

# ANNUAL REPORT

## GENDER EQUALITY LAW CENTER

[www.genderequalitylaw.org](http://www.genderequalitylaw.org)

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# OVERVIEW

GENDER EQUALITY LAW CENTER

## ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The Gender Equality Law Center (GELC) is a New York-based 501(c)(3) non-profit law and advocacy organization committed to advancing laws and policies that promote gender justice and racial equity. Our work focuses on breaking down legal and societal barriers that limit equal opportunities for individuals on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, gender expression and identity, along with recognizing and eradicating those specific to the intersection of gender and race. To this end, GELC employs a blend of strategies including: impact litigation, legislative reform, education and community outreach, "know your rights" trainings, and organizing.

GELC's three main programs include: (1) combating gender-based discrimination in the workplace and in schools to ensure that every individual can compete on a level playing field regardless of their gender; (2) mitigating instances of sexual harassment and assault in the workplace and in school settings; and (3) striking a work-family balance by fighting against pregnancy discrimination and for family leave.

While all of GELC's work focuses on advancing and protecting the rights of individuals who face social, institutional, and legal discrimination, our mission is to provide access to legal services for low income individuals, particularly those from historically marginalized communities in New York.



# MESSAGE FROM BOARD PRESIDENT

GENDER EQUALITY LAW CENTER

Dear GELC Supporters,

It is such an honor to be part of GELC's mission, and to share in celebrating GELC's many accomplishments with you. 2019 has been a banner year in terms of GELC's accomplishments and growth. We enter into GELC's fifth anniversary year poised to continue our solid work. From the Board perspective, we had the opportunity this year to grow into a new phase of stewardship, doubling our membership, and to deepen our commitment to GELC's mission by joining the staff in GELC's first annual vision-planning retreat, as well as the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond's life-changing Undoing Racism training.

Of course, the lifeblood of GELC's work is our incredible base of donors. GELC's representation changes the lives of their clients forever, and all those impacted by the policy changes it demands. And GELC has played an instrumental role in passing historic, groundbreaking legislation in both the state and city level. But without our donors, none of this work would be possible. Talk is cheap; by supporting GELC, you are demonstrating your deep, active commitment to gender equality, and toward being proactive rather than passively waiting for changes to occur. And stay tuned for the launch of an Advisory Council and other exciting opportunities to get involved throughout 2020 and beyond!

Looking forward to continuing the work together.

Onward and upward.



Susan Crumiller  
President, GELC Board of Directors



# LEADERSHIP

GENDER EQUALITY LAW CENTER

## Board of Directors



**Susan Crumiller**  
Board President



**Bonita L. Betters-Reed**  
Board Secretary and Vice President



**Allegra L. Fishel**  
Board Member



**Shareema Abel**  
Board Member



**Sean Harvey**  
Board Member



**Chandra K. Smith**  
Board Member

During the second quarter of 2019, Susan Crumiller became the Board President and Bonita ("Bonnie") L. Betters-Reed stepped up as the Vice President of the Board. She is also the acting Secretary. Both Susan and Bonnie have been a critical piece of GELC's growth during 2019 and have played a huge role in the expansion of our fundraising efforts.

At the close of 2019, we were thrilled to welcome three new Members to the Board of Directors. Shareema Abel, Sean Harvey, and Chandra K. Smith each bring with them a unique combination of experiences and expertise that will help GELC grow in the coming years. Their official terms began at the start of 2020 but all relationships were individually cultivated during 2019 when they were also elected to their new roles.

### GELC Staff

Staff is led by the fierce direction of Executive Director, Allegra Fishel, with leadership support from Director of Programs and Policy, Lauren Betters, Director of Development, Alex McAdams and Legal Fellow and Community Outreach Coordinator, Gaby Rendon. Additional support staff, including legal and communications interns and volunteer attorneys are critical to our success.

