

CLEARY GOTTlieb

Pro Bono Practice Highlights



“Pro bono work is central to who we are at Cleary—our lawyers at every level of seniority, across all practice areas and geographies, are committed to addressing the complex legal needs of the communities in which they live and work. The dedication and enthusiasm of our people to create a lasting, positive impact on the lives of others is remarkable.”

Michael A. Gerstenzang
Managing Partner



“Cleary’s pro bono practice is committed to improving the lives of the most vulnerable. Our people consistently go above and beyond to advance that mission, providing support to small businesses, to immigrants and refugees, to advocates for civil rights, and to nonprofits globally. I am continually inspired by this collective effort in pursuit of positive change.”

Katherine Hughes
Director of Pro Bono – U.S.

Welcome

Founded in a spirit of inclusiveness, personal and professional responsibility, compassion for the needs of others, and dedication to improving our communities, Cleary Gottlieb is fully committed to the duties of good global citizenship. We believe pro bono work should be a mindful choice, one that expresses both personal and collective interests. Rather than make pro bono work mandatory, we fully support the voluntary legal efforts of all our lawyers and professional staff.

Cleary's pro bono practice is led by a team of full-time attorneys and professional staff across our offices. We work together to develop our relationships with nonprofit partners and to provide service opportunities around the globe.

We approach our pro bono work exactly as we approach our paying cases: prioritizing the needs of the client. A supervising partner at the helm of each project ensures that we leverage the full resources of the firm to provide assistance to vulnerable individuals and the community-based NGOs that serve them.

In 2021:

100,000+

Global Pro Bono
and Service Hours

700+

Pro Bono Clients Served

600+

Active Pro Bono Matters

100%

U.S. Summer Associate
Participation



Defending Immigrants and Human Trafficking Survivors

Immigration

- Successfully moved to reopen and dismiss the removal proceedings of a U.S. Navy veteran and long-time lawful permanent resident of the United States who was deported to Jamaica in 2012. As a result of Cleary's work, our client was reunited with his family after nearly a decade apart.
- Represented a citizen of Sierra Leone who was detained and tortured by the Revolutionary United Front. After litigating his case for over ten years, Cleary succeeded in obtaining asylum for this client.

Human Trafficking

- Represented 13 trafficking victims in 2021 from a range of countries, including Colombia, Guyana, and Jamaica, in securing their T visas and related immigration relief.
- Obtained a T visa for a transgender woman who was brought to the United States and forced into child prostitution. During that time, she was convicted of dozens of prostitution-related offenses, which Cleary helped vacate.
- Advocated on behalf of a pansexual man from Jamaica, securing his release from immigration custody on bond, halting his deportation, and ultimately securing his T visa. The client was forced to carry drugs into the United States by traffickers who threatened to reveal his bisexuality in Jamaica.

Immigrant Rights

- Filed a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' (USCIS) "no blanks" policy, through which USCIS rejected U visa petitions— often filed by female domestic violence survivors— solely on the basis that the petitions contained blank answer fields. USCIS records revealed that it had rejected nearly 12,000 U visa petitions in only 6 months. Cleary utilized the records to support litigation resulting in suspension of the policy.

"I went to law school to gain the tools to advocate for those most marginalized in our society, those who are all too often stripped of their humanity as a result of grave systemic inequities. Representing two survivors of Boko Haram's abduction of the Chibok schoolgirls has been a highlight of my time at Cleary. As a Nigerian woman, I was deeply moved by their stories. It was truly an honor and a privilege to help them secure humanitarian parole."

Nimat Lawal

Associate, New York





Advancing Human Rights Globally

International Human Rights

We regularly partner with the Clooney Foundation for Justice (CFJ), the Cyrus R. Vance Center for International Justice (Vance), the Public International Law & Policy Group (PILPG), the Center for Reproductive Rights, and the Center for Justice & Accountability in support of advancing human rights for all and advocating for societal change.

- **CFJ:** Partnered with the TrialWatch team to research, monitor, and report on the criminal trials of vulnerable individuals around the world, including prosecutions of political dissidents, journalists, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and more.
- **PILPG:** Collaborated with the Public International Law & Policy Group on one of their country-specific transitional justice teams to provide legal and technical support in the implementation of a permanent peace agreement.
- **Vance:** In connection with the Vance Center and Human Rights Watch, developed a comparative legal analysis focused on the right to comprehensive sexuality education in Brazil.

