



annual report 2022

EVOLVING WITH THE COMMUNITY



Welcome Pages

2022

Mission

The mission of LSHV is to provide high quality counsel in civil matters for low-income individuals and families and other vulnerable persons who do not have access to legal representation to maintain their basic needs, and to pursue equity through dismantling systemic oppression.

Vision

The vision of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley (LSHV) is to help create a society where all individuals have equal access to justice. LSHV is committed to actively opposing racism and changing systems that tolerate and perpetuate all forms of oppression.

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CEO Message



RACHEL C. HALPERIN

**Chief
Executive
Officer**

Our organization celebrated a banner year in 2022, and I am thrilled to share the considerable impact we continue to have on the Hudson Valley community. Like many other businesses, we looked forward to regaining a sense of normalcy in our day-to-day business operations as we'd hoped to get past the ongoing effects of the pandemic. Our collaborations with community partners and government agencies and support from our amazing

“THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND CONTINUING TO JOIN US IN THIS FIGHT”

donors was not only inspiring but a true testament of everyone's commitment to equal access to justice.

As the year came to a close, enthusiasm filled the halls of our offices in anticipation of what the year's accomplishments mean for the future. Most notably, we handled nearly 13,000 cases, which impacted over 30,000 individuals. We answered close to 15,000 calls to our Central Intake Hotline and provided approximately 9,000 hours of pro bono volunteer time. The increased need for our services simultaneously caused several internal organizational changes. We grew tremendously by adding nearly fifty new team members and experienced exciting staff promotions. For us, this continued growth means increasing our impact on the communities we serve by balancing the scales of justice one case at a time.

The 2022 Justice Gap report from the Legal Services Corporation found that low-income Americans need more legal help for 92% of their substantial civil legal problems. This justice gap—the difference between the civil legal needs of low-income residents and the resources available to meet those needs cannot be met without partnerships between civil legal service providers, private attorneys, the government, courts, and other stakeholders. The

need within our communities is so great that for every person we can assist, we must turn away two or three other people in need. Regardless, our dedicated team is ready to answer the call.

I recently read Michelle Obama's book, *The Light We Carry*, which she dedicates to all those who use their light to make sure that others feel seen. This is the perfect description of our incredible staff, Board members, and donors. All the people who support LSHV use their innate light—their legal talent, zealous advocacy, compassionate listening, writing skills, administrative aptitude, or financial capital—to ensure those in our community have access to justice. Despite the incredible work we did together this past year, in 2023, we must do more to close the justice gap and dismantle systemic oppression. The legitimacy of the law depends on equal justice. Equal justice requires equal access. LSHV ensures equal access.

Thank you for being so supportive and continuing to join us in this fight!

Sincerely
Rachel C. Halperin



2022

BY THE NUMBERS

12,992
Cases Handled

IMPACTING
30,412
Individuals
10,432
Children
3,626
Seniors

10,332
Clients Served

IMPACTING
7,240
Women
4,808
Persons with Disabilities
1,232
Domestic Violence Survivors
809
Veterans and their Families
231
Cancer Survivors

195 STAFF MEMBERS, INCLUDING:

- 104 Attorneys
- 44 Paralegals
- 35 Admins
- 8 Housing Counselors
- 4 Social Workers and Parent Advocates

We provide free, high-quality civil legal services to poor and low-income individuals and families in the lower and mid-Hudson Valley. Our experienced and compassionate attorneys, paralegals and support staff employ a holistic approach to making sure we provide the advice, counsel and representation needed. In 2022, over 516,000 Hudson Valley residents were living within 200% of the federal Poverty guidelines and eligible for our services. We are here when they need us!

Veterans Unit

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF UNIQUE SERVICE TO VETERANS & MILITARY FAMILIES

Serving in the military is an act of nobility and sacrifice. This sacrifice is not only made by the person who serves but their family as well. These veterans and their families deserve equal access to justice at home. We recognize that veterans, especially women and those who have recently returned from duty, face a broad and unique set of legal problems. Their time serving our country can often lead to physical and/or mental health challenges upon return to civilian life.

