Overview of Achievements, 2018-2019

Over the 12 months of the reporting period, Youth Represent closed 1,000 cases for 723 young people. Also partnered with 19 community-based organizations to deliver legal representation, Know Your Rights workshops, and capacity-building technical assistance.

Our clients are primarily young men and women of color under the age of 25 from New York City’s five boroughs. Twenty-five percent come from Brooklyn, 24% come from the Bronx, 27% from Manhattan, 13% from Queens, and 4% from Staten Island. Overwhelmingly poor, all have had some form of involvement with the justice system. Many are enrolled in programs run by community-based organizations or the city. We often serve individuals whose court-involvement overlaps with other judicial systems, including Family Courts, school suspension hearings, or eviction proceedings. Forty-eight percent of our clients have no high school diploma (or equivalent), and more than 90% are unemployed. Thirty-four percent live in subsidized housing; 67% come from single-parent homes. Fifty-four percent are African American; 34% are Latino. Nearly three quarters are male, while 26% are female.

Youth Represent saved our clients $25,110 in lump sums and $198 in monthly payments. We also secured $7,000 in back awards and $150 in monthly payments. Additionally, as we noted in our interim report, it is difficult to quantify the significant value our clients realized by having obstacles to employment removed.

Youth Represent focuses on standing with clients in cases in which they would not otherwise be entitled to an attorney. We travel to workforce development and youth services programs across the five boroughs and deliver our community-lawyering model, which combines direct legal representation, Know Your Rights workshops, capacity-building technical assistance for youth services organizations, and leadership and engagement opportunities for young people. Our primary focus is on neighborhoods most harmed by over-policing, and institutions in which youth are particularly vulnerable to—or seeking to counter—mistreatment and/or disproportionate punishment.

Population Served: Youth who have been involved in the criminal justice system.

Area Served: New York City Metropolitan Area

Total Funding: $923,691

Total IOLA Grant: $100,000

Staffing - Full Time Equivalents:

- Total Staff: 7.34
- Lawyers: 4.77
- Paralegals: 2.00
- Other: 0.57
Youth Represent

2,747 people benefitted
1,000 legal cases closed

Breakdown of cases by Legal Problem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>People 2,747</th>
<th>Cases 1,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>701</td>
<td>1,732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>426</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Rita” was referred to Youth Represent by a program director at Queens Community House at Voyages Prep High School in South Jamaica. Rita shared that she was experiencing a conflict with a long-time friend and neighbor, and that she had gotten into a fight with the friend and the friend's mother the day before, which had resulted in a DAT ticket charging her with misdemeanor assault. Frightened because this was her first arrest, Rita had no idea what was going to happen to her. A staff attorney explained the criminal court process to Rita, and guided her through important details and background information to present to her criminal defense attorney. Later that day, Rita received notice from her school that they were suspending her for 30-60 days as a result of the alleged incident. Our staff attorney represented Rita at the School Suspension hearing where we got the charges dismissed due to lack of evidence. Our staff attorney also advocated for more support for Rita in school, which resulted in Rita being assigned a new guidance counselor.

“Patty” has been arrested 37 times. Almost all of the arrests were carried out by officers from the same precinct in the Bronx; the majority have not resulted in convictions. When Patty met with our staff attorney, she had no idea how many times she had been arrested, and no idea what the outcomes had been in each of her arrests. Our staff attorney reviewed Patty’s RAP sheet with her, cycle by cycle. The entire review took about 90 minutes, and by the end Patty had a full understanding of exactly what she was dealing with as she began to look for a job. Patty and our staff attorney did a mock interview, and discussed strategies for discussing criminal history in the context of job interviews.
Other Services...

Number of People Benefitted by Services Other Than Direct Legal Representation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>1,445 people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Legal Education</td>
<td>1,289 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Se Assistance</td>
<td>156 people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Legal Related Services: Overview

Youth Represent provides Know Your Rights workshops for youth and technical assistance for staff at community-based organizations through our partnership model. Our workshops educate young people on their legal rights and responsibilities, and address specific situations such as interacting with the police, conducting a job search with a criminal history, responding to a school suspension, or facing exclusion from public housing. We deliver our technical assistance primarily in the form of staff training at partner organizations. Specifically, we teach staff how to identify and respond to the unique needs of court-involved youth, and we explain how various convictions or plea deals will appear on criminal background checks.

We give organizations the tools they need to prepare clients to answer questions about criminal backgrounds on job applications and in interviews, and we highlight obstacles that can impede a young person’s chance at success—such as licensing bars, housing evictions, family court issues, school suspensions, employment discrimination, immigration status, sexual orientation, and gender non-conformity.

