



Pro Bono *Pro Community*

Volunteer Lawyers Network uses the power of volunteers to protect and enforce the legal rights of low-income Minnesotans.



annual report
FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022



above: Keynote speaker Michelle Horovitz at the 2022 Riverfront Celebration.
left: Co-Chairs of the Benefactors Board, Erin Ogelsbay (left) and Michael Reif (right) pause for a photo op during the event.



Pro Bono *Pro Community*

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staff 2021-2022

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Case Coordinator: Criminal Expungement

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Housing Project Attorney

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Housing Clinic Coordinator

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Case Coordinator: Civil

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Intake Specialist/Case Coordinator: SIJS

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Volunteer Liaison / Data Manager / Case Coordinator: Employment/Letters to Creditors

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Intake Specialist

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Case Coordinator: Immigration

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Eliza Messinger
Resource Attorney/Program Manager: Criminal Expungement

Greg Rachwal
Case Coordinator: Family, Bankruptcy

Kara Rieke
Resource Attorney/Program Manager: Family

Kait Ripley
Case Coordinator: Housing

The Roadmap for the Journey Ahead

Looking back on 2022, I am incredibly proud of the work and accomplishments of VLN's volunteers and staff. Despite the ongoing global pandemic, helping community members in need remained the watchword for our volunteers, board, and staff. Through all the ups and downs of the past year, VLN remained a critical resource for our clients and communities navigating the tail-end of an unprecedented global health emergency.

One of the accomplishments I take the most pride in is the adoption of our 2022-2025 strategic plan. This plan is the result of over six months of hard work by our board and staff. From the beginning of the planning process, we decided it was critical to obtain feedback from our stakeholders. To that end, we conducted interviews with justice and community partners; surveyed staff members, board members, and volunteers; held a joint board and staff retreat; and had what seemed like countless discussions. In the end, we developed a plan that focuses on the pillars of VLN, our clients, our volunteers and community partners, and our staff.

The plan centers around three strategic commitments:

- 1) Create deeper community connections and build effective client-centered services;
- 2) Engage, train and support a culturally competent pool of energized volunteers; and
- 3) Invest in staff and infrastructure to foster a supportive and productive work environment.

We believe the strategic plan will allow VLN to adapt to a changing legal and pro bono landscape and ensure the organization is a resource for our clients and communities for years to come.

Developing the plan was only the beginning. Over the next three years, we will actively engage our volunteers, board, justice partners, and community partners as we work to implement our vision.

Now that we have a roadmap, it is time to begin our journey. I look forward to going on that journey with you.

With gratitude,

Thomas Walsh
VLN Executive Director

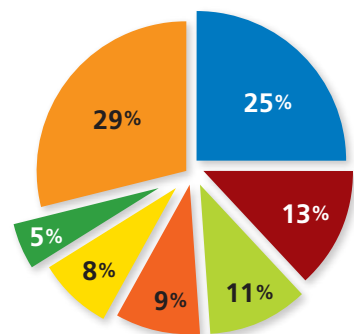
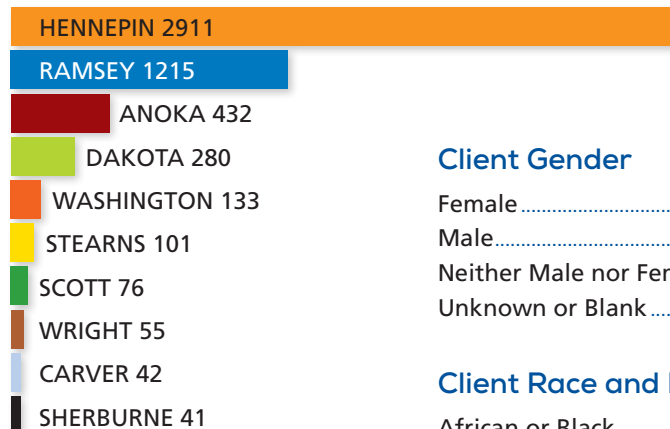


We invite all our VLN community to review the VLN 2022-2025 strategic plan. The document is available on our website at:

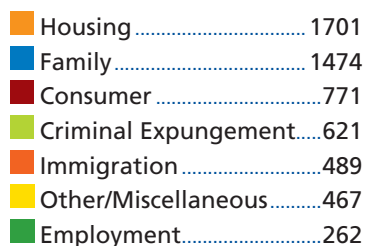
VLNMN.org/about-vln/governance

524 attorneys took a new case during FY21-22: *5,941 services* were provided, including *915* provided at clinics and events, and *4,439* provided via telephone legal advice.