# IMPACT

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*"Shout out to GELC for their anti-Sexual Harassment Training. GELC provided a concise and effective training and has an extraordinary depth of knowledge, experience, and subtly in this arena. A critical unquantifiable: the in-person group setting normalizes these difficult conversations and makes it easier to have them."*

-Community Member

## ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHTS

- Conducted 12 know your rights trainings (in English and Spanish) with hundreds of community members and non-profit staff on sexual harassment prevention
- Co-facilitated and presented on panel discussions on pregnancy discrimination in the workplace.
- Participated in numerous actions and rallies including: "Stand With Survivors: Weinstein Trial Day One", "No Golden Parachute for Sexual Abuse—Rally against CBS and Moonves", "Support City Council staff and ask the City Council to implement a truly harassment-free New York City", "#StopTheBans Rally", "NYC Equal pay rally" and "Sexual harassment is NOT a compliment."
- Engaged and trained youth on sexual harassment as part of the NYC Youth Law Conference for High School students.

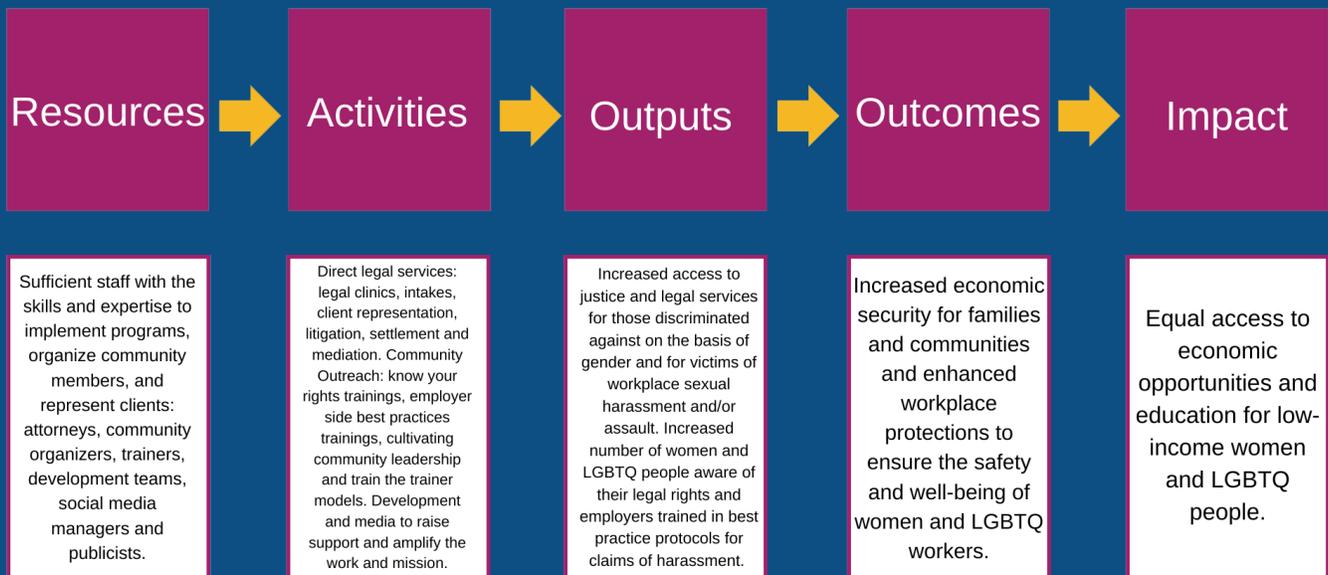
- Participated in a citywide restorative justice approaches strategic roundtable.
- Drafted and provided testimony to government officials and lobbied and helped pass legislation, including progressive NYC and NYS anti-sexual harassment laws, New York State Paid Family leave, amendments to enhance pay equity in NY, and expanding the definitions of gender and sexual orientation.
- GELC Executive Director attended an intervening identities conference held by the National Women's Law Center.



# IMPACT

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## How We Create Change



## LEGAL SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2019, GELC obtained nearly \$350,000 in settlements on behalf of our clients, including a six-figure settlement for three low-wage working women who were employed by a well-known NYC based lifestyle and meal preparation company. All three women experienced years of heinous acts of sexual harassment and assault by their supervisor and retaliation when they reported the abuse. One of the women is bisexual and was targeted for her sexuality while two of the three women are undocumented and feared for the livelihood of their families.
- GELC has an on-going case against the Brooklyn Diocese on behalf of a Catholic school teacher who was fired for being gay. We filed an extensive rebuttal at the Commission against the Catholic School and Brooklyn Diocese.