Humanitarian Crisis Response

We continually adapt and respond to global and domestic crises as they develop in real time. Our attorneys stand ready to commit their time and energy to those most deeply affected by these crises. Our recent efforts include:

- **Ukraine:** Assisting those seeking Temporary Protected Status and other forms of immigration relief; working with the Brussels Bar, the Legal Diversity and Inclusion Alliance, and other law firms to establish a legal helpdesk for refugees; advising nonprofits on sanctions compliance, corporate structuring, and tax-exempt status.
- **Afghanistan:** Representing a dozen journalists and their families on affirmative asylum applications and other humanitarian immigration relief as well as a high-ranking member of the prior Afghan government and a former student at an American university.
- **Disaster Relief:** In the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Ida, we delivered a City-wide training on FEMA appeals and then represented numerous clients whose homes had become uninhabitable.

Championing LGBTQ+ Rights

Amicus Briefs

- Filed an amicus brief in conjunction with law professors supporting a constitutional challenge to Alabama’s policy requiring individuals to undergo gender-confirming surgery before changing their gender marker on a driver’s license in *Corbitt v. Taylor*.
- Filed an amicus brief in conjunction with school administrators supporting a transgender student seeking to use a bathroom other than the one that matched the student’s sex assigned at birth in *Adams v. School Board of St. Johns County*.
- Co-drafted an amicus brief with the Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund (TLDEF) supporting a constitutional challenge to Arkansas’ ban on gender dysphoria treatment for youth, compiling stories from transgender adults who benefitted from the treatment in *Brandt v. Rutledge*.

Challenging “Conversion Therapy”

Cleary, with the Southern Poverty Law Center and co-counsel, obtained a major victory in the consumer fraud litigation against the “conversion therapy” referral organization Jews Offering New Alternatives for Homosexuality (JONAH).

In 2015, a jury found that JONAH’s program was fraudulent and unconscionable. The parties signed a settlement agreement, and the court entered a permanent injunction shutting down JONAH.

Undeterred, defendants continued the practice, and plaintiffs moved to enforce the permanent injunction and settlement agreement.

Ultimately, a trial court ordered the organization to cease all operations, dissolve as a corporate entity, and pay the agreed breach damages. The decision was recently affirmed on appeal.

“Together with our co-counsel, Cleary successfully shut down an organization that defrauded vulnerable young people, falsely telling them that being gay is a mental illness and that the organization’s program could change people from gay to straight. We were incredibly heartened by the unanimous jury verdict recognizing that the organization’s scheme had been an unconscionable violation of the New Jersey Consumer Fraud Act.”

Lina Bensman
Partner, New York





Incubating, Innovating, and Launching Ideas

Supporting Nonprofits

- Assist a range of nonprofits with formation and tax-exempt status, with missions ranging from reducing global carbon emissions to mentoring Brooklyn-based youth.
- Provide structuring and strategic advice. Currently guiding the Brooklyn Public Library through a historic merger; recently advised the Osborne Association on its corporate structure to better accommodate its reentry work.
- Offer holistic legal advice, drawing knowledge from across the firm, including on commercial leases, copyright and licensing matters, and a host of complex tax and governance projects. Clients include Legal Outreach, the Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, and many others.

Small Business Basics

- Recently launched the sixth year of our monthly business clinic; to date, attorneys have provided guidance to 120+ small businesses as they navigate their next steps.
- Regularly partner with community-based NGOs to provide education and training programs to local entrepreneurs.
- Advise on more complex small business projects, including corporate structuring, real estate, intellectual property, and tax, including:
 - Assisting a Haitian-American entrepreneur with plans to acquire a building to host her community gathering space.
 - Providing support to a writers' collective in its development of contracts governing a group publishing arrangement.

Social Finance for Change

- Develop innovative revenue-generating projects on behalf of pro bono clients and enable them to use finance as a tool for social change, including:
 - **The Nature Conservancy** on a new fund that aims to strengthen the practices around conservation efforts in targeted regions in Africa.
 - **Acumen** on a first-of-its-kind fund that provides critical capital to support African agricultural startups that help smallholder farmers adapt to the effects of climate change.
 - The **Guidebook to Digital Inclusion Bond Financing**, which outlines how sustainable financing frameworks can be used to meet the global challenge of digital inclusion and offers resources for those interested in pursuing these goals.



