



**VOLUNTEER  
LEGAL ADVOCATES**



# **ANNUAL REPORT 2024**



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# DCVLP IS NOW VOLUNTEER LEGAL ADVOCATES.

## **New Name. Same Essential Mission.**

Our new name honors the network of pro bono lawyers and advocates who drive our mission forward every day. It reflects who we are and what we do: champions for justice through skilled, compassionate pro bono legal aid.

### **Why the Change?**

We needed a name that matched the breadth of our reach and depth of our commitment. Volunteer Legal Advocates reflects the staying power of our work and the passion of those behind it. What hasn't changed is our core focus: we remain guided by the belief that a life free of violence and abuse is a basic human right.

Together, we are building a future where every survivor and child impacted by domestic or gender-based violence can access the legal support they deserve.

**Learn more at [VolunteerLegalAdvocates.org](https://VolunteerLegalAdvocates.org)**

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**DEAR FRIENDS,**

Your generosity, commitment, and passion for our work at Volunteer Legal Advocates have ensured that 2024 was a year of growth and profound impact.

As I reflect on our shared successes, I'm deeply grateful for the many ways you've continued to show up for our community. In 2024 alone, generous pro bono attorneys donated over 50,000 volunteer hours, and we served more than 3,000 individuals across Washington, DC, and Montgomery County, MD.

Today, with a new name and a renewed commitment to our mission, our trauma-informed legal services continue to offer safety, stability, and hope to local survivors and children.

**I couldn't be prouder of our work and of the people who make it possible.**

Thank you for believing in our clients and our mission, and for joining us as we enter this new chapter with courage, conviction, and hope.

Read on to learn more about what we accomplished together in 2024 and where we're headed next.

With gratitude,

*Sara B. Tennen*



Sara B. Tennen, Esq., MSW  
Executive Director



# WHO WE ARE

## VOLUNTEER LEGAL ADVOCATES

provides free legal representation in protection orders, family law, and immigration cases and operates walk-in legal clinics in Washington, DC, and Montgomery County, MD, to expand access to justice.

Powered by a dedicated network of volunteer attorneys and advocates, we help thousands across our community build safer and more stable futures at no cost to them. Together, we create lasting change and empower individuals to reclaim their lives with dignity and hope.

## MISSION

**TO ADVOCATE** for domestic violence victims, at-risk children, and other vulnerable individuals through comprehensive pro bono legal services;

**TO EMPOWER** victims with knowledge, resources, and ongoing support; and

**TO BROADEN OUR IMPACT** by engaging, training, and supporting a strong and diverse network of volunteer lawyers and community volunteers.

## VISION

We believe that a life free of violence and abuse is a basic human right.

# PROFESSIONAL TEAM

Marcy Baskin  
Stephanie Bergman, Esq.  
Jennie Berman, Esq.  
Samara Braverman  
Jesse Brennan, Esq.  
Nam Mee Cho, Esq.  
Zsofia Cimino  
Amy Coles, Esq.  
Nia Cook  
Betsy Crumb, Esq.  
Jaquelyn Diaz Sapp  
Courtney Federico, Esq.  
Karen Foxman, Esq.  
Madison Glennie, Esq.  
Ignacio Gomez

Ricardo Gomez, Esq.  
Karen Gunderman, Esq.  
Jules Herman  
Monica Herman  
Vanessa Hernandez, Esq.  
Elaine Holmes, Esq.  
Julia Holston  
Daniela Huerta Garcia, Esq.  
Britney Monroe, Esq.  
Gargie Nagarkar  
Abbey Ojala  
Alissa Osberg, Esq.  
Maya Pearl  
Colleen Petroni, Esq.

Nellie Phelan, Esq.  
Jessalyn Schwartz, Esq.  
Juliette Singarella, Esq.  
Norah Sloss, Esq.  
Lea Sondheimer  
Robyn Swanson, Esq.  
Sara Tennen, Esq., MSW  
Amy Turner, Esq.  
Blanca Torres  
Maria Velez  
Aida Vindell, Esq.  
Jakiah Webb  
Brian Yourish

*As of July 2025*



# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM

**We help survivors move from crisis to control, and from fear to freedom.**

Volunteer Legal Advocates supports survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and other forms of gender-based abuse with trauma-informed legal representation. We handle protection orders, custody, divorce, and related legal issues. Through a holistic model, our attorneys work closely with trained Client Advocates who provide safety planning, emotional support, and referrals.



