

Annual Report

LGBT Bar Association
of New York (LeGaL)

2019

The logo is a dark blue circle containing the text "LGBT BAR NY" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters, stacked vertically. The background of the entire page features a pattern of overlapping triangles in various shades of green and blue, creating a geometric, abstract design.

**LGBT
BAR
NY**



You are LeGaL.

After 42 years, our fight for LGBTQ rights continues.

The LGBTQ community has made many important advances over the LGBT Bar Association of New York's (LeGaL) 42 years, but there is still so much work to be done.

Today, many in our community rightly feel like they are under attack by the federal government – particularly transgender people, immigrants, LGBTQ youth, low-income people, queer people of color, and people with multiple intersecting identities. LeGaL, and our volunteer lawyer network, has been stepping up and fighting back.

In 2019, with the help of our volunteer attorneys, LeGaL served over 2,200 LGBTQ people by providing free legal assistance through our walk-in clinics and helpline. For the last 30 years, since the height of the AIDS crisis, LeGaL's Legal Clinic at the LGBT Center in Manhattan continues to serve record numbers of low-income New Yorkers every Tuesday night.

In a year when the Trump administration was busy implementing the hateful trans military ban, rolling back protections for LGBTQ patients, and announcing regulations that would end protections for LGBTQ children and families, LeGaL's Legislative Committee has been fighting to ensure that New York State is a refuge for our community.

LeGaL was there when Governor Cuomo signed GENDA into law, banning discrimination against transgender New Yorkers statewide. LeGaL helped pass laws banning the barbaric practice of conversion therapy and ending the so-called gay and trans "panic defenses" as legal justifications for violence against LGBTQ people. This year we are fighting to pass the Child Parent Security Act, to make sure that New York is a national leader in supporting modern LGBTQ families while protecting surrogates, intended parents, and their children.

In 2019, the Senate confirmed a record number of judicial nominees, one-third of which have records that are openly hostile to the equal dignity of LGBTQ people. Meanwhile, LeGaL's Judiciary Committee has been working overtime, interviewing and rating state and city judges to ensure that New York courts are fair and impartial. At the same time, our legal team and pro bono partners are bringing impact litigation to secure protections for LGBTQ families and survivors of exploitation.

We celebrated World Pride in NYC in 2019, and LeGaL marked the 40th Anniversary of Stonewall with over 100 marches, under a banner that read "OUT Lawyers Fighting Injustice." LeGaL takes this mission seriously. That is why we are dedicated to cultivating new LGBTQ legal professionals through our Mentorship Program, our LGBTQ Career Fair, and our one-of-a-kind LGBTQ Judicial Fellowship.

Thank you for being a part of this work. You are LeGaL, and with your help, we continue the fight for full equality and justice for all.

Eric Lesh,
Executive Director

Kristen Prata Browde,
Board President



Advocacy & Representation

Our Work

LeGaL strives to ensure full equality for LGBTQ individuals and to increase access to justice by providing free legal services to members of our community. LeGaL is uniquely positioned as a point of entry into the legal system for members of the LGBTQ community because of our Clinics, Helpline, and portal for online inquiries. Through the leadership of LeGaL Legal Director, Brett Figlewski, we endeavor to identify litigants with compelling cases that may have a wider impact for our community.

Highlights

LeGaL was the sole amicus in a parentage case in the Appellate Division for the Fourth Department involving multiple parents and in which LeGaL argued that the equitable principles supporting the rights of non-biological/non-adoptive parents be considered and applied. LeGaL was represented by the law firm of Latham & Watkins, LLP.

LeGaL continued to partner with the law firms of our Leadership Council to raise awareness and much-needed resources for our community. For the second year in a row, Pillsbury Winthrop provided duffel bags and winter supplies to the homeless and housing-insecure LGBTQIA+ youth who visit our weekly Youth Qlinic.



Meet Our Clients

Gaston

Gaston suffered years of exploitation by his husband, and LeGaL has worked to secure a fair award of maintenance in a protracted divorce trial. In litigating cases such as his, LeGaL helps to ensure that LGBTQ victims of exploitation have full access to the panoply of protections and rights recognized in the law.

