



*Special needs require special attorneys.*

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RUSSELL PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

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**BERNARD A. KROOKS ELECTED PRESIDENT OF SPECIAL NEEDS ALLIANCE**

(**TUCSON, Ariz.**) - New York attorney **Bernard A. Krooks** has been elected president of the **Special Needs Alliance (SNA)**, the organization announced during its fall meeting at St. Pete Beach, Florida. He succeeds President **Andrew Hook**, the Virginia attorney who served in the position since October of 2007. Krooks has served as chairman of the SNA Marketing Committee for the past year.

Relying upon the strengths of Hook's administration and broadening national awareness of the SNA are at the core of Krooks' 2009 agenda.

"I do not want the SNA to remain the world's best kept secret," Krooks said. "People need to know of us and recognize us as a resource for individuals and advocates in the disability community."

Krooks plans to build on the SNA's growing reputation as a vocal advocate on a wide range of special needs issues—not simply public benefits and disability law. He points specifically to the **SNA's Public Policy Committee**, seated earlier this year to address legislation and regulations impacting the special needs community.

"We will be active participants in legislation aimed at special needs matters," Krooks said. "We will be present when these issues are being discussed and debated."

President Krooks aims to lead a local initiative to arm Alliance members with the confidence to weigh in on issues falling outside of law.

“We need to become more vocal--and be more active participants--at the local level with disability organizations: participating in awareness events and fundraisers, speaking to more disability groups, and volunteering our time. It will be my responsibility to energize the members to engage in these activities.”

A founding partner of **Littman Krooks LLP**, President Krooks operates offices in New York City, White Plains and Fishkill, New York. He is past president of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys and an adjunct assistant professor at the New York University Center for Finance, Law and Taxation.

Krooks has been widely quoted as an expert on the topics of special needs and estate planning both locally and nationally, and speaks frequently on these topics across the United States. He is an active member of numerous committees and boards, and coaches youth soccer and baseball.

The **SNA Board of Directors** also saw changes during the fall meeting, designed to streamline leadership and better prepare future SNA presidents:

- Arizona attorney **Bridget O'Brien Swartz** was chosen President Elect. Swartz's presidency will begin in October of 2009.
- **Neal Winston**, a Massachusetts attorney, was elected Vice President.
- Longtime Treasurer **Kemp Scales** retained his position. The Western Pennsylvania attorney additionally chairs the **SNA Publications Committee**.
- Board Member **Calvin Curtis** was elected Secretary. The Utah attorney Curtis has served on the Board of Directors since 2008.
- Joining the Board of Directors is the newly-elected **Brian Rubin**. The Chicago-area attorney was also tapped as the new chairman of the Marketing Committee, replacing President Krooks. Additionally, Rubin was instrumental in the formation of the Public Policy Committee, of which he currently serves as chairman.

### **About the Special Needs Alliance:**

The Special Needs Alliance (SNA) is a national, not for profit organization of attorneys dedicated to the practice of disability and public benefits law. Individuals with disabilities, their families and their advisors rely on the SNA to connect them with nearby attorneys who focus their practices in the disability

law arena. 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. The majority have been certified as Elder Law Attorneys (CELAs) by the National Elder Law Foundation, the certifying entity for the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA).

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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