## Christine's Story

Christine endured over a year of escalating abuse, including threats with a knife in front of her young child. Unsure of her legal rights, she turned to our legal clinic for help. Volunteer Legal Advocates provided her with a team of attorneys who guided her through a complex case and helped her secure full custody and a protection order.

With additional support from our Client Advocate, Christine also obtained a housing voucher and trauma counseling for her child. Today, Christine and her son are safe, stable, and rebuilding their lives.

## OUR IMPACT IN 2024

**464**

Protection Order and  
Family Law cases  
accepted in DC

**100%**

of clients surveyed  
reported feeling safer  
after our services





# IMMIGRATION PROGRAM

**When survivors of gender-based violence are also navigating the immigration system, the stakes are even higher.**

Stable immigration status is key to safety and essential for building a future free from abuse. We provide trauma-informed legal representation to immigrant survivors and vulnerable children seeking humanitarian relief. Our attorneys ensure clients feel seen, heard, and protected, because safety shouldn't depend on your immigration status, and justice should never be out of reach.

**OUR IMPACT  
IN 2024**

**223**

immigration cases  
handled to help children  
& survivors obtain  
humanitarian relief



## Lucia's Story

Lucia fled her abusive partner, but feared for her life and her children. Her abuser continued to harass and threaten her even after she left. As an undocumented immigrant, Lucia felt she had nowhere to turn, until she was referred to our legal clinic. Our volunteer attorney took on her case, assisting Lucia in obtaining a protection order and divorce with full language access and trauma-informed care.

After a challenging trial, Lucia was granted a two-year protection order and described feeling immense relief. Today, we continue to support Lucia and her children as they pursue legal immigration status. With our support, Lucia is building a safer, more stable future for herself and her children.



# CHILD ADVOCACY PROGRAM

**Volunteer Legal Advocates serves as court-appointed Guardians *ad litem* for children in high-conflict custody cases involving domestic violence, abuse, or neglect.**

Our attorneys serve as each child's legal voice, conducting in-depth investigations and advocating in court for safe, stable, and permanent homes. Our goal is simple and urgent: to ensure every child we represent grows up in a safe, permanent, loving home.

## OUR IMPACT IN 2024

**120** children in DC  
had their voices  
amplified in court

The need is urgent. Of the children Volunteer Legal Advocates has represented in the past two years:

**62%**

were physically or sexually abused

**91%**

witnessed domestic violence and/or were abused.



## Nora's Story

*"You have been instrumental not only in securing the legal outcome that helped us move forward but also in supporting Nora's healing, development, and sense of safety. You didn't just help us win a case. You helped restore hope, dignity, and peace to our lives."*

*Thank you for all that you do, not just for us but for every family in need of protection, advocacy, and light during dark times."*

– Ms. J., mother of 17-year-old Nora





# PURSuing JUSTICE IN MARYLAND

In Montgomery County, MD, only 22% of survivors in protection order cases have legal representation. We’re helping close the justice gap.

Since opening our MD office in 2023, we have built a strong presence in Montgomery County, providing trauma-informed protective order and family law legal services for survivors in court and our walk-in legal clinic in Rockville. This expansion reflects our vision of a world where every survivor has access to legal help, no matter their zip code.

OUR IMPACT  
IN 2024

270

survivors connected  
with our MD attorneys



Ana’s Story

Ana escaped an abusive relationship, but the danger continued. Her ex continued to harass her and acted violently during custody exchanges. After a serious incident, Ana turned to our Montgomery County legal clinic, where we helped her obtain a protective order, full custody, and supervised visitation to keep her child safe.

When her ex filed for custody and the court ordered mediation, we represented Ana again, securing an agreement that gave her final decision-making authority and protected her child’s well-being.



