



SPOTLIGHT

AIDS Legal Referral Panel's fight endures as it hits milestone

Rich | Examiner staff writer Jun 23, 2025



ANNUAL REPORT 2025



ALRP

AIDS Legal Referral Panel





SPOTLIGHT

AIDS Legal Referral Panel's fight endures as it hits milestone

By Natalia Gurevich | Examiner staff writer Jun 23, 2025



BY THE NUMBERS 2025

2,150

Legal matters handled

64% Clients over age 50 at intake

24% Clients over age 65 at intake

63% Clients over age 50 living alone

100,944

Legal matters handled
1983-2025

1,363

Unique clients assisted

61% Clients of color

83% LGBTQ+ clients

8% Transgender and nonbinary clients

85%

Clients expressing satisfaction with ALRP services

\$919,749

Value of legal hours donated by Volunteer Panel Attorneys this year

77% Clients living on an income of \$30,000 or less

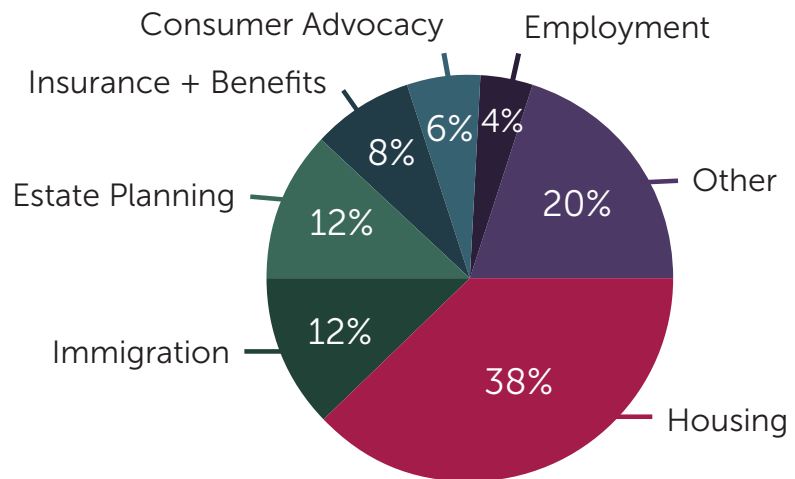
53% Clients living on an income of \$15,000 or less

842

Community members reached through 42 outreach presentations with partner organizations

316

Attorneys trained through 11 Continuing Legal Education webinars



LEGAL AREAS SUPPORTED IN 2025

100,000 cases and counting

Dear friends and supporters,

ALRP was founded in the early, terrifying days of the HIV epidemic to help people get their affairs in order when they only had days or weeks to live. At that time, no one could have anticipated the devastating scale of the crisis, that there would still be a need for us four plus decades down the road, or that we could possibly take on 100,000 legal matters.

In fact, we crossed the 100,000 case milestone on June 12, and the demand for our services is not going down, it is increasing. There are many reasons for this reality. One is that as our client base has aged—40% in 2025 were 60 or older—their legal, financial, physical, and mental health challenges have become more complex. Another is that cuts in federal funding imposed by the new federal administration have begun to fray already meager safety net programs, creating day-to-day crises for our clients. For the 77% of our clients who are trying to live on incomes of less than \$30,000 per year in the Bay Area, there is no such thing as a “small” legal problem. For immigrants, the slew of rapid-fire, punishing new policies have stripped away long-standing legal protections, sowed chaos and fear, and resulted in record numbers of new cases.

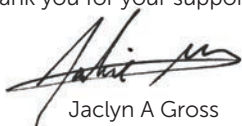
Just as we’ve done over the last 42 years, we grew and adapted our programs to meet the evolving needs of and challenges faced by our clients. This report describes some of the ways in which our team of attorneys, paralegals, social workers, and volunteer Panel attorneys helped hundreds of people stay in their homes, secure immigration relief, regain benefits and stabilize their finances, access health care, connect to vital services, and so much more.

None of this would have been possible without the support of our loyal institutional and individual donors, elected officials and government agency employees who have stood by us year after year, and our board and staff and who give so much of themselves each and every day.