For that reason, in 2012, LSHV established the Veterans & Military Families Unit as a general practice. The unit works holistically to protect veterans and their family members from homelessness, to address barriers to employment, and to assist veterans in gaining or preserving economic stability. LSHV's Staff Attorneys navigate the complex systems of resources, in order to assist our clients in accessing the benefits to which they are entitled.

Since being established in 2012, organization wide, we have handled 2,688 cases impacting 8,196 people. The unit has 6 attorneys working diligently daily to ensure that those who served and protected us have top-notch legal support when their basic needs are at risk.

Congratulations to our amazing Veterans & Military Families Unit on your 10th anniversary. We salute you!



Deanna Arden
Staff Attorney



Alexander Brandes
Supervising Attorney



Thomas Caruso
Staff Attorney



Cherish Celetti
Supervising Attorney



Christopher Mamone
Staff Attorney



Alexandra Schweitzer
Supervising Attorney

JAY'S STORY

LSHV is fortunate to have an attorney in the unit who is a veteran himself. Thomas Caruso became a part of the LSHV team in 2021 and has handled more than 240 cases ranging from military discharge upgrades to trials in housing court. Having been a Sergeant in the United States Army, Thomas is truly devoted to his clients and has a deep understanding of their needs. At the heart of his work is placing Veterans first. A fierce advocate, he understands the importance of full representation in cases where, when left unrepresented, it would result in life-altering consequences for the Veteran. Thomas recently represented a veteran he described as one of his favorite clients, and we would like to share his story with you.

Jay* is a combat veteran of the US Marines and a member of a Native American tribe. He served in the Persian Gulf, where he saw combat and where his unit was camped for four months downwind of a burn pit. A burn pit is a solution to an age-old problem. An army creates a tremendous amount of waste. This includes all manner of things, such as broken equipment, spare equipment, human waste, and garbage. Long ago, the military decided to utilize burn pits as a matter of expediency. A burn pit is a depression in the earth, usually made with a bulldozer. The military would dispose of any waste in the burn pit, cover it with jet fuel or simple gasoline, and ignite the pit with a flame thrower. It neatly incinerates all the waste – and creates clouds of toxic fumes. Burn pits have been the cause of many severe medical conditions.

Jay has suffered from many of the illnesses associated with the effects of being near burn pits, as well as severe PTSD. The Department of Veterans Affairs rated him as 100% disabled. He subsequently filed for Social Security disability and was initially denied. Jay came to LSHV for help, and together, he and Thomas applied for reconsideration. He was again denied, and Thomas requested a hearing before an administrative law judge (ALJ).

Thomas then contacted Jay's treating psychologist at the VA and she was able to write a letter verifying that Jay was incapable of working in any capacity. Thomas also obtained Jay's most recent medical records showing his condition, including pervasive arthritis, migraines, and neurological damage.

Thomas and Jay participated in a virtual hearing with the Social Security Administration, a practice that the agency had adopted at the height of the pandemic. This was particularly helpful for Jay as he'd relocated back to his reservation on the Canadian border.

Jay was finally met with good news following the hearing, and his disability request was granted. This win doubled his income and provided him with a substantial lump sum payment dating back to his application date. That money helped improve his life and the lives of his family.

We believe that Thomas' work with Jay's VA psychologist was instrumental in this outcome.

(*) Denotes name change to protect the identity of our client.