# LEGAL CLINICS

**Access to brief legal advice empowers survivors of domestic and gender-based violence to move toward safety and stability.**

Volunteer Legal Advocates operates weekly clinics in DC and MD, reaching people where they live and work so getting legal help is never an added burden. You'll find us in courthouses, libraries, at medical clinics, and online. At each legal clinic, survivors and caregivers can receive free trauma-informed legal consultations, learn about their rights, and connect with resources for housing, employment, and public benefits.

**OUR IMPACT  
IN 2024**

**1,094**

individuals served at  
our legal clinics in DC  
and MD

**Our clinic offerings continue to expand. In 2024, we launched:**



Expansions of our medical-legal partnerships, offering legal consultations where clients are already seeking medical care



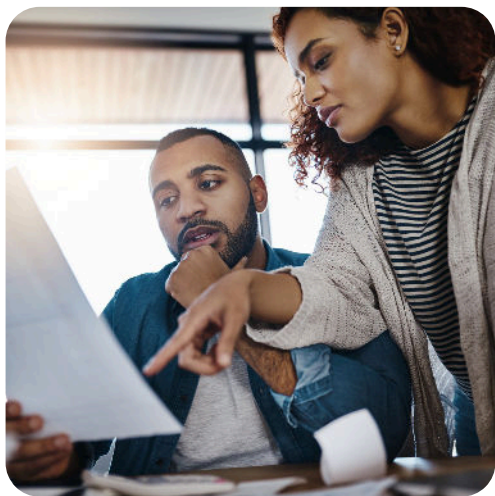
The pilot of a clinic at a Domestic Violence shelter where survivors can consult an attorney for their protection order, custody, divorce, or emergency custody needs



Our first Maryland clinic at Rockville Memorial Library, offering free, brief legal advice on protective orders and family law matters each week



# IMPACT LITIGATION & ADVOCACY



**Volunteer Legal Advocates** uses our experience with survivors and vulnerable children to advocate for more effective policies, legislation, and increased funding for victim services.

We are active members of several local policy coalitions and working groups, and regularly sign amicus briefs and letters of support concerning issues impacting our clients and partners.

## OUR IMPACT IN 2024

**1,960** = **\$735k**  
pro bono hours

dedicated to appellate cases where trial judges issued decisions inconsistent with the law and set dangerous precedent

## Policy Efforts in Action

In 2024, we chaired and convened the cross-sector **Gun Relinquishment Working Group** to develop recommendations for improving firearm relinquishment procedures in protection order cases in DC. These recommendations aim to ensure effective enforcement, improve compliance, and enhance victim safety through legislative changes, court procedural reforms, and updates to Metropolitan Police Department protocols.

As one of the only legal services providers in DC representing survivors in **Extreme Risk Protection Order** (ERPO) proceedings, we worked on technical amendments to improve the implementation and enforcement of the ERPO statute included in the Secure DC Omnibus Amendment Act of 2024. These reforms strengthen the implementation and enforcement of ERPOs, offering critical protections for those facing imminent danger.



# CLIENT ADVOCACY

As clients face complex legal and emotional challenges, they can rely on our Client Advocates, who walk alongside them every step, offering safety planning, emotional support during legal meetings, and guidance in navigating vital resources.

Whether connecting someone with a social worker, helping replace an ID, or facilitating access to mental health services, our advocates ensure that no one has to navigate this journey alone. By integrating legal representation with holistic, trauma-informed support, we help survivors not only escape violence but also build a foundation for long-term safety and independence.

