

VOLUNTEER LAWYERS FOR THE ARTS VLANY.ORG



2021 ANNUAL REPORT

VOLUNTEER LAWYERS FOR THE ARTS

LETTER FROM BOARD CHAIR



2021 was quite a year for VLA. Faced with changing circumstances and ongoing challenges, we adapted, adjusted, and pivoted. Our commitment to New York's artists and arts organizations, however, remains deep and unchanged. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all those who continue to make it possible for us to pursue our mission.

Our volunteer attorneys provided more than \$20 million in pro bono legal services in VLA's 2021 fiscal year – over Zoom – to artists and arts organizations at a time when they needed help more than ever. These artists came to VLA for assistance with a broad variety of legal problems, involving contracts, protection of intellectual property and the need to navigate the legal landscape arising from any number of COVID 19 -related issues. When we hear from someone like Joy Parisi, a small arts business owner severely impacted by the pandemic, that “Without VLA, I would have had nowhere to turn,” we know that the work of our staff and network of volunteer attorneys is making a difference in the life of the New York arts community. Everyone associated with VLA is firmly committed to continuing this important work.

With thanks for your support of VLA,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jay', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Jay Cohen
VLA Chair

LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Since 1969, VLA has been dedicated to protecting the rights of artists and helping to ensure the continued vibrancy of New York's cultural landscape. In today's challenging environment, VLA's work matters more than ever. I am pleased to share this report on our activities from July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021, our 2021 fiscal year. During this time, as the arts community was deeply impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, VLA was there to help artists and arts administrators navigate legal issues and continue their creative pursuits despite ongoing challenges.

Together with our volunteer attorneys, Board and staff, VLA maintained, and even grew, our service to the arts community in new virtual formats. This success was due in large part to the steadfast support of our donors and funders and the tireless efforts of VLA's staff. In addition to our regular programming serving thousands of artists, we continued to provide pandemic-related expedited legal services, resources, and free educational webinars.

As the arts and cultural sector emerges from this very challenging period, we look forward to continue working with all of you — artists, arts organizations, volunteers, and supporters — to protect and advance creativity in New York and beyond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Katie Wagner
VLA Executive Director

OUR TEAM



KATIE WAGNER, ESQ.
Executive Director



AMY A. LEHMAN, ESQ.
Director of Legal Services



LAURA LEVIN-DANDO, ESQ.
Staff Attorney



EMMA E. FREAN, ESQ.
Legal Services Coordinator



ARIEL E. PHILLIPS
Development Director



ANASTASIA KAMBANIS
Design and Marketing Manager

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BENEFACTORS

Advance
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
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VLA FOUNDATION AND GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS

BNY Mellon Foundation
Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS
Jean & Louis Dreyfus Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
New York City Department of Cultural Affairs
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
The Cowles Charitable Trust
The Lucille Lortel Foundation
The Reed Foundation
The Shubert Foundation
The Venable Foundation
United States Patent and Trademark Office

LAW FIRM & CORPORATE CONTRIBUTORS

Ballard Spahr LLP
Comcast NBCUniversal
Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP
Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler LLP
Withers Bergman LLP

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AFFORDABLE LEGAL SERVICES

LEGAL SERVICES

VLA serves over 10,000 artists each year. VLA continued to operate all legal services, including consultations and clinics, virtually during 2021, to ensure artists receive assistance at a critical moment.

AT A GLANCE



\$20M
Value of pro bono
legal services



561

Number of artists and arts organizations who
received pro bono legal services

3209

Art Law Line intakes



146

received in-house
consultations

188

participated in
legal clinics

227

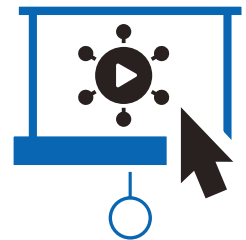
placed with an
outside attorney



LEGAL SERVICES

VLA provided critical legal support to artists struggling with the impacts of the pandemic.

COVID SPECIAL LEGAL SERVICES



Expedited Legal Intake Process • COVID Database of Resources • Free COVID-Related Webinars

IMPACT

JOY PARISI

Founder of Paragraph, *Workspace for Writers*



“Without VLA, I would have had nowhere to turn.”

When COVID-19 hit, Joy Parisi was forced to temporarily shutter Paragraph, her coworking space for writers. She lost nearly all of her income and had no way to pay her rent.

The attorneys at VLA helped Joy negotiate with her landlords and keep her small arts organization in business.

ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

VLA's Legal Education Programs are a vital resource for the arts community and the lawyers who serve it. VLA offers foundational courses on legal fundamentals that apply across the arts and cultural sector as well as specialized classes addressing legal issues within individual creative disciplines.

