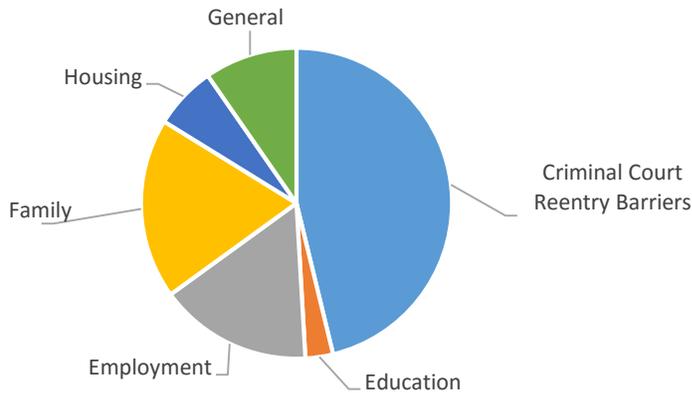


OUR WORK

Types of Legal Services



Why RAP Sheets?

We obtain RAP sheets for nearly all our clients for four important reasons:

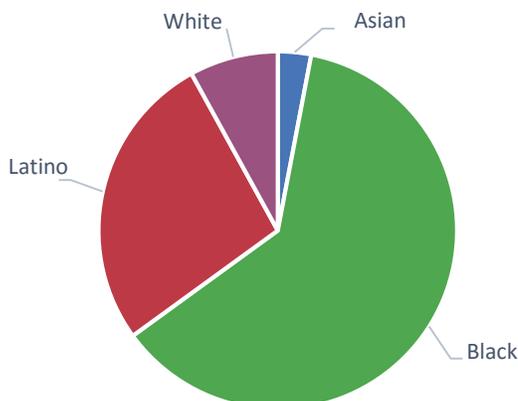
- 1: Before our intervention, 35% of our clients are mis-reporting their criminal histories in job interviews, either disclosing criminal contact they aren't legally required to, or withholding information that employers will see when they run a background check. We explain what they should and should not be disclosing to employers, landlords, and colleges.
- 2: Young people struggle in interviews when they must answer tough questions about their criminal histories. When we go over RAP sheets, we also conduct "mock interviews" with them so they can practice explaining their criminal past and then pivoting towards their bright futures.
- 3: We find errors on 30% of arrests on RAP sheets: charges that should be dismissed and sealed are appearing on background checks, preventing youth from getting jobs. We travel to courthouses, communicate with the NYPD and District Attorneys, and do whatever it takes to fix these errors.
- 4: In order to counsel clients on their re-entry needs, we must have a full understanding of their goals as well as their criminal history. Then we can predict what barriers there might be to achieving those goals, and work with the young person to remove them.

IN 2015, YOUTH REPRESENT . . .

- provided legal representation or advice to **951** youth.
- obtained **788** rap sheets to help youth understand their criminal records, and corrected **171** errors in those rap sheets.
- worked on **335** new cases.
- taught **158** legal workshops to **1,548** youth, families and youth service providers.

OUR CLIENTS

Client Demographic



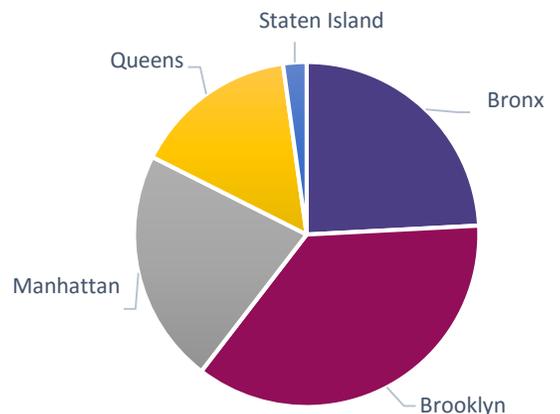
Gender Identity



22

Average Age

Borough of Residence



YEAR-END HIGHLIGHTS: STRENGTH BEFORE GROWTH

As the critical issues of mass incarceration and re-entry are pushed to the forefront of our nation's and our city's consciousness, the need for Youth Represent's legal services has never been clearer. But before expanding too quickly, we wanted to look inward. Part of this recognition was rooted in a recent evaluation of our community-lawyering model: the report suggested that we "institutionalize the high-quality interpersonal relationships" between our attorneys and their clients.

To do so, we set out to identify what made these relationships so special—that is, to identify our organizational values. We wanted a set of values that would not only define who we are but that would also challenge us to reach farther and work harder in the future.



YOUTH DRIVEN: Young people's voices and lives matter. Therefore, we take the time needed to listen deeply, think boldly, and act thoughtfully. Our client-centered representation helps ensure youth preserve their dignity as we take the journey with them from courtroom to community.

FEARLESS: We always take on the fight for our clients. We are committed to challenging racial and social injustice in the legal system and driving policy change through our deep knowledge of practice. Our fearlessness is strengthened by our humility. There is no defined end to what we are prepared to do for our clients as they navigate the systemic barriers arising from justice involvement.

RESOURCEFUL: We are agile, flexible and deeply committed to providing first-rate legal representation to young people. We maintain our strength through mentoring, supporting, and challenging one another. We are always learning as individuals and as an organization.

GENUINE: We believe in people and our capacity to grow and learn as individuals and as a team. We actively cultivate a supportive, healthy community where people are treated authentically and with compassion. This culture is seen and felt by our young clients and empowers us to be a strong and dynamic force for change.

We also finished our strategic plan: where before we represented youth with criminal histories on legal problems caused by those legal histories, we will now represent youth with criminal histories for whatever legal problem they might face. We have come to recognize that any legal issue can disrupt a young person's chance of successful reentry, regardless of its root cause.

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