Overview of Achievements 2020-2021

Last year, Lenox Hill Neighborhood House provided free, comprehensive civil legal services to thousands of low-income community members in Manhattan. We provided legal assistance to frail older adults, individuals with disabilities, people who are homeless, immigrants, low-wage workers and in low-income families through a multidisciplinary, holistic approach to legal representation that eliminates traditional barriers to accessing services. As there are no other general legal services organizations located in our community, our unique program fills a critical service gap. Embedded and integrated within a large settlement house, our attorneys and advocates strive to address the legal – and often socioeconomic – challenges faced by those who seek our assistance. Rather than require clients to visit numerous offices and complete different intake processes, at the Neighborhood House, the same lawyer might represent an older adult in an eviction case as well as in an administrative agency appeal over termination of a cash assistance or housing-related benefit, and also link the client to a legal advocate who will help the client apply for health insurance and other government benefits. In addition to providing comprehensive legal services, we connect our clients to a wide range of social services offered by the Neighborhood House (e.g., ESOL classes, senior centers, Early Childhood Center, geriatric care management), as well as to services provided by our community partners.

During the past reporting period, our legal services program handled 1,727 matters which benefitted 2,657 low-income New Yorkers with their needs for civil legal services, including eviction prevention and other housing-related issues, access to government benefits, navigating complex health care matters, and advance directives. Some specific highlights of our work during the grant period include representing 123 households in judicial or administrative proceedings; preventing eviction, or delaying eviction and providing time to relocate, for 226 people living in 103 households; securing SNAP benefits for 250 individuals in 98 families in the aggregate monthly amount of $24,879; helping 22 low income families with heads of household who are elderly and/or who have disabilities obtain or preserve SCRIE/DRIE benefits in the aggregate amount of $5,244.52 per month; enrolling 690 individuals in health insurance, including Medicaid, Medicare, and private insurance, and assisting an additional 14 individuals with MSP, EPIC, Extra Help or other issues affecting their health insurance; assisting older adults with the drafting and execution of 14 life-planning documents; and helping to raise from nonprofits and distribute approximately $81,232.81 in emergency financial assistance to households which were instrumental in preventing evictions, utility terminations and other emergencies. We helped our clients to recover and/or save approximately $1,140,577 on an annual basis, including awards, monthly benefits and savings/credits realized. As part of our legal services program, we also conducted 27 virtual community legal education events, reaching an audience of 433 individuals. During this period, our pro bono and volunteer partnerships continued to enhance our capacity to deliver legal services, through which 73 volunteer attorneys and 22 non-attorney volunteers devoted 4,339 hours to our clients.

Population Served: General Low-Income Population

Area Served: New York City Metropolitan Area

Total Funding: $2,867,086

Total IOLA Grant: $122,500

Staffing - Full Time Equivalents:

- Total Staff: 22.36
- Lawyers: 14.84
- Paralegals: 5.79
- Other: 1.73
Public Benefits:
Ms. R is a single 36-year-old undocumented mother with two U.S. citizen children. The client was referred to Lenox Hill Neighborhood House through a family member. The client works as a child-care provider and has lost most of her clients due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The client is only earning $50 per week, which is not enough to cover her expenses. Our SNAP advocate assisted the client with the SNAP application process including submitting all the supporting documents. The Human Resources Administration (HRA) approved her for expedited services, and she was able to get SNAP benefits while her ongoing SNAP case was in process. However, after 30 days, the client’s SNAP case became stagnant. The client informed the SNAP advocate who then tracked the case and found the case was still pending. The SNAP advocate then called the HRA Constituent Services line with the client to address the issue. The representative got all the information needed and the issue was resolved within 14 days. The client is now receiving the benefits she is entitled to in the amount of $430 per month that she desperately needed.

Housing:
Ms. B is a 73-year-old woman. She lives with her adult son, Mr. B, and her 4-year-old grandchild in an affordable rent stabilized unit, which has been her home for about 46 years. Prior to our representation, the landlord obtained a default judgment of eviction & warrant against Ms. & Mr. B, based on alleged rent arrears totaling about $20,000. We represented Ms. & Mr. B in proceedings seeking to vacate that judgment. The court dates for these proceedings were postponed for several months because of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pause in proceedings, we entered into negotiations with the landlord’s attorney. As a result of those negotiations, we were able to secure the landlord’s consent to vacating the default judgment and eviction warrant. We were also able to have the landlord agree to complete significant repairs to the apartment that he had refused to undertake for several years, including but not limited to the replacement of a faulty stove that was a fire hazard, plumbing works in the bathroom, replacement of the showerhead, mold remediation, sealing of holes, plastering, and painting. We were ultimately able to resolve the court proceedings based on a 35% rent abatement (totaling approximately $9,000), due to the prolonged history of poor conditions and the landlord’s failure to properly implement a rent reduction order. Because of our assistance, we were able to prevent the B family’s eviction from their long-term affordable home and ensure that their landlord met his obligations to keep that home habitable.
Other Services...