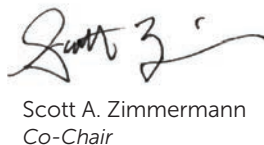
2026 will be another difficult year for our clients and ALRP, with many threats coming down the road, including the impact of California losing billions in federal funding for Medi-Cal and CalFresh, upon which 75% of our clients rely for health care and food; a potential end to subsidies for permanent supportive housing, another essential program for hundreds of our clients; and more cuts in grant support from the City of San Francisco, as it continues to grapple with large budget deficits over the next two years and beyond.

We don’t know how all this will turn out, but we do know that thanks to you, ALRP won’t stop fighting to advance and protect the rights, dignity, and health of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Thank you for your support!



Jaclyn A Gross
Co-Chair



Scott A. Zimmermann
Co-Chair



Matt Foreman
Executive Director



ALRP's housing team. Right: Director of Social Services Kim Kruse with Senior Paralegal Bryanna Garay and Social Worker Cassie Walter. Below: Senior Housing Attorney Kai Shintani, Staff Attorney Ryan Orkisz, Director of Housing & Litigation Jeff Dulgar, and Senior Supervising Attorney Allison Pruitt. Not pictured: Paralegal Kylah Stroh.

"Kai is a wonderful, patient, understanding, and very wise attorney. Thank you all for helping people like myself and others with similar situations."

—FRANCESCA*, ALRP Client

*name changed to protect privacy



HOUSING

Last year, the number of eviction notices filed in San Francisco jumped 10%, from 3,244 in 2024 to 3,585 in 2025. This was driven in part by landlords trying to take advantage of rapidly rising rents by evicting long-term tenants and replacing them with those able to pay market prices. (In 2025, the median rent for a one-bedroom apartment in San Francisco rose 12%, from \$2,785 in January to \$3,107 in December.)

As a result, ALRP's eviction defense team had its busiest year on record, opening 260 new cases, 16% more than 2024. This accounted for 13% of the total 2025 caseload of the citywide Eviction Defense Collaborative, a coalition of nine organizations helping to ensure that every tenant facing eviction has access to legal representation.

While 102 of these cases were still in progress at the end of the year, we helped 155 clients stay housed in 2025—an 85% success rate. With an estimated cost of \$62,000 per year incurred by San Francisco when a person becomes homeless, ALRP's eviction defense work saved taxpayers \$9.6 million.

The housing program, a keystone service, accounts for nearly 40% of all cases. In addition to those facing eviction proceedings, another 382 clients came to ALRP for help addressing substandard and dangerous living conditions, housing discrimination, and illegal rent increases.

When Francesca reached out to ALRP, she was facing eviction, and Senior Housing Attorney Kai Shintani got to work on her case. At their first meeting, however, it became clear that Francesca was very sick, and she was soon hospitalized with a serious illness.

Despite these circumstances, the Court insisted that the case move forward. To resolve Francesca's case, Kai attended the three-hour hearing in person, with Francesca attending remotely from her hospital bed. Thankfully, Kai was successful in securing an agreement that Francesca could stay in her home—where she could focus on her recovery, rather than compounding her health struggles with homelessness.



IMMIGRATION

2025 saw swift and draconian changes to federal immigration policies and enforcement, including indiscriminate ICE arrests, the termination of humanitarian relief programs, exorbitant new filing fees, travel restrictions, and deliberate efforts to create a climate of chaos and fear. As a result, our immigration team experienced unprecedented demand, working with a total of 219 clients from 24 countries, a 16% increase over 2024.

Staff and Panel attorneys helped our clients file applications for asylum, work permits, naturalization, and visas based on being a victim of crime or human trafficking. We also represented them in immigration court and advocated for better treatment in detention facilities.

Along with legal work, we reached another 420 community members through immigration-focused Know Your Rights presentations around the Bay Area, including training other service providers about their rights and responsibilities in the event of an ICE raid.

In 2025, ALRP was awarded a prestigious two-year Shartsis Friese LLP Public Interest Fellowship Award of \$150,000, enabling us to hire a second full-time immigration attorney, Rafael Benzecry. He earned his LL.B. from the Federal University of Amazonas in 2017 and an LL.M. from Harvard Law School in 2023. Before joining ALRP, Rafael practiced immigration law in rural Pennsylvania.



“When I was detained, I didn’t know what was going to happen to me ... but ALRP was with me from beginning to end. I am eternally grateful for the hard work they are doing.”

