

For Immediate Release

National Disability Finance Coalition Announces Leadership Transition

[Rockville Centre, NY] — The National Disability Finance Coalition (NDFC) is pleased to announce a significant leadership transition. Emerson Sekins will assume the role of Board Chairman, succeeding Charlie Hammerman, the founding Chairman of NDFC. This change comes as a result of a unanimous Board decision made during the Board Meeting on March 11.

Emerson Sekins, currently serving as the Board Treasurer and the Executive Director of Northwest Access Fund, brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to financial empowerment and accessibility. Under his leadership, Northwest Access Fund has significantly expanded its reach and impact, supporting individuals with disabilities through innovative financial solutions. Sekins' vision for NDFC involves bolstering the coalition's role as a catalyst for inclusion and economic empowerment within the disability community.

"I am honored to step into the role of Chairman for the National Disability Finance Coalition," said Emerson Sekins. "This organization has a critical mission at the heart of two communities I deeply care about. I look forward to building on the strong foundation that Charlie has established, and I am excited about the opportunity to lead our efforts in making financial services more accessible and inclusive for people with disabilities."

Charlie Hammerman, stepping down from his role, leaves behind a legacy of groundbreaking work in disability finance. As the President and CEO of the Disability Opportunity Fund and the founder of NDFC, Hammerman's foresight and dedication have been instrumental in bridging the gap between financial institutions and the needs of individuals with disabilities. His contributions have laid a solid foundation for the Coalition's future endeavors.

"Leading the National Disability Finance Coalition has been one of the greatest honors of my career," remarked Charlie Hammerman. "I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together and am confident that Emerson's leadership will steer the NDFC towards new heights of achievement. The future is bright for our coalition, and I look forward to supporting its continued success in any way I can."

"The Coalition expresses its deepest gratitude to Charlie for his visionary leadership and tireless efforts in establishing NDFC as a beacon of hope and progress," said Pam Porter, Executive Director of NDFC. "We are equally excited to welcome Emerson into his new role. His proven leadership, commitment to our mission, and innovative thinking will be invaluable as we continue to advance financial inclusion for people with disabilities."

Under the new leadership, NDFC aims to further its mission through strategic partnerships, advocacy, and expanding its programs to meet the evolving needs of the disability community. The Coalition remains committed to creating a more inclusive economy that recognizes the value and potential of every individual.

For additional information about NDFC, Emerson Sekins, or the transition, please contact info@disability-finance.org.

About the National Disability Finance Coalition

The National Disability Finance Coalition (NDFC) is dedicated to bridging the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) industry and the disability community. Through advocacy, education, and partnership, the NDFC strives to enhance financial access and opportunity for individuals with disabilities across the nation.

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About Emerson Sekins

As the CEO of Northwest Access Fund, Emerson Sekins is dedicated to empowering people with disabilities and their families by providing affordable access to life-changing assistive technology financing and the support and resources needed to navigate financial barriers. With over 20 years of advocacy experience in the disability community, Emerson is deeply committed to addressing the systemic financial barriers faced by individuals with disabilities. These barriers include unaffordable medical and prescription costs, credit score impacts from medical debt and bankruptcies, and restrictions on assets and savings tied to public benefits. Emerson's passion for the mission of Northwest Access Fund began in 2013 when he joined the organization as a program staff member working with low-income clients to access assistive technology. Since then, he has served as Asset Building Director and Deputy Director before assuming the role of Executive Director in 2017. A leader in the field of disability finance, Emerson serves as the Secretary of the Washington Community Investment Coalition former Treasurer and now Board Chairman of the National Disability Finance Coalition. Emerson earned an MPA and a BA in Disability Studies from the University of Washington.

About Charlie Hammerman

Charles Hammerman is an accomplished Senior Executive with more than 29 years of success across the financial services, real estate, healthcare, and fitness industries. Leveraging extensive experience leading a national fund for people with disabilities as well as working for one of the largest financial services companies in the world, he is a valuable asset for companies seeking expert advisory in the areas of public relations, marketing, crisis management, or IPOs. His broad areas of expertise include government relations, legal compliance, regulatory issues, operational management, process optimization, business development, strategic planning, M&A, fundraising, portfolio management, and responsible investing.

Throughout his executive career, Mr. Hammerman has held leadership positions at companies including The Disability Opportunity Fund, Tzedec Economic Development Fund, and Merrill Lynch. As President & CEO of The Disability Opportunity Fund (DOF) since 2007, he has led the national Certified Community Development Financial Institution from zero to \$30 million with a \$24 million investment portfolio to address gaps in housing and related services for people with disabilities. His appointment to lead DOF followed his role as Founder/Managing Director of the Burton Blatt Institute at Syracuse University, an organization to advance opportunities for the disabled. He previously was a senior member of Private Executive Services, a division of Merrill Lynch's Global Private Client Group where he helped lead a 35-person team that managed more than \$10 billion in assets for high net worth families and corporations. He also spent four years in Merrill Lynch's Equity Capital Markets division and four years in the Office of General Counsel. He earlier worked as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Eastern District of New York and as an Associate at Morgan Lewis & Bockius. He has been responsible for spearheading the creation of "Merrill Lynch's Disability Awareness Professional Network", led the company to be recognized by Diversity Inc. Magazine as the "Number One Company for Employment of People with Disabilities", and has originated more than 200 IPOs with secondary and convertible debt offerings in energy, real estate, consumer goods, and technology.

Charles holds a BA in Economics from Washington University in St. Louis and a JD from Fordham University School of Law. He recruited and seated the 13-member independent Board of Directors for DOF and chaired the first-ever Disability Conference at the New York Stock Exchange. He has held nonprofit board roles including with Habitat for Humanity NYC Community Fund, the John Jay College Foundation, Achilles International Disabled Athletes, The Interfaith Nutrition Network, Israel Elwyn, Congregation Sons of Israel, South Shore Jewish Community Center, Just One Break Inc., The Brandeis School, and Hewlett-East Rockaway Jewish Center.