## Our Client Advocates assist with:

- Safety planning and referrals to crisis response resources
- Referrals to the Crime Victims Compensation Program
- Referrals to mental health and other healthcare resources related to gender-based violence
- Financial resource referrals if expenses are associated with domestic violence or family law issues
- Relocation and housing advocacy

## OUR IMPACT IN 2024

# 619

cases were supported by  
a Client Advocate

*“There are so many people and organizations in this region offering crucial supportive services, and every person deserves to have their emotional and physical needs met. I am grateful for the opportunity to make these connections.”*

– Client Advocate



# SPOTLIGHT: MEET OUR ARSHT LAW FELLOW

Volunteer Legal Advocates is honored to host the Roxana Cannon Arsht Law Fellowship, and to celebrate Judge Arsht's groundbreaking achievements as Delaware's fifth female lawyer and first female judge. We proudly recognize her pioneering spirit and enduring legacy through this two-year program empowering female attorneys returning to the workforce after a career break.

**Arsht Fellow Nam Mee Cho supports clients through cases and legal clinics.**

**How has the Arsht Fellowship supported your reentry into legal practice?**

**Nam Mee:** Roxana Cannon Arsht's ability to overcome the barriers of her time to become an advocate and judge inspired me to return to work in direct legal services. I'm grateful to her family for making it possible that, at 51 and after a significant career break, I can work full time and find a new way to assist those who have experienced abuse. The fellowship provides the infrastructure for me to learn a new area of law.



**Nam Mee Cho, Esq.**

**Has working with survivors and children shaped your understanding of advocacy and access to justice?**

**Nam Mee:** Working with this community has shown me the multiple barriers to justice that survivors face, and how creative advocacy can have a significant impact. It's an honor to see how my work, both at clinics and through representation, can impact their outcomes and access to justice.

**How has this experience influenced your goals for the future?**

**Nam Mee:** I want to tell every attorney in the DMV that they can learn a new area of law and become a pro bono attorney for Volunteer Legal Advocates! I'm so proud of our training program, mentorship model, and holistic social service navigation support. I look forward to helping more volunteers incorporate pro bono work into their practice. The need for our skills and credentials as licensed attorneys is so high.

# SPOTLIGHT: EMERGENCY LEGAL SERVICES

**Thousands of domestic violence survivors in DC face urgent legal crises without a lawyer.** Recognizing this critical gap, Volunteer Legal Advocates launched our Emergency Legal Services Fellowship to provide same-day legal help to survivors with generous support from the American College of Trial Lawyers Foundation and Vanderbilt Law School.

**George Barrett Social Justice Fellow, Alissa Osberg, Esq., supports clients in courtrooms, clinics, and a Domestic Violence shelter.**



**Alissa Osberg, Esq.**

**Can you share a moment or case that has stayed with you?**

**Alissa:** I always return to one case: when we helped a survivor after her baby's abusive father kidnapped and refused to return the baby. The mother couldn't breastfeed or take the child to medical appointments. We filed for custody and an emergency hearing, and the judge ordered the father to appear with the baby in court the next day. The mother was reunited with her newborn right there at the counsel table. Our emergency legal services made that possible. We met, filed the motion, and appeared before a judge within days, at a crucial moment in that child's life.

**What types of crises do you help survivors navigate?**

**Alissa:** We support survivors in Domestic Violence and Family Law courts. These cases often involve parental kidnapping or immediate threats to a child's safety, requiring quick intervention. We are helping some clients navigate court for the first time, while helping others respond to new developments that make existing orders unsafe. We see clients through some of the most turbulent, emotional times they'll ever experience. We also work with survivors whose situations don't meet the court's emergency standard by connecting them to non-legal resources like housing and safety planning.

**What have you learned about survivors and the legal system?**

**Alissa:** I've learned so much about the barriers survivors face in the legal system. For someone in crisis, getting to court, filing a motion, serving the other party, and telling their story to a judge—all while navigating trauma—can feel overwhelming. This is especially true in cases involving children in danger or being withheld. Attorneys and advocates don't just guide survivors through the legal process; they help carry the mental and emotional load, so survivors can focus on their families.



# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: JENNA ROSS

Our pro bono attorneys bring expertise and passion to every case and clinic they take on. Volunteer Jenna Ross is Senior Investigations Counsel at Ericsson and past Chair of the Volunteer Legal Advocates Junior Board.