Top 10 MN Counties Served



Services Provided by Category of Law



Client Gender

Female	3671
Male	2190
Neither Male nor Female	50
Unknown or Blank	30

Client Race and Ethnicity

African or Black	2447
Asian or Pacific Islander	179
Hispanic or Latino	726
Middle Eastern	42
Multiracial	184
Native American	145
White	2015
Other	92
Unknown, Not Specified, or Blank	110

Types of Services Provided

Clinic	710
Counsel and Advice	313
Brief Service	331
Extended/Full Representation	746
Phone Services	4184
Counsel and Advice	4037
Brief Service	132
Screening	259
Workshops/Other Paneled Svcs	42
TOTAL	5941



A volunteer lawyer assists a pro bono client during a VLN clinic.

In-Person Clinic Reopenings

VLN's in-person legal clinics are crucial in meeting our goal to provide client-centered services. Our in-person clinics allow volunteers and staff to meet clients where they are, facilitate more robust relationships between volunteers and their clients, and provide opportunities for clients to receive higher levels of service – especially with non-English-speaking clients.

We have begun reopening many of our in-person clinics that were closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In FY21-22, we reopened our Family Law Clinic at the Hennepin County Family Justice Center, the Second Chance Saturday criminal expungement clinic, and the Park Avenue Legal Clinic which celebrated 25 years of operation in 2022.

In addition to reopening existing programs, VLN expanded our clinic offerings to meet community needs. In spring 2022, we launched a new clinic at Mercado Central in South Minneapolis in partnership with Unidos Minnesota to serve the Spanish-speaking immigrant community.

VLN Volunteers go the Extra Mile

Despite the ongoing pandemic, more than 500 legal professional volunteers provided 5,941 services to our clients last year. VLN honored two of these extraordinary volunteers during our annual Riverfront Celebration on September 8, 2022.

2022 VLN Volunteer of the Year



Patricia Bloodgood
retired, Zimmerman Reed

Patricia Bloodgood grew up on Long Island. After attending a Catholic boarding school in Crookston, Minnesota, she went to college at the University of Minnesota. She is a 1984 graduate of the University of Wisconsin Law School. Patricia practiced law with Lockridge Grindal Nauen (and its predecessor iterations) for 20 years. In 2008 she joined Zimmerman Reed.

In 2017, Patricia started volunteering with VLN to lay the groundwork for what she hoped would be a purpose-driven retirement. Her plan worked. She is now essentially retired from ZR and happily keeping busy with volunteer legal work with VLN, among other pursuits.

We are so grateful to have Patricia's presence in the VLN community and look forward to the amazing work she will do in the coming years.



Patricia Bloodgood with VLN Executive Director Tom Walsh at the Riverside Celebration. She and Susan Gallagher were both recognized for their volunteer contributions during the event held in September.

2022 John D. Levine Pro Bono Distinguished Service Award



Susan Gallagher
Gallagher Law Office, LLC

Susan Gallagher is a sole practitioner and family law attorney and owner of Gallagher Law Office, LLC. Susan is recognized for her knowledge and experience in complex family law issues, including custody, finances, spousal maintenance, and the protection of nonmarital assets. She works with her clients to settle their case, but if settlement is not possible, she is a skilled trial lawyer. A registered nurse turned

lawyer, Susan worked in Intensive Care Unit management, the Emergency Department, and as a helicopter rescue nurse.

Susan earned her Juris Doctor in 1993 from William Mitchell College of Law. As a Rule 114 Qualified Neutral, Susan works as a mediator, arbitrator, early neutral evaluator, parenting consultant, custody evaluator, and special master. Susan is recognized as a Super Lawyer® and American Bar Association Fellow. Susan obtained certification as a Child and Family Forensic Evaluator through William James College in 2020.

Susan serves on the Minnesota Women Lawyer's Advisory Board and is an emeritus member of the Minnesota Association for Justice Board of Governors and the Executive Board of Minnesota Association of Family and Conciliation Courts. Susan is a Master of the Bench and President-Elect in the Warren E. Burger American Inn of Court.

Susan has been a volunteer attorney for Volunteer Lawyers Network since 2003 and past Chair of the VLN Family Law Committee. We are very grateful for Susan's dedication and skillful contributions to our community.

"My life is full of unfortunate circumstances, and the people at VLN know how hard it is to go through the legal system without proper representation. I honestly thank God for you folks. God bless every person who works for VLN."

—2022 Housing Court Client



While facing serious health issues, creditors came after Barbara. **"I couldn't keep up with all the bills with my health.** ... I came across VLN and at first thought it was too good to be true that someone would **help me for free."**

Barbara's volunteer attorney not only helped her file for bankruptcy but went above and beyond to get her student loans forgiven as well.

"[VLN staff and my attorney] very understanding. They were so patient, so kind, and so helpful."



When Rosa* found little success in securing legal help, VLN was there to assist her.

"There are a lot of people like me who don't have the financial resources to pay for an attorney."

"VLN allowed me to move forward, helping me in a case that I had for a long time. [My attorney] especially **helped me a lot."**

You Gave to the Max!

