



**For Immediate Release**

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### **Janet Lowder Named President of Special Needs Alliance**

October 27, 2011 (Tucson, Arizona)--Attorney Janet Lowder, Cleveland, Ohio, has been elected president of the [Special Needs Alliance](#) (SNA). SNA is a national nonprofit association of attorneys committed to helping individuals with disabilities, their families, and the professionals who represent them.

As president, Lowder will lead SNA's advocacy on behalf of individuals with disabilities. Activities include public policy initiatives, as well as collaboration with organizations such as The Arc, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and the Autism Society of America (ASA).

Of special concern is the current assault on Medicaid, often central to the financial security of individuals with disabilities. "During these difficult economic times, with political leaders at all levels of government juggling budgets, we cannot allow decades of social progress to be reversed," declares Lowder. "The members of the Special Needs Alliance are keenly aware of the suffering that could result from cuts to programs serving this vulnerable population.

"SNA attorneys, with decades of disability law experience, are on the front lines with families whose loved ones have special needs. Whether the issue is long waiting lists for housing, special education that builds the skills for independence, or lingering stereotypes, we are committed community activists."

Lowder, a shareholder in the firm of [Hickman & Lowder Co., L.P.A.](#), is a recognized authority on Medicaid and estate planning for families with special needs. She and founding partner Franklin Hickman were instrumental in establishing the nonprofit Community Fund Management Foundation, one of the first organizations in the country to provide pooled trust services to

families in need of a trustee, or unable to pay for the professional management of their special needs trusts.

She is a member of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys and a Certified Elder Law Attorney (CELA) through the National Elder Law Foundation. Named an Ohio Super Lawyer since 2003 and listed in Best Lawyers in America® since 2005, she has also been identified as one of the Top 50 Women Lawyers in Ohio.

Also elected to the **SNA board of directors**: **Pi-Yi Mayo**, CELA, Baytown, Texas, as president-elect; **Marielle Hazen**, CELA, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, as vice president; **Brad Frigon**, CELA, Englewood, Colorado, as treasurer; **Richard Courtney**, CELA, as secretary. Elected as directors: **Katherine Barr**, Esq., Birmingham, Alabama; **Martha Brown**, CELA, Webster Groves, Missouri, **Brian Rubin**, Esq., Buffalo Grove, Illinois; **Scott Suzuki**, Esq., Honolulu, Hawaii. Continuing as directors: **Steve Dale**, Esq., Walnut Creek, California; **Robert Fechtman**, CELA, Indianapolis, Indiana; **Mary Alice Jackson**, Esq., Sarasota, Florida; **Dennis Voorhees**, CELA, Twin Falls, Idaho; and **Jefferey Yussman**, Esq., Louisville, Kentucky.

SNA membership is based on a combination of relevant legal experience in the disability and elder law fields, direct family experience with disability, active participation with national, state, and local disability advocacy organizations, and professional reputation.

For more information about the Special Needs Alliance, or to locate a member attorney in your area, visit [www.specialneedsalliance.org](http://www.specialneedsalliance.org) or call 1-877-572-8472.

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