**“Working with Volunteer Legal Advocates allows us to see the immediate, meaningful impact our efforts have on individuals and the broader community.”**



**Jenna Ross, Esq.**

**How did you learn about Volunteer Legal Advocates, and what inspired you to get involved?**

**Jenna:** I first learned about Volunteer Legal Advocates nearly a decade ago. I was inspired to deepen my commitment after seeing how unique the organization is in providing volunteers with meaningful guidance and support through supervising attorneys—something that sets it apart and ensures high-quality advocacy.

**What do you wish others knew about Volunteer Legal Advocates?**

**Jenna:** I want prospective volunteers to know Volunteer Legal Advocates offers a unique, supportive model. By pairing each volunteer with a supervising attorney, they ensure you never navigate a case alone—you have an experienced resource by your side every step. I’ve worked with other organizations where you’re handed a case with little guidance, but that’s not the approach here. Volunteer Legal Advocates fosters collaboration and confidence. Providing pro bono legal services to survivors and their children is also deeply meaningful. Offering them support during such critical moments is both impactful and profoundly rewarding.

# EVENT SNAPSHOTS

We are grateful to our many donors, partners, and volunteers who join us for special events throughout the year! Thank you for supporting and celebrating our shared successes.

## Annual Benefit 2025: Unveiling our New Name!





# EVENT SNAPSHOTS

We are grateful to our many donors, partners, and volunteers who join us for special events throughout the year! Thank you for supporting and celebrating our shared successes.

## Celebrating our 2024 Volunteers of the Year





# TRAINING & CONFERENCE SNAPSHOTS

Each year, Volunteer Legal Advocates staff, volunteers, and partners lead professional development trainings and workshops at law firms, corporations, conferences, and more.

