

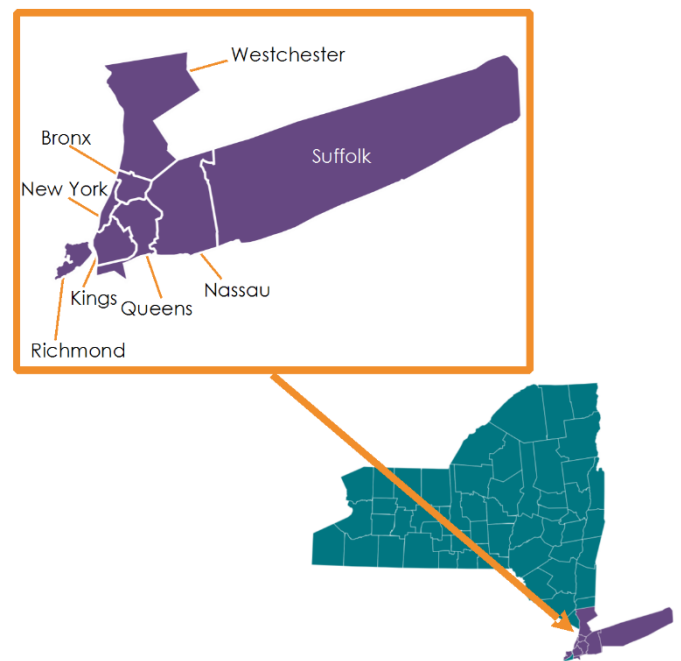
NEW YORK LAWYERS FOR THE PUBLIC INTEREST

**2023 – 2024
Report**

OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS

In the 12-month reporting period, NYLPI provided direct legal services, education, and training that benefited over 120,000 people in New York and improved the lives of more than 3.5 million New Yorkers. Where direct benefits and cost savings were measured, the value to clients was nearly \$750,000.

- In an agreement with NYLPI, New York-Presbyterian Hospital will implement 1,300 accessibility improvements to its facilities, including entrances and loading areas, interior and exterior routes, doors, signage, public restrooms, patient rooms, service counters, nurses’ stations, and gift shops, all to be completed by the end of 2028. These enhancements will improve health outcomes for people with disabilities, which are worsened by inaccessible healthcare facilities, and will benefit other patients and staff of the hospital, including the elderly and those who do not speak English as their first language.
- In the settlement of a fair housing case with NYLPI’s client Melanie Rivera-Mora, the Corcoran Group committed to a far-reaching training program for all agents on fair housing requirements for people with disabilities, promoting equitable access to housing. NYLPI and its pro bono partner, Chaffetz Lindsey, filed the lawsuit in 2019, asserting claims under the federal Fair Housing Act and the New York City Human Rights Law.
- NYLPI’s Transplant Equity campaign expanded access to kidney transplants for immigrant New Yorkers through direct representation and advocacy, legislative efforts, trainings, and research. Six people received life-saving kidney transplants in the grant period through NYLPI’s advocacy.



Service Area: New York City Metropolitan Area

Population Served: People with disabilities and other vulnerable populations

Staffing Full Time Equivalents:

Total Staff: 31	Lawyers: 15.5
Paralegals: 7	Others: 8.5

- NYLPI filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of Raul de la Cruz, a man with a mental disability who was shot by the NYPD after his father called 311 seeking help for a mental health crisis. The lawsuit is part of NYLPI's commitment to fighting police violence against citizens experiencing mental health crises, which includes the previously-filed lawsuit *Baerga v. City of New York*. This work also includes NYLPI's advocacy for building an effective non-police mental health crisis response system.
- NYLPI published reports to educate the community on disability rights, climate justice, and health justice. These publications include *A Crisis in Special Education: New York City's Failure to Educate Students Classified with "Emotional Disability," A Proposal for Systemic Change*; *Wake Up and Smell the Fumes: How School Bus Idling Harms Children and Communities*; and *They Can Donate, But They Can't Receive: Toward Transplant Equity in New York State*.
- We provided ongoing support and weekly resource lists, training opportunities, and webinars for Special Education learning, which were accessed by over 92,000 individuals during the grant period. Factsheets and materials are available in English, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Russian, and Haitian Creole.
- Through our Pro Bono Clearinghouse, we partnered with 852 attorneys, staff, and volunteers who donated nearly 26,000 pro bono hours and represented 407 nonprofits serving 1.5 million low-income clients in need. The Clearinghouse provides legal representation, capacity-building, extensive training, and resources to nonprofits across the city.
- We trained and provided resources to more than 120,000 community members and stakeholders on empowerment strategies to access healthcare, education, transportation, and housing. We partner with communities to build collective power and achieve their own vision of justice and equality.