New to LSHV

<u>Name</u>	<u>Job Title</u>	<u>Office Location</u>
McEnroe, Daniel	Staff Attorney	Poughkeepsie
Kenney, Michael	Staff Attorney	Newburgh
Payamps, Brian	Director of Accounting	White Plains
Lebron, Jurielis	Paralegal	Newburgh
Franklin, Shemika	Human Resources Generalist	White Plains
Crawford, Shemicka	Housing Counselor	Peekskill
Hernandez, Amarfelin	Paralegal	White Plains
Pereira, Barbara L	Paralegal	Yonkers
Mello, Christopher	Financial Analyst	White Plains
Escobar, Arively	Paralegal	White Plains
Asif, Fiza	Paralegal	Monticello
Kasinki, John A.	Staff Attorney	Goshen
Miniel, Hector	Housing Counselor	Yonkers
Broge, Brett Allen	Staff Attorney	Goshen
Novak, Erin	Staff Attorney	Yonkers
Aquino, Lawrence Paulo	Staff Attorney	Mt. Vernon
Valencia, Christopher J.	Staff Attorney	Yonkers
D'Elia, Laura E.	Staff Attorney	Newburgh
Piacquadio, Anthony	Grants Analyst	White Plains
Puelles, Joselin	Receptionist/Paralegal	Poughkeepsie
Seroussi, Alysha	Staff Attorney	Newburgh
McGloin, Eugene P.	Staff Attorney	White Plains
Martinez, Antonio J	Paralegal	Mt. Vernon
Hayden, Travis	IT Director	White Plains
Leon, Jazmine	Chief Development Officer	White Plains
Smith, Stephen	Staff Attorney	White Plains
Gaito, Anthony M	Paralegal	Peekskill
King, Chrystalia	Staff Attorney	Peekskill
Almonte, Lillian	Family Advocate	White Plains
Hawkins, Melanie	Grants Manager	White Plains
Guerrero, Pamela	Paralegal	Yonkers
Gholson, Jolitta K.	Paralegal	Poughkeepsie
Antonelli, Ariana	Staff Attorney	Goshen
Martinez, Eline	Housing Counselor	Kingston
Herrera, Sintia	Development Assistant	White Plains
Nolasco-Perez, Samantha	Receptionist/Paralegal	Goshen
Abraham-Peticco, Viviana Cecilia	Paralegal	Newburgh
Villa Inga, Nancy	Paralegal	Peekskill
Loja, Marcelo	Paralegal	Peekskill
Teague, Steven	Staff Attorney	Newburgh
Fitzmaurice, Theresa Ann	Staff Attorney	White Plains

<u>Name</u>	<u>Job Title</u>	<u>Office Location</u>
Johnson, JoniKay	Staff Attorney	Mt. Vernon
Crespo, Ivan	Paralegal	White Plains
Santo, Giannina	Staff Attorney	Nanuet
Roth, Alana	Staff Attorney	Kingston
Ramirez, Tanya Jackelin	Paralegal	Newburgh
Nusbaum, Ali Nicole	Staff Attorney	Kingston



Staff Promotions

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PROMOTED TO</u>	<u>PROMOTED FROM</u>	<u>OFFICE LOCATION</u>
Liu, Qi Jun	Assistant Director of Finance	Reporting Manager	White Plains
LoBello, Joseph	Assistant Director of Grants	Grants Manager	White Plains
Schweitzer, Alexandra C.	Supervising Attorney	Supervising Attorney	Poughkeepsie
Turbert, Hope H	Supervising Attorney	Supervising Attorney	Nanuet
Turner, Lucy	Supervising Attorney	Supervising Attorney	Goshen