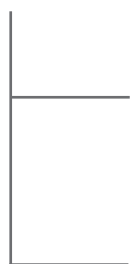
In 2021, VLA continued to hold all educational programs virtually, both live and on-demand to ensure artists continued to receive support during the pandemic.

WEBINARS/ONLINE PROGRAMMING AT A GLANCE



1,412

Number of artists and attorneys participating



63

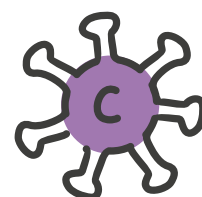
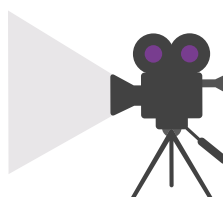
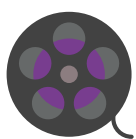
zoom webinars held

20

on-demand programs

TOPICS

- Contracts
- Copyright
- Dance and Choreography
- Digital Content/COVID
- Digital Media
- Employment Law
- Fair Use
- Film and Screenwriting
- Forming a Non-Profit
- Functional Design IP
- Immigration/COVID
- Legacy and Estate Planning
- Moral Rights for Visual Artists
- Music
- Paycheck Protection Program
- Photography
- Tenant Laws/COVID
- The CARES Act
- Theater and COVID Shutdowns



PARTNERSHIPS AND OUTREACH

As part of its effort to better serve the arts community, VLA partnered with a number of organizations to hold virtual events and programs:

COVID Music Initiative: Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts in New York, in collaboration with California Lawyers for the Arts and Volunteer Lawyers & Professionals for the Arts (VLPA) of the Arts & Business Council of Greater Nashville to provide free and expedited legal services to the music community affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mixed-Income Earner Relief: VLA worked with other VLA and entertainment organizations to secure the passage of this legislation and to educate our artists on it.

School of Visual Arts Virtual Fair and Dance NYC Virtual Symposium

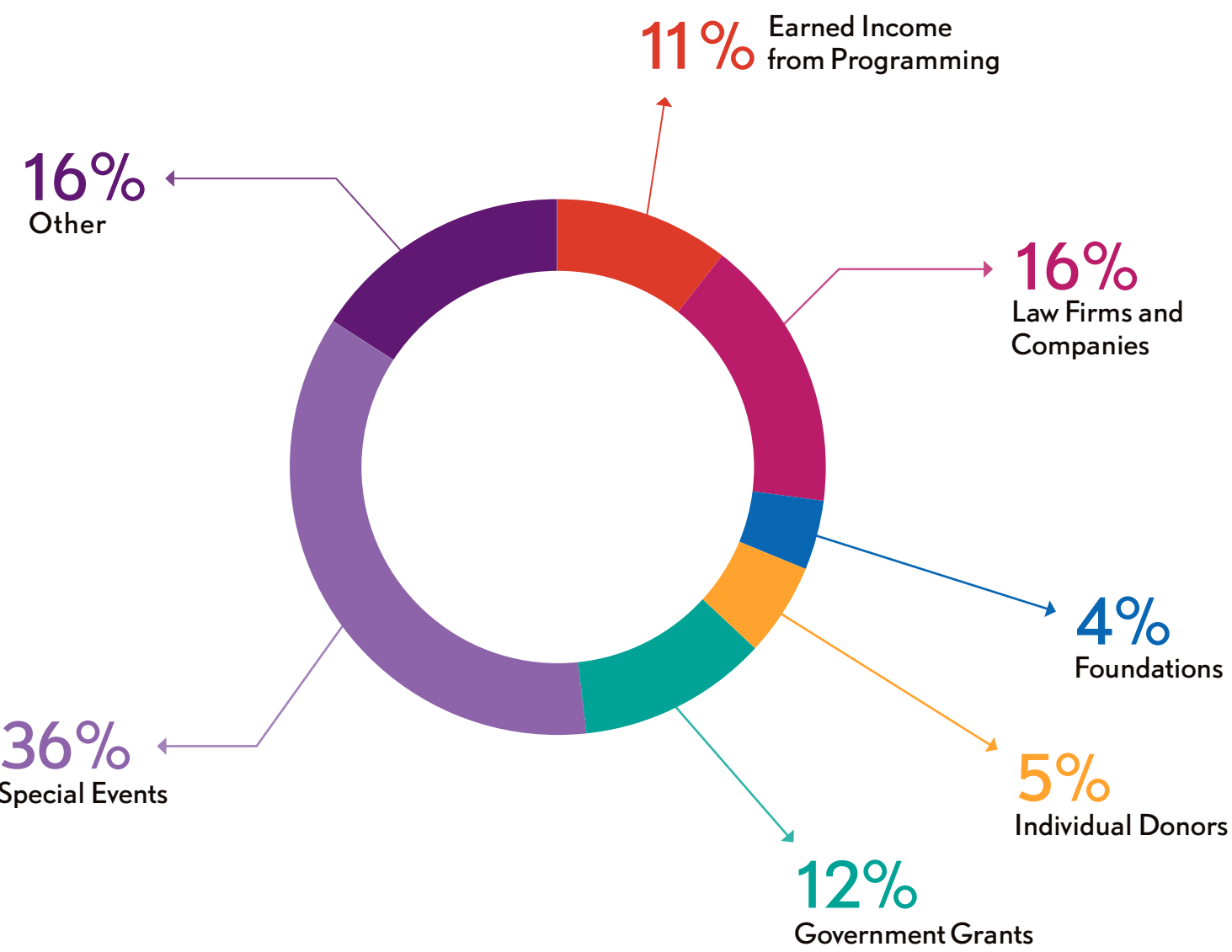
United States Patent & Trademark Office: VLA partners with the USPTO to facilitate pro bono representation for artists seeking patents.



