Overview of Achievements, 2018-2019

Housing Conservation Coordinators, Inc. (HCC) is a 47 year old community based legal services organization that was founded to “advance social and economic justice and fight for the rights of poor, low-income and working individuals and families.” Over its history, HCC has largely focused its comprehensive services on housing-related matters, including preventing displacement, accessing public benefits, and preserving the limited stock of affordable housing. HCC has expanded its services over the past decade to provide a wider range of legal support to lower income residents. HCC’s services now include assistance with immigration matters, consumer protection and elder law to help stabilize the lowest income households.

In 2018-2019 HCC assisted 4,177 low income households in Manhattan, including full representation in 480 matters; in-depth advocacy to 441 households, and advice/counsel to 454 households; hosted Community Legal Education workshops benefitting 1,159 attendees, which included: tenant rights’ education for 31 tenant associations (595 total attendees), community workshops on various legal issues benefitting 389 community members; Pro se workshops benefitting 534 attendees at HCC’s 13th Annual West Side Tenant Conference and various legal workshops; and referrals to legal and social service providers benefitting 6,326 families.

In addition, HCC’s website was viewed by 28,254 unique visitors during the 12 month period, with self-help referrals accessed by 5,990 people and an additional 2,120 downloads of issue based reports.

Population Served: Low Income Population
Area Served: New York County
Total Funding: $2,083,243
Total IOLA Grant: $105,000

Staffing - Full Time Equivalents:
- Total Staff: 18.00
- Lawyers: 11.00
- Paralegals: 1.00
- Other: 6.00
Housing Case: HCC represented a tenant in a non-pay case brought by the New York City Housing Authority. The tenant, who suffered from asthma, and his teenage daughter, who had a heart condition were withholding rent due to major leaks and mold in the apartment that was being ignored for months by NYCHA. Prior to the second appearance in Court, the Attorney went to the project manager of the building to obtain a history of the work orders that had been filed. At the court appearance, the presented the evidence necessary to demonstrate that NYCHA had failed to comply with their own work orders. It was then discovered that there was a major leak in the entire line of apartments. Upon settlement, NYCHA provided half of the rent and immediate repairs to apartment and the source of the leak thereby improving the conditions for the entire line of apartments.

Immigration Case: This past fiscal year, a homeless mother sought legal assistance from the HCC immigration team. The single mother was forced to live in a homeless shelter with her 9 year old son after she fled persecution and violence in her home country of Venezuela. Venezuela has been going through a crisis of food and medicine scarcity, hyperinflation and intense violence. President Maduro’s government cracked down on protesters and increased political arrests. The client was part of a group of protesters as an active member in an opposing political party. The client attended numerous demonstrations and government
Other Services...

Number of People Benefitted by Services Other Than Direct Legal Representation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Number of People</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12,097 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Legal Education</td>
<td>2,659 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Se Assistance</td>
<td>3,448 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Assistance</td>
<td>5,990 people</td>
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</tbody>
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Other Legal Related Services: Overview

HCC provided Pro Se (389 attendees) and Community Legal Education Workshops (770 attendees):

- **Pro Se Workshops:** a) On December 8, 2018 HCC hosted its 13th Annual West Side Tenant Conference at Fordham Law School, which included workshops led by trained professionals and plenary sessions on issues facing west side tenants. The workshops were attended by 534 tenants throughout the day; b) HCC staff also conducted monthly legal workshops at Project Find’s Senior Clinic on housing, consumer, end-of-life and benefit matters (136 attendees).

