

LAWYERS ALLIANCE FOR NEW YORK

2022-2023

OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS

During the reporting period of April 1, 2022 through March 31, 2023, Lawyers Alliance’s staff and its extensive pro bono network provided timely, quality legal services to strengthen the capacity and impact of nonprofit organizations serving low-income New Yorkers. We continued to build on our experience as the oldest and largest provider of pro bono business law services to nonprofit organizations in New York State and the U.S. to address legal issues that are relevant to the success of nonprofits today. Our legal representation services are directed to nonprofit groups working in low-income communities throughout New York City’s five boroughs. Our Resource Call Helpline, legal alerts, webinars, and other educational resources are available more broadly to assist nonprofits across the State.

We continued to serve nonprofit and social purpose organizations with a wide range of missions and activities aimed at improving quality of life in low-income New York neighborhoods. We channeled our staff and volunteer resources and expertise towards pressing community needs. Over the past twelve months, five program priorities stood out for heightened client outreach and legal assistance: Economic Opportunity; Housing and Human Services; Quality Education; Community Arts, and Urban Health. Lawyers Alliance also pursued special initiatives that addressed evolving legal and systemic issues of concern to all categories of nonprofit organizations serving low-income New Yorkers.

During the reporting period, Lawyers Alliance’s cross-sector initiatives focused on helping nonprofits advance racial equity, tackle legal risk management, engage in lobbying and advocacy activity within the law, and deal with ongoing pandemic challenges and legal issues stemming from economic uncertainty.



Population Served: General Low Income Population

Total Funding: \$3,706,950.00

Total IOLA Grant: \$212,500.00

Staffing Full Time Equivalents:

- Total Staff: 21.8
- Paralegals: 3
- Lawyers: 12
- Other: 6.8

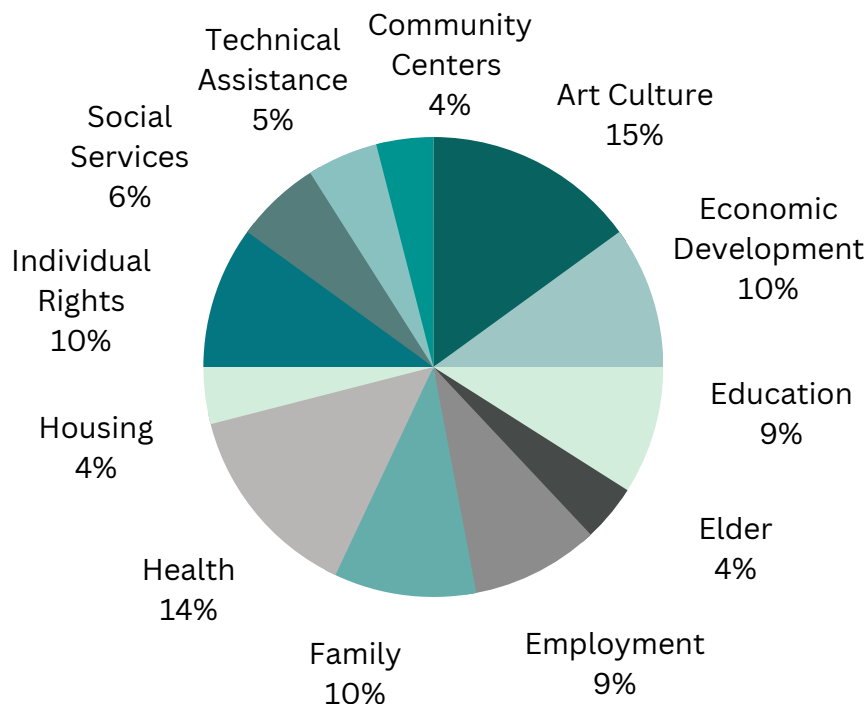
During the period April 1, 2022 through March 31, 2023, Lawyers Alliance:

- Provided legal services to a total of 1,237 nonprofit organizations and social enterprises on 1,370 full scope legal representation matters and 1,174 brief customized consultations (including 1,060 inquiries through the Resource Call Helpline and 114 consultations through clinics and other limited-scope consultations), for a total of 2,544 cases/legal projects.
- Engaged 2,349 pro bono attorneys from law firms and corporations to reach more nonprofit clients and provide a larger volume and range of quality legal assistance.
- Provided community legal education to nonprofit representatives through live and recorded webinars, newsletters, legal alerts, and publications (a total of 36,796 educational interactions).
- Offered web-based assistance through our website that totaled 50,777 downloads (according to revised analytics approach).