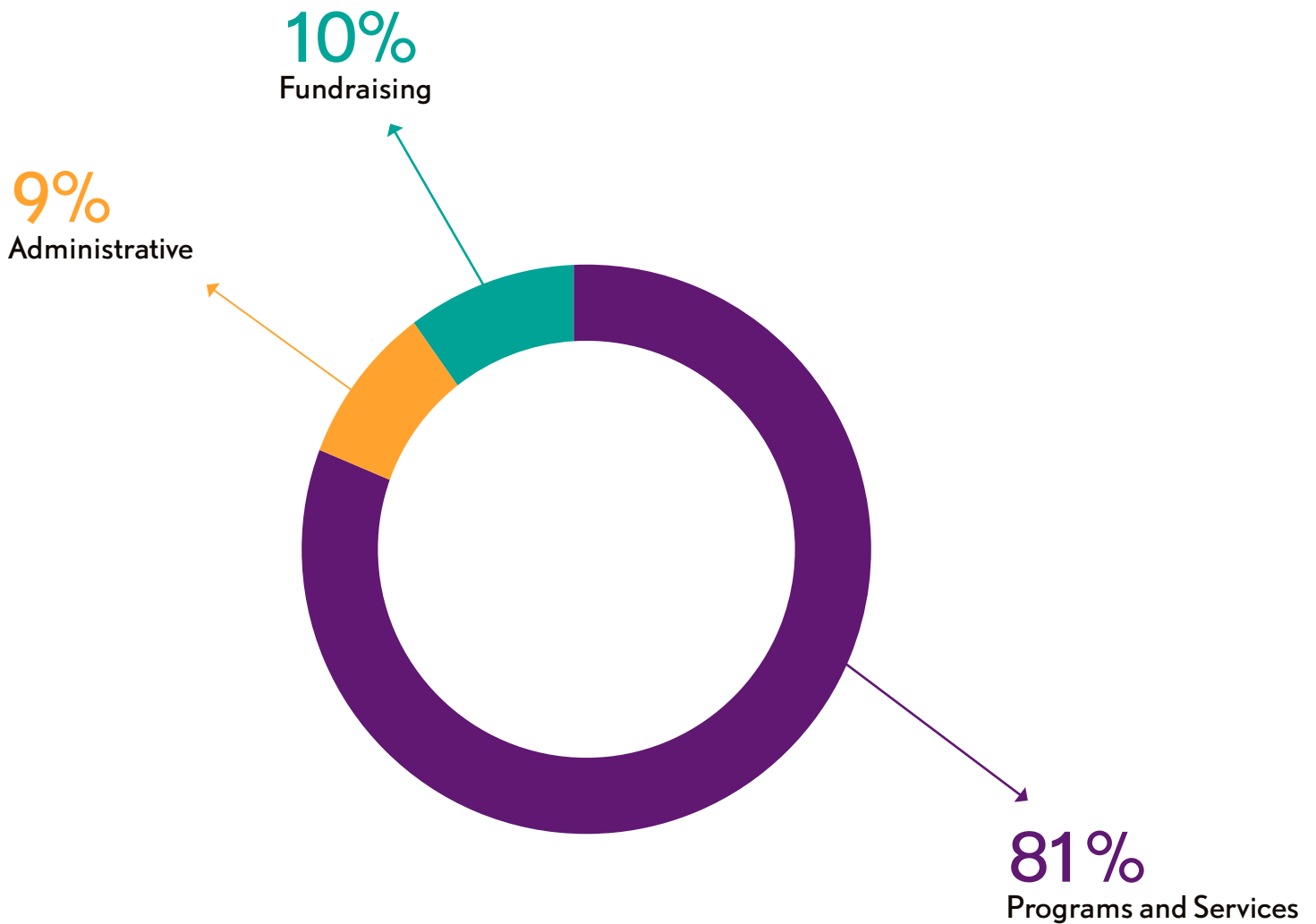
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FINANCIALS

INCOME FY21



EXPENSES FY21



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FUNDRAISING

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

2020 COCKTAILS FOR A CAUSE

GI^{VE}INGTUESDAY

In November 2020, VLA held its annual Cocktails for a Cause for #GivingTuesday in a virtual format. Approximately 40 attendees joined the event, which featured a cocktail making class and live music performance.