DIRECT LEGAL SERVICES

Case Example #1, Immigrant Health Justice: Mr. R, a 60-year-old man living in Brooklyn, had been on dialysis for 7 years before he met with an outreach coordinator from SUNY Downstate Medical Center who gave him hope for a healthier future. Mr. R had been told that he did not qualify for a transplant because he was undocumented and did not have health insurance. In spring 2022, the coordinator referred him to the NYLPI/SUNY Downstate Kidney Transplant Pipeline, which at the time had only been operating for four months. NYLPI completed a comprehensive immigration and health benefits screening and found that not only

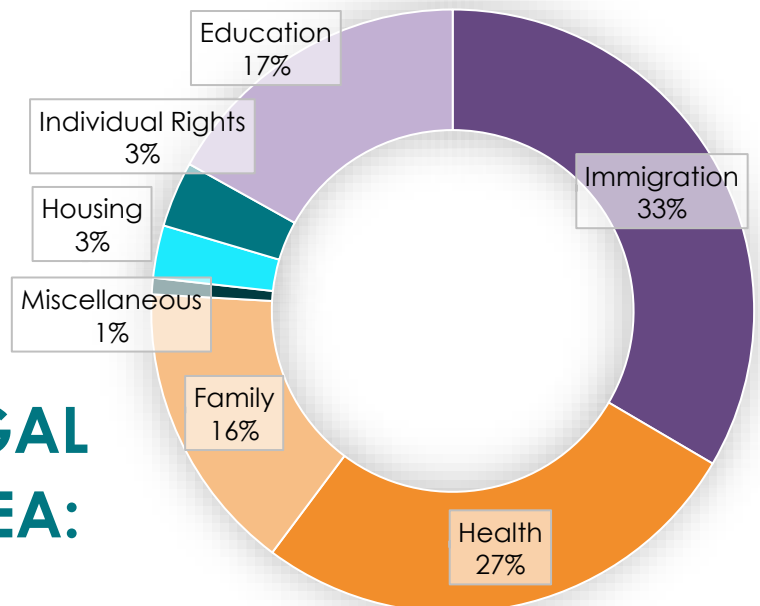
did Mr. R have a pathway to qualify for insurance, he also had a pathway to become a legal permanent resident. NYLPI helped him submit the appropriate immigration application and navigate the health insurance enrollment process. Once he was insured, the SUNY Downstate team determined that he was a candidate for a kidney transplant. Two years later, Mr. R is now listed for a transplant and well on his way to becoming a legal permanent resident. NYLPI continues to support him through his immigration and transplant process.

Case Example #2, Immigrant Health Justice: Prior to her diagnosis of End Stage Renal Disease, Ms. G worked as a nanny and took great pride in raising many children as her own. But with her diagnosis, she lost her ability to work and earn a livelihood. Undocumented and uninsured, Ms. G was ineligible for the healthcare she needed to improve and prolong her life. Instead, she lived in fear of contact with immigration authorities and continued to survive on a depleting dialysis regimen. When NYLPI met with Ms. G, we determined that she had a pathway to become eligible for comprehensive health insurance and we took on her direct immigration representation. As a result, Ms. G became the beneficiary of a family-based immigration petition filed by her U.S. citizen daughter and became eligible to enroll in Medicaid.

With our support, Ms. G was accepted as a transplant patient at a private hospital—but she faced continued discriminatory hurdles to receiving care, despite being fully insured. NYLPI intervened again and advocated directly with hospital staff and leadership. After nearly a year of advocacy, Ms. G finally received her transplant. She is recovering well and looking forward to a long and healthy life with her family.



CASES BY LEGAL PROBLEM AREA:



OTHER LEGAL-RELATED SERVICES

NYLPI has an extensive community education program, supported in part by IOLA funds. NYLPI's attorneys, community organizers, social workers, and other advocates regularly provide trainings to community groups and stakeholders to empower them to better advocate for themselves. In the past 12 months, we trained and provided resources to over 120,000 community members on empowerment strategies to access healthcare, education, transportation, and housing. Service delivery included 92,000 special education resource guides distributed to people subscribed to our disability justice email list.

UndocuCare: In October 2023, NYLPI's Health Justice team held a presentation and training on access to City and State benefits for recent immigrant arrivals, which was attended by 121 community members. The presentation was hosted in partnership with the AIDS Center of Queens County and focused on the particular needs of the TGNCI+ (transgender, gender non-conforming, intersex, and more) community. NYLPI staff distributed materials with information on applying for public benefits, accessing healthcare, and obtaining legal services for immigration needs.

