



# YEAR IN REVIEW

## 52

The geographic reach of our programs is expansive. This past year, we were able to connect with individuals in 52 counties in New York.

## 4,314

Our team of staff and volunteers provided critical legal service to 4,314 clients this year.

## 650

Volunteers are at the core of our community-centric approach. We had a panel of over 650 volunteers working with us this year.



# UNITED IN OUR VALUES

VLPCNY holds ourselves accountable to our clients, our volunteers, our partner agencies, and our colleagues performing this work. Our values encompass the culture and spirit of our organization, guide our programming and communicate our priorities.

## RESPECT

Our **Eviction Program** has expanded its reach by offering community drop-in clinics multiple times each month. Renters can speak with an attorney to discuss habitability concerns, issues with a landlord, maintenance worries and more. We continue to advocate for and with those who are most impacted by the inequitable housing system to ensure families have safe and affordable homes.



The longstanding **Talk-to-a-Lawyer Program** continues to offer accessible, monthly consultations - including the impactful **Veterans Clinic**. While military service members are provided legal assistance while they are serving, there is no government-funded legal service provided to veterans once they leave the service. This clinic utilizes local lawyers, are also veterans, to bridge the barriers to legal representation being experienced by recent, and past, military veterans.



Volunteers in our **Family Court Program** have been busy assisting low-income clients with completing petitions and advising on matters related to uncontested divorce, child custody, visitation and support, and domestic violence



# COLLABORATION

“Helping individuals and families meet their goals of completing necessary life documents was amazing and sharing that joy with them was even more amazing. This is why we are here, and what we hope to continue to do for those in need.”  
- Volunteer Attorney

Recently, our **Elder Law Program** held an estate planning clinic with volunteers from the firm Bousquet Holstein, where attorneys generously donated their time to assist clients with essential legal documents. Estate planning is crucial for everyone, regardless of their financial situation, as it ensures that a person's wishes are respected, and their loved ones are cared for in the event of incapacity or death.

# EMPATHY

Staff and interns with our **LGBT+ Rights Program** continue their imperative outreach to the community. This year we hosted a Gender-Affirming Legal Name Change Clinic with The Cortland LGBTQ Center. This opportunity allowed us to provide free name and gender marker changes for trans\* individuals and legal resources to assist those experiencing discrimination and/or harassment, undoubtedly lifesaving measures.



VLPCNY recognizes that many societal barriers make it seemingly impossible for many families to achieve economic security and build generational wealth. That's why we are so proud to have grown our **Economic Opportunity Program** through our partnership with the EDCAP (Education Debt Consumer Assistance Program) Network. Together we are assisting borrowers in navigating the complexities of the student loan system.



The VLPCNY **Small Business Program** recently assisted a single mother who was operating a small home food business. She was offered an opportunity to do a pop-up restaurant at a local venue, but was required to have an LLC and other legal safeguards established before she could accept this booking. We were able to quickly place this client with a local attorney who helped her to form her LLC, obtain an Employer Identification Number and advise her on insurance regulations for her entity. As a result, the client was able to get funding to buy equipment, signage and marketing and most importantly, develop financial stability for her family.

Standout volunteers with our **Immigration Program** are serving the New American community in tremendous ways, by helping families with asylum applications, representing clients in pursuing status and facilitating trainings for peers on ways to provide trauma-informed pro bono support to refugees. Aside from helping our clients on their pathways to lawful, permanent residency, our team has also been tabling at mobile consulates to spread the word about our efforts to support immigrants.



# TRANSPARENCY

VLPCNY remains focused on continuing to use education, representation and advocacy to work with and for the people we serve. We are united in our values, as we move toward a more equitable future for all. Dr. Martin Luther King said, *“The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.”* We know it doesn't bend that way on its own. It bends that way because people fight to dismantle systems of inequity and oppression.

