FY 2022-2023
ANNUAL REPORT

Report Highlight
A joint report of the work of the LGBT Bar Association of Greater New York and its companion 501(c)(3) Foundation

Prepared By:
Shain Filcher, Esq.
Executive Director

Prepared For:
Board of Directors,
Bar Association Members,
Supporters, and Friends

DEC. 2023
ANNUAL REPORT
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It was my honor to be selected in June of 2022 as Executive Director. I first joined the bar association in 2015 by volunteering at our free weekly walk-in legal clinic hosted at The Center in Manhattan. Eight years ago, I never could have dreamt how much our organizations would grow in that time, and how belonging to this bar association would ultimately build both my family and my career.

Given the backdrop of rising attacks against the LGBTQ+ community this year, it is particularly joyful to share the good news of this Annual Report with you. Our Annual Report showcases some of the work of our bar association and foundation during FY 2022-2023, and celebrates the major anniversary milestones we achieved as a bar association and foundation. Our bar association may be turning 45 years old this year, but we are just getting started!

As you read our Annual Report, I hope this will renew your sense of commitment to both of our organizations. Whether you’re a volunteer, a supporter, or co-conspirator, you are the heart and soul of who we are and what we do.

Thank you.

A vibrant rainbow ...

“Our sapphire anniversary has reminded us that the diversity of our membership is both the beauty and strength of our bar.”

Shain Filcher, Esq. (they/he/she)
Executive Director
OUR VISION

We envision a world where being a member of the LGBTQ+ community in and of itself will not subject someone to additional legal barriers to creating a family, accessing healthcare, and working in one’s chosen profession.

OUR MISSION

Find your chosen family and your career

Focused on the greater New York metropolitan area, the LGBT Bar Association of Greater New York is dedicated to improving the administration of the law, ensuring full equality for members of the LGBT community, promoting the expertise and advancement of LGBT legal professionals, and serving the larger community.

Phone 212-353-9118

Website www.lgbtbarny.org

Email info@lgbtbarny.org

Office Address 120 Wall Street, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10005
The Association and Foundation work in tandem to the benefit of LGBTQ+ attorneys and the community at large. The work of our foundation is supported by one of the oldest and largest LGBTQ+ bar associations in the entire country, providing a core of volunteer attorneys who reflect the communities they serve.

LGBTQ+ and allied attorneys helping LGBTQ+ people

The Association and Foundation work in tandem to the benefit of LGBTQ+ attorneys and the community at large. The work of our foundation is supported by one of the oldest and largest LGBTQ+ bar associations in the entire country, providing a core of volunteer attorneys who reflect the communities they serve.
Multi-year battle over the perfect wedding outfit leads to a win for our clients and respect for LGBTQ+ community

Victory at NYC Commission on Human Rights

After searching for over a year for just the right wedding outfit, Angel eventually found a white jumpsuit being sold online by a New York City designer. The designer refused to sell Tiffany the jumpsuit, stating that she “wouldn’t be able to make a piece for a same-sex wedding. It goes against my faith” and then told the lesbian couple to “reconsider” their marriage plans. LGBT Bar NY’s Legal Director, Brett Figlewski, was able to take the case on thanks to a partnership with law firm, Cooley LLP, as lead counsel.

After nearly two years, a hearing was held. On September 28th, Judge Protano issued a decision and proposed order, which found that the designer unlawfully discriminated against Tiffany on the basis of her sexual orientation when the designer refused to provide her with a jumpsuit for her same-sex wedding. Judge Protano rejected the designer’s First Amendment claim, finding, among other things, that the New York State Human Rights Law was not an unreasonable interference with the designer’s religious freedom, and that the designer’s refusal to sell an already designed jumpsuit for a same-sex wedding was not protected under the First Amendment as an “expressive statement.”

Protecting our Families

Per the terms of the decision and proposed order, Tiffany and Angel will be awarded $5,000 in compensation for emotional distress, and the designer will be required to pay $20,000 in civil fines and penalties.
Over 40 years in reporting legal developments impacting LGBTQ+ people

Trailblazing legal journalism

Since 1980, LGBT Bar NY continues to publish LGBT Law Notes, thanks to our Founder and Editor-in-Chief, Professor Emeritus Arthur Leonard of New York Law School. Law Notes is the most comprehensive monthly publication summarizing the latest legal and legislative developments affecting the LGBTQ+ community in the U.S. and abroad.

This year, select historical excerpts of Law Notes were invited to join the permanent collection of the Digital Transgender Archive, a free online portal seeking to increase accessibility of transgender history.

Our podcast has provided a platform for longer conversations about LGBTQ+ legal issues and interviews with LGBTQ+ and allied attorneys. Our podcast is available on Apple Music, Spotify, Podbean, Google Podcasts, and on our website, www.lgbtbarny.org.
In September 2022, our Foundation’s Flagship Walk-In Clinic in Manhattan celebrated its 35th anniversary providing *free* legal services to LGBTQ+ New Yorkers.