Future Planning for People with Disabilities: Throughout the grant period, NYLPI's Disability Justice team held trainings on future planning for people with disabilities. These trainings covered financial planning (including supplemental needs trusts), healthcare proxies, power of attorney, guardianship, and other topics. The trainings were held at public schools in communities throughout NYLPI's service area and were attended by 406 community members during the grant period.

4,037

people
benefited from
**Pro Se
Assistance**

108,983

people
benefited from
**Community
Legal
Education**

13,029

people
benefited from
**Web-Based
Assistance**

IMPACT CASES

Impact Case Example #1, Mental Health

Crisis Litigation: We continued our ongoing federal class action litigation (*Baerga v. City of New York*) challenging the City's use of police officers as the front-line response to people with actual or perceived mental disabilities. This included filing a second amended complaint in April 2023, which added additional plaintiffs, including additional individuals who were detained, and asserted further legal violations.

In March 2024, NYLPI filed a new lawsuit on behalf of Raul de la Cruz, who was shot by the NYPD while experiencing a mental health crisis after his father called 311 for help. NYLPI continues to represent Mr. de la Cruz in this ongoing litigation, which asserts the right of New Yorkers with mental health conditions to be safe from police violence.

Impact Case Example #2 New York-

Presbyterian Hospital Settlement: In March 2024, NYLPI reached a settlement with New York-Presbyterian Hospital, under which the hospital will implement 1,300 accessibility improvements to its facilities by the end of 2028. These enhancements will improve health outcomes for people with disabilities, which are worsened by inaccessible healthcare facilities.

The agreement was reached after NYLPI approached New York-Presbyterian to provide guidance and feedback about the accessibility needs of patients with disabilities. The parties, with an accessibility consultant, developed a plan to incorporate accessibility enhancements to capital improvement

All Impact Cases

- Body-Worn Camera Footage Access for Individuals Killed by the NYPD When Experiencing Mental Health Crises
- Brad H. Mental Health Discharge Planning from Jails
- Cleanup North Brooklyn Campaign litigation
- Disability Advocates, Inc. v. Paterson (*O'Toole v. Cuomo*)
- Fair Play Coalition for High School Sports Equity – *Moises Jimenez v. DOE* litigation
- Housing Access Project for Individuals with Disabilities
- Civil Rights Complaint with DHS against local immigration detention facility
- *Sosa v. Hudson County*, healthcare for New Yorkers in immigration detention
- *Bonilla v. Hudson County*, healthcare for New Yorkers in immigration detention
- New York City Courthouse Accessibility
- Transparency in the Department of Education litigation
- Treatment of Children in Foster Care Who Have Developmental Disabilities (*L.J. v. ACS & OPWDD*)
- *Willowbrook*
- South Ozone Park Sewage Legal Assistance Project

- Britt v. MTA, challenging discrimination against people with disabilities excluded from fare discounts (with MFJ)
- Raritan Baykeeper v. American Recycling Management, Clean Water Act and nuisance litigation against two polluting waste facilities causing environmental and health injuries in Jamaica, Queens
- Baerga v. City of New York, mental health crisis response
- Goldenberger v. MTA, subway gaps
- Concerned Citizens of Dover, environmental health
- Hospital accessibility, structured negotiation
- Concert venue accessibility, structured negotiation
- Rivera-Mora v. Corcoran, access and accommodation
- Raul de la Cruz v. City of New York, mental health crisis response
- Amicus: Fresh Air for the Eastside v. New York, enforcing the Environmental Rights Amendment, on appeal in the New York Appellate Division Fourth Department
- Amicus: State of New Jersey v. United States Department of Transportation, 2:23-cv-03885, (D.N.J.) in support of defendant Department of Transportation and NY congestion pricing

plans. The improvements will also benefit other patients and staff of the hospital, including the elderly and those who do not speak English as their first language.

Impact Case Example #3, Corcoran Group Settlement: In October 2023, NYLPI reached a settlement with the Corcoran Group on behalf of a family who alleged the denial of the opportunity to tour an apartment when a real estate agent insisted that their child remove his rubber-soled shoes, which were connected to the leg braces he required to stand and walk. NYLPI and its pro bono partner, Chaffetz Lindsey, filed the lawsuit in 2019, asserting claims under the federal Fair Housing Act and the New York City Human Rights Law.

The settlement includes a far-reaching training program for all Corcoran agents on fair housing requirements for people with disabilities, promoting equitable access to housing.