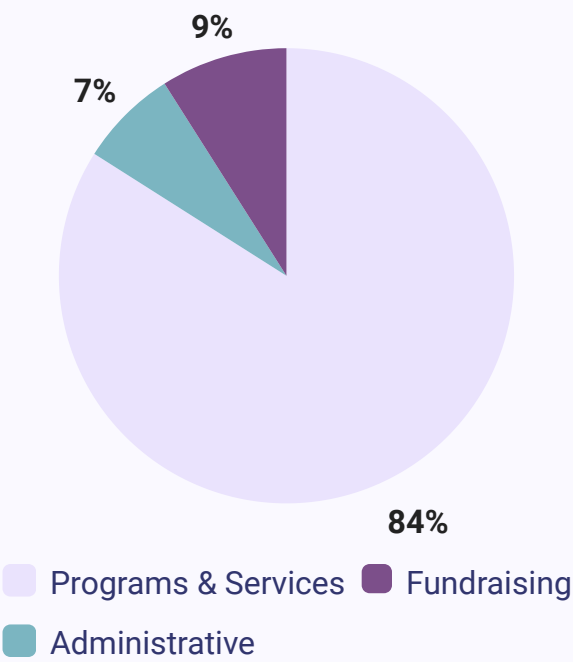




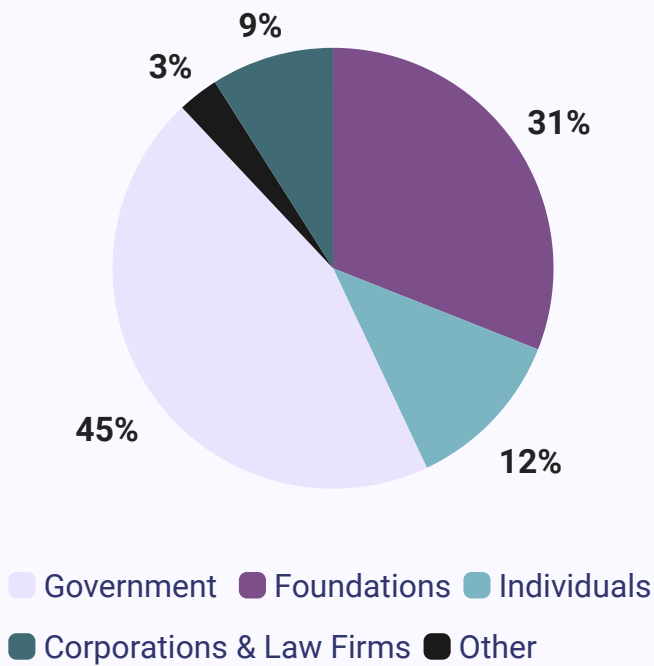
# BY THE NUMBERS

## 2024 OPERATING BUDGET

EXPENSES: \$4.2 MILLION



REVENUE: \$4.6 MILLION



## MEASURABLE IMPACT


**50,000 HOURS**  
valued at **\$18 MILLION**  
in legal services donated by  
**525** volunteer attorneys

**80+**  
law firm and  
corporate  
partners

**30+**  
local partner  
organizations

**35%**  
of clients  
have received  
multiple services

**3,087** survivors and children  
escaping violence and  
establishing safe homes

**PLATINUM** Guidestar rating  
 Charity Navigator score

# OUR CORPORATE & LAW FIRM PARTNERS

**We are deeply grateful for the partnership of volunteer attorneys from the more than 80 law firms and corporations below. Together, we help thousands of clients access lifesaving legal resources.**

Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP  
Amazon  
Baker & Hostetler LLP  
Bean, Kinney & Korman, P.C.  
Bergmann & Moore LLC  
Blank Rome LLP  
BraunHagey & Borden LLP  
Capital One  
Clario  
Clark Hill PLC  
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP  
Clifford Chance US LLP  
Cohen Milstein Sellers & Toll PLLC  
Covington & Burling LLP  
Cozen O'Connor P.C.  
Crowell & Moring LLP  
Dechert LLP  
Dentons US LLP  
Devlin Law Firm LLC  
Dinsmore & Shohl, LLP  
DLA Piper LLP  
Duane Morris LLP  
Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott, LLC  
Elias Law Group LLP  
Eversheds Sutherland (US) LLP  
Exactech, Inc.  
Exelon Corporation  
ExxonMobil  
Fenwick & West LLP  
Foley Hoag LLP  
Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen & Loewy LLP  
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP  
Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP

Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP  
Gilbert LLP  
Goulston & Storrs PC  
Greenberg Traurig LLP  
Groom Law Group, Chartered  
Hogan Lovells US LLP  
Hooper, Lundy & Bookman, PC  
Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP  
Invenergy Inc.  
Jackson & Campbell PC  
Jenner & Block LLP  
Johnson & Masumi, PC  
Johnson, Marcou, & Isaacs LLC  
Jones Lang LaSalle IP, Inc.  
Jordan Lynch & Cancienne PLLC  
JP Morgan  
Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP  
Keller & Heckman LLP  
King & Spalding LLP  
Kirkland & Ellis LLP  
The Knot Worldwide  
KVS Title LLC  
L Law Firm PLLC  
Latham & Watkins LLP  
Littler Mendelson P.C.  
Manatt, Phelps & Phillips LLP  
Masa Group LLC  
McDermott, Will & Emery LLP  
McNeely Hare & War LLP  
Microsoft  
Miller & Chevalier Chartered  
MillerMasciola  
Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky, and Popeo, P.C.  
Morgan Stanley  
Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP  
Nixon Peabody LLP

Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP  
Perkins Coie LLP  
Pfizer  
Potomac Law Group, PLLC  
PSA Airlines  
Raytheon Technologies (RTX)  
Reed Smith LLP  
Ropes & Gray LLP  
Shannon & Wright LLP  
Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP  
Shook, Hardy & Bacon LLP  
Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP  
Squire Patton Boggs LLP  
Steptoe & Johnson LLP  
Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders LLP  
UGI Utilities, Inc.  
Verizon Communications Inc.  
Vinson & Elkins LLP  
White & Case LLP  
Wilkinson Stekloff LLP  
Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP  
Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP  
Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati LLP  
Winston & Strawn LLP  
Wright & Talisman, P.C.  
Zuckerman Spaeder LLP  
ZwillGen PLLC

# AMPLIFYING VOICES SOCIETY: POWERING JUSTICE, RESTORING HOPE

The Amplifying Voices Society honors donors of \$1,000 or more annually and those who sponsor our Benefit at the \$2,500 level or above. Each year, Amplifying Voices Society members help Volunteer Legal Advocates serve more than 3,000 survivors of domestic violence, gender-based violence, and vulnerable children.