Financial Report

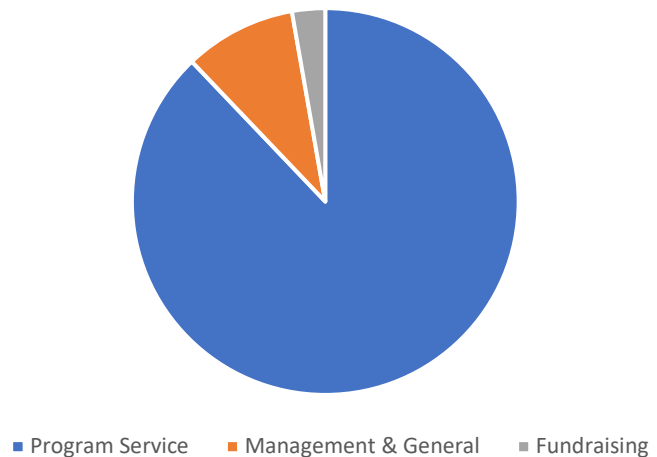
REVENUE 2022

Interest/Investment	71,072.56	0%	
Donated Services	1,141,920.92	4%	
Private Funding	1,930,467.68	7%	
IOLA	2,167,175.12	8%	
LSC	2,422,629.42	9%	
Federal Funding	2,827,346.17	11%	
County & City	4,859,229.60	18%	
NYS Funding	5,565,627.20	21%	
OCA	5,777,437.76	22%	
TOTAL	\$26,762,906.43	100%	

EXPENSES 2022

Program Service	\$23,315,415.64
Management and General	\$2,480,860.52
Fundraising	\$734,808.76
TOTAL	\$26,531,084.92

Expenses



Testimonials

“

Testimonial

Legal Services of the Hudson is an extraordinary nonprofit. I'm a low-income Domestic Violence survivor and thanks to the work that my attorney did I was able to have equal access to Justice! This helped me build a safe and secure future for my kids and myself.



SILVIA



“

Testimonial

Thank God for Legal Services of the Hudson Valley, I wouldn't be here, where I am at, without them.



Marilyn



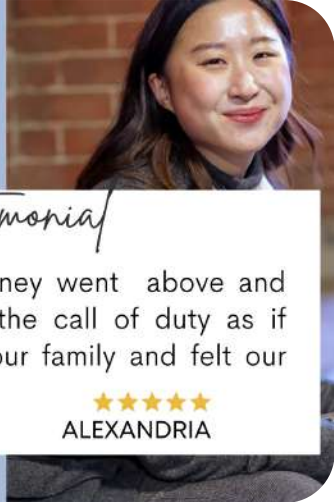
“

Testimonial

My attorney went above and beyond the call of duty as if part of our family and felt our pain.



ALEXANDRIA



“

Testimonial

I greatly appreciate the assistance, kindness, and compassion shown to me by Thomas Mancone. He did an excellent job of explaining the legal issues involved in my case and what my options were. He was always willing and available to answer any of my questions and concerns. I am so grateful for all of his assistance and wish him the best in his continued legal work. I would definitely contact him again should I require legal assistance in the future.



LUCILLE



“

Testimonial

I want to thank you for all your help from the bottom of my heart for me and my children.



SANDRA



2022 Equal Access to Justice Gala



From L to R: Paul Adler, New York State Governor Kathy Hochul, Rachel C. Halperin, John Harris

The 2022 Equal Access to Justice Gala was an event in LSHV history. The beautiful event took place at the gorgeous Westchester Country Club in Rye, New York, overlooking the Hudson River, on September 14, 2022, thanks to former board member, the Honorable Philip Halpern, who sponsored us. Situated outdoors overlooking the Hudson River, Tara Rosenblum of News12 emceed the event. We honored

New York's first female Governor, Kathy Hochul, with the Champion of Justice Award and former LSHV Board Members Paul Adler, Chief Strategy Officer of Rand Commercial, and Jonathan C. Harris, General Counsel and Secretary of MBIA Inc., with the Equal Access to Justice Award.

Attendees enjoyed cocktails and a networking reception featuring the

Champion of Justice Award presentation to the Governor, where she promised to remain "one of our staunchest allies." This historic moment was followed by an evening program that celebrated LSHV's clients, staff, and this Equal Access to Justice Honorees.

During our program, LSHV also debuted our 2022 Client Impact Video, sharing stories and experiences of our clients and LSHV staff. Silvia Falcon, a domestic violence survivor, came to LSHV while pregnant after having been physically abused, discovering that her young daughter was being sexually abused and losing custody of her children. Sylvia recalled losing hope and having nowhere to turn, but LSHV was there to help. At the gala, she relayed a message of hope and gratitude as she now has full custody of her children, and her abuser was convicted and sentenced for his crimes. She currently works with other victims of domestic violence throughout the Hudson Valley.

