The VRLC’s mission is to provide legal representation to victims of rape and sexual assault to help rebuild their lives; and to promote a national movement committed to seeking justice for every rape and sexual assault victim.
Dear Friends,

We are delighted to provide you with an overview of the critical work of our staff and volunteers in Fiscal Year 2022. The year saw many victories for sexual assault survivors as we continued to address their immediate legal needs and uplift their voices through our services. Our national training team grew, and our impact was amplified through creative and practical offerings for lawyers, advocates, and other professionals to unite and strengthen the national response to sexual violence.

Donors and volunteers continued to invest in VRLC because we are the leader in the legal response to sexual violence. Our approach works. The “secret sauce” is the synergy of providing comprehensive legal representation to individual survivors while simultaneously training and mentoring other professionals to improve the response to sexual violence nationwide. VRLC makes an impact both locally and nationally. This annual report showcases our unwavering and compassionate efforts to help survivors when and where they need us the most.

As we continued to navigate cuts to our core funding, we were confident that our community would lift us up. The generous support of individuals, businesses and foundations in FY 2022 enabled us to answer the calls of survivors who need free lawyers, and to partner with them in the journey to reclaim their futures. Thank you for being a member of our cherished community, investing in VRLC, and believing survivors.

Join us. Please follow VRLC on social media (@VictimRightsLaw), sign up for our newsletter, volunteer, host an event, and donate. Let’s keep VRLC strong for those who need us.

In gratitude,

Stacy Malone, Esq.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Legal Help for Rape and Sexual Assault Survivors

Sexual assault survivors often reach out to VRLC needing help with multiple complex legal issues. VRLC attorneys provide a wide range of expertise across several areas of law and do so with a trauma-informed approach. This enables survivors to get help on a variety of legal needs all in one place - VRLC.

Massachusetts: VRLC attorneys focused on expanding safety protections for survivors. Staff attorneys collaborated with local firms to build our capacity to manage appeals in civil protection order matters and to protect our clients’ private records during the criminal prosecution of their perpetrators. Our efforts saw staff argue before a three-member panel of the Massachusetts Court of Appeals for the first time as well prepare for a Single Justice appeal. Staff attorneys also collaborated with organizations statewide to provide feedback on proposed edits to the 258E Harassment Prevention Order for survivors of non-intimate partner violence. VRLC advocated to expand the available protections so that survivors of non-intimate partner violence can have the same safety precautions available to survivors of intimate partner violence, including firearm forfeiture for 258E defendants.

Oregon: VRLC attorneys continued to provide critical legal assistance to rape and sexual assault survivors in Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties. The primary legal practice areas requested by survivors were education law and immigration law. Our team also created and distributed an Oregon Civil Protection Order chart, which has proven to be a valuable tool for attorneys and victim advocates across the state to determine which type of civil protection order best applies to their clients. This chart will serve as a template to explore jurisdiction-specific protection orders throughout the country in the future.

Both Oregon and Massachusetts VRLC offices moved in 2022! Each office is now located in easily accessible parts of downtown Portland and Boston respectively. As we emerged from pandemic restrictions, it has been exciting to meet clients in our new offices as well as at community partner sites.

**Board of Directors**

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Massachusetts

797 individuals called the Massachusetts intake line
419 rape, sexual assault and stalking survivors were assisted with 904 separate legal matters

43% of clients identified as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color)
22% identified as immigrants
18% had limited English proficiency
6% were experiencing homelessness

Boston

Oregon

400 individuals called the Oregon intake line
416 rape, sexual assault and stalking survivors were assisted with 695 separate legal matters

77% of clients identified as BIPOC
65% identified as immigrants
45% had limited English proficiency
8% were experiencing homelessness

Portland

17% identified as LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual, and others)

21% disclosed a disability
13% identified as LGBTQIA+
VRLC on Sexual Violence in Antarctica

VRLC, as part of a larger team, worked for two years on issues of sexual harassment and assault within the U.S. Antarctic Program (USAP), culminating in an eye-opening review. In August 2022, the National Science Foundation’s Office of Polar Programs published a report on sexual assault and harassment in USAP. Since its release, the high prevalence of sexual assault and harassment in the USAP has come under intense scrutiny by Congress, major news outlets, and science publications. In collaboration with the National Science Foundation’s Office of Polar Programs, VRLC spent several months in Antarctica facilitating a series of listening sessions, analyzing survey responses, and launching a confidential advocacy program for the USAP community to improve the response to sexual violence in this unique setting. Our work on the ice continues to help make the USAP a safer environment.

Strengthening the National Response to Sexual Violence

Our National Training and Consultation program is far-reaching, creating a ripple effect nationwide. Throughout 2022, VRLC’s National Training and Consultation team provided training, mentorship, and consultation to 1,750 attorneys, advocates, higher education professionals, and other service providers in 51 U.S. states and territories. VRLC’s team of experts conducted these trainings and consultations under three Office on Violence Against Women funded projects: the Sexual Assault Justice Education Project; Legal Empowerment Advocacy Project; and the Student Conduct Dating, Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking Capacity Building Project.

VRLC closely collaborated with numerous partners, including the National Housing Law Project; El Programa Hispano Católico; Aequitas; Clery Center; Stalking Prevention, Awareness, and Resources Center; National Organization for Victim Assistance; and the Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. Trainings included advocacy for survivors in the criminal justice system; deliberate sanctioning practices; understanding the toxicology of alcohol-facilitated sexual assault; a small group cohort specifically for supervising attorneys; and much more. Following several of these trainings, the team also conducted Share and Learn calls, which provided the unique opportunity to discuss case- and program-specific questions as well as build relationships with other attorneys and advocates nationwide who have encountered similar challenges.