Co-counsel: Sanctuary for Families

Tomeka

Tomeka was denied access and rights to the child Tomeka raised since birth by the Family Court in Rochester. We appealed the case to the Appellate Division for the Fourth Department and will continue to fight for Tomeka and the rights of all non-biological/non-adoptive parents. With Tomeka’s case, LeGaL remains at the forefront of the legal battle to secure and protect the rights of LGBTQ families across New York State.

Co-counsel: Nixon & Peabody

GET INVOLVED

Team up with LeGaL to research and write critically important amicus briefs, or co-counsel with us on high profile cases.

Volunteers

Volunteers are the heart and soul of LeGaL's free legal services. Thank you to all of our amazing 2019 volunteers who make LeGaL's work on behalf of the LGBTQ community possible.

Our sixth annual Volunteer Thanksgiving & Awards Night at Arnold & Porter celebrated the achievements of our most dedicated volunteers and raised money for our legal services.

Connections

As part of LeGaL's effort to provide and increase access to high quality, culturally-competent legal services for members of the LGBTQ community, we offer a Pro Bono Panel and a Lawyer Referral Network.

In 2019, LeGaL's Clinic continued as an entirely paperless operation and now utilizes a new customized and secure online platform, allowing our volunteer attorneys to conduct consultations and submit intakes seamlessly for follow-up and referral.

GET INVOLVED

In 2019, LeGaL had over 30 LGBTQIA-identified active volunteer attorneys. Help us serve the community by volunteering at one of our walk-in legal Clinics.

You can also join our Pro Bono Panel and help us place vulnerable members of our community in the right hands. Or, join our Lawyer Referral Network to connect with potential fee-paying clients who have contacted LeGaL in searching for an attorney.

Legal Services

For the local LGBTQ Community

Legal Clinics

LeGaL provides a critical service for LGBTQ New Yorkers, especially lower income members of our community, through our free walk-in Clinics. Our Tuesday night Clinic has been running for over 30 years. In 2019, LeGaL proudly operated three clinics, including our Saturday night LGBTQ Youth "Qlinic" and our student-led Clinic in New Jersey. LeGaL's volunteer attorneys offer holistic consultations and referrals to members of our community and help with any number of legal issues, including housing, immigration, family law, criminal, employment, discrimination, and more.

Legal Helpline

LeGaL's Helpline fields legal inquiries and requests for referrals and provides information about our walk-in Clinics. In 2019, this free Helpline continued to experience an enormous volume of calls from community members, with approximately 2,000 requests for legal assistance.

150+

CLINIC SESSIONS

LeGaL held over 150 free walk-in legal clinic sessions at its 3 clinics combined.

2000+

REQUESTS

LeGaL received over 2,000 requests for legal services through its online platform, legal clinics, and Helpline.

1200+

REFERRALS

LeGaL referred over 1,200 consultations to the attorneys on its Lawyer Referral Network.

Activism & Leadership

Fighting Injustice

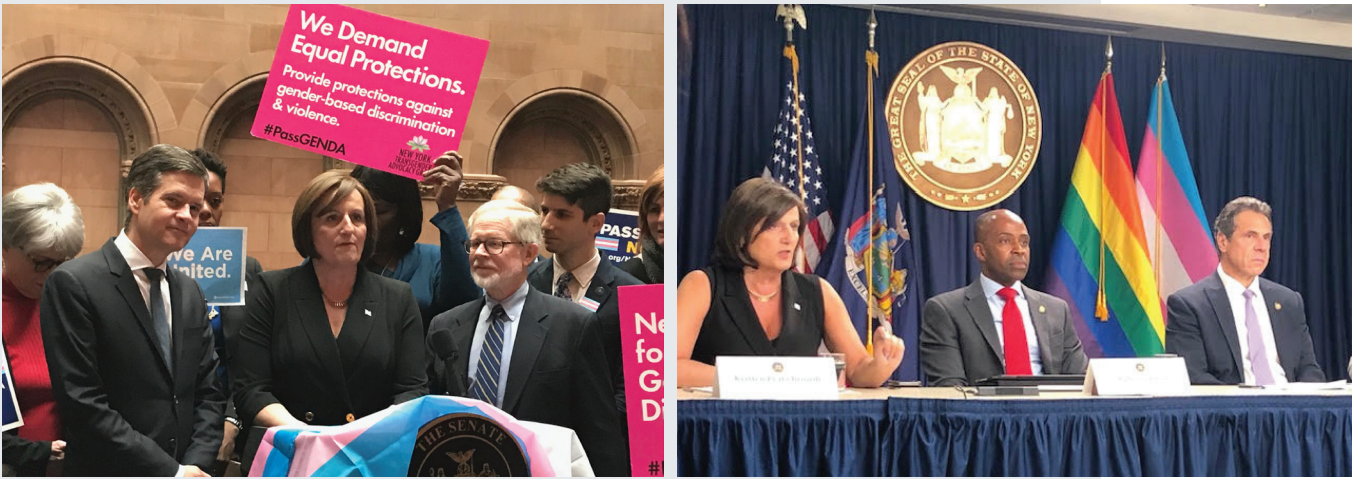
In 2019, the LGBTQ community faced enormous challenges and achieved significant victories. LeGaL was on the frontlines fighting for justice and equality.