With an unprecedented number of sponsorships, over 250 members from

the county, legal, business, and nonprofit communities were in attendance. The event raised over \$400,000 to support LSHV's long-standing programs.

The 2022 Equal Access to Justice Gala was made possible through the following generous sponsors and underwriters. Presenting Sponsor – Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP; Platinum Sponsors – Boies Schiller Flexner LLP; Bond Schoeneck & King; Kasowitz Benson Torres LLP; Mastercard; MBIA Inc.; Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler LLP; PepsiCo; Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan LLP; Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP; Gold Sponsors – Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft LLP; Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc.; Sidney & Linda Rosdeitcher; Selendy Gay Elsberg PLLC; Sidney Rosdeitcher; Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP; Wachtell Lipton Rosen & Katz; Silver Sponsors – Baker McKenzie; Cabanillas and Associates P.C.; Debevoise and Plimpton LLP; DelBello Donnellan Weingarten Wise & Wiederkehr LLP; Keane & Beane P.C.; Mutual of America; PCSB Community Foundation; Reception Underwriter – Finkelstein, Blankinship, Frei-Pearson & Garber, LLP; Reception Underwriter – Webster Bank; Bronze Sponsors – Bleakly Platt & Schmidt, LLP; Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company; Clarfeld; Cooley LLP; Kutak Rock LLP; Mintz; The Paul and Mary Adler Charitable Fund for Good; Alison Plenge and Colin Aitken; Rand Commercial; Sher Tremonte LLP; Yankwitt LLP; Client Sponsors – Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP; Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP; Kraft Kennedy; Dessert Underwriter– AMS Acquisitions; Holt Construction; McCabe & Mack LLP; Simone Development Companies;



New York State Governor Kathy Hochul



From L to R: Rachel C. Halperin, LSHV former client, Frances Pantaleo, Esq.

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All proceeds from the 2022 Equal Access to Justice Gala will allow Legal Services of the Hudson Valley to continue its mission of protecting rights and promoting justice for all throughout the Hudson Valley region.



Back row, L to R: Richard Gluckselig, Esq., Frances Pantaleo, Esq., Christopher R. Cabanillas, Esq., Jonathan Harris, Paul Adler, Sarmad M. Khojasteh, Esq., Jane Sovern, Esq., Alejandro Cruz, Esq., Russell M. Yankwitt, Esq.

Front row, L to R: Charles S. Biener, Esq., Rachel Chazin-Halperin, Clifford Weber, Vicki Walcott-Edim, Esq., Alison J. Plenge, Esq., Jeremiah Frei-Pearson, Esq.

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Jonah Brassard	Gabriel Herrmann	Harold Pressberg
Kevin Brennan	Yves Jean	Raghu Rangachar
Joseph & Sue Browdy	Jonathan Jeremias	Joan Ritter
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Special Tributes



GOVERNMENT GRANTS

Legal Services of the Hudson Valley applauds the vision and deep concern for the welfare of children and families demonstrated by Westchester County – as well as County Executive George Latimer’s leadership – in creating a partnership with our organization, which helped us to launch our multi-disciplinary Family Defense Unit. In a collaborative effort, Westchester County and LSHV applied for and received a \$2.6 million grant over 3 years to establish our unit in 2021, which continued in 2022. Working together, we have strengthened families by ensuring that they have the resources they need, keeping children in their homes and communities, and safely reuniting families whenever possible. Our unit handles cases at every stage of involvement with Child Protective Services and has achieved outstanding results in the CPS investigation matters, avoiding indicated reports in 90% of the cases and avoiding removals of children in 99.5% of all cases. Our track record of reuniting families with children has demonstrated that multidisciplinary family defense units are a powerful tool in helping support parents in our community.