Founded in response to the height of the AIDS epidemic, our weekly Manhattan walk-in legal clinic continues to meet the LGBTQ+ community’s legal needs through today. The walk-in legal clinic offers a safe space for low-income LGBTQ+ people to meet with a LGBTQ+ volunteer attorney and discuss whatever legal issue they may be facing. The most common legal inquiries pertain to preventing eviction, obtaining asylum, recognition of parental rights, employment discrimination, and obtaining a court-ordered name change/corrected gender marker.
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SAPPHIRE GALA HONOREES

Honoring those individuals who have demonstrated a deep-seated commitment to equality

Community Vision

New York State Governor Kathy Hochul

Community Excellence

- Kate L. Doniger, Esq.,
  Partner at Kaplan Hecker & Fink LLP
- Hon. James L. Hyer, J.S.C.,
  Justice of the Supreme Court, 9th Jud. District
- Taylor D. James, Esq.
  Staff Attorney at The Legal Aid Society

Special Honoree

Arthur S. Leonard, Founder LGBT Bar NY & Professor Emeritus at New York Law School
We are grateful to this year’s Sapphire Gala sponsors and patrons for their continued support and partnership.

**Sapphire**
Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP

**Gold**
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP
Cooley LLP
Elefterakis, Elefterakis, & Panek
JPMorgan Chase & Co.
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**Platinum**
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Morrison Foerster LLP
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Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz

**Silver**
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Barclay Damon LLP
Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
Cornerstone Research
Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP
Foley Hoag LLP
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Friedman Kaplan Seiler Adelman & Robbins LLP
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP

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Cardozo OUTLaw
Chemtob Moss Forman & Beyda, LLP
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Wigdor Law LLP

**Small Firm/Solo**
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Thomas H. Prol
Tatiana L. Rugel
Palak Sharma
Hon. Michael Sonberg
Michael Weiner
Hayley R. Winograd
Steven R. Yuniver

www.lgbtbarny.org
As a New York State accredited CLE provider, we host and co-sponsor courses to not only help lawyers stay licensed but also to educate the larger legal community about the unique needs of LGBTQ+ clients and colleagues.

Innovative and Timely CLE Programming

Here's a few examples of some of the courses LGBT Bar NY offered this year -

2022 Year in Review CLE:

Examining the major cases and legislative developments impacting LGBTQ+ people

How Deeply Rooted are LGBTQ+ Rights?

Where We Stand post-Dobbs

The Library is Officially Closed:

The Rise of Book Bans and Threats against Drag Story Hours
Each November, we celebrate all of our volunteers and highlight some of our most stalwart volunteers who lead our Foundation’s pro bono efforts.

Richard E. Weber Award for Outstanding Student Dedication
- Syd Sanders
- Joe Saperstein

Outstanding Dedication Award
- Yefren Rojas
- Michael Kutner
- Karen Levit

Law Firm Leadership Award - Cooley LLP
With Special Recognition of
- Kathleen Hartnett,
- Katelyn Kang,
- Kaitland Kennelly,
- Valeria Pelet del Toro, and
- Ian Shapiro
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STRENGTHENING THE PIPELINE

Developing the current and next generation of LGBTQ+ legal professionals

Law Student Mentorship

56 law students were paired with a mentor

Judicial Candidate Screening

The Judiciary Committee, Chaired by Janice Grubin, Esq., and Michael Weiner, Esq., interviewed 35 candidates seeking elective judicial office.

The Federal and State Appointed Candidates Sub-Committee continued to be active.

Congratulations to the Honorable Seth Marnin

On June 9, 2023, Governor Kathy Hochul appointed Seth M. Marnin to the New York Court of Claims. His historic selection marks not only the first time an openly trans man has taken the bench in New York but also nationwide.

Marnin was one of three LGBTQ+ judges selected to join the Court of Claims, alongside David Fried of Rockland County and Brian Haak of Albany County.
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STAFF AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS*

Staff

Shain Filcher, Esq., Executive Director
Brett Figlewski, Esq., Legal Director
Leah Harper, Director of Communications

Board of Directors - Foundation

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Vice President: Anthony Lise
Treasurer: Glen Ahlers
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Meredith Miller
Nishan Bhauamakik
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Kristen Chin
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Board of Directors - Association

President: Anthony Perrotto
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Treasurer: Glen Ahlers
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Miriam Kavalarchik
Tom Maligno
Brian Gatens
Michael Lynch
Omar Gonzalez-Pagan
Andrew Teig
James Esseks
Law Student Liaisons: Ashton Hessee; Jeff Szulc

*Given the recent organizational transition from calendar year to fiscal year, not all Staff and Directors listed herewith served the entire 22-23 FY
We are grateful for the courage and the vision of our founder, Art Leonard, for his tireless commitment to LGBTQ+ equality.

Arthur S. Leonard, Professor Emeritus NY Law School

A bar association that began as an ad in the **Village Voice** ...

...is now a leading LGBTQ+ advocacy organization in New York State and nationwide!
## Support and Revenue

**$592,049**

- Donation Revenue: $417,049
- Donated Professional Services: $175,000

## Expenses

**$715,793**

- Legal Programs and Services: $149,088
- Management and General: $388,730
- Fundraising: $2,975
- Donated Professional Services: $175,000

## Net Assets

**Beginning of the Year**: $340,428

**End of the Year**: $153,915
THANK YOU

WE’RE PROUD TO HAVE YOU IN THE FAMILY