Pursuing Policing Reform and Justice for All

Impact Litigation

- In partnership with The Bronx Defenders, we filed a class action lawsuit against the NYPD and the City of New York challenging the NYPD's unlawful sharing of information from sealed arrest records in defiance of longstanding privacy laws. In 2021, we successfully filed for a preliminary injunction banning the NYPD from giving officers access to New Yorkers' sealed arrest records and directing the NYPD to issue corrective instructions to prevent the practice.
- In partnership with the Policing Project at NYU Law and co-counsel, we filed a lawsuit on behalf of indigenous rights, social justice, and environmental advocates against the Oregon Department of Justice challenging the state's covert domestic spying program, the Oregon TITAN Fusion Center, which is one of a national network of fusion centers that collect and share information between federal and state agencies.

Post-Conviction Advocacy

- Partnered with the Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth to represent individuals sentenced to life-without-parole as juveniles in their resentencing hearings after two landmark Supreme Court rulings retroactively abolished mandatory life-without-parole for juveniles in favor of individualized sentencing. Cleary recently completed a seven-day resentencing hearing for a client, at which the court sentenced our client to the minimum term-of-years, finding that he was remorseful and had demonstrated rehabilitation. After serving over 28 years in prison, our client has now been released.
- Piloted a new program with the ACLU of Maryland to assist clients with every aspect of their parole applications. We advise clients who have significant health concerns or are elderly, who were sentenced to lengthy terms as youths, or are particularly vulnerable due to other factors. We support our clients through each step of the parole process.

Upholding Civil Rights in a Time of Need

Housing

- Launched the Eviction Writs Project in partnership with the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Center through which we represent tenants with limited means in the last stage of eviction defense. Since fall 2021, Cleary has prevented evictions for numerous families unable to pay rent.
- Participated in short-term engagements to assist tenants with rental arrears through the American Rescue Plan. Our D.C. and New York attorneys assisted tenants with their emergency rental assistance applications, preventing eviction and homelessness.
- Successfully negotiated home repairs and a substantial rent refund on behalf of a client in a dispute with her landlord over numerous housing code violations. The D.C. Office of Administrative Hearings ordered the client's landlord to repair all the issues and granted her a refund of 19 months' worth of rent.

Veterans Benefits

- Through the Veterans Consortium, successfully represented a Navy veteran diagnosed with PTSD in a discharge upgrade, entitling the client to the full slate of VA benefits to assist with his medical issues.

Civil Protection Orders

- Represented a domestic violence survivor in filing a petition for a civil protection order against her husband, who faces several domestic violence charges in multiple jurisdictions involving assaults against her. After a day-long virtual mediation session, Cleary attorneys obtained a temporary protection order and later a civil protection order for the client.
- Cleary attorneys successfully obtained a two-year extension of a civil protection order for a domestic violence survivor who was subject to violent and harassing behavior from the father of her child.

“I’m grateful for the opportunity I’ve had at Cleary working with domestic violence survivors. The vast majority of victims seeking to break the cycle of abuse are left to navigate the judicial system unrepresented. Our team stood side-by-side with survivors in court, in partnership with DC Volunteer Lawyers Project. The burden lifted from a client’s shoulders at the close of a trial is palpable.”

Samuel H. Chang

Associate, Washington, D.C.





Highlighting EMEA Pro Bono

Refugee Support

- Assisted the International Refugee Assistance Program (IRAP) with potential litigation strategies across Europe to support persons displaced as a result of climate change.
- Collaborated with Refugee Legal Support, Safe Passage International, and various international law firms to launch the Afghan Pro Bono Initiative, offering legal advice and representation to refugees from Afghanistan.
- Assisted IRAP with researching and drafting reports on Afghanistan for use in future refugee resettlement work. The reports focus on the treatment of Afghan orphans, individuals with disabilities, and people perceived as “Westernized” in Afghanistan.

Nonprofit Advice

- Represented Save the Children Fund in the transfer of its Emergency Health Unit to Save the Children International.
- Advised Special Olympics Italia Onlus on a wide range of contract law, corporate, and compliance matters, including assistance with respect to the association’s bylaws, corporate governance, and accounting disclosure following reforms to the nonprofit sector in Italy.
- Assisted Comunità di Sant’Egidio in ongoing projects to establish a charitable collaboration to combat poverty and hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Legal Clinics

- Prepared a Legal Toolkit and established a free legal advice clinic in partnership with The Entrepreneurial Refugee Network (TERN) to help refugees in the UK set up their own businesses. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the clinic developed into a remote and rolling service, enabling refugees to access reliable advice quickly at a time of unprecedented difficulty.
- Partnered with Toynbee Hall to sponsor and staff a Free Legal Advice Clinic on Saturday mornings. The clinic supports local women, many of whom have suffered abuse, and offers advice on issues ranging from family law and domestic violence to housing and employment law.