Legislative Advocacy

For 42 years, LeGaL has been committed to promoting equality and justice for LGBTQ people in our court system. LeGaL’s legislative committee and membership work tirelessly to push for policy changes that will expand protections for our community.

This year, LeGaL played a critical role in passing statewide protections for transgender New Yorkers, banning conversion therapy, and eliminating the gay/trans "panic defenses" from our courts!

In 2020, our top legislative goal is to pass the Child Parent Security Act. This legislation is critical for all New Yorkers who rely on medical advances to build a family.

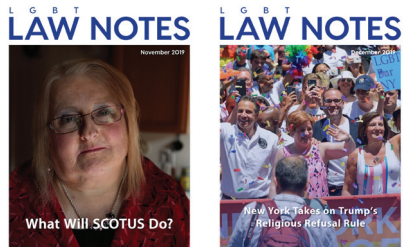
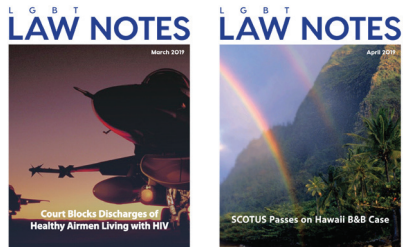


Judiciary Committee

LeGaL’s Judiciary Committee is working to ensure fair and impartial courts. Chaired by Janice B. Grubin and Michael J. Weiner, the sixteen members had a busy, productive, and influential 2019. From August through November, screening panels of the Committee interviewed and evaluated candidates for judicial office. LeGaL’s Judicial Screening Panel interviewed a record thirty-one candidates for New York State judicial office this season.

"LeGaL’s Judicial Screening Panel is one of the few judicial candidate review boards in the country primarily dedicated to ensuring fair, sensitive, and impartial judges who will uphold the rights of LGBTQ people. We are very proud of our work"

JANICE B. GRUBIN, BARCLAY DAMON,
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE CHAIR



LGBT Law Notes

Monthly Publication

LeGaL's *LGBT Law Notes* is the most comprehensive monthly publication, covering the latest legal and legislative developments affecting the LGBTQ community. For over four decades, New York Law School Professor Arthur Leonard has served as editor and chief writer.

2019 *LGBT Law Notes* Issues

January	The Battle to Block the Ban
February	SCOTUS Rules of Trump's Military Ban
March	Court Blocks Discharges of Healthy Airmen Living with HIV
April	SCOTUS Passes on Hawaii B&B Case
May	SCOTUS Takes Up LGBT Workplace Rights Case
June	SCOTUS Leaves Win for Trans Students In Effect
July	Summer Wedding Cake Is Served
August	Adoption Agency Asks SCOTUS for License to Discriminate
September	Big Victory for Trans Health
October	Conversion Therapy in the Courts
November	What Will SCOTUS Do?
December	New York Takes on Trump's Religious Refusal Role

LeGaL's LGBT Podcast

On iTunes & Podbean

The LeGaL LGBT Podcast features lively discussion of legal issues impacting the LGBTQ community. LeGaL Executive Director **Eric Lesh** interviews LGBTQ lawyers, policy wonks and activists. The *LGBT Law Notes* episode with **Professor Arthur Leonard** digs into three of the most important new LGBTQ civil rights rulings.