In 2022, our FDU handled 221 cases and had a 100%-win rate on “Amend and Seal” cases – which resulted in parents who previously would have been barred from seeking employment such as Teaching Assistant, Nurse’s Aide in a pediatric setting, or daycare worker, being able to apply for or continue careers in those fields, enabling them to provide for their families’ needs independently.

We are very grateful for Westchester County’s support. We could not do this critical work without its strong and dedicated support.

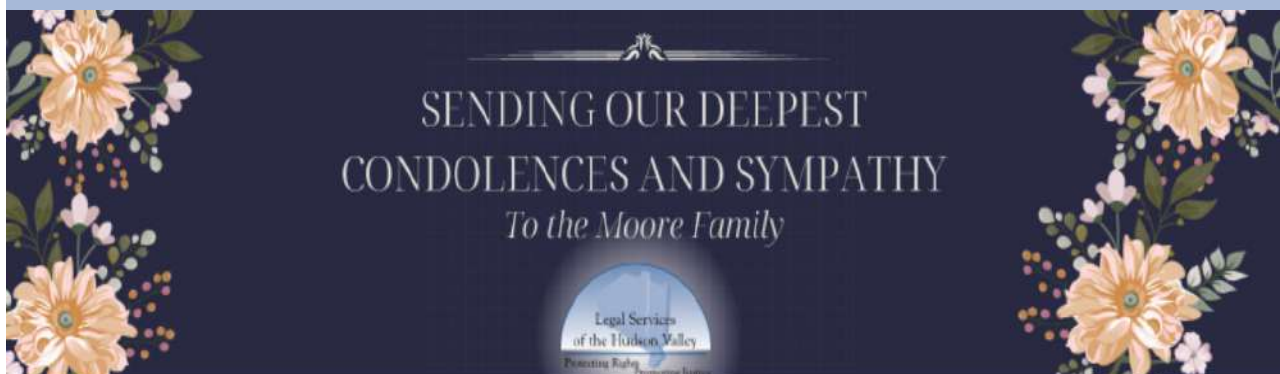
PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS

We extend our deep condolences to the Moore Family on the passing of Katherine Moore – who was known for her service to the nonprofit and arts communities in Westchester, as well as for her strong commitment to social, racial, and economic justice – in February 2023. We are deeply grateful to the David and Katherine Moore Family Foundation, which granted LSHV a total of \$300,000 in General Operating Support over a period of eight years, allowing us to cover vital costs – such as occupancy and utilities – which are not often funded by private foundations. At an average cost of \$2,000/case, this enabled us to handle approximately 150,000 cases for individuals and families struggling to maintain their basic needs. She truly made a difference and will be missed.

We are proud and honored to partner with the Redlich Horwitz Foundation which, like LSHV, aspires to see families thrive and be free from systemic oppression and involvement with the child welfare system, when that is unnecessary or inappropriate. Since late 2020, the foundation has provided LSHV with a total of \$450,000, enabling us to hire an Appellate Attorney to work in our Family Defense Unit. We are deeply appreciative of this generous support and the foundation's trust in LSHV's capacity to affect positive change in the systems that impact families' lives. In addition, we value and respect the foundation's work as a thought leader in the field.

Words can't do justice to the gratitude we feel for the Gerstner Philanthropies/Helping Hand Fund's support – totaling \$275,000 in 2022 – of our Emergency Rental and Utility Arrears Fund. This funding allowed us to assist families who experienced crises, such as serious illness or the loss of employment, that would have otherwise caused them to become homeless after an eviction.

A special thank you to a long-time generous supporter of LSHV, the Dyson Foundation, which in addition to continuing to provide General Operating Support for our Mid-Hudson Valley Offices, in 2022 also provided funding that enabled us to create a much-needed Rental and Utility Arrears Fund for residents of those counties. The foundation's support of that fund made it possible for us to prevent 20 families from becoming homeless. We are grateful on their behalf.



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