Our partnership model pairs a single Youth Represent attorney with a community-partner organization to go on-site and deliver staff trainings at least once a year. Depending on the partner organization’s intake schedule, we also conduct regular workshops when possible.

Other Legal Related Services: Examples

- Healthcare institutions represent one of the largest employment sectors in New York, but it can be difficult for system-involved youth to access jobs in the healthcare industry because of how many have convictions for drug possession. This is an example of how the collateral consequences of system involvement weigh most heavily on youth of color: research shows that while drug use is the same—or even less—for people of color, they are more likely to be criminally charged with possession. We embraced the opportunity to deliver workshops to two major healthcare providers in New York, explaining how a criminal record does not increase the likelihood of future criminal behavior on the job, and the robust laws in New York that protect both applicants and employers.

- As name change petitions have become an increasingly large part of our practice, and as we continue to serve more LGBTQ youth through our partnership with the Mt. Sinai Adolescent Health Center, we have developed Know Your Rights workshops for youth seeking name and gender marker changes. We deliver these to patient support groups at the Clinic and to parents of transgender and gender non-conforming youth.
Significant Collaborations

Partnerships are the foundation of our model. We have contracted fee-for-service partnerships with the following 19 nonprofits and agencies to deliver workshops and staff trainings, and provide legal representation and advice to participants: Atlas: DIY, CASES, Catholic Charities, Catholic Migration Services, Center for Court Innovation, the Department of Youth Community Development’s Intern & Earn and Train & Earn programs, Eastern District of New York, Friends of Island Academy, Getting Out and Staying Out, Henry Street Settlement, Make the Road New York, Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center, Per Scholas, Queens Community House, Safe Passage, Southern District of New York, Stanley Isaacs Neighborhood Center, UnLocal, and Year Up.

We also receive referrals from many other nonprofits to represent clients on an informal basis, and partner with a number of other agencies and organizations on our policy reform work, which is often conducted through coalitions.

Technology

Over the past year, thanks to the investment of an individual donor, we have begun to expand how we can use technology to reach youth. We call this effort the RAP App, which we described in detail in our proposal last fall. The RAP App is an online way for clients to access a summary of their criminal records, and represents an improvement in how we deliver our RAP sheet review services in a number of ways:

1. We conducted a full redesign of our RAP sheet summary to be more user-friendly and appealing to our young clients.

2. The summary now pulls from additional fields in our Salesforce Database, so the document has greater utility. For example, as paralegals enter RAP sheet cycles into Salesforce, they enter fields indicating whether a client is eligible for a Certificate of Relief. The new summary pulls data from those fields and displays it on the summary so the client and attorney know they should start the process to apply for a CRD.

3. It enables clients to review their RAP sheet when they need it most: right before walking into an interview with an employer or landlord.

4. It cuts down on the time between when we take a client’s fingerprints and when we review the summary with them, because we can email them the summary and go over it on the phone, rather than having to schedule an in-person meeting with them.

5. When a client accesses their RAP sheet through this tool, it sends an alert to the client’s attorney, who can then reach out to touch base with the client and see if they are facing any legal situations where we can be of assistance.

Though relatively new, we are excited to track the impact this tool might have on client attrition and communication.
Youth Represent operates a Youth Reentry Clinic at Brooklyn Law School, and we hire two summer legal interns each year as well. We have also benefitted from three new volunteer and pro bono opportunities over the past year:

Jill Hanekemp is on our Board of Directors, and she volunteers one day a month in our office. She conducts legal research on operational and compliance matters.

The law firm Outten & Golden is sponsoring Max Selver, a graduate of NYU School of Law, to volunteer at Youth Represent on a full-time basis through the end of the year. He is being paid a full salary by O&G during this time. He represents clients and develops organizational advice and position papers. He has been an instrumental addition to our employment litigation practice.

We have brought on former Brooklyn Law School clinic student Spencer Smith as a Pro Bono Scholar, a program created by Chief Judge Lippman to give law students more real-world experience before graduating. Spencer is a 3L BLS student who took the NY Bar exam in February; his results and admittance to the Bar will be expedited so he has the potential to be a practicing attorney by May. He will be a fellow from March-May, and is providing support to our School Justice Project.

---

**Pro Bono Volunteer Involvement**

**Pro Bono Statistics**

- **Attorneys:** 2 Volunteers, 796 Hours
- **Law Students:** 7 Volunteers, 644 Hours

**Sources Of Funding**

- **IOLA Grant:** $50,000
- **Foundations:** $307,382
- **State Funding:** $196,615
- **Other:** $369,694
- **Total:** $923,691