



Advocating for
disability civil rights
since 1979

DISABILITY RIGHTS EDUCATION & DEFENSE FUND (DREDF)

The Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF), with offices in Berkeley, California and Washington, DC, has been a leading cross-disability civil rights law and policy center since its founding in 1979. DREDF's mission is to advance the civil and human rights of people with disabilities through legal advocacy, training, education, and public policy and legislative development.

DREDF:

- Plays a central role in articulating the principles of disability rights law and developing strategies for groundbreaking disability civil rights legislation and litigation: advocating successfully for federal civil rights laws; representing members of Congress and leading disability organizations in *amicus curiae* briefs in cases argued before the US Supreme Court; and national grassroots training of thousands of parents of children with disabilities and adults with disabilities.
- Uses litigation not only to enforce existing laws, but also to clarify and advance disability rights through the pursuit of law reform cases, such as by filing the first full inclusion special education case that went to the U.S. Supreme Court, *Holland v. Sacramento City* (1994).
- Laid the groundwork for the landmark 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by preserving its predecessor law, Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, when it came under attack in the early 1980s, and playing leading roles in the passage of the ADA and other groundbreaking laws such as the Handicapped Children's Protection Act of 1986, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) reauthorizations of 1997 and 2004.
- Teaches disability rights law at Boalt Hall School of Law at UC Berkeley and providing internships for law students each summer
- Works internationally in 17 countries with advocates who seek assistance in developing law and policy reform strategies, and publishing the first comprehensive analysis of global disability rights, DREDF's *Disability Rights Law and Policy: International and National Perspectives* (Transnational Publishers, 2002).
- Builds disability rights advocacy by identifying economic and social disenfranchisement of people with disabilities as the result of prejudice and discrimination rather than an inevitable consequence of the physical and mental limitations imposed by disability, closely aligning DREDF with other civil rights struggles and leading to an invitation in 1981 to join the Executive Committee of the nation's largest coalition of civil rights groups, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR).