From April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022, HVJC handled 253 legal matters, benefitting the lives of
771 individuals and household members. Cases handled involved a variety of practice areas,
including housing, immigration, family law, consumer matters, employment, income
maintenance, and health matters. HVJC’s target population includes immigrants, regardless of
immigration status, living at or below 200% of the poverty level. Approximately 73% of clients
served during the reporting period were undocumented and 70% had Limited English
Proficiency (LEP) requiring translation to fully access services. Of those LEP clients, 98%
spoke Spanish.

HVJC saw a significant increase in the need for legal services during the reporting period.
From April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022, intakes increased to 865 from 535 during the same
period the previous year, more than a 60% increase. HVJC is the only non-profit law firm in the
Hudson Valley providing comprehensive legal service to undocumented tenants in eviction
proceedings and 70% of intakes during the reporting period involved housing matters.

During the reporting period, HVJC secured $191,817.40 in financial benefits for our clients,
including $115,554.50 in lump sum child support awards and $863.90 in monthly child support
benefits. Our housing unit saved tenants $75,399.00 in rental arrears judgments. In June
2021, HVJC received funding from Westchester County to assist tenants with applications for
New York State’s ERAP program. Since the program started, HVJC’s two ERAP advocates
opened cases for 238 Westchester residents facing eviction.

Population Served: Low Income Populations

Area Served: 7-County Area of SE New York

Total IOLA Grant: $70,000

Staffing Full Time Equivalents:
- Total Staff: 8
- Lawyers: 4
- Paralegals: 4
Overview of Achievements

Over the past year, HVJC advocated for changes to the legal system to benefit low-income populations and increase access to justice. We fought for systemic change in housing law, specifically advocating for Right to Counsel bills in Westchester County and at the state level to provide representation to all tenants facing eviction. We also continued our advocacy for passage of the Tenant Dignity and Safe Housing Act, a bill that provides tenants standing to affirmatively sue property owners for repairs in housing court.

In October 2021, HVJC secured a subcontract with Legal Services of the Hudson Valley to provide eviction prevention services to non-citizens throughout the Hudson Valley. The funds include more than $1.6 million spread over 2 years, which will enable HVJC to double our staffing to 14 and open a second location. In April 2022, we welcomed 3 new attorneys and one new paralegal to our staff and opened our second office in Newburgh, NY.

Direct Legal Services: Cases

Housing:

Maria came to HVJC for help after an illegal eviction. Maria rented an apartment with her husband and two young children. After living there for several years, they noticed some minor plumbing issues and informed the landlord. The issues grew steadily worse from 2020-2021 but the landlord refused to make any repairs, insisting no contractors were available because of the Pandemic. Maria decided to withhold rent until the plumbing was fixed. Finally the landlord came to see the problem and told them the necessary repairs were extensive and would require the family to stay somewhere else for 2 weeks. He arranged for them to stay in an apartment belonging to his relative. After they went to the temporary apartment, Maria kept checking in with the landlord and was told the work was taking longer than expected. After about 4 weeks, the landlord’s relative told Maria they needed to leave by the end of the week. Maria tried to reach her landlord but he wouldn’t respond. Maria went to her apartment but the locks were changed and from the window she could see their belongings were gone. HVJC filed an order to show cause and appeared with Maria in court. HVJC learned the landlord had not only fixed the plumbing issue, but had renovated the entire apartment and was seeking to rent it for a higher amount. HVJC argued the landlord intentionally deceived the family into vacating the apartment and his actions were a clear violation of the current eviction restriction laws. After negotiations, the landlord agreed to restore the family to the newly renovated apartment at their previous rent amount with a written lease and waived his right to collect the many months of withheld rent.
Immigration:
Ricardo is a 16-year-old boy who contacted HVJC for assistance with his immigration case. Ricardo was living in his home country with his parents. When he was very young, his father passed away leaving the family in a difficult financial situation. His mother seeing no other option left Ricardo in the care of his maternal Grandmother and traveled to the US to find a way to provide a better life for her son. When Ricardo was 9, his grandmother told his mother that she no longer wanted to care for him. With no other family member willing to watch over him, his mom sent word for him to come to the US. Ricardo was just 11 years old when he arrived at the US border where he was detained and put into deportation proceedings. He was released into his mother’s care a short time later with deportation looming.

With HVJC’s help, Ricardo was able to secure Special Immigrant Juvenile Status and he is no longer in removal proceedings. He is living with his mom and excelling in high school. With his newly secured Green Card, he will be eligible for financial aid to achieve his dream of one day attending college.
Other Services: Overview

HVJC engages in various activities designed to raise public knowledge of individual legal rights in the immigrant community and increase awareness of available services for those in need. We accomplish this by collaborating with schools, churches, food pantries and other trusted service providers in the immigrant community to establish outreach opportunities. Outreach events range from tabling events, to handing out brochures at food distribution events, or providing ‘Know Your Rights’ trainings for community members and service providers.

From April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022, HVJC participated in 7 web-based presentations on legal rights and 20 community events where brochures were distributed. Through our outreach efforts, HVJC reached 2,205 community members.

| Number of People who Benefitted from Services Other Than Direct Legal Representation | 2,207 People Benefitted by Services Other Than Direct Legal Representation |
| Community Legal Education | 2,205 |
| Online Assistance | 2 |

Other Services: Technology and Other Innovations

During the reporting period, HVJC upgraded from traditional telephones to a VOIP system. The new 3CX system allows us to manage contacts across our two offices and accommodates our rapidly growing staff. 3CX provides both a website and a mobile application so staff can utilize their computer or cell phones to make and receive calls. Both options allow staff to use a Wi-Fi connection or cellular network to conduct work calls without privacy concerns or service interruptions. This technology coupled with our existing web-based case management system simplifies our hybrid work model, allowing us to compete with other legal employers to attract and retain qualified candidates in the current job market.
Other Services: Trainings

High quality training for our staff members is a key part of ensuring that we can provide high quality services to our clients. We have a contract with the Practicing Law Institute to provide full access to training at no cost and we provide in house training on substantive legal issues. Staff are encouraged to participate in training related to our practice areas and we cover costs for any approved CLE courses. With the recent addition of several newly admitted attorneys to our staff, we set aside funding for an intensive skills training for all new staff and are seeking quotes from providers.

HVJC encourages staff to participate in local coalitions and task force meetings and take leadership roles where possible to promote professional growth. We currently participate in several taskforce/coalition groups focused on improving services and access to justice for the low-income immigrant population we serve, including the Statewide Right to Counsel Movement, the Westchester Family Task Force, New York Immigration Coalition; Westchester Steering Committee, the Westchester Eviction Prevention Network, and the Hudson Valley Immigration Practitioners group.

Pro Bono Volunteer Involvement

HVJC has a relatively small staff and limited resources to commit to establishing a Pro Bono Attorney program. Instead, we engage with volunteers through established programs like Americorp VISTA and the Pro Bono Scholar program where administration is handled by a third party. Most recently, from March 2021 to May 2021 we hosted a Pro Bono Scholar from Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University. This is the second time HVJC was selected to host a Pro Bono Scholar.

In addition, we have a regular volunteer who is a retired professor from Elisabeth Haub School of Law. She previously ran the law school clinical program and she consults with us on difficult cases and law practice management.

1 Attorney volunteered 10 hours

1 Law Student volunteered 485 hours
Significant Collaborations

HVJC collaborates with several immigrant service groups and providers of free civil legal services in the Hudson Valley. We have a direct referral relationship with Legal Services of the Hudson Valley. We participate in Westchester’s Eviction Prevention Network and regularly receive referrals from members including Catholic Charities, CLUSTER, Mount Vernon United Tenants, Westchester Residential Opportunities, and the Bridge Fund.

In addition to referrals, we work with our community partners to develop trainings and outreach opportunities. Some of our regular community partners include the Community Resource Center, Make the Road, Neighbor’s Link, and the Westchester County Human Rights Commission.

Sources of Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<tr>
<td>IOLA Grant</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Funding</td>
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<td>City and County Funding</td>
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