–HIAN, ALRP Client



In June, our asylum client Hian was detained by ICE as he left immigration court with his ALRP legal team. Within a few days, he was transferred to a detention facility in southern California; later, he was again transferred to Washington state. At both facilities, he was denied consistent access to his medications and faced inhumane conditions and violence.

Throughout the summer, ALRP worked to press Hian’s asylum case, restore his access to medication, and get him released from detention. After three separate hearings, Hian was finally granted asylum in September, and we flew him home to San Francisco. We then helped him find housing, access benefits, and get a Social Security number.

ALRP’s immigration team: Shartsis Fellow Rafael Benzecry, Law Clerk Mirna Champ, Staff Attorney Slater Stanley, and Social Work Intern Alyssa Gomez

Right: Senior Supervising Attorney Allison Pruitt and volunteer notary Kyle Kitson finalize clients' legacy documents at the September 27 clinic. Below: Supervising Attorney Emily Heinzen with a client.

"ALRP is vital for those of us living with HIV/AIDS. You first helped me back in 1992 with securing COBRA benefits from my reluctant employer ... I hold you gratefully in high esteem. Thank you for a lifetime of support and being there at the critical moments!"

—ALAN, ALRP Client



Alan attended ALRP's legacy planning workshop on September 27, where he finalized his will, advance healthcare directive, and power of attorney. Nearly three-quarters of the people who attended the workshop were seniors, 92% were LGBTQ+, and 29% were living with HIV.

Considering a planned gift? In 2025, we were grateful to receive gifts totaling nearly \$40,000 from the estates of Joseph Amaroso and Mark Gorman and Michael Sporn, which helped ensure that people living with HIV/AIDS will have access to a legal safety net for years to come. If you are interested in making such a commitment toward our future, please visit alrp.org/planned-giving. ALRP may be able to provide a referral to an estate planning attorney.



LEGACY PLANNING

When ALRP was founded in 1983, we were a team of volunteer attorneys drafting emergency wills for community members dying too soon of AIDS. Four decades later, we still believe that everyone deserves to have a say in their legacy and healthcare at the end of their lives.

In 2025, we helped 145 clients draft wills, powers of attorney, and advance health care directives. We also conducted educational presentations on legacy planning for clients and staff at partner organizations such as Maitri, PRC, and UCSF 360.

In May, ALRP started working with Openhouse and Bay Area Lawyers for Individual Freedom (BALIF) to plan an inaugural "will-a-thon" to help members of our community complete wills and other legacy documents at no cost to them. Over the summer, Supervising Attorney Emily Heinzen held three webinars explaining the importance of these documents and processed intake forms from all attendees interested in moving forward.

Then, on Saturday, September 27, a team of 29 volunteer attorneys and notaries worked alongside ALRP and Openhouse staff to help 80 community members secure finalized legacy documents—far exceeding our expectations. The clinic highlighted a substantial need in our community, and we look forward to making it an annual event.

CONNECTION TO SERVICES

Through our HIV Consumer Advocacy Project (HCAP), ALRP supports clients by removing barriers to HIV-related medical care and other supportive services. This program is critical to overcoming the gaps in service, stigma, and institutional hurdles our clients face every day.

In 2025, we supported 112 HCAP clients—keeping them connected to San Francisco’s robust system of care while working with community and government partners to improve access to services across the network of providers in San Francisco, Marin, and San Mateo Counties.

In addition to HCAP, we also have two social workers who support clients in applying for rental assistance and subsidies; make sure they have access to medical care; connect them to a broad range of social service providers throughout the Bay Area; and work with them on their individual goals. **These services help ensure our clients receive the holistic support they need to stay healthy.**

BENEFITS

Over 75% of ALRP’s clients rely on disability benefits, Medi-Cal, and other forms of government assistance to make ends meet in an increasingly unaffordable region. ALRP supports clients in navigating return-to-work rules, changes to benefits based on life events, recertification processes, and more. **In 2025, we helped 130 clients with matters related to government benefits.** This work is led by Staff Attorneys Hunter Wolff and Delaney Nevius.

“I know that I have rights, and no one’s going to step on them, because I have the AIDS Legal Referral Panel to back me up.”

