



Kelli Neptune is the Executive Director of the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Center, the largest provider of pro bono legal services in the District of Columbia. The Pro Bono Center assists more than 20,000 individuals, nonprofits and small businesses with approximately 1,500 volunteer lawyers each year.

Before assuming her role at the Pro Bono Center, Kelli was the Director of Externships and Public Interest Programming at Howard University School of Law. Prior to her transition to academia, she was in private practice specializing in family and criminal law matters. Additionally, she was a visiting professor at Georgetown University Law Center and an adjunct professor at Howard University School of Law where she taught doctrinal, experiential, and clinical courses.

Kelli's commitment to public service began during her almost decade-long tenure at the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia. Starting as a staff attorney, she became the Deputy Trial Chief of the General Felony Section and eventually the trial division's Senior Deputy Trial Chief. In these roles, Kelli represented juveniles and adults in misdemeanor, felony, appellate, and civil housing and family law cases. She also chaired the Deborah T. Creek Criminal Practice Institute and engaged in legislative advocacy with the Council of the District of Columbia.

Currently, she serves on the boards of the National Legal Aid and Defender Association, the Artishia and Frederick Jordan Scholarship Fund, and is an ex officio member of the Judicial Conference of the D.C. Circuit's Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services. Kelli also co-chaired the Association of American Law Schools Section on Pro Bono & Access to Justice's Education Enrichment Committee and, in 2023, was appointed to the D.C. Access to Justice Commission.

Kelli is the recipient of the 2024 Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia's Stars of the Bar Award; the 2025 Greater Washington Area Chapter (GWAC) Women of Wonder, Public Service Award; and led the Pro Bono Center's virtual interactive website project that won the 2025 D.C. Bar's Frederick B. Abramson Award and the 2025 National Association of Bar Executive's LexisNexis Community & Education Outreach Award.

Beyond her professional endeavors, Kelli was a certified civil volunteer mediator for the District Court of Maryland and is a voter registration volunteer with the Maryland State Board of Elections. Kelli graduated with a B.A. from Emory University and a J.D. from Emory University School of Law.