- ED, Allegra Fishel, joined the Equal Pay Litigators network. This is a group of 20 + national not for profits and private lawyers working to combat pay discrepancy for women, specifically women of color who do this through litigation & legislative advocacy.
- In the last quarter of 2019, GELC took on six new cases for litigation, including a sexual harassment case on behalf of a female construction worker against a building contractor and a large not for profit building developer;



# IMPACT

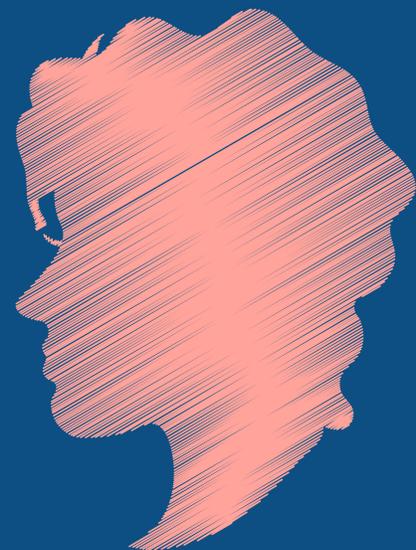
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## LEGAL SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS, cont.

- Sexual harassment case involving novel issues pertaining to retaliation by ex-partner of a female employee on the job (co-counseling with Brooklyn Legal Services).
- Pregnancy discrimination case against a large multi-billion dollar corporation that provides logistical and janitorial services (co-counseling with Make The Road);
- Case against Brooklyn-based prosecutorial agency for failure to provide language access to services and representation in rape case.
- Case against Rutgers for sexual harassment by a professor who has now resigned. Focus in this case is on the failure of Rutgers's Office of Equal Employment to properly investigate ongoing and sustained complaints of sexual harassment and inappropriate behavior by this former Professor of Political Science. (co-counseling with Private counsel)
- Gender stereotyping and family responsibilities case on behalf of a male truck driver whose employer tried to prevent him from taking leave to bond with his newborn daughter and discriminated against him because his supervisor believed childcare was women's work only.

*"When I was terminated from my job, I had so many thoughts about how and why, and I was so overwhelmed with how I could get back on my feet. It was tough to even think about pursuing legal action as it is time-consuming and in most cases unaffordable. I am blessed to have known about GELC as it truly saved me from a situation that I didn't have the tools to navigate on my own... I will forever be grateful for the help that these women gave me. They helped me get through a tumultuous time in my life, teaching me how to advocate for myself and feel empowered in my experience. I truly do not know where I would be or how I could have recovered without their assistance."*

-GELC Client



# IMPACT

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## TEAM HIGHLIGHTS

- GELC staff members participated in interviews and were represented in print media on various legal issues impacting women and LGBTQ, including interviews on the radio station WBAI, Manhattan Neighborhood Network, and BRIC Media, as well as in Newsweek and The New York Times.
- GELC was chosen by Wix Playground (a project of the website developing company Wix) to receive one-on-one web development consultation with a team of developers and illustrators to rebuild our website.
- GELC team and staff worked with Strategic Consultant, Amita Nagaraja on a joint retreat to strategize and create a multi-year plan in support of the effectiveness and sustainability of the organization.
- The organization welcomed three new members to our Board of Directors.
- GELC participated as a team in a three day Undoing Racism training.
- Our Director of Development participated in a year-long NYC Development Circle where she met monthly with a small targeted group of other non-profit Development Directors, facilitated by Cause Effective.



To learn more about our programming and upcoming events visit us on social media:



@genderlaw



@genderequalitylaw



@gender-equalitylaw-center



gender-equality-law-center/



shorturl.at/dBRU3

# SUPPORT

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## Organizational Partnerships

We see partnerships as being critical to the effectiveness and success of our programming. Through partnerships and coalition-building, we take a more holistic approach to social change by supporting shared goals, exchanging data to help identify need, and working jointly to best serve our constituents with the greatest impact. Some of our partners include:

- Make the Road NY
- NOW/NYC
- Safe Horizon
- PowHer NY
- New Immigrant Community Empowerment
- National Advocates for Pregnant Women
- Worker's Justice Project
- Ujima: The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community
- Gender Justice
- National Women's Law Center
- NELA
- Equal Rights Amendment Coalition
- Cornell Workers' Rights Coalition
- New Women New Yorkers
- MINKA
- Center for Anti-Violence Education
- NYC Anti-Violence Project
- Brooklyn Legal Services
- Urban Justice Center

## Institutional Funders

GELC is extremely grateful to have received continued institutional support from the Valentine Perry Snyder Fund, the New York Women's Foundation in the form of a very generous multi-year general operating support grant, as well as a grant from The New York Bar Foundation in support of our Workplace Victims Law Project. Additionally, at the end of 2019 we applied for, and in early 2020 were awarded, funding from the Time's Up Legal Defense Fund in support of our litigation on behalf of low-wage workers who have experienced gender-based discrimination or harassment. Thank you also to Outten & Golden and The Darnell-Moser Charitable Fund, from whom we also received support.