Number of People Benefitted by Services Other Than Direct Legal Representation

| Total                             | 779 people |
| Community Legal Education         | 433 people |
| Online Outreach                   | 346 people |

Other Legal Related Services: Overview

In addition to the direct legal services we provided during the reporting period, we also conducted significant community legal education. Community legal education often helps individuals to resolve legal disputes before prolonged litigation ensues and allows us to intervene early on to resolve or prevent a legal problem. These types of legal related services also enable us to assist hundreds of additional low-income New Yorkers whom we would not have the resources to advise or represent individually. Our goal in providing these services is to educate people about their legal rights, which empowers them to take action, and teaches them how to seek out legal assistance if needed in the future. We conduct our community legal education efforts in several formats, including lecturing to audiences, leading legal roundtable discussions, participating on substantive law panels, and doing “table to table” outreach at community-based organizations.

Other Legal Related Services: Examples

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic many of the usual other legal related services we performed were unable to be conducted including onsite clinics and know your rights presentations at community-based organizations and partner agencies.

However, we participated in nontraditional virtual opportunities to reach the community. The legal department created a series of “know your rights” training series we presented virtually to the parents of children enrolled in Lenox Hill Neighborhood House’s Early Childhood Center on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Housing updates both in English and Spanish. We also hosted virtual Medicare/Medicaid Part D clinics to the LHNH Senior Center. Legal staff also participated in a radio show that provided legal information regarding the state of affairs of housing that broadcasted throughout New York City.
One of our most significant collaborations is with the New York City LEAP coalition, a membership organization of 18 New York City legal service providers that work collaboratively to increase the availability of quality legal services to low-income New Yorkers. Our partners include Brooklyn Defender Services, Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation, CAMBA Legal Services, Catholic Migration Services, Goddard Riverside Law Project, Housing Conservation Coordinators, JASA/Legal Services for the Elderly, Make the Road New York, Mobilization for Justice, Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation, Take Root Justice, The Bronx Defenders, The Door, Urban Justice Center, and Volunteers of Legal Service. The LEAP Coalition continued work on a City-Wide Tenant Anti-Harassment program, with legal services provided in all five boroughs, including a coordinated hotline and referral system. We are the lead agency for LEAP’s anti-harassment work in Manhattan and accordingly, we collaborate with our partners regularly on referrals, reporting and case trends. LEAP organizations also maintain close contact with each other, sharing best practices, resources, referrals and advocacy strategies.

We have remained an active member of the New York State Legal Services Coalition. Through this collaboration, we regularly communicate with State-wide legal services providers about pressing issues, funding, diversity initiatives and member services.

We also collaborate with various community-based organizations throughout New York City. We also participate in several substantive task forces and groups in order to collaborate with other legal and non-legal providers, including the Emergency Rent Coalition, the SNAP Task Force, the Medicaid Home Care Advocates group, the East Harlem Community Health Committee, the NYC Right to Counsel Coalition, and a SCRIE/DRIE advocates group.
To maximize resources, build capacity and keep up with the demand for our services, we continue to nurture our pro bono partnerships, which provide a creative way to help us meet the demand for legal assistance from our community's low-income clients. We conduct annual trainings to help keep our pro bono attorneys abreast of any new developments in the law, as well as continue our strong mentoring support of pro bono volunteers. Our pro bono partnerships include:

a. Supplemental Needs Trust Project: In the past year, we partnered with Mayer Brown and worked collaboratively on cases, accepted referrals of low-income individuals with disabilities for assistance in joining pooled income Supplemental Needs Trusts to assist with their Medicaid benefits.

b. SCRIE Assistance Project: Our SCRIE application assistance project is now in its tenth year, utilizing attorneys from Paul Weiss, Citigroup, Weil, Gotshal & Manges and Morgan Stanley. These volunteers helped low-income older adults access or receive information about SCRIE benefits during the reporting period, enabling them to have their rent payments frozen and thereby maintain the affordability of their homes.

c. Advance Directives Project: Our partnership with the law firms: Dechert LLP and Paul Weiss allowed us to draft, execute and assist clients with the full range of advance directives including wills, health care proxies, living wills and powers of attorney.

d. Medicare Part D Clinic: In this partnership, we trained volunteer attorneys from Kasowitz Benson Torres & Friedman LLP and Fried Frank to help clients choose Medicare Part D prescription drug plans.

e. Law School/College Interns: Law Student interns joined us Cardozo, New York Law school, Columbia, and we hosted College student interns from Fordham University, New York University, University of Michigan, Hunter college, Brooklyn College and Occidental College.

### Pro Bono Statistics

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<th>Attorneys:</th>
<th>73 Volunteers</th>
<th>754 Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>Law Students:</td>
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<td>1,438 Hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Volunteers</td>
<td>13 Volunteers</td>
<td>2,147 Hours</td>
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### Sources Of Funding

- **IOLA Grant**: $122,500
- **City & County Funding**: $1,238,093
- **State Funding**: $813,021
- **Other**: $693,472
- **Total**: $2,867,086