Cleary Gottlieb's Public Interest Fellowship

During the pandemic, the firm launched an ambitious public interest fellowship program, placing Cleary Gottlieb associates at select nonprofits and legal services organizations for a one-year rotation, providing critically needed legal work to underserved communities. Originally conceived as a response to COVID-19 and the related increase in need for legal assistance of all kinds, the fellowship program is now an ongoing part of the firm's pro bono program.

Dozens of Cleary Fellows have now worked in an incredibly diverse range of practice areas through the Fellowship, including immigration (direct representation, impact litigation, and policy), criminal defense (public defender, criminal trials, appeals and post-conviction, and policy), civil rights (environmental and racial justice), international human rights (assisting post-conflict states and the wrongfully detained and/or convicted), civil work (benefits, employment, and economic justice), corporate and transactional (nonprofits and small businesses), and family law (domestic violence, orders of protection, and custody/visitation issues).

Host organizations include the ACLU Voting Rights Project, Brooklyn Defender Services, Clooney Foundation for Justice, Everytown for Gun Safety, International Refugee Assistance Project, Office of the Appellate Defender, Sanctuary for Families, Start Small Think Big, The Legal Aid Society, and more.

Committed to Service

Our lawyers and staff are committed to improving the communities in which we live and work. Dozens of Cleary lawyers serve on the boards of directors of nonprofit, academic, and arts organizations around the world. A sample of U.S. lawyers serving on the boards of our partner legal services organizations include:



Jonathan I. Blackman
Senior Counsel
Lawyers' Committee for
Civil Rights Under Law



Daniel Ilan
Partner
Volunteer Lawyers for
the Arts



Matthew D. Slater
Senior Counsel
Lawyers' Committee for
Civil Rights Under Law
Washington Lawyers
Committee



Carmine D. Boccuzzi Jr.
Partner
New York Lawyers for
the Public Interest



Mitchell A. Lowenthal
Senior Counsel
Urban Justice Center



Lisa Vicens
Partner
Her Justice
Cyrus R. Vance Center
for International Justice



Roger A. Cooper
Partner
The Legal Aid Society



Rahul Mukhi
Partner
New York Lawyers for
the Public Interest



Diana L. Wollman
Partner
Lawyers Alliance for
New York



Lev L. Dassin
Partner
The Bronx Defenders



Francesca L. Odell
Partner
Start Small Think Big



David H. Herrington
Partner
Lawyers' Committee for
Civil Rights Under Law



Lisa M. Schweitzer
Partner
Mobilization for Justice



Global Educational Pipelines

Cleary Gottlieb has a long tradition of actively supporting professional and educational pipelines for underserved students and communities at home and around the world.

Washington Irving Campus Program

For over 30 years, the firm has partnered with the Washington Irving Campus and Legal Outreach in New York City to prepare public high school students for college and adult life.

The firm's unique and robust partnership with the Washington Irving Campus, established in 1991, has led to rising graduation rates and SAT scores, along with more students applying and being accepted to colleges. Cleary's partnership activities with the Washington Irving Campus include:

- One-on-one mentoring of students
- College admissions assistance
- SAT preparation classes
- Mock Trial coaching
- Weekly Book Club
- Internship program

The firm employs a full-time coordinator to manage the partnership and to source other community service opportunities. Through the program, students cultivate meaningful relationships with legal professionals; expand their professional networks; develop valuable academic, professional, and social skills; and gain confidence in themselves, their work, and their future.

Legal Outreach: Experiential Learning for NYC High School Students

Cleary hosts a select group of student interns through the Legal Outreach program for a week of legal research, contract negotiation, brief writing, and litigation training. In 2021, we saw more than 70 Cleary volunteers collaborate with 16 student interns.

National Literacy Trust

Cleary's London office partners with the National Literacy Trust on a variety of initiatives to give disadvantaged young people the skills they need to succeed in education and employment. Cleary is a proud member of the Vision for Literacy Business Pledge, an initiative for businesses across the UK to support literacy levels and help secure the economic future of the next generation.

In 2021, Cleary launched the Words for Work Virtual Internship, a week-long program to provide a unique insight into working at an international law firm. Engaging more than 25 volunteers from Cleary's legal and professional support teams, the internship enables young people to develop the confidence and skills needed to support their transition into further education or employment.

Cleary has also worked with NLT to co-found Leaders for Literacy: Law, a roundtable for legal practitioners to address the literacy barriers that prevent many young people from pursuing a career in law.

