

## Leah C. Aden



Leah C. Aden is an Assistant Counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund (LDF). At LDF, Leah represents Black people in a variety of actions involving voting discrimination, including challenges to discriminatory voting measures under the Voting Rights Act, the United States Constitution, and state laws.

Leah was a member of LDF's litigation team in *Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder*, a recent high-profile case in which, in a devastating opinion, the United States Supreme Court struck as unconstitutional the heart of the Voting Rights Act, effectively rendering Section 5's "preclearance" provision inoperable. Without Section 5's protections in place following the *Shelby County* decision, Leah has worked with other advocates to block voting changes that potentially are discriminatory including by: successfully urging Georgia to maintain early voting opportunities and Baker County, Georgia to maintain polling places. Prior to the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Shelby County*, Leah successfully represented Black voters in *South Carolina v. United States*, in which a three-judge federal court rejected South Carolina's request to implement its discriminatory photo identification law for the 2012 Presidential election. Leah also represented Black voters in *Texas v. Holder*, in which a three-judge federal court blocked Texas's recent attempt to implement a discriminatory government-issued photo identification measure. *Texas v. Holder* was ultimately vacated by the *Shelby County* ruling. Leah now is a member of LDF's litigation team in *United States, et al. v. Texas, et al.*, a challenge under a different provision of the Voting Rights Act, Section 2, to Texas's discriminatory photo ID measure.

Leah also advocates for the abolition of prison-based gerrymandering, the practice of counting incarcerated people for redistricting purposes at their prison facility address rather than at their pre-incarceration home address.

Prior to joining LDF in February 2012 as a NAACP LDF Fried Frank Fellow, Leah was a litigation associate in the New York office of Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson, LLP. She also previously served as a fellow at the Center for Civil Rights at the University of North Carolina School of Law, where she focused on public education issues, including school desegregation and education adequacy litigation. Leah served as a law clerk to the Honorable John T. Nixon of the United States District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee. Leah received her J.D. from Howard University School of Law and B.A. in History and African-American Studies from Columbia University.