DIRECT LEGAL SERVICES: CASES

2,544 benefits were achieved for **1,237** non-profit groups

Types of Groups Represented



OTHER SERVICES: OVERVIEW

From April 1, 2022 through March 31, 2023, Lawyers Alliance provided training for nonprofit managers and board members through our educational programs, including live and recorded webinars, newsletters, legal alerts, and publications (a total of 36,796 educational interactions).

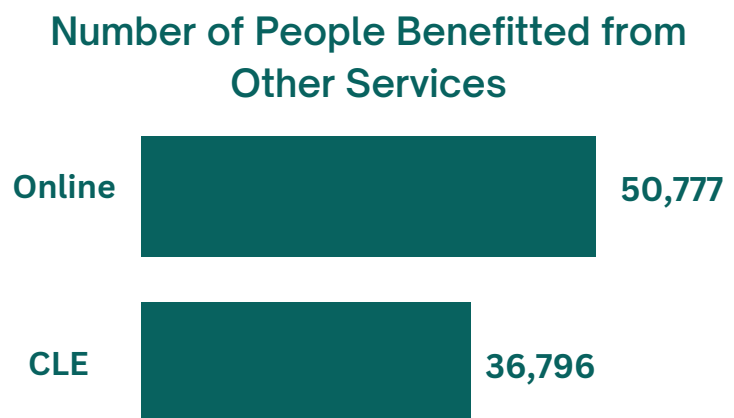
Legal Education Brochure: Lawyers Alliance sent 38 Legal Alerts via email to a distribution list of nonprofit representatives, including IOLA grantee organizations (19,466 emails received).

Interactive Online Presentations: These included 14 live webinars with 321 attendees, 11 pro bono clinics attended by representatives from 91 nonprofits, and 26 special presentations and trainings for 804 participants. We offered presentations in collaboration with nonprofit organizations, law firms, corporations, and other key actors in the nonprofit sector. These presentations covered subjects of wide interest to nonprofit managers, such as corporate governance and employment law, and topics targeting organizations working in our program priority areas such as educational enrichment or community arts.

Pre-Recorded and Other Static Online Content: Selected recorded webinars are available for viewing on the Lawyers Alliance website, along with other static resources; webinars on board governance recorded in Spanish, Mandarin, and Arabic are also available on the website. Eight publications are available on the website. Other: Newsletters were sent in Autumn 2022 and Winter 2023 to an average of more than 8,000 nonprofit, legal and community contacts each time (for a total of 16,075).

Online Outreach: Legal alerts were also posted on www.lawyersalliance.org and provided timely information about changes in the law and emerging legal issues. During the reporting period our web-based assistance reached 50,777 downloads/impressions (according to revised analytics approach).

87,573 People Benefitted from Services Other Than Direct Legal Services



OTHER SERVICES: TECHNOLOGY

We are particularly proud of our significantly upgraded Case Monitoring System, designed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our quality control efforts. After a spring 2022 pilot, Lawyers Alliance completed a full rollout in fall 2022, and continued to make refinements in 2023. We modified our web-enabled database to help automate and email questions to the primary client and volunteer contact on each pro bono legal matter (previously done mostly manually); automatically populate the database with responses (previously done manually); and produce useful dashboards (new). The system now generates dashboard alerts to help staff triage questions and requests for staff assistance. We in turn refined our internal procedures for staff follow-up with clients and volunteers. This upgrade saves staff resources and improves the timeliness and quality of our communications with clients and volunteers.

We conducted a cybersecurity review that resulted in updating security protocols and implementing additional account protections. We updated our business continuity, incident response, and disaster recovery plans for technology operations. We continued regular cybersecurity training and anti-phishing testing for staff, and upgraded several computers and other technology equipment.

OTHER SERVICES: TRAININGS

At each Board meeting, a program presentation provides the Directors with information that illustrates the legal work carried out by our staff and volunteers, as well as the compelling programs provided by our clients. Additionally, regular reports to the Board provide a comprehensive listing of each new client and new matter so that the Board is engaged and kept apprised of the legal needs and challenges in the sector, enabling them to help recruit talented volunteers from within their firms. These program presentations, combined with information on our organization's finances and operational developments, are supplemented with senior staff-led orientations as needed for newly-elected Board members.

Staff members are encouraged to pursue professional development opportunities to enhance their program and related legal work, including internal trainings and through courses provided by Practising Law Institute, Georgetown Law School (e.g., a spring 2023 free online course on Nonprofit Joint Ventures), and other resources. During the reporting period, staff also participated in anti-sexual harassment training as well as regular computer security trainings.

