

## **SRLP Allied Attorney Network**

Dear Colleague:

We want to invite you to be part of our growing SRLP Allied Attorney Network! With your help, the SRLP Allied Attorney Network will gather an amazing list of allied attorneys who are committed to the values and vision of SRLP.

The Sylvia Rivera Law Project (SRLP) works to guarantee that all people are free to self-determine their gender identity and expression, regardless of income or race, and without facing harassment, discrimination, or violence. SRLP is a collective organization founded on the understanding that gender self-determination is inextricably intertwined with racial, social and economic justice. Therefore, we seek to increase the political voice and visibility of low-income people of color who are transgender, intersex, or gender non-conforming. SRLP works to improve access to respectful and affirming social, health, and legal services for our communities. We believe that in order to create meaningful political participation and leadership, we must have access to basic means of survival and safety from violence.

Our small staff of SRLP attorneys does an immense amount of work each year, providing direct legal services to well over 150 clients each year and litigating important precedent setting cases of national impact. The purpose of the SRLP Allied Attorney Network is to expand our resources and provide more of our clients with safe and affirming legal services, while providing opportunities to other members of the bar to gain substantive experience and do meaningful public service work. You may decide if you want to be directly involved in our work by taking on a case as our "allied counsel" or co-counseling with us in a case. You may also assist us by drafting *amicus* briefs, which can carry your name or not, depending on the circumstances of your practice. You can also decide you want to undertake a piece of legal research, volunteer as a legal observer at a protest, or help us in a number of other ways.

Already, in our few years of existence, SRLP has won major victories with the indispensable involvement of allied attorneys. Allied attorneys helped litigate *Doe v. Bell*, the precedent-setting case establishing the right of transgender youth in foster care to be free from discrimination and to wear clothing according to their gender identity. This year, allied attorneys helped us win a favorable settlement in the case of a young transgender woman denied needed medical care in her juvenile justice facility. Allied attorneys also helped us in our successful three-year battle to create a policy of Department of Homeless Services that brings meaningful access to homeless shelters for transgender women in New York City.

SRLP is contacted by many individuals all over New York and around the country, to whom we would like to provide names of local attorneys sensitive to their needs. To that end, we maintain a list with the names of attorneys who are sensitive to transgender,

intersex, gender non-conforming people and issues of poverty and race. These resources are incredibly useful—many of the people who call us for assistance have been turned away for legal help multiple times already or are afraid to reach out to anyone because they think they will be treated badly. We hope that you will consider allowing us to add you to our list. We request, but do not require that you waive any initial consultation fee, as well as offer your services on a sliding-scale or, where permissible, contingency-fee only basis for low and moderate income people presenting with legal issues related to gender identity, gender expression, or intersex condition. We pride ourselves on connecting callers with appropriate resources, so we hope you will not mind answering the additional questions on our check list to allow us to make connections that will work better for callers and attorneys and to make our callers feel safer.

Please understand that while we are in great need of allied attorneys, depending on our current needs and the stage of development of the cases we are working on, it may be quite some time before we contact you with a project that we think is ready and right for you. On the other hand, it may be tomorrow! Whether or not we get in touch with you right away, know that we do need and deeply appreciate your support.

If you would like to join our network, please click on the link below and take a moment to complete the information form. If you have any questions, e-mail us at [info@srp.org](mailto:info@srp.org). Once we receive your form we may contact you and conduct a short interview to verify your information before adding you to our list. Thanks again for your continued support. We look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

Sylvia Rivera Law Project