Valentine Perry Snyder Fund



# SUPPORT

## GENDER EQUALITY LAW CENTER

### Individual Donors

We are grateful to our individual, recurring and major donors who are the backbone of the organization and ensure organizational sustainability in the years to come. We wouldn't be able to do the work we do without the support of:

- Romy Abbey
- Rob Ackley
- Jen Addonizio Rozen
- Kerry Akashian
- Erin M. Alarcon
- Linda Alexander
- Marla Altberg
- Christopher Anderson
- Maitefa Angaza
- Gail Auster
- Ama Ayeh
- Mary Jean Babic
- Betty Bailey
- Shannon Bell
- Kendall Bentsen
- John Beranbaum
- Maria Bertram
- Lauren Betters
- Paul Douglas Betters
- Ryan Betters
- Bonnie Betters-Reed
- Tammie Blanchard Reed
- Brenda Brown
- Katrina Cabanban
- Ann Capelluti
- Erin Carney
- the house that casting built
- Stefanie Catella
- Lauren Chappie
- Arati Chaudhury
- Tatha Chaudhury
- Sara Clugage
- Sarah Corbett
- Darlyne Crum
- Jon Crumiller
- Marshall Crumiller
- Susan Crumiller
- Michael Crumpler
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- Elizabeth David-Dembrowsky
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- Gary Ireland
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- Martin Japtok
- Susan Johnson
- Roger Jou
- Jay K
- Michele Kahane
- George Kalergis
- Lani Kalergis-Becker
- Graciela Kaplan
- Jason Karuza
- Gale Kaufman
- Dan Keebler
- Courtney Keefe
- Rich and Gina Kelley
- Yotam Kellner
- Diane Kellogg
- Sean Kenney
- Virginia Kerr
- Stéphanie Kimou
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- Kristy Kinglliana Konidaris
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- Maggie Sommer
- Susan Sommer
- David Spertner
- Tom Spiggle
- Harold S. Spitzer
- Connie Lee Standafer
- Alya Stoffer
- Tish Streeten
- Marlene Super
- Michelle Sutherland
- Monica Swinney
- Mary Ann Tartaglia-Straube
- Diane Tillotson
- Karen Moore Tolen
- Vuong Tong
- Marie Turley
- Erika Vanbeuzekom
- Nicolle Vasquez
- Maron Warhaftig
- Erica Waters
- Karen Weisgerber
- Oliverlane Whiskey
- Helen Whitney
- Leigh Anne Wolf
- Courtenay Wood

# FINANCES: REVENUE

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Our total revenue in 2019 was \$185,000—following in the pattern of a steady increase over a four year period. GELC secured four institutional grants including, the second year of a multi-year \$40,000 grant from The Valentine Perry Snyder Fund, a new grant of \$5,320 from The New York Bar Foundation, and two separate grants from The New York Women's Foundation (NYWF)—a \$5,000 capacity building grant allowing us to hold our very first Board and staff retreat facilitated by a professional strategic consultant and a \$120,000 multi-year general programming grant that has allowed us to expand GELC's community outreach work in both English and Spanish. In addition to these grants, the NYWF also made it possible for GELC's staff and board to attend a weekend workshop entitled "Undoing Racism" training with the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond—a critical workshop that has impacted our approach to the work we do. Along with these institutional grants, we also received litigation support of \$13,000 from the TimesUp Legal Defense Fund which is enabling GELC to represent a low income Latina construction worker against a large NYC developer.

