board and Ms. Smoot have plans to launch several major projects in 2017. In the coming months, CJJ will publish a new set of recommendations that focus on ways that stakeholders can work together to ensure that justice involved youth do not become homeless. The recommendations will also include ways to help ensure that unaccompanied youth - those who are homeless and without a parent or family - do not become involved with the juvenile justice system solely as a result of their housing status.

CJJ will also host its Annual Conference and Hill Day on June 14-17 in Washington D.C.

"CJJ is a vibrant organization and plays an important role as the voice of the states. I look forward to working with the State Advisory Groups to help empower them to be leaders of change in their jurisdictions, and to help ensure that all of our children have an equal chance at a brighter future," Ms. Smoot said.

Prior to her appointment as Executive Director, Ms. Smoot served as the lead on CJJ's federal policy initiatives, helping to lead the charge on the reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. Ms. Smoot was also responsible for developing, managing, and implementing nationwide initiatives in juvenile justice reform with CJJ's state members and partners across all states, territories, and DC. Ms. Smoot drafted model policies for status offense reform, and worked with State Advisory Groups to build their capacity for leadership. Ms. Smoot was also the project director for CJJ's work with the Pew Charitable Trusts Public Safety Performance Project.

Prior to her work with CJJ, Ms. Smoot represented young people in the District of Columbia and Virginia in delinquency and special education matters. Before that, she worked as a print journalist in Maryland and West Virginia for nearly a decade, amassing nearly a dozen awards for her news, investigative, and features news reporting. In her spare time, Ms. Smoot is a long distance runner, and oversees volunteer hypothermia programs to provide shelter for those in need during the winter months. She resides in Virginia with her partner, Shaun, and their dog.