—CATAH, ALRP Client



Catah is one of many long-term survivors who have been coming to ALRP since the 1990s. Over the years, we’ve represented him as he was facing eviction; provided legal advice as the ownership of his apartment building changed hands; supported him with hurdles to getting a government-issued ID; and made sure his access to Social Security Disability Insurance and Medi-Cal didn’t lapse throughout multiple difficult life changes.

Most recently, after SFMOMA acquired some of his late husband Mooshka’s artwork, Catah worked with our Supervising HCAP Attorney, Stephen Spano, to ensure the sale wouldn’t threaten his housing subsidy from the San Francisco AIDS Foundation moving forward.

Supervising HCAP Attorney Stephen Spano represents ALRP at Huckleberry Youth Programs’ Block Party on April 16



Right: Nicole Ozer, Hon. Tani Cantil-Sakauye, Sanjeet Ganjam, and Katie Moran. Below: ALRP Summer Law Clerks Ryan Lee, Jasmin Roley, and Joshua McDaniel attend a Giants game on June 5

“Working at ALRP was an irreplaceable experience. I developed a deeper understanding of the support systems for marginalized communities within the Bay Area, received expert mentorship, and gained hands-on experience in multiple practice areas of law.”

—JASMIN ROLEY, *Summer 2025 Law Clerk*



EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Continuing a proud legacy of training the next generation of public interest lawyers, ALRP hosted seven student law clerks in 2025. Clerks conduct intake interviews, provide litigation support, and work on special projects with attorney mentorship.

We also held 11 free Continuing Legal Education trainings, which were attended by 316 attorneys and covered diverse topics relevant to the needs of HIV+, low-income individuals. In addition, our legal team gave 42 presentations for 842 staff and clients at partner organizations on topics such as eviction defense, fair housing, new immigration policies, legacy planning, and name and gender changes.



IN THE COMMUNITY

On November 18, we hosted an event at the University of San Francisco School of Law focusing on the impact of the Trump Administration on jurists, law firms, and law schools. Our incredible panelists were former California Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye; Nicole Ozer, Executive Director of UC Law SF's Center for Constitutional Democracy; and Sanjeet Ganjam, Partner at Shartsis Frieze and ALRP Board member. USF Associate Professor Katie Moran served as moderator. The speakers provided illuminating insights about how different sectors of the legal community are grappling with unprecedented challenges.

We also continued two summer traditions, holding our annual Garden Party at Hot Johnnie's on June 21 and participating in AIDS Walk San Francisco with our team the Legal Eagles on July 20. Founded in 1987, AIDS Walk San Francisco has raised over \$96 million to help those living with HIV/AIDS. **We are grateful for Gilead's continued leadership support and for the 25 members of our team and 243 supporters who raised over \$35,000 for ALRP.**



The ALRP Legal Eagles at AIDS Walk 2025

ADVOCACY

In 2025, ALRP continued its leadership role in budget advocacy with the City of San Francisco, including retaining our former Executive Director Bill Hirsh to coordinate the efforts of two coalitions of providers.

Along with our colleagues in the HIV/AIDS Provider Network (HAPN), we met with the Mayor's Office and each member of the Board of Supervisors to press the case for why no cuts should be made to funding for services for people living with HIV, even with the city facing a \$272 million deficit for Fiscal Year 2025-26. This advocacy delivered results: Thanks to the leadership of Board of Supervisors President Rafael Mandelman and Mayor Lurie, funding for HIV services was not reduced, and the city backfilled new cuts in federal Ryan White CARE Act funding with its own dollars.

In the spring, ads promoting the importance of the Tenant Right to Counsel (TRC) program went up in San Francisco's subway stations (photo below). The ads were part of a larger effort to educate the public and San Francisco policymakers about how effective and cost-efficient the TRC program is in preventing homelessness. ALRP and the Eviction Defense Collaborative split the \$20,000 cost of the campaign. Like funding for HIV-related services, no cuts were made to TRC grants in the city's FY2025-26 budget.