To join, visit [VolunteerLegalAdvocates.org/AVS](https://VolunteerLegalAdvocates.org/AVS).



Anonymous (2)  
Jessica Abrahams  
Melanie Aitken  
Adrienne Arsht  
James & Kaye Barker  
Susan & Edward Basile  
Stephanie & David Bergman  
Dalia Blass  
Hal Brewster & Geoff Wetrosky  
Beth Brinkmann  
Jennifer Cassell  
Matthew Brown & Zachary Chapman  
C. Michelle Chen  
Matt Cohen & Katie Kedian  
Alexis Collins & Stephen Kotev  
Lisanne Crowley & Dwight Dickinson  
Amanda Davidoff  
Elissa & Tom Davidson  
Andrew DeJaco  
Cayla Ebert DeJaco & Robert DeJaco  
Leslie Delagran  
Linda Dreeben  
Caleb Dulis  
Ellen Dwyer  
Jennifer & A.J. Fechter  
Jamillia Ferris & Joshua J. Harrison  
Barbara & David Garlock  
Veronica Gomez-Lobo & Tom Fishbein  
Jessica Gordon

Helen Gordon  
Kathryn & Michael J. Hanley  
Dale & Stephen Harburg  
Deborah Harmon & Bob Seder  
Sally Sloan & Tom G. Hentoff  
Fred Herman  
Renata Hesse & Joshua Soven  
Ivy & Horace Howells  
Samantha Marshall & Phillip Hurst  
Sophia McCrocklin & William Isaacson  
Brian Jacobs  
Jennie Rabinowitz & Daniel Jamieson  
Pam & David Kanstoroom  
Jane & Paul Khoury  
Rakesh Kilaru  
Alexandra Klingenstein  
Benjamin Klubes  
Alexandra & Joe Krisch  
Heather Lamberg & Jeremy Calsyn  
Laurie Lipper  
Desiree & John Magney  
Ann Malester  
Mark Mansor  
Katherine Marcella Cole  
Karen Barker Marcou & George Marcou  
Kate & Joe Margolis  
Susan Fox & Jeffrey Markowitz  
Florence Auld & Frank Marshall  
Lauren & Luke McGuire  
Margaret McKinney

Louise & Joe Micallef  
Sarah Morgenthau & Carlton Wessel  
Kjersten & Stephen Morrison  
Andrea & John Murino  
Kathleen & Keith Oberg  
Maria Plaxco  
Linda Potter & Tim Shriver  
Sharis & Thorn Pozen  
Margarita Prieto & Mark Michael  
Hannah Rabinowitz  
Jeffrey Raver  
Linda Rhodes  
Sabrina Rose-Smith  
Carla Rountree  
Tara Sakraida Parker & Richard Parker  
Amy Saltzman  
Pamela & Dick Sauber  
Katharine Saunders  
Kamil Shields  
Christina Silberman  
Ellen Spiegel  
Katherine St. Romain  
Caroline Stanton  
Bennett Stichman  
Jen & Zachary Stillerman  
Whitney Taylor & William Baker  
Sara & Adam Tennen  
Ilene Weinreich & Dave Smith  
Katharine Weymouth  
Debbie & Cliff White  
Tracy Zorpette



# HONORING OUR LEGACY CIRCLE

We are grateful to the generous Legacy Circle donors who have made our work a philanthropic priority year after year. For the past decade, your unwavering support has fueled the growth of our programs and ensured that thousands of survivors have access to free legal representation each year.

Thank you for believing in our mission and leaving a lasting impact on our community.