Rebecca Pinnell &
Virtual Cocktail Class



Performance by Musician
Lyle Divinsky

2021 VIRTUAL GALA

On April 20, 2021 VLA held its first ever virtual Champions of the Arts awards and gala. The event was a resounding success that far exceeded the budgeted goal.



HONOREES

JORDAN FASBENDER

Executive Vice President, General Counsel
and Secretary
iHeartMedia

MICHAEL D. FRICKLAS

Chief Legal Officer and Corporate Secretary
Advance

FEATURED

Dance Performance by Yin Yue • Musical Performance by Baethoven • Virtual Paddle Raise

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

2021 VIRTUAL GALA SPONSORS

GOLD



SILVER

Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP
Jenner & Block LLP
Jones Lang LaSalle Brokerage, Inc.
Kirkland & Ellis LLP
Ropes & Gray LLP
Sullivan & Cromwell LLP

BRONZE

Bloomberg Law
Debevoise & Plimpton LLP
Dentons US LLP
Goldman Sachs
Greenberg Traurig, LLP
Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP
Jackson Lewis P.C.
Kendall Brill & Kelly LLP
King & Spalding LLP
Leichtman Law PLLC

Loeb & Loeb LLP
Lowenstein Sandler LLP
Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp LLP
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CONTRIBUTORS

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Erika Stallings
Ernst & Young
Gary R. Greenstein
Gibson Dunn

Hogan Lovells
Jane Cowles, Attorney
Joseph Tedeschi
Levine Lee LLP
Littler Mendelson P.C.
Mintz & Gold LLP
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Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati Foundation
Ziffren Brittenham LLP

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HOW TO SUPPORT THE MISSION

GET INVOLVED

VOLUNTEER

VLA's success relies on the generous commitment made by its volunteer attorneys. Volunteer attorneys provide valuable legal assistance to artists who otherwise would be unable to afford it. This is an exciting opportunity to work with artists and make a meaningful contribution to their work and livelihoods.

Receive CLE Credits for Pro Bono Work

VLA is approved to provide CLE credit to attorneys who provide pro bono legal services through our organization.

Visit **VLANY.ORG/TRAINING** to learn more and get started through our new attorney orientation.

BECOME A MEMBER

Becoming a member is a meaningful way to support VLA's efforts on behalf of the arts community. VLA offers attorney and institutional memberships.

Individual Attorney Membership Benefits:

- Opportunities to volunteer for in-house consultations with artists (for attorneys with more than three years of experience, or in conjunction with a more senior attorney)
- Discounted VLA Educational and CLE programs
- Access to career counseling services
- Opportunities to be a speaker for in-person classes in your area of expertise
- Exclusive "Members Only" preview of VLA Pro Bono Caselist

Institutional Membership Benefits:

- Private Volunteer Attorney Orientation at a Member's firm or company
- Option, based on availability and member level, to arrange for Member-hosted VLA Clinic(s)
- Opportunities for Member's attorneys to volunteer for in-house consultations with artists
- Attorney member rate on VLA Educational and CLE programs for Member's attorneys
- CLE class(es) conducted at Member's firm upon request
- Exclusive "Members Only" preview of VLA Pro Bono Caselist
- Public Acknowledgement as VLA member based on investment level

Visit **VLANY.ORG/JOIN** to learn more about becoming a member. VLA also offers memberships for artists. Visit the address above to learn more.

VLANY.ORG/JOIN

DONATE

Your support helps New York's low-income artists access free legal aid. By making a donation, you are helping artists such as Viola and Taylor:



VIOLA A. YEŞILTAÇ

Visual Artist

"Without VLA I would not have been able to retrieve my artworks. The attorney made sure my rights are not only protected but also more importantly, made me aware of my rights as an artist in New York."



TAYLOR SISK

Writer, Editor, Filmmaker

"Without VLA, I don't know that I would have ever recovered my footage...It made all the difference."

Make your contribution to VLA today to give thousands of artists access to critical legal assistance and help the New York arts community in its continued recovery.

Your support helps provide thousands of hours of free legal representation and education programming to New York's low-income artists. Visit our website to donate today, or send a check to Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts, 729 7th Avenue, Suite 1401, New York, NY 10019.



Photo: Phillip Reed

"It was life changing."

– Elisabeth Condon, VLA Client and Visual Artist



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