2025 FINANCIALS*

REVENUE (Total Revenue \$3,865,200)

Government		\$1,701,295
	Unrestricted Revenue	\$745,898
	Restricted Grants	\$498,258
	Donated Legal Services	\$919,749

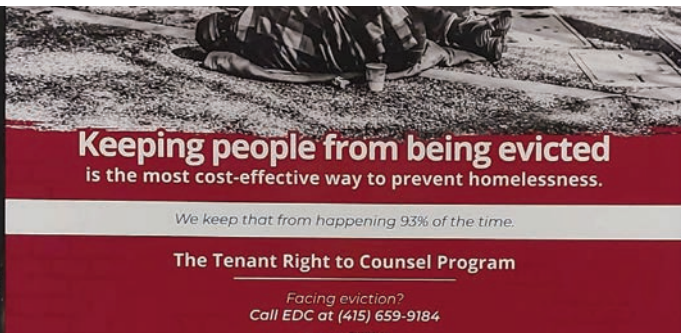
EXPENSES (Total Expenses \$3,821,417)

Client Services		\$3,252,393
	Fundraising	\$298,570
	Administration	\$270,454

NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR

Unrestricted	\$1,656,874
Restricted	\$179,137
TOTAL	\$1,836,011

* As of December 31, 2025 (unaudited). Our audited financials will be available at alrp.org no later than May 1.



A poster at the Van Ness Muni stop advertises the Tenant Right to Counsel program

**RIGHTS.
RESILIENCE.
REVELRY!**



ANNUAL RECEPTION

A record number of supporters—over 390—joined us on October 23 for ALRP's 42nd Annual Reception. We were so proud to celebrate our honorees and hear their powerful remarks: Attorney **David Tsai** received the Clint Hockenberry Award for his decades of selfless leadership—advocating for HIV+ immigrants seeking asylum, volunteering with HIV service organizations, and advancing justice and equity in the Asian American and LGBTQ legal communities. And actor, author, and civil rights icon **George Takei** received the Bill Hirsh Award for his courage in speaking out about the early days of HIV/AIDS, his ongoing philanthropy, and his decades of using his platform to fight prejudice and promote justice.

We were also grateful to welcome back Gilead Sciences as our Presenting Sponsor for the event. Over the last two decades, Gilead has contributed over \$1 million to support critical ALRP programs and has served as the lead sponsor of our Annual Reception since 2009. **Thanks to the generosity of our guests and sponsors, this year's event raised over \$310,000—an all-time high!**

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ALRP's 43rd Annual Reception
October 22, 2026 - The Grand

TICKETS AND SPONSORSHIPS: alrp.org/events



Evan Low, President and CEO of LGBTQ+ Victory Fund, presented the Clint Hockenberry Award to David Tsai



Special Guest Host Varla Jean Merman



George Takei, former State Senator Mark Leno, and George's husband Brad Takei



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Horizons Foundation guests Jason Angel, Jim Liu, Yuming Chiu, Nathaniel Haynes, and Shilpen Patel



Wendy Sung and Marco Place of Jones Day



Jonhatan Aragon of Kecker, Van Nest & Peters with guest Abel Gomez



Michael Hebert of Greenberg Traurig, Suzette Barnes of Morgan Stanley, ALRP Board Member Ally Givens of King & Spalding, and Beth Mazie of PRC



Christine Capuyan, honoree David Tsai, and Sanam Saaber with Michael Stevens of Seyfarth Shaw



Sarah Hoffman, Max Joachim, Alice Giang, ALRP Board Member Evelyn Bui, and Amin Labbate of Venable



Arnaud Silvarelli and Michelle Roberts of Roberts Disability Law with honoree George Takei

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Thank you to everyone who supported ALRP in 2025!

+ Donor for 10+ consecutive years

^ Monthly sustainer

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San Francisco Department of Disability and Aging Services

San Francisco Department of Public Health+

San Francisco Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development+

State Bar of California+

Foundations/Corporations/Organizations

\$50,000+

California Access to Justice Commission

Gilead Sciences, Inc.+

Shartsis Friese LLP+

The Williams & Hart Rainbow Fund of Horizons Foundation

\$10,000 – \$49,999

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The Estate of Mark Gorman and

Michael Sporn

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\$5,000 – \$9,999

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Community Thrift Store+
Eviction Defense Collaborative+
Legal Assistance to the Elderly+
PRC+
San Francisco AIDS Foundation



Long-time supporter Barry Graynor and BALIF Board member Caleb Krywenko attend an ALRP donor event on May 8

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