2019 Podcast Episodes

- Born Perfect: Banning Conversion Therapy Nationwide**
Guest: Matthew Shurka, Born Perfect Campaign
- LGBT Immigration and Asylum in the Time of Trump**
Guest: Sharita Gruberg, Center for American Progress
- Oral Argument at SCOTUS for LGBT Workers**
Guests: Omar Gonzalez-Pagan, Lambda Legal; Prof. Arthur Leonard, New York Law School
- Transgender Day of Remembrance**
Guests: Kristen Browde, LeGaL President
- LGBT Workplace Fairness from a Litigator's POV**
Guests: Larry Pearson and David Gottlieb, Widgor LLP; Jillian T. Weiss
- Queer Sex Works and the Fight to Decriminalize in New York**
Guest: Jared Trujillo, Legal Aid
- Federal Policy Chat with the ACLU**
Guest: Ian Thompson, ACLU National
- Sentenced to Death Because He's Gay**
Guest: Ethan Rice, Lambda Legal
- Here Comes the Trans Military Ban**
Guest: Prof. Arthur Leonard, New York Law School

Community Vision
Award Honorees

- Tammy Baldwin

United States Senator
- Shannon Minter

Legal Director of the National
Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR)
- Brad Hoylman

New York State Senator



LeGaL's Annual Dinner Gala

The Annual Dinner supports the charitable and educational activities of the LeGaL Foundation. As part of the Annual Dinner Ceremony, LeGaL presents Community Vision Awards to honor individuals or organizations with a distinguished record of service to the LGBTQ community, including a sustained commitment to achieving equal rights for all members of our community.

Dinner Sponsors

PLATINUM

Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP
Outten & Golden LLP

GOLD

Kirkland & Ellis LLP
The Morrison & Foerster Foundation
Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP
Seyfarth Shaw LLP
Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz

SILVER

Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP
Allen & Overy LLP
Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP
Bender & Rosenthal LLP
Business Intelligence Associates, Inc. (BIA)
Blank Rome LLP
Boies Schiller Flexner LLP
Borah, Goldstein, Altschuler, Nahins & Goidel, P.C.
Bracewell & Giuliani LLP
Brady Klein Weissman LLP
Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP
Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft LLP
Capell Barnett Matalon & Schoenfeld LLP
Carol L. Buell Law & Mediation, PLLC
Chaves Perlowitz Luftig LLP
Chemtob Moss Forman & Beyda, LLP
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
Cooley LLP
Cooper & Dunham LLP
Covington & Burling LLP
Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP
Debevoise & Plimpton LLP
Dechert LLP
Epstein Becker & Green, P.C.
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP
Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP
Friedman Kaplan Seiler & Adelman LLP
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP
Greenberg Traurig, LLP
Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP
The Jacob Fuchsberg Law Firm

Jenner & Block LLP
JPMorgan Chase & Co.
Kahn & Goldberg, LLP
Kaplan Hecker & Fink LLP
Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP
Kelley Drye & Warren LLP
Kobre & Kim LLP
Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP
The Kurland Group
Latham & Watkins LLP
LeClairRyan, P.C.
Loeb & Loeb LLP
Lowenstein Sandler LLP
McCarter & English LLP
MetLife
Moses & Singer LLP
New York Law School (NYLS)
O'Melveny & Myers LLP
Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler LLP
Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP
Proskauer Rose LLP
Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan, LLP
Richard Freiman & Associates, PLLC
Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP
Selendy & Gay PLLC
Severance, Burko, Spalter & Masone, P.C.
Stroock & Stroock & Lavan LLP
Sullivan & Cromwell LLP
Susman Godfrey LLP
Titlevest
Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP
WilmerHale

Building Expertise

CLEs, Panels, and
Discussions

LeGaL is an accredited CLE provider. We host several CLEs and educational programs throughout the year for the legal community and our members. LeGaL partners with other organizations to deliver a wide range of CLE programs, panels, and discussions on topics relevant to the LGBTQ community.



