



panel notes

ALRP Newsletter | Summer 2016

upcoming events

Bay of Pigs
July 30

The Factory

It's the 10th anniversary of this over-the-top leather and fetish event - the official Saturday night dance event of Up Your Alley. Volunteers needed.



Up Your Alley
July 31

Dore Alley

Join over 15,000 leather and kink enthusiasts in enjoying adult vendors, live demonstrations, and DJ stages. Volunteers needed.



REAF Gala
August 21

Herbst Theater

Come support ALRP while watching Broadway-quality performances and enjoying wine, champagne, hors d'oeuvres, and a silent auction.



Magnitude
September 24

The Midway

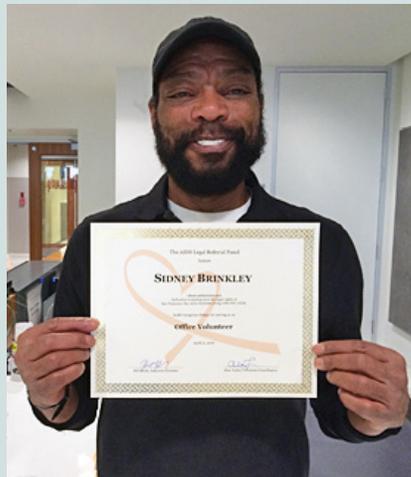
Dancing, drinks, live stage shows, and an infamous dungeon are all provided at the official Saturday night Folsom Street Fair party. Volunteers needed.



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- Summer 2016 Law Clerks

alrp and me



Sidney at this year's Volunteer Appreciation Party

Sidney Brinkley, an ALRP volunteer, was recently moved to share his experiences receiving services from ALRP. We were touched by his candid story and wanted to share it with our ALRP family.

My first contact with ALRP was brief. It was the mid-nineties and the first tech boom was going full steam - a modern day Gold Rush. Landlords were cashing in by forcing out long-term residents by any means necessary.

During those years I was acutely sick, and one day I came home from receiving a treatment at Davies Medical Center to find an eviction notice taped to my door telling me to vacate the premises in 30 days. I was stunned! I was scared. What was I going to do? I was broke. Where was I going to go?

I have lived in my rent controlled Mission District apartment since 1991. When I moved in, the neighborhood had an active drug trade, street gangs, and homeless encampments. The Dolores Park area was far from the upscale, trendy hang-out it is today.

When I confronted my landlord he said he was doing an Owner Move In (OMI). He was evicting me to move his daughter into my apartment.

I believe there was a racial element involved as well. I'm the only African American tenant in the building and I had lived there longer than any white tenant.

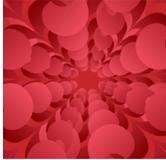
Folsom Street Fair September 25

The world's biggest leather event with over 200 exhibitor booths showcasing fetish gear and toys. Volunteers needed.



Annual Reception October 19, 2016 Julia Morgan Ballroom

Join ALRP in commemorating its 33rd year of service to people living with HIV/AIDS at our biggest event of the year.



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When I pointed that out, the landlord told me the other tenants were not on month-to-month leases, which was a bald-faced lie. It was my understanding that every lease went month-to-month after the first year.

The OMI was (and is) a notorious tactic used by property owners to remove a tenant. A relative moves in. The apartment is renovated. The relative moves out, and the apartment goes back on the rental market at a substantially higher rent.

ALRP was just one of several agencies I frantically contacted. I was informed that, because OMI's had been so abused, a ballot measure passed which protected seniors and the disabled from eviction if they had lived in their apartment for a set number of years.

When he couldn't get to me, the landlord brought an OMI eviction against another long-term tenant and proceeded with his plan. The daughter moved in, the apartment was renovated, she moved out, and the apartment went back on the market for a much higher rent.

Though I kept my apartment, what followed was years of harassment from the landlord in the form of him completely ignoring me. Calls for repairs would go unanswered. I've had to call the City and file a complaint just to get a faucet repaired.

By 2013 a second tech boom had sent San Francisco apartment rents sky high, especially in my building. All the apartments around me were renovated, leaving mine the only non-renovated apartment in the building.

Two businesses opened on the ground floor, and both placed their operating equipment on the roof. The remaining space was leased to well-known cellular providers, and they set-up several microwave antennas.

All this activity made my ceiling unstable, and the large, glass ceiling fixtures came crashing down, one after the other, spraying glass shards everywhere.

I escaped injury both times only by being in another room when they fell. Now, a third fixture was hanging precariously. I wanted them replaced with something safer. The landlord refused.

I called ALRP. A Staff Attorney and a law clerk named Matthew came to my apartment to survey the damage and discuss my complaint.

A stern letter from ALRP was sent to the landlord reminding him of his legal obligation to provide a safe environment under California Civil Code § 1941 and that further action would be taken if he didn't comply. It was clear they meant business.

