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DRM Honors Erica L. Green, Vanita Gupta, and the Honorable Chris Van Hollen

Baltimore, Md.—Disability Rights Maryland (DRM) is proud to announce that **Erica L. Green**, Correspondent for *The New York Times* Washington Bureau, is the recipient of DRM's *Excellence in Journalism Award*, **Vanita Gupta**, president and CEO of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, is the recipient of DRM's *Champion of Justice Award*, and **The Honorable Chris Van Hollen**, United States Senator of Maryland, is the recipient of DRM's *Public Policy Award*. All three awardees will be honored at the Breaking Barriers Award Gala on September 18, 2019, at the American Visionary Art Museum (AVAM) in Baltimore, Maryland.

Ms. Green is being recognized for her award-winning coverage of investigations into the Baltimore City school system. Now at the *Times*, her cutting-edge reporting has helped to safeguard the civil rights of students with disabilities in the nation's schools. Robin Murphy, executive director of DRM, stated, "Erica's coverage of Baltimore City Public Schools, the juvenile justice system, school segregation and her role on the Sun team, which won the 2016 Pulitzer Prize finalist award for coverage of the tragic death of Freddie Gray, has lifted a heavy curtain and exposed the challenging reality of conditions in schools for children with disabilities."



Ms. Gupta is being recognized for her national leadership in advancing civil rights and access to opportunity for all, and for her dedication to protecting the rights of people with disabilities. "She relentlessly opposes all forms of discrimination," said Ms. Murphy. "The number of people with disabilities whose lives have been directly and significantly impacted by her work is countless." At The Leadership Conference, Ms. Gupta spearheads the fight for justice, inclusion, and democracy. Previously, she served as the U.S. Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General and led the Civil Rights Division at the U.S. Department of Justice. Under her leadership, the Civil Rights Division vigorously protected and promoted disability rights, creating meaningful change for thousands of Americans with disabilities.



Senator Van Hollen is being recognized for his unwavering commitment to disability rights for more than two decades of service to the people of Maryland, first in Annapolis, and then in Congress. Ms. Murphy said, "Senator Van Hollen is a tremendous ally of the disability rights community. He has consistently supported access and inclusion, leading both by example and by his tireless work to pass state and federal legislation that has made a real difference in the lives of Marylanders with disabilities."



In Congress, Van Hollen was part of a small bipartisan group that introduced and passed the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act, which created tax-free savings accounts for individuals with disabilities. He is a vocal advocate for increased funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and he has introduced numerous legislative proposals aimed at supporting Americans with disabilities. He has also served as co-chair of the Congressional Down Syndrome Caucus.

Disability Rights Maryland is the federally mandated Protection & Advocacy organization charged with advancing and defending the rights of Marylanders of all ages statewide, with all types of disabilities. DRM works to create a just and inclusive society by advancing and defending the legal and human rights of people with disabilities. DRM partners with advocates and people with disabilities to promote and expand opportunities for people with disabilities in all aspects of community life, regardless of income, age or race.

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