



# Victim Rights Law Center

## September Newsletter

Dear Friends,

We are still buzzing from an extraordinary 20th Anniversary Shining Star Gala last week. It was inspiring to see friends and colleagues from rape crisis centers, pro bono partners, former clients, and new faces join together to shine a spotlight on the urgent supports our collaborative efforts help make possible for survivors.

We are riding this momentum into October when we host the [National Sexual Violence Law Conference](#) in Chicago. This will be our largest conference yet, and we can't wait to learn and gather alongside attorneys and advocates from all over the country.

Anti-sexual violence work is hard, but the community of support we've built over the last 20 years uplifts us.

Thank YOU for being a part of it.

Stacy Malone  
Executive Director

## IN THE NEWS

### Shining Star Gala in *People*

We were honored to have both Writer E. Jean Carroll and her lawyer and 2023 VRLC Leadership Awardee Roberta "Robbie" Kaplan speak at our 20th anniversary gala Wednesday evening. In an article referencing their gala appearance last week, Carroll tells [People](#) that her victory in court was not just for her, but for all women and calls Kaplan "the greatest attorney in America." Read the full story in *People* [here](#).



E. Jean Carroll and Donald Trump. PHOTO: MICHAEL M. SANTIAGO/GETTY, RON SACHS - POOL/GETTY

PEOPLE.COM

Carroll was in Boston on Wednesday to honor her attorney, Roberta “Robbie” Kaplan, as the 2023 Leadership Awardee by the [Victim Rights Law Center](#), which provides legal representation to survivors of rape and sexual assault to help rebuild their lives.

## EVENTS

### Scenes from Shining Star Gala



**“To our clients and really, all survivors – thank you for your bravery. It is an incredible privilege to belong to a profession that allows us to walk into a courtroom, tell someone’s story, and walk out with a piece of paper that changes their life. We believe you and we will never stop fighting for your safety**



and freedom.”

**- Maddy Rodriguez, 2023 Shining Star Awardee,  
VRLC Pro Bono Attorney, Foley Hoag**

Thank you to the members of our community - volunteers, staff, partner organizations, donors, sponsors and more - that showed up for us and helped make our 20th anniversary gala a successful celebration of survivors and those who advocate on their behalf.



## DEVELOPMENT

**Meet our Development Director**

**We are Thrilled to Welcome**



## Development Director, Ellen Leuchs!

"I am impressed and appreciative of the intelligence, commitment, and humaneness that is present in every interaction I have with my colleagues and VRLC's volunteers," Ellen says of joining our team.

"The more I learn about VRLC, the more I see the incredible impact the team has on individual lives and on building skills and understanding on a national level. When donors contribute to VRLC, they

help individual survivors reclaim their lives AND they destabilize cultural norms that fuel future sexual violence."

## NATIONAL TRAINING & TA

### Joining Forces with the American Bar Association

VRLC and the [American Bar Association Commission on Domestic and Sexual Violence](#) are collaborating on a project focused on integrating a trauma-informed approach to legal services. In August, VRLC Deputy Director Amanda Walsh facilitated a roundtable of anti-sexual violence organizational leaders to discuss ways they prevent harm to and promote the wellness of attorneys, intake staff, and clients they serve.



Read more about a VRLC attorney's own experience with vicarious trauma and why this topic is so important to us [here](#).

## DIRECT SERVICES

### Supporting Protections for Survivors

The VRLC submitted [testimony](#) earlier this month in support of Massachusetts' Harassment Prevention Law (258E). It has been over 10 years since 258E was enacted. This bill closes gaps in protections for survivors seeking relief under and expands access to these orders by including trafficking as a basis for relief and ensuring that judges can remove firearms from respondents in related cases.



*Since 2003, the Victim Rights Law Center has worked to provide survivors with free legal services to help restore their lives and promote a national movement seeking justice for rape and sexual assault survivors. Learn more about our efforts [here](#).*

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