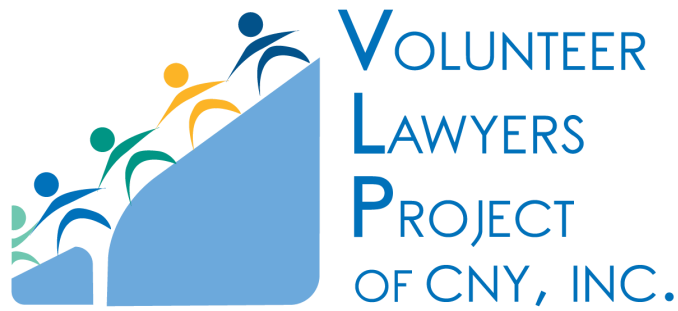


2022



YEAR END REVIEW

A YEAR OF COLLABORATION & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

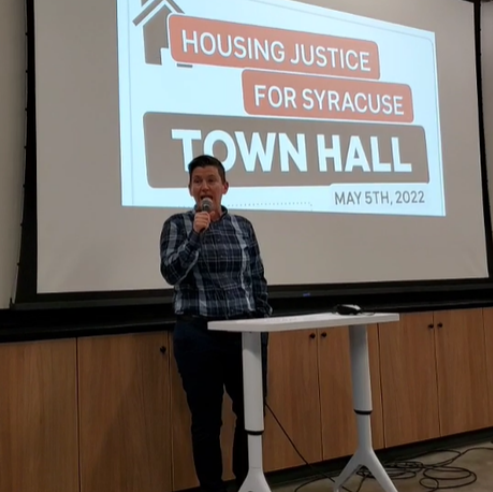


2022 was a year of reconnecting with the community at in-person clinics, collaborating to address urgent community needs, and reengaging our volunteers. The Volunteer Lawyers Project of CNY's team of staff and volunteers provided legal assistance to over **3,742** people, benefiting over **7,400** community members.

Highlights include:

- Defending over 1,000 tenants in eviction court, fighting for their right to remain in safe housing, and connecting tenants with much-needed financial support.
- Defending and supporting marginalized and targeted communities, such as new arrivals from Afghanistan and Ukraine in pursuing asylum claims, and LGBTQ individuals fighting discriminatory treatment.

We continue to grow in response to overwhelming community need, and our services remain rooted in racial and economic justice. We work with and for the people we serve, and we rely on the dedication of volunteers and supporters who embody the spirit of pro bono service. **Our team looks forward to what 2023 will bring!**



JUSTICE FOR TENANTS

The VLPCNY Housing Team worked with a young single father who experienced severe financial hardship during the pandemic. He lost hours at his job, and, like many other working parents, stayed home with his son when he was quarantined twice from school. Earning money to provide for the family's needs became extremely difficult. Then, when a loved one died from Covid, the healthcare and funeral costs wiped out his remaining funds. Unwilling to work with him, his landlord filed an eviction case against him, repeatedly refusing his attempts to pay at least partial rent. With our help, he filed an application for the NY State Emergency Rental Assistance Program. This enabled us to win several court adjournments for him while the application was pending, during which time he worked on his relationship with his landlord. After five months of negotiations, the landlord agreed to accept payments and withdrew the eviction case. Ultimately, our client and his son were able to stay in their apartment.

FOCUS ON MEDICAL DEBT



In 2022, VLPCNY helped more than 80 people fight debt lawsuits, saving the debtors over \$175,000 dollars. One woman received an income garnishment notice for medical debt incurred at a hospital years ago. Our team helped her file a motion to vacate the old judgment, both because she was never properly served with the summons, and because the hospital should have offered her Charity Care (a kind of financial assistance) to help pay for her treatment. We were able to get her entire debt erased. In 2023 VLPCNY will be expanding its focus on medical and nursing home debt, to fight unjust collection practices and empower healthcare consumers by strengthening efforts to end medical debt in CNY.

SERVING OUR VETERANS



Partnering with the Betty and Michael D. Wohl Veterans Legal Clinic at Syracuse University College of Law and volunteer attorneys from several local law firms, VLPCNY focused on the legal needs of CNY veterans in November. At the CNY Veterans Parade and Expo, attorneys and law students volunteered their time and expertise, providing consultations on issues ranging from veterans law, housing, family law and consumer rights. Additionally, veterans received free wills and powers of attorney. It's a privilege to make legal services accessible to those who have served our country, and we're looking forward to making next year's event even better.

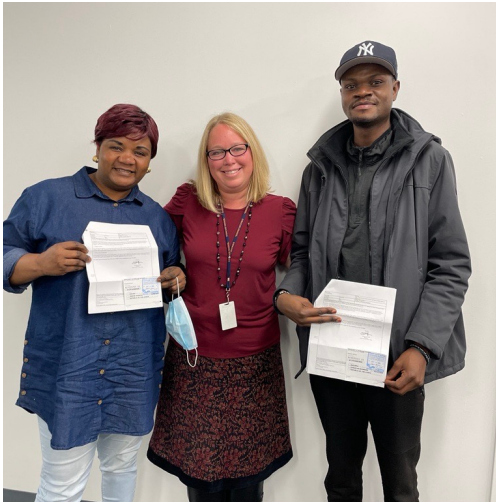
OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO LGBTQ COMMUNITY



Mallory Livingston's passionate advocacy for LGBTQ community members was recognized by the NY State Bar Association with the Dennison Ray Award. Since becoming VLPCNY LGBTQ Rights Program Director in May 2018, Mallory and her law student volunteers have completed 504 name changes for transgender community members and addressed anti-LGBTQ discrimination in housing, employment, healthcare and public accommodations. Additionally, she has trained over 2,000 community members on LGBTQ rights and gender marker changes for trans* individuals.

"There are so many attorneys who are working hard for their communities, who are trying to make for a better and more just world. I'm proud to be one of them." - **MALLORY LIVINGSTON**

SERVING THE IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY



This year the VLPCNY Immigration Program worked with a mother and son from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Their husband/father was killed while working with the World Food Programme. With their asylum applications having been filed in 2019 by Sara McDowell, Director and Supervising Attorney of Immigration Programs, the clients finally had their interviews in April 2022, in the midst of the Afghan crisis. In October, their applications were approved, ending a multi-year legal process to ensure their safety. Now, mom can file for her other young children, who are still living in fear in the DRC, to join her – just one example of the ways that our legal community has come together to meet the needs of immigrants and refugees seeking safety.

COLLABORATING TO ADDRESS URGENT NEEDS

This year, our team coordinated a series of trainings and clinics to provide a rapid response to serve new arrivals fleeing war in Afghanistan and Ukraine. VLPCNY partnered with Hiscock Legal Aid, Catholic Charities, Interfaith Works and RISE, and dozens of pro bono attorneys to provide legal advice and counsel to over 170 families. Pro bono attorneys are now preparing and submitting asylum, TPS and other applications to help these families obtain permanent stability here in CNY. In 2023 we are excited to begin partnering with other volunteer lawyer programs across Upstate New York to expand our impact.



540

**NUMBER OF IMMIGRATION
CASES OPENED
THIS YEAR**

Want to support our work?
[Make a charitable gift today!](#)
**Together we are providing access
to justice to those in need.**