- **Community Legal Education (770 attendees):** a) **Tenant Associations (324 attendees):** HCC staff organized tenants building-wide to collectively challenge improper practices by building owners. Tenants are first given an overview of tenant’s rights in rent regulated housing before the specifics of the building situation are discussed. In the 2018-19 reporting period, HCC assisted 31 buildings to form tenant associations, holding tenant meetings for total of 324 attendees; and b) **Community Groups (554 attendees):** HCC staff provided trainings for community groups, including the West Side Neighborhood Alliance (WSNA) membership meetings as well as tenants living in buildings organized through the Stabilizing NYC coalition, to educate community residents on a range of issues facing the community. The Stabilizing buildings are targeted specifically to educate tenants in buildings owned by the “worst landlords” in NYC, like Steve Croman, about their rights and remedies.
Other Legal Related Services: Examples

Example #1: HCC is working with tenants of Polyclinic Apartment, 345 West 50th St, a Project Based Section 8 Housing and Urban Development building that has been without cooking gas since June 2018. With the support of US Congressman Jerrold Nadler’s office and HUD officials, HCC and the Polyclinic tenants have been working to push the Management Company, Winn Residential, and landlord, Standard Properties, to begin the necessary repairs. In March 2019, Polyclinic tenants organized a press conference and rally, which CBS reported on and over forty tenants attended, to bring public attention to the building issues. Currently, HCC is assisting the tenants with filing a group HP action for the gas repairs and a multitude of unaddressed individual repairs.

Example #2: HCC organized the West Side Croman Tenants Coalition, a group of tenants who live in buildings owned by Steve Croman. Under a Settlement Agreement between Croman and the NYS Attorney General, these buildings are now managed by New York City Management with oversight from a Third-Party Monitor. HCC worked with tenants in one of these buildings, 722-724 Tenth Ave, where tenants found New York City Management unresponsive to long-needed repairs. After organizing for almost a year, these tenants have had many of their repairs completed. However, New York City Management continues to be unresponsive to other Croman tenants, including tenants at 434 West 52nd Street, where tenants have been without cooking gas for almost a full year. For this reason, HCC formed the coalition and is working with elected officials to ensure that New York City Management does their job.

Impact Cases

Robert Rodriguez, Elaine Pinnock, Jovanny Pichardo v. Ben Carson, et al.: HCC represented one of the plaintiffs, Elaine Pinnock, in a Federal lawsuit which we won on April 16, 2019, where Judge Furman of the Southern District of New York ruled that HUD incorrectly interpreted the National Housing Act that led to thousands of people paying extremely high percentages of their income as rent if they have Section 8 Enhanced Housing Choice Vouchers. Our client has been paying more than 83% of her income as rent to her landlord for many years.

HUD has until May 30 to correct their interpretation of the rule, and we are also seeking legal fees in this decision. Once HUD corrects their interpretation, HPD will have to adjust their rules and begin adjusting the rent for at least 860 people with Enhanced Section 8 Vouchers in this situation. We have already filed challenges to HPD for other tenants facing this similar hardship and are awaiting their response as well.
**Other Services**

**Trainings**

HCC’s Legal Component conducted 5 fall trainings for both new attorneys and organizers as well as experienced staff in the following housing law areas: rent regulation, non-payment proceedings, federally subsidized housing, overcharge/rent arrears and public assistance. 8 to 12 staff members attended each of the trainings. Additionally, in October 5 attorneys and the Executive Director attended the NYSBA’s Partnership Program. As a member of Leap, a Coalition of 18 legal services providers in NYC, HCC staff regularly attend bi-monthly Leap trainings on issues related to both housing law as well as other civil matters outside of our usual practice areas. HCC attorneys take full advantage of attending these trainings. HCC’s Associate Director, who supervises our immigration docket attended the 15th Annual Immigration Law and Policy Conference at Georgetown Law School. HCC’s Paralegal and Intake Coordinator both participated in the Connect Training Institute’s “Understanding Domestic Violence: Essentials & Intersections” – a 28 hours training. HCC’s Paralegal also attended a 40 hour Immigration training sponsored by the Immigrant Legal Resource Center. As part of the DOVE Initiative in NYC – a partnership with Safe Horizons, HCC also sends each attorney and intake worker to regular trainings on Domestic Violence held at the Family Justice Center in order to both assess and advise clients who may be at risk of domestic violence and/or elder abuse.