PRO BONO VOLUNTEERS

Lawyers Alliance’s staff-supported pro bono program enables volunteers to use their skills efficiently and effectively. The model incorporates four essential elements for maximum impact: client outreach, client screening, volunteer support, and volunteer recognition. During the reporting period, 2,349 pro bono attorneys from a network of 140 law firms and corporations were engaged in legal matters. We utilized multiple strategies to mobilize volunteer capacity, skills, and interest:

- **Recruitment:** We engaged in volunteer outreach to law firms, corporate legal departments, and attorneys, and to replenish the volunteer pool. Outreach included case opportunity emails, consultations with pro bono managers and prospective volunteers, and volunteer-oriented events. Corporations were an increasingly important source of volunteers as we enhanced limited scope and specialized subject matter opportunities for in-house legal counsel.
- **Expertise and Support on Nonprofit Legal Issues:** Staff attorneys vetted legal clients and legal matters, answered volunteers’ questions, and served as co-counsel on cases placed with volunteers.
- **Model Documents, Educational Programs, and CLE Offerings:** Pro bono attorneys had access to Lawyers Alliance’s research outlines, model documents, and other training materials. During the reporting period, we provided CLE trainings for a total of 431 attorneys and we presented 3 CLE trainings to 156 law firm attendees, for an overall total of 587 attendees. CLE offerings also included July 2022 “Serving on a Nonprofit Board 2022: Practical and Ethical Considerations for Attorneys,” presented in conjunction with the Practising Law Institute (PLI) and November 2022 “Hot Topics in Non-Profit Law: What Qualifies as Charitable in Workforce Development?” presented with the NYC Bar, each to maximize the number and diversity of law

2,349 Attorneys volunteered 57,526 hours

12 Law Students volunteered 2,520 hours

4 Other Volunteers volunteered 1,298 hours

- **Law Students and Interns:** Law students participated in a summer program and semester projects focused on intake, legal research and analysis, and communicating with clients and volunteers about case progress. We are currently hosting a Pro Bono Scholar.
- **Recognition:** A present goal is to expand Lawyers Alliance’s volunteer recognition activities to highlight and appreciate our volunteer attorneys robustly year-round. In the reporting period, we added personal notes to individuals and their supervisors and more public announcements. The November 2022 Cornerstone Awards and Pro Bono Month stories saluted all volunteers, with special awards to 12 individuals and 2 institutions for extraordinary service. We publicized 8 special Volunteer Accomplishments about law firms and volunteers via our website, Probono.net, and email announcements. In January 2023 we implemented one-year volunteer anniversary thank you messages.

SIGNIFICANT COLLABORATIONS

Lawyers Alliance partners with umbrella organizations, coalitions, and other technical assistance providers on educational programs and client outreach. During the reporting period, we partnered with such organizations as the New York City Charter School Center (on the 5/17/22 pro bono clinic “Conquering Contracts: Negotiating, Administering, and Terminating within the Law”) and the Staten Island Not-for-Profit Association (attending and presenting “Developing a Strong, Impactful & Sustainable Board of Directors” at their annual conference on 10/27/22). We were active in and facilitated discussions among members of Ahead of the Curve, a collaborative of NYC-based capacity builders that strengthens the nonprofit sector through the merits of partnership, referrals, and knowledge sharing. Among New York City technical assistance providers, we collaborated with and received/provided referrals from/to Association of Nonprofit Specialists, Cause Effective, Community Resource Exchange, BDO FMA, Nonprofit New York, and Support Center for Nonprofit Management.

Significant collaborations have also been a critical part of our nonprofit advocacy work, with important results in the reporting period. In June 2022, we worked with the New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals to block the imminent passage of A4575a (Paulin)/S4339a (Skoufis), which would make it harder to form, amend, and dissolve many social services organizations that include workforce development among their purposes, and would impose new governance obligations on groups that have a single government official serving as an ex officio board member.

Since fall 2022, we have been working with Human Services Council, Safe Horizon, and Urban Pathways to urge New York State’s Department of Budget to make changes in the Master Contract for Grants, which is the standard template used for nonprofit contracts. Among other issues, we are urging the State to enter into real dialogue with the sector regarding the contract, to eliminate the State’s right to hold back 15% of total contract payments as security for the contract’s completion, and to require the State to pay undisputed invoices in a timely manner.

SOURCES OF FUNDING

Lawyer's Alliance for New York received **\$3,706,950** in total funding this past year

Other Funding	\$1,460,865
Fundraising	\$916,731
Foundations	\$713,000
Federal Funding	\$335,665
IOLA Grant	\$212,500
City and County Funding	\$68,189