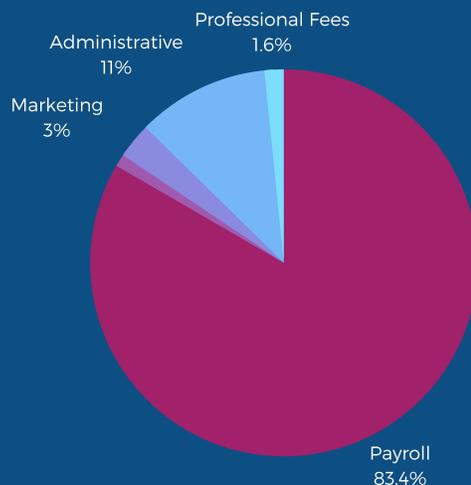
In 2019, we had our most successful end of year campaign yet— bringing in close to \$50,000 in unrestricted individual donations. Additionally, our recurring donor based has doubled, and we cultivated relationships with and secured donations from two new major donors. This support has allowed us to increase our capacity which enables us to take on more clients and cases. By increasing our capacity in taking on more cases, GELC continues to recoup attorneys fees in those we litigate which contributes to a large portion of our revenue. It is a unique fundraising model that strengthens both the sustainability and the capacity of the organization and allows us to serve more people.

*"I CHOSE THE GENDER EQUALITY LAW CENTER TO DONATE TO BECAUSE I HAVE A GOOD FRIEND WHO IS A TRANSWOMAN AND HAS FACED SO MANY DIFFICULT MOMENTS WHERE SHE HAS FELT HELPLESS OR VICTIMIZED. AND, AS A WOMAN MYSELF, I HAVE OFTEN BEEN A VICTIM OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE. I BELIEVE IT'S IMPORTANT TO HELP THROUGH CHARITABLE DONATIONS—THAT'S MY OUTLET: I WANT TO HELP AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE AND EDUCATE THOSE UNAWARE OF HOW SEVERE GENDER INEQUALITY TRULY IS."*

-GELC DONOR

# FINANCES: EXPENSES

GENDER EQUALITY LAW CENTER



In 2019 we expanded our team by hiring a legal fellow who also acts as our Community Outreach Coordinator. For part of the year, GELC also employed a part-time Staff Attorney. Additionally, our part-time contract Development Coordinator became our full-time salaried Director of Development and another Staff Attorney became the Director of Programs and Policy. Our overhead expenses are minimal due to the fact that we have office space in a collaborative work space which includes utilities and shared office equipment. The remaining expenses are for events, travel, continuing education, professional fees, licensing for our attorneys, and capacity building workshops and training for staff.

Our total expenses for 2019 were \$205,000.00. The majority of our expenses are administrative and management costs related to employee salaries, contractor fees, fringe benefits, and taxes. We finished the year with an approved deficit which we were knowingly able to cover because of a contingency in the organizational budget.

## GELC's PROGRAMS WILL:

- 1** Provide critical information in our know your rights workshops to increase economic security and safety for marginalized communities.
- 2** Empower low-income women and LGBTQ New Yorkers to lead their communities in coming forward about workplace harassment & discrimination.
- 3** Implement data-based programming from which to develop and measure services that respond to the most pressing needs of our target communities.



# MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

GENDER EQUALITY LAW CENTER

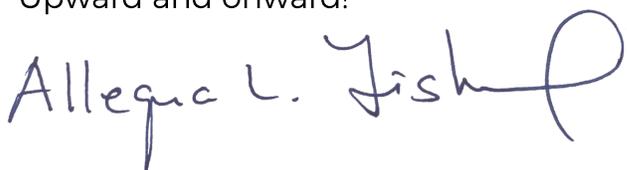
Dear Supporters,

2019 was GELC's greatest year of growth to date! We expanded in many ways, including providing more direct services, handling more intake callers, facilitating more anti-discrimination and sexual harassment prevention trainings, and working with our partners and coalitions to advance legislative changes. Our full-time staff doubled in size and our Board is now made up of six members with diverse experiences, backgrounds, and expertise. We are very proud of this expansion.

Our work is more important than ever. Our partnerships and volunteer lawyers help ensure our farthest reach. But there is so much more we could do if we could increase our staff and provide more legal resources, trainings, and public advocacy on each of these issues.

I am proud of our achievements since we opened our doors in 2015 and I am looking forward to future growth and productivity.

Upward and onward!



Allegra Fishel

Founder & Executive Director





This report was created by Alex McAdams on behalf of GELC  
amcadams@genderequalitylaw.org

**Gender Equality Law Center**