CLE Programs

- The Future of the Judiciary: Advancing Progressive Goals Through NYS Courts**
Host: Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP / Sponsor: American Constitution Society / Partner: Metropolitan Black Bar Association
- Criminal Legal Issues and the LGBTQ+ Community**
Host/Sponsor: New York Law School / Partner: Hispanic National Bar Association
- LGBTQ Law 2018 Year in Review**
Host/Sponsor: Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP
- Planning for Unmarried Couples: LGBTQ & Others**
Host: SAGE Edie Windsor Center / Sponsor: NYSBA
- Title VII Lunchtime CLE**
Host: Stroock & Stroock & Lavan LLP / Sponsor: Morgan Stanley

Panels & Discussions

- LGBTQ&A: Fireside Chat with Judge Ariel Chesler and Sarah Filcher**
Host: Brooklyn Law School / Sponsors: Brooklyn Law School OUTLaws; Network of Bar Leaders
- Lunchtime Discussion with Judge Pamela Chen**
Host/Sponsor: Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP
- "Owning Your Power...Taking Charge of Your Legal Career" with Career Coach Jim Arnoff**
Host: Centre for Social Innovation
- LGBTQ Law Student Career Fair & Panel**
Host: New York Law School / Sponsors: Epstein Becker & Green, P.C.; K&L Gates LLP; Shearman & Sterling LLP; Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP; WilmerHale

Networking

Receptions & Mixers

We are social! Who said lawyers can't be fun? Thanks to our Networking and Social Events Committee (chaired by Nicholas Corsano), in 2019, LeGal presented numerous opportunities for members to meaningfully engage with each other and the broader legal and LGBTQ communities, including:

Receptions

- LeGal's Mentoring Program Kickoff**
Host/Partner: New York City Bar / Sponsors: BakerHostetler; Seyfarth Shaw; Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP; Lateral Link
- Induction of LeGal's 2019 Officers**
Host/Sponsor: Kirkland & Ellis
- LGBTQ+ Law Student Leadership Summit**
Host: Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP
- 8th Annual Judicial Reception**
Host/Sponsor: Weitz & Luxenberg PC
- LeGal's 2019 Pride Reception**
Host: Proskauer Rose LLP / Sponsors: Proskauer's LGBT Affinity Group; New York City Opera
- Outten & Golden Annual Public Interest Awards**
Host/Sponsor: Outten & Golden LLP
- LeGal's Volunteer Thanksgiving & Awards**
Host/Sponsor: Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP

Social Mixers

- Ladies Night Karaoke**
Host: Sing Sing Ave. A
- Happy Hour with LeGal's FMLS**
Host: Atlas Social Club
- Annual Pride Prep with LeGal's Leadership Council**
Host: LGBT Leo Bar at Asia Society
- Joint Latinx and LGBTQ+ Pride Event**
Host: Elmo / Sponsor: BIA / Partners: Hispanic National Bar Association; DBA; PRBA
- Tie the Knot Pride Pop-up Shop**
Host: The Tie Bar / Sponsor: "Tie the Knot"
- The Skivvies Pride Performance & Fundraiser**
Host: Brooklyn Brewery
- The Summer Brief: Fire Island Pool Party**
Sponsors: Pernod Ricard/Absolut Vodka; YUASA
- Beat the Heat Mixer**
Host: Boxers HK / Sponsor: Morgan Stanley
- Lavender Law Afterparty**
Host: Kline Institute of Trial Advocacy / Sponsors/Partners: Lambda Legal; GALLOP; National Trans Bar Association; TABU Philadelphia; White and Williams LLP
- Stitch n' B*tch**
Host: Prelude Capital
- LeGal/Open Finance Joint Mixer**
Host: Le Reve / Sponsor: Dechert LLP
- Youth Qlinic Holiday Bag Stuffing**
Host/Sponsor: Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP
- LeGal Wintry Mixer Holiday Party**
Host: Therapy



Law Student Opportunities

Programs & Events

LeGaL is committed to the advancement and development of aspiring LGBTQ legal professionals. We offer several programs, events, and networking opportunities to further the growth of LGBTQ law students.