City Solicitors Horizons

Since 2015, Cleary has partnered with Sponsors for Educational Opportunity in London to deliver a mentoring program to underserved university undergraduates aspiring towards a career in law. The program provides a unique opportunity for students to prepare for forthcoming law firm applications and vacation schemes.

Cleary volunteers mentor students selected under the program throughout their undergraduate degree, and the firm offers a one-week work placement each summer to provide students with a first-hand experience of working at a leading international law firm.

Recent Recognition



Best Collaboration Initiative for 28 Too Many

The Lawyer Awards



Pro Bono Partner of the Year

DC Volunteer Lawyers Project



Best New Pro Bono Activity; Most Effective Pro Bono Partnership

LawWorks Pro Bono Awards



Pro Bono Publico Award

The Legal Aid Society



Collaboration Award

National Literacy Trust Business Awards



Pro Bono Publico Award

LatinoJustice



Hon. Daniel W. Joy Dedicated Service Award

Lutheran Social Services of New York



Pro Bono Volunteer Partner Award

Catholic Charities Community Services



Impact Fund of the Year Award Winner: Cumberland Forest Project

Environmental Finance



Top Pro Bono Firm, Ranked No. 21

American Lawyer National Pro Bono Rankings



International Pro Bono Excellence Honoree

The Cyrus R. Vance Center for International Justice



Pro Bono Trailblazer: Katherine Hughes

New York Law Journal



International Pro Bono Firm of the Year

*Euromoney Legal Media Group's Americas
Women in Business Law Awards*



World Justice Challenge Award for Malawi Death Penalty Resentencing Project

The World Justice Project

“I’m extremely proud of Cleary’s work with the National Literacy Trust. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, colleagues across the London office volunteered regularly to support the education and employability of young people, enabling many to aspire towards careers in law. We are delighted to support NLT’s vital work in addressing the literacy gap and boosting social mobility.”

Nallini Puri
Partner, London



“I’m very proud of Cleary’s vital Pro Bono work. I’ve worked with teams across all of our offices on a variety of matters, including representing Afghan refugees seeking protection in the U.S., assisting domestic violence victims seeking safety, and helping tenants through landlord disputes. Witnessing the improvement of our clients’ situations has demonstrated the significance and necessity of this work.”

Jeremy Calsyn
Partner, Washington, D.C.

“As a first generation immigrant, I have always been passionate about supporting underserved students and promoting their education and professional development. Since I joined the firm in 2016, I have helped students, many of whom are first-generation immigrants, refugees, homeless, or family providers, receive up to full-ride scholarships to high caliber four-year universities through Cleary’s Washington Irving Campus Program. I am constantly humbled and awed by how much our students can accomplish when given the resources and tools to succeed.”

Shuangjun Wang
Associate, New York





“We have great opportunities to help those who have no one to speak for them. Our team has worked to defend laws in place to save lives from gun violence, including conducting a 50-state survey to address current state status of how a hate crime is defined and penalized and to what extent hate crime offenders are prohibited from the purchase or possession of firearms and why.”

Lisa Vicens

Partner, New York

“At Cleary, I have had the opportunity to do so much meaningful pro bono work for survivors of gender-based violence, including a full-year Fellowship representing domestic violence survivors in Family Court. In each case, Cleary has given me the tools I needed to support my clients, develop my skills as a lawyer, and pursue my passion for gender justice.”

Morton Bast

Associate, New York



“I’ve found it to be incredibly rewarding to use the skills I’ve honed in my private funds practice for the benefit of our pro bono clients. Raising a social impact fund takes as much effort as raising any other private equity or venture capital fund, so the dedication of resources to these funds speaks to the firm’s commitment to pro bono.”

Jamal Fulton

Partner, New York



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To learn more about Cleary Gottlieb's pro bono practice, please visit us at:
www.clearygottlieb.com/pro-bono



clearygottlieb.com

Founded in 1946 by lawyers committed to legal excellence, internationalism, and diversity, Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP is a leading international law firm with approximately 1,100 lawyers around the world. The firm has 16 closely integrated offices in New York, Washington, D.C., Paris, Brussels, London, Frankfurt, Cologne, Rome, Milan, Hong Kong, Beijing, São Paulo, Abu Dhabi, Seoul, and the Bay Area.

Under the rules of certain jurisdictions, this may constitute Attorney Advertising. Prior results do not guarantee a similar outcome.

Throughout this brochure, "Cleary Gottlieb", "Cleary" and the "firm" refer to Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP and its affiliated entities in certain jurisdictions, and the term "offices" includes offices of those affiliated entities.