Adrienne Arsht  
Olivia & Bill Baker  
James & Kaye Barker  
Carol & John Boochever  
Lisanne Crowley & Dwight Dickinson  
Barbara & David Garlock  
Veronica Gomez-Lobo & Tom Fishbein  
Helen Gordon  
Dale & Stephen Harburg  
Bill Isaacson & Sophia McCrocklin  
Jane & Paul Khoury  
Karen Barker Marcou & George Marcou  
Louise & Joe Micallef  
Sharis & Thorn Pozen  
Margarita Prieto & Mark Michael  
Leslie Rose & Stephen Kohn  
Pamela & Dick Sauber  
Alison Vest & Ken Cox

# HONORING OUR SUSTAINING CIRCLE

We celebrate the law firms and corporate partners who make up our Sustaining Circle. Each has been recognized as a past Partner of the Year, and continues enhancing their commitment to Volunteer Legal Advocates and our community.



Amazon  
Capital One  
Covington  
Cleary Gottlieb  
DLA Piper  
Hogan Lovells  
King & Spalding

Latham & Watkins LLP  
Pfizer  
Ropes & Gray  
Steptoe  
Verizon  
Williams & Connolly LLP

## CELEBRATING OUR VOLUNTEERS

### **2024 Volunteer of the Year**

Marissa Hill Daley, *McDermott Will & Emery*

### **Appellate Volunteers of the Year**

Blair Decker  
Katherine Valde  
Melissa Giangrande  
*Hogan Lovells*

### **Child Advocacy Volunteers of the Year**

Susan Lahne  
Ann Sablosky (posthumously)

### **Civil Protection Order Volunteer of the Year**

Joseph Wheatley, *Amazon*

### **DC Clinic Volunteers of the Year**

Vanessa Le, *DLA Piper*  
Stephanie Whiteley

### **Domestic Relationship Branch Volunteer of the Year**

Jennifer Bisgaier, *Goulston & Storrs*

### **Immigration Volunteers of the Year**

Paula Ortiz Cardona, *Covington & Burling*  
Mary Bohan

### **MD Clinic Volunteers of the Year**

David Kanstoroom  
Linda Rhodes



# OUR LEADERSHIP

## OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### **Karen Barker Marcou, President**

Volunteer Legal Advocates  
Co-Founder

### **Hal Brewster, Secretary**

Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP  
Manager

### **Tracey Coates, Vice President**

Coates Family Law  
Principal

### **Annette M. Stanley, Treasurer**

Gaillard Consulting  
Principal

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### **Jessica Abrahams**

Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP  
Partner

### **Princess McDuffie**

DC Court Services & Offender Supervision  
Agency  
Domestic Violence Specialist

### **Matt Cohen**

Meta  
Director & Associate General Counsel

### **Margarita Prieto**

Independent Civic &  
Social Organization Professional

### **Alexis Collins**

Amazon  
VP & Associate General Counsel

### **Stephen Raptis**

Reed Smith LLP  
Partner

### **Phillip Hurst**

Capital One  
Senior Director, Associate General Counsel

### **Kamil Shields**

Sullivan & Cromwell LLP  
Partner

### **Heather Lamberg**

Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP  
Partner

### **Ilene Weinreich**

Volunteer Legal Advocates  
Volunteer Attorney

### **David Last**

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Partner

### **Katharine Weymouth**

Togetherly Parents  
Chief Operating Officer

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Professor, journalist, and writer



# JUNIOR BOARD

We are grateful to our Junior Board, a dynamic group of emerging leaders from law firms, government agencies, and corporations who support Volunteer Legal Advocates through their advocacy, energy, and commitment. As ambassadors for our mission, they expand our reach, strengthen our partnerships, and ensure our continued impact for survivors and children.

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*As of July 2025*

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Together, we are building a more just and equitable future; one where safety, dignity, and stability are within reach for every survivor and child.

**We couldn't do this vital work without you.**

**"The lawyers appointed to my case defended my interests as if they were their own. They restored peace to my life and protected my son."**

**"Since I came into the clinic and went to court with my lawyer, everything is calm. I can now focus on being a student and a mother to my children. Thank you for bringing this feeling of relief into my life."**

**"The legal process was daunting, but Volunteer Legal Advocates gave me back peace and safety."**







Ending the cycle of violence for survivors and children through pro bono legal aid

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