Not only did I get new, modern ceiling fixtures but new kitchen appliances, too. And my landlord got a new attitude. Repair requests are now promptly handled.

I didn't pay a cent for any of this. ALRP never so much as hinted that

CONTINUED PAGE 3

special thanks



they wanted a payment or donation from me, and that's why I volunteer. If I can help them out by volunteering a few hours in their office when needed, I do. I appreciate what ALRP did for me, and the far bigger battles they fight on behalf of others with HIV/AIDS.

– Sidney Brinkley

director's message

Fallen Heroes

I got an email the other day about a former client who had passed away. She was a black transgender woman who served as a Co-Chair of the HIV Health Services Planning Council, the community body charged with allocating federal funds for HIV services in San Francisco. Through the Planning Council I had the pleasure of working with this remarkable woman for many years. She faced great challenges in her life, but always lived it with dignity and compassion. She was a true hero in the fight against HIV. It was upsetting to hear that she is no longer with us, and I am grateful that I was there to witness her light.



A couple of weeks later I learned about the passing of Carla Johnson, the Director of the Mayor's Office on Disability, who was tragically taken by breast cancer. She lent the struggle an immeasurable amount of generosity and humanity. Like the aforementioned client, Carla's work was subtle and largely unsung. It lives in the sidewalks, buildings, and programs that are a bit more accessible due to her advocacy. She embodied the truest meaning of "service."

Most recently we lost Eileen Hansen, an extraordinary and quintessential San Francisco activist with a rich connection to ALRP. She was also a close friend of Carla. Eileen was tough, smart, compassionate, and intensely dedicated to the cause of social justice, especially for LGBT rights and the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS. I worked most closely with Eileen when she served as ALRP's Public Policy Director. She fought hard to protect the confidentiality of HIV test results and she constantly sought to build coalitions with underserved communities within the HIV/AIDS epidemic: women, people of color, and people with mental health disabilities. Aside from the dear friends that Eileen helped care for in the earliest days of the epidemic, Eileen's efforts made a huge difference in the lives of thousands of people living with HIV. Eileen's passing is a huge loss to the community; her legacy will forever inspire those engaged in the struggle.

I am still mourning these three friends. Our community has endured so much heartbreak, and death at too young an age continues not only for people living with HIV, but also their allies. The outlook can seem bleak - because sometimes it is - but we must make their loss constructive. Social justice does not have the privilege of taking breaks. After some somber reflection and much deserved celebration of the lives of our fallen, I am compelled to rededicate myself to work even harder to end the epidemic. Carla, Eileen, and our client would not have wanted it any other way. ❤️

recent events

AIDS Walk 2016

The ALRP Legal Eagles team raised a record **\$32,036** at AIDS Walk 2016, beating last year's record by \$900. We simply could not have done it without each and every one of you - our walkers, Star Walkers, donors, and volunteers. AIDS Walk 2016 had over 20,000 supporters in a cold and drizzly Golden Gate Park. But our spirits were not dampened by the weather, and together we helped make AIDS Walk 2016 a success.

The ALRP Legal Eagles team finished **#4**, and our Super Star Walker **Paul Richardson** ranked **#7** for individual fundraisers, bringing in \$8,305.



ALRP Legal Eagles AIDS Walk Team 2016

Major Donor Party

ALRP honored **The Bob Ross Foundation** and **Lisa & Dirk DiGiorgio-Haag** at its 2016 Major Donor Party on May 25th at The Plant Café. During the party, ALRP launched its Hopeful Heart Campaign aimed at raising \$100k from individual donors.



L-R: Robert Esposito, Bill Hirsh,
Emily Nugent, Tom Horn



L-R: Lisa and Dirk
DiGiorgio-Haag, Bill Hirsh

recent events (cont'd.)

Volunteer Appreciation Party

ALRP celebrated its dedicated volunteers at the 16th Annual Volunteer Appreciation Party. The event was held on April 21, 2016 at Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP. Guests enjoyed wine, food, live music, and an award ceremony. Longtime ALRP volunteer **Dusty Araujo** was honored with the *2016 Volunteer of the Year Award*.



L-R: Alex Taylor, Bill Hirsh, Dusty Araujo

Academy of Friends

ALRP guests and volunteers attended the **36th Annual Academy of Friends' A GATHERING OF ROYALS** held on Sunday, February 28, 2016 at the San Francisco Design Center. The AOF Gala benefitted ALRP and five other HIV/AIDS services agencies. ALRP received over \$10,000 in support of our free and low cost legal services for our clients.

Everyone at the event enjoyed delicious food provided by the Bay Area's finest restaurants and caterers, and wine and champagne provided by amazing vintners. It was a great night of fun and a way to watch the 2016 Oscars® viewable from most every angle in the Design Center.