TECHNOLOGY

We continue to deepen our use of Microsoft 365, Zoom, Teams, WhatsApp, Facebook Live, and other tools that increase our reach with client communities. NYLPI continues to develop and enhance our case management database, Case Management Pro, including recent workflow improvements for immigration cases and outcomes tracking. We have hired a dedicated Data Systems specialist, who is working to make our use of Case Management Pro more effective.

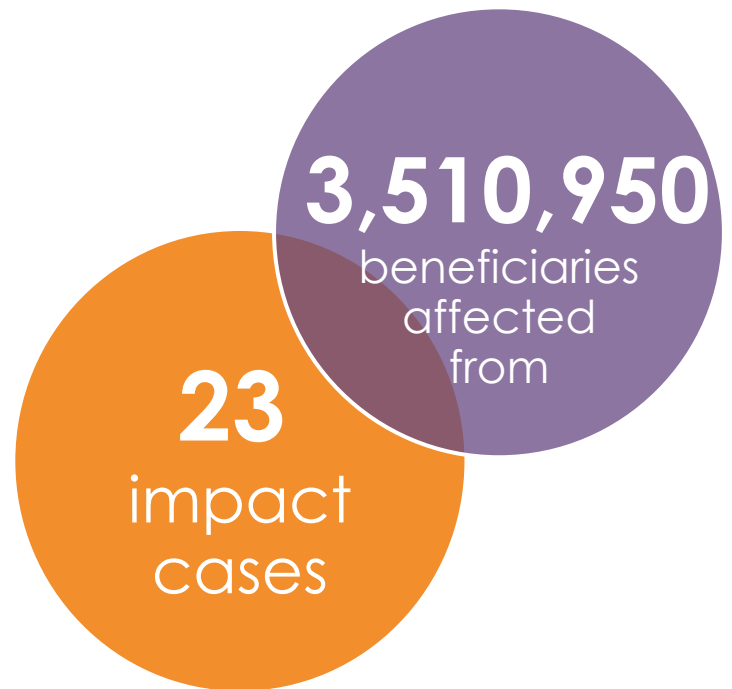
NYLPI subscribes to Westlaw, making case research fast and effective, and all NYLPI staff have access to e-mail and the Internet. NYLPI has a video remote interpreting and a relay service so that we can provide intake and technical assistance services to people who are hearing impaired both in person and through the phone, as well as having TTY.

NYLPI also uses a “Language Line” phone system for communicating with clients who have limited English proficiency. The Clearinghouse distributes the cases it is seeking to place with pro bono attorneys through a weekly email.

NYLPI regularly updates its website and social media channels to provide information on our programs, as well as resources we have available. NYLPI also maintains the critical portions of our website in multiple languages.

IOLA TECHNOLOGY GRANT

NYLPI used the technology grant to enhance the organization’s internal infrastructure. The grant was used to purchase key equipment for staff including laptop computers, universal docks, and computer monitors. The purchases are essential to support staff work in-office and from home. All are equipped with Microsoft 365 and full access to Case Management Pro and NYLPI’s SharePoint document for file sharing.



PRO BONO VOLUNTEERS

NYLPI promotes a legal culture where pro bono involvement is valued and prioritized. NYLPI's staff regularly meet with key partners at law firms and corporate legal departments to encourage and facilitate pro bono opportunities, and when possible, tailor pro bono projects.

We work to foster a lifetime commitment to pro bono through our annual summer program. In addition, NYLPI hosts summer interns from law schools, providing an organized twelve-week program that introduces them to community lawyering and affords the opportunity to work on a range of issues.

During the grant period, our Clearinghouse engaged 852 pro bono attorneys and staff from nearly 80 law firms, who donated 16,760 pro bono hours and represented 407 nonprofits and community groups by providing counsel on matters such as corporate structure, contract negotiations, litigation, and more. These nonprofits were better able to focus on serving their communities by utilizing their resources for their missions rather than on costly legal services. In total, volunteer attorneys, staff, and interns donated nearly 26,000 pro bono hours.

The Clearinghouse has expanded its client services by organizing workshops for nonprofit leaders, using pro bono attorneys as teachers on topics including starting a nonprofit, diversity, equity and inclusion, and digital privacy and cybersecurity. The Clearinghouse held 11 workshops attended by nonprofit leaders, including topics such as "Advocacy and Lobbying for New York Nonprofits," "Intellectual Property and Licensing for Nonprofits," and "Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive Workplaces: Best Practices for DEI Initiatives That Create Real Change."