Thanks to all who donated during our Give to the Max campaign, VLN raised a record \$24,836, including a generous \$12,000 match from VLN's Board of Directors. Your gift allows us to provide free legal aid for clients like Mary* (name changed). When Mary began searching for stable work, her record was an obstruction. "I started the process with VLN to get my record expunged, so I didn't have to explain the worst night of my life to a stranger," she explains. "[My volunteer lawyer] really took the time to understand what qualified for expungement... [She was] really respectful and careful in talking about it." With this assistance, Mary was able to expunge her records and secure employment. "I've been able to go into a job application with confidence, and not have to deal with the trauma of explaining my past."



When seeking to obtain custody of her child, Volunteer Lawyers Network was there to help Cassie*.

"[VLN's volunteers] are excellent lawyers. They helped me in my case. They helped me out a lot to gain my son's custody."

Cassie's lawyer helped her understand the court process, how to speak to the judge, and how to win her case.

"Yes, I'm very grateful. I'm so grateful for the help."



Pro Bono *Pro Community*

Many thanks to our generous donors!

Donations received July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

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In Memory of
Alice Nouen
U.S. Federal District Court

You changed **11,537 lives** during FY21-22, including **4,698 children**,
through the delivery of pro bono legal services in Minnesota. *

*approximate numbers

In Honor of Jonathan Bye,
Catherine LaGrange, Robert
Tunheim, & Leita Walker in
recognition of their pro-bono work
Ballard Spahr LLP

In Honor of Spencer Davis-
VanNess, Brandon Vaughn,
Brandom Pakkebier, Kaitlin Elk,
Michael Reif, Marcus Guith,
Jamie Wing, & Lindsey Hanson in
recognition of their pro-bono work
Robins Kaplan LLP

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3M

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Target Corporation

Thomson Reuters

U.S. Federal District Court

Wild Mountain

Winthrop & Weinstine, P.A.

Services Provided at Clinics, Events, Workshops

COPAL	1
Covid-19 Pop Up Clinic.....	2
Criminal Expungement - 2nd Chance Saturday	20
Dignity Center Clinic	3
Housing — Anoka County.....	145
Housing — Hennepin County.....	254
Housing — Ramsey County.....	386
Jeremiah House Clinic.....	13
Just Deeds.....	8
Legal Access Point Clinic.....	15
Park Avenue Clinic.....	21
Pro Se Asylum Clinic	36
Rural Access Clinic	9
SIJS (Special Immigrant Juvenile Status) Project.....	27
Miscellaneous Clinics.....	2
TOTAL.....	942

*Due to Covid-19, VLN clinic services
decreased drastically after mid-March 2020.*



Riverfront 2022 attendees listen to keynote
speaker Michelle Horovitz

We apologize if we missed you or made an error; please let us know so we can thank you properly.

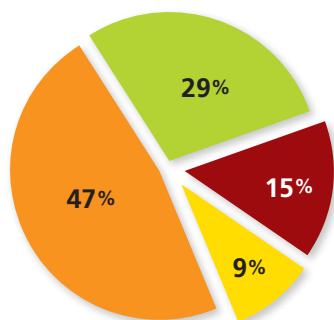


Pro Bono Pro Community

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FINANCIAL REPORT *July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022*

Income

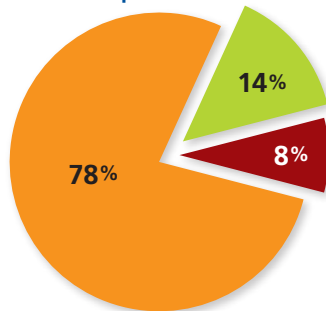


Contributions	767,902
Service Grants.....	464,226
Other Income	240,949
Special Events.....	148,635
Interest Income	105
Seminar Fees & Manuals.....	56
TOTAL INCOME.....	\$1,621,873

Assets

Cash & Cash Equivalents.....	1,009,210
Contributions Receivable.....	153,664
Service Grants Receivable	128,125
Prepaid Expenses.....	22,979
Net Property & Equipment	56,506
Other Assets	4,568
TOTAL ASSETS.....	\$1,158,664

Expenses



Program Services	1,229,788
Management & General.....	218,101
Fundraising.....	118,109
TOTAL EXPENSES.....	\$1,565,998

Liabilities

Accrued Payroll & Related Costs	37,318
Accrued Compensated Absences	36,227
Contract Liabilities	19,000
TOTAL LIABILITIES.....	\$92,545

Net Assets

Without Restriction Undesignated	435,204
Board Designated for Cash Reserve Fund	473,025
With Restrictions	157,890
NET ASSETS.....	\$1,066,119
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS ...	\$1,158,664

Thank you!

Thank you for helping us fight for fairness and justice for struggling families and individuals in Minnesota who deserve a chance to thrive. Make a secure tax-deductible donation at VLNMN.org/donate

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