Hank Henry Judicial Fellowship

LeGaL’s 24-year-old Judicial Fellowship program is unique because it provides fellows the chance to work with and rotate for the 10-week summer among several different judges from varying courts and tribunals. The fellows get a first-hand look at the work of openly gay and lesbian judges in federal district court, state trial and appellate courts (including the highest court in the state), and administrative tribunals, providing an insider’s understanding of the judicial system.

LeGaL's 2019 Hank Henry Fellow was Alexandra Kane of Notre Dame Law School ('21).



LGBTQ Law Student Career Fair

LeGaL’s LGBTQ Career Fair is a one-of-a-kind annual event targeted specifically to local LGBTQ law students, and provides a great opportunity to meet informally with lawyers and recruiters from many of the area’s major legal employers and learn about employment opportunities in preparation for the fall recruiting season.

"Mentorpalooza" Mentoring Program

LeGaL and New York City Bar LGBT Rights Committee seek to foster the professional development of LGBTQ law students and assist them in navigating the unique issues they might encounter during Law School and the beginning of their legal careers. The Mentoring Program aims to reinforce a sense of community among members of the LGBTQ legal community while enhancing the skills and career prospects of participants. Area law students who are members of LeGaL are eligible to register as mentees. The LeGaL Mentoring Program will provide a mentor for support and to assist in achieving academic, professional, and personal goals.

- #### 2019 Career Fair Employers
- Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP
 - Bronx County District Attorney's Office
 - Bronx Defenders
 - Bryan Cave LLP
 - Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft LLP
 - Cahill Gordon & Reindel LLP
 - Clifford Chance US LLP
 - Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP
 - Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP
 - Debevoise & Plimpton LLP
 - Epstein Becker & Green, P.C.
 - Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP
 - Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP
 - Hogan Lovells US LLP
 - Jones Day
 - K&L Gates LLP
 - Kelley Drye & Warren LLP
 - Kings County District Attorney's Office
 - Kirkland & Ellis LLP
 - Latham & Watkins LLP
 - Law Offices of Thomas Sciacca, PLLC
 - Legal Services NYC
 - National LGBT Bar Association
 - New York City Law Department
 - New York County District Attorney's Office
 - New York State Attorney General's Office
 - Nixon Peabody LLP
 - O'Melveny & Myers LLP
 - Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP
 - Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP
 - Proskauer Rose LLP
 - Richmond County District Attorney's Office
 - Ropes & Gray LLP
 - Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP
 - Shearman & Sterling LLP
 - Sidley Austin LLP
 - Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP
 - Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP
 - Sullivan & Cromwell LLP
 - Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP
 - White & Case LLP
 - Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP



Member Benefits

Join us at lgbtbarny.org!

For 42 years, LeGaL has worked to to advance equality and justice in and through the legal profession. By joining LeGaL, you become part of our mission and our vision to serve the LGBTQ community. Check out our benefits:



Law Notes

Check out our monthly publication on LGBTQ legal and political news.



CLE Library

View and download CLE Materials from current and past programs.



Referrals

Become a member of our Lawyer Referral Network or Pro Bono Panel.



Resources

Access our affiliate sites for legal resources and other opportunities.



Mentoring

Mentor a law student through our annual Mentoring Program.



Volunteering

Become a volunteer attorney at one of our free legal clinics.



Discounts

Receive discounts from our affiliate partners.



Leadership

Boost your firm’s profile as an LGBTQ leader by joining our Leadership Council.

2019 Financial Statement

Support and Revenue		
1.	Association Dues	\$42,185
2.	Foundation Support	\$614,580
3.	Grants	\$37,800
4.	Donated Professional Services	\$175,000
Total Income		\$869,565

Expenses		
1.	Legal Programs and Services	\$560,211
2.	Management and General	\$68,133
3.	Fundraising	\$8,500
4.	Donated Professional Services	\$175,000
Total Expenses		\$811,844

Net Assets, beginning of year	\$158,717
Net Assets, end of year	\$216,438



Staff & Board

Staff

Eric Lesh, *Executive Director*
Brett Figlewski, *Legal Director*
Leah Harper, *Director of Operations & Design*

Board of Directors

Kristen Prata Browde,
President

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