852

attorneys volunteered **16,760** hours

34

law students volunteered **9,098** hours

SIGNIFICANT COLLABORATIONS

Nonprofit New York: Nonprofit New York is a capacity-building organization that works to build a thriving community of extraordinary nonprofits through training and educational programs, policy, and legislative advocacy on behalf of the nonprofit sector and offering expert resources and guidance to its members. NYLPI collaborates with Nonprofit New York to produce innovative and impactful webinars to address important legal issues for nonprofits. The webinars covered topics around nonprofit governance, intellectual property and licensing, digital privacy, employment law, and more. During the reporting period, we partnered in organizing 8 webinars which were attended by over 350 representatives from nonprofit organizations.

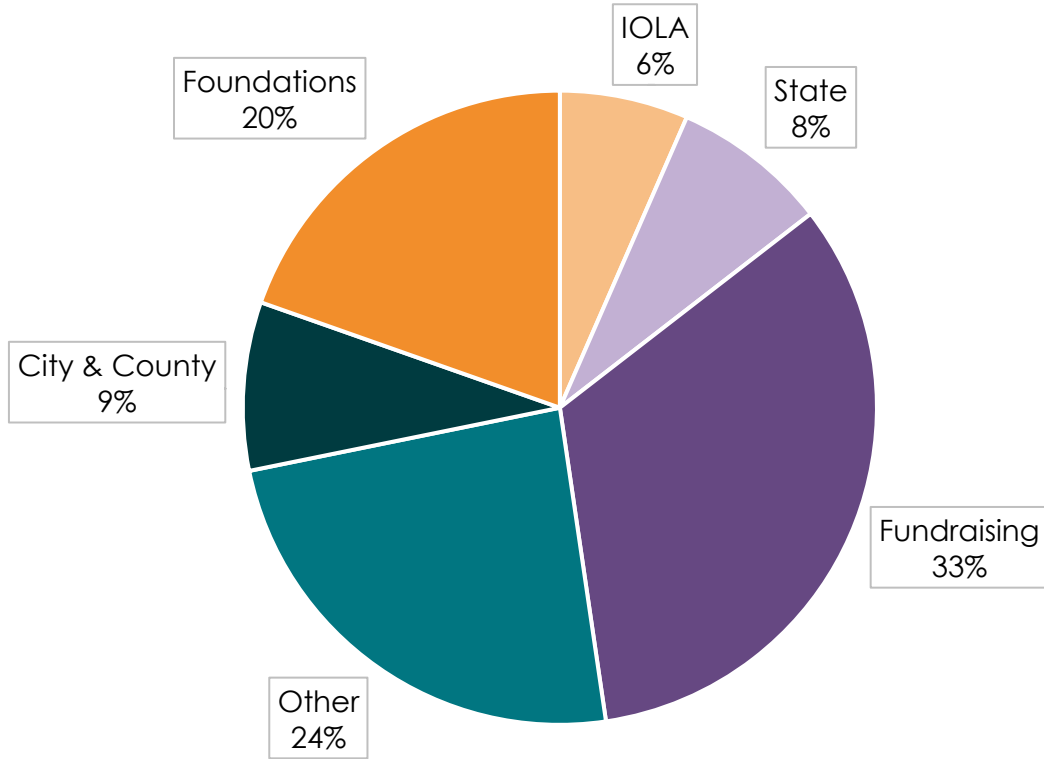
Pro Bono Law Firms: In a partnership with multiple pro bono law firms, we publish a series of resource guides for nonprofits and small businesses, available online through the NYLPI Nonprofit Toolkit.

New York Legal Services Coalition: As a member of the New York Legal Services Coalition campaign steering committee, NYLPI mobilized its Board members and the private bar community to speak in one voice against the Governor's raid on the IOLA Fund in the state budget.

Catholic Migration Services: Catholic Migration Services (CMS), a not-for-profit legal services provider affiliated with Catholic Charities of Brooklyn and Queens and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn, provides free legal services and Know Your Rights education to low-income individuals regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, or immigration status. In 2023, we launched the Pro Se Plus Project (PSPP) alongside various immigration legal services providers and community-based organizations. The project was created to address some of the legal needs of newly arrived immigrants to New York City. NYLPI has successfully partnered with CMS and our pro bono law firms to run a series of PSPP clinics, offering a variety of legal assistance to newly arrived immigrants. These clinics include general immigration screening clinics, pro se asylum preparation clinics, and clinics to assist in applying for work authorization. At these clinics, supervising attorneys from CMS provide legal consultations based on client needs and volunteer attorneys help clients in completing immigration applications. In the reporting period, three clinics were held, serving 70 clients, with more than 45 immigration applications filed.

CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES FUNDING

\$ 6,556,490



IOLA Funding	\$ 430,000
City & County Funding	\$ 563,130
State Funding	\$ 522,331
Foundations	\$ 1,285,445
Fundraising	\$ 2,173,483
Other Funding	\$ 1,582,101