VRLC attorneys launched and distributed guides and resources that hundreds of attorneys now use each year to better serve survivors of sexual violence, stalking, and dating violence. In 2022, we created a Legal Pleading Bank, and updated our much sought after Legal Practice Manual. We also produced a 40-minute training video to enhance the questioning techniques of higher education professionals in dating and domestic violence cases.

VRLC’s national program engages in policy work that directly impacts not only VRLC clients but all sexual assault survivors. In 2022, we submitted a public comment to the U.S. Department of Education in response to proposed Title IX changes under the Biden administration. The comment states in part, “The proposed regulations address some of the most insidious aspects of the current regulatory regime. We offer this comment to help guide and facilitate changes that would strike the appropriate balance of equity and fairness from a trauma-informed perspective. Our sincerest hope is that student-victims will not be afraid of reporting sexual assault to their school and be able to trust again that Title IX provides an effective remedy.”
Pro Bono Partnerships

Pro bono attorneys and legal paraprofessionals are essential partners to VRLC in both Massachusetts and Oregon.

Serving Survivors Locally…

A survivor going through the criminal justice process had a decade’s worth of her medical, mental health, and social media records requested by defense counsel representing her assailant. She didn’t feel comfortable continuing with the criminal case, as it was a serious invasion of her privacy. A VRLC pro bono attorney represented the survivor and was able to significantly limit the selection of records supplied for the trial. The survivor felt like her privacy was protected and was able to comfortably engage in the remainder of the criminal case against the perpetrator leading to a conviction.

…and Impacting the Movement Nationwide

Law firms Goodwin; Manatt, Phelps & Philips; and Shook, Hardy & Bacon assisted VRLC on several large projects. These firms contributed thousands of pro bono hours researching timely topics such as sexual assault protection orders related to when rape results in pregnancy; reporting of non-accidental injuries; jurisdiction-specific work on privacy for minors, adults, elders, and those who are disabled; the rights of attorneys (or lack thereof) to question and/or depose crime victims; and seeking post-conviction relief for survivors of gender-based violence. This research informed our staff attorney’s representation of numerous survivors.

Thank You to our Pro Bono Attorneys

Beaverton Law Group, LLP
Bennett Hartman Attorneys at Law, LLP
Cappelli Law, LLC
Conn Kavanaugh Rosenthal Peisch & Ford, LLP
Crispin Hannon
Tiffany Davidson, Attorney at Law P.C.
Dechert LLP
Dumas & Vaughn, Attorneys at Law
Engrav Law Office
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McCarter & English
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Rachel Menashe, Attorney at Law
Miller, Nash, LLP
Mintz
Morgan Lewis
Proskauer
Rizzo Bosworth Eraut PC
Seaside Attorneys
Seyfarth
Shook, Hardy & Bacon
Sinclair Law LLC
Charles B. Steele, J.D.
Stoel Rives LLP
Tonken Torp
WilmerHale
On September 22, 2022, the VRLC community gathered for the Shining Star Gala at The Exchange in Boston’s Seaport. It was an evening filled with networking, building community and inspiring remarks from survivors and leaders in the anti-sexual violence movement. It was moving and inspiring to hear the impact lawyers can have on survivors’ lives.

**Champion Award:** Sullivan & Worcester  
**Shining Star:** Katharine Foote, Esq., Mintz  
**Leadership Award:** Michele Bratcher Goodwin  
**Visionary Award:** Gymnast sexual assault survivors, accepted by Rachenda Rockwell  
**Courage Award:** VRLC client

Thank you to our volunteers, donors, and award recipients for an extraordinary celebration!

"When I started my journey 5 years ago to hold Larry Nassar and USA gymnastics accountable for their unspeakable actions, I was Jane Doe. I was anonymous, still suffering silently, but I was not alone…there was no gold medal at the end of my gymnastics journey, but that would not be the end of my story. Today, I take back my life."

Rachenda Rockwell  
2022 Visionary Awardee

"Without my VRLC attorney I would have been lost and confused and scared. My VRLC attorney showed me how an attorney can help people through the most difficult times of their lives… I want to change lives the way my VRLC attorney changed mine."

VRLC Client  
2022 Courage Awardee
The full extent of our work wouldn’t be possible without the generosity of our financial supporters. Thank you to those donors for your commitment to sexual assault survivors and your confidence in VRLC to change lives.
Thank You to Our Donors

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The William H. Donner Foundation, Inc.
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Womenade Boston

$10,000 – $19,999
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Anonymous
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Goodwin
Michele and Howard Kessler
Kristin Knuuttila and Eric MacLeish
Stacy Malone and Al Tringali
Deborah and Steven Marcus
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Robert Insolia
Jackson Lewis
Nolan Lambroza
Kathryn Murtagh
Oregon Immigration Foundation
Krista Green Pratt and Josh Pratt
Christopher, Meg, and Eliza Price
Daniel Rawner

If you’d like to learn more about how to financially support VRLC and our efforts, please visit victimrights.org/donate or contact Ellen Leuchs, our Director of Development (eleuchs@victimrights.org or 617-401-8119)
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Special thanks to the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation, Massachusetts Office for Victims Assistance, Office on Violence Against Women, and Oregon Department of Justice Crime Victim and Survivor Services Division.
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