L-R: Tom Pack, Jeff Jacobi, Bill Hirsh, Greg Curatolo, Jim McBride

upcoming events



HELP IS ON THE WAY XXII

On the Red Carpet

Sunday, August 21, 2016
Herbst Theater & Green Room

Idols & Icons

REAF HELP IS ON THE WAY XXII GALA

Sunday, August 21
5:00pm - 11:30pm
Herbst Theatre

ALRP is proud to be a major beneficiary of the Richmond Ermet Aid Foundation's 22nd "Help Is On The Way" Gala, held at the San Francisco War Memorial's Herbst Theatre. Join us at this elegant evening of fun, featuring a **silent auction, gala reception, musical performances**, and an **after party** with the show's cast.

Special guests include cast members from the Broadway touring cast of **BEAUTIFUL: The Carole King Story**, and more than ten additional performers, including national and local favorites such as Broadway legend **CAROLE COOK**, international celebrity **DAME EDNA**, and SF cabaret star **PAULA WEST**.

100% of ticket proceeds go directly to supporting ALRP's free legal services. PLEASE MENTION ALRP when ordering tickets by phone or online (reaf-sf.org).

For more information, e-mail Jim McBride at jim@alrp.org. If you are interested in volunteering at the gala, please e-mail alex@alrp.org to sign up.

ALRP ANNUAL
ALRP FROM THE HEART
RECEPTION & AUCTION
Wednesday, October 19
6:00pm - 9:00pm
Julia Morgan Ballroom

Help ALRP commemorate its 33rd year of service to people with HIV/AIDS at our biggest event of the year -the ALRP From The Heart 33rd Annual Reception and Auction.

This year's reception is being held from 6:00-9:00pm on Wednesday, October 19th in the Julia Morgan Ballroom at the

33rd
ANNUAL
ALRP
FROM THE HEART
RECEPTION
&
AUCTION

upcoming events (cont'd.)

Merchants Exchange, 465 California Street (at Montgomery Street) in San Francisco.

During the reception, ALRP will be presenting our *2016 Clint Hockenberry Leadership Award* to **Jerome Fishkin, Esq.**, our *2016 Attorney of the Year Award* to **Okan Sengun, Esq.**, and our *2016 Firm of the Year Award* to **Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP**.

Enjoy amazing food and wine while connecting with colleagues and friends. The evening will also feature a Live and Silent Auction.

Tickets start at \$100. Contact **Jim McBride** at 415-701-1200 ext. 301 or jim@alrp.org for info or tickets.

increased rent-rent control protection legislation

ALRP housing attorney Jaime Rush worked with the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, including Supervisor Scott Wiener of District 8, to expand rent control protections for people who receive a Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) rental assistance voucher. The legislation was unanimously passed by the Board of Supervisors last month.



Jaime Rush



Supervisor Wiener

This amendment will close a long-standing loophole, and will ensure equitable legal protections for San Francisco's 240 HOPWA assisted tenants. HOPWA is a federal program that provides housing assistance and supportive services for low-income people living with HIV/AIDS. Tenants eligible for the HOPWA rental assistance program can receive a subsidy to pay a portion of their monthly rent.

Prior to the amendment, the San Francisco Rent Ordinance made a distinction between low-income tenants receiving rental assistance through the federal Section 8 program, and those who received rental assistance through the federal HOPWA program. While neither class of tenants had full scope rent increase protections under the Ordinance, Section 8 assisted tenants were always afforded rent increase protections under some circumstances. HOPWA assisted tenants, on the other hand, were completely exempt from rent increase protections under all circumstances. The passed amendment eliminated this illogical distinction so that long-term survivors of AIDS, whose ability to maintain their health is entirely dependent on having stable housing, will not be disproportionately faced with rent increases that force them out of their homes.

increased rent-control protection (cont'd.)

ALRP is fortunate that our staff is compelled not only to assist individual clients but also to change the legal landscape our clients face. While Jaime describes this amendment as being modest, any change in the law that affords greater legal protection to people living with HIV will make a real difference in our clients' lives. 🍷

summer 2016 law clerks

ALRP was lucky to once again have the assistance of a talented team of law students this summer. In addition to completing substantive writing projects, our clerks worked full time conducting intakes, meeting with clients, drafting documents, and making referrals. We will be sorry to see our clerks go in August, but hope that their experience here inspires them to explore a future career in public interest law.

In Summer 2016 we were joined by:

George Abrahamyan, UC Hastings '18

Madeleine Lough-Stevens, UC Hastings '18

Tarika Seneviratne, University of Melbourne '18

Kristen Vierhaus, USF School of Law '18

Robert Williams, USF School of Law '18

Trevor Zeiler, USF School of Law '18



L-R: Robert, George, Trevor, Kristen, Madeleine, and Tarika