**Technology**

HCC’s database tracks clients seeking individual services, participating in group actions, and involved in community campaigns and includes the client histories, types of assistance provided, case notes, outcomes, and identifies building neighbors. We also utilize Google Docs, Dropbox, etc., for non-confidential collaborative work. HCC engages Just-Tech, a technology and IT services organization experienced in and committed to providing high-quality IT support for small legal service nonprofits, and as a result, HCC receives a $5,000 grant annually through Microsoft Azure. During this past fiscal year we have engaged LegalServer and have been building a new database to improve HCC’s capability to track data and services provided. HCC’s go live date is in June 2019.

HCC organizers conduct regular email blasts to more than 2,000 residents about community meetings, upcoming issues, and events to increase awareness about neighborhood issues and educational opportunities.

**Significant Collaborations**

In 2018-19, HCC worked in partnership with other legal services providers in New York City to directly enhance individual client services as follows: 1) HCC participated in the Legal Services for the Working Poor (LSWP) Consumer Debt coalition, that consists of five NYC providers (the other partners being CAMBA, NMIC, Goddard Riverside Law Project and UJC). Each organization conducted its consumer debt intake on-site and referred cases to the coalition for legal representation. Trainings were also conducted for coalition staff. HCC assisted 20 individuals to resolve consumer debt issues through this program and an additional 35 seniors attended workshops on consumer debt issues and, 2) City-wide coalitions on specific issues: HCC also participated in numerous city-wide coalitions, including LEAP (a coalition of 18 independent legal service providers), Stand for Tenant Safety, Illegal Hotels, Certificate Against Tenant Harassment (CATH), Real Rent Reform, Real Affordability for All Campaign, etc.
Pro Bono Volunteer Involvement

- **Pro Bono Assistance**: HCC utilizes pro bono assistance either to provide direct case services or to co-counsel with HCC staff attorneys on cases outside of our area of expertise. During the reporting period HCC continued to benefit from the assistance of a pro bono team (3 Associates and 1 Partner) who provided assistance on a complicated holdover proceeding with deposition support and trial co-counsel. In this matter, HCC and pro bono co-counsel, represented the last remaining rent stabilized tenant in an 8-unit building in Hell’s Kitchen. The landlord brought an eviction proceeding seeking to recover the apartment on the grounds that his son and daughter-in-law intend to move into our client’s apartment. During the trial the case settled, as it became clear to the Judge that the landlord may not have any DOB permits, did not apply for a Certificate of No Harassment, among other things. As part of the negotiated settlement, our client is moving into a better unit and maintaining his rent stabilized tenancy status (and rent).

- **Legal Clinic**: HCC conducts a weekly legal clinic for individuals who live outside our catchment area or who fall above our income guidelines for representation and staffs this clinic primarily with volunteer attorneys from the private bar. In 2018-19, 275 clients were assisted with legal advice at HCC’s Monday night legal clinic (223 clients) and Tax Clinic (52 clients). The clinics are staffed entirely by volunteer attorneys.

- **Non-attorney volunteers**: HCC hosts non-attorney volunteers to support our legal and organizing program and maintains a Practice Order in good standing. In the past year HCC hosted 3 organizing interns from John Jay College, 6 law student summer interns and 1 college winter intern. HCC’s Supervising Attorneys teach a Housing Rights Clinic at Fordham law school and provide supervision to 3 law student students during each of the semesters (6 total). 7 Volunteer Board members also actively participate in various committees and projects.

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**Pro Bono Statistics**

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Volunteers</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attorneys</td>
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<td>360</td>
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<tr>
<td>Law Students</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4,920</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1,660</td>
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**Sources Of Funding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iola Grant</td>
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<td>Foundations</td>
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<td>State Funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$2,083,243</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources of funding chart:

- Iola Grant: 17%
- Foundations: 5%
- State Funding: 5%
- Other: 73%