FROM THE COLLECTIVE

This issue of the Sylvia Rivera Law Project’s Annual Report is dedicated to the community members we lost this year. On January 5th transgender artist Vincent Tafarella passed away. Artist and activist Chloe Dzubillo died on February 18, 2011. On March 15th former collective member Isaac Kwock passed away after a fight with cancer. Each of them have graced SRLP with their energy and insights over the years.

We remember Vincent for his charisma and friendliness. Vincent was a long time community member and supporter of the Sylvia Rivera Law Project. Vincent served and as a mentor and supporter of many young transgender people in New York City. Vincent was also a renowned artist and activist who generously donated his art to the organizations he cared about, including SRLP. A memorial service and art show to commemorate Vincent’s life was held at the LGBT Community Center in May.

We remember Chloe for her passion and her larger than life presence. Chloe was a tireless advocate for the diverse transgender populations in New York City as well as for people living with HIV and AIDS. She was also a truly amazing and gifted artist and graciously donated her art to support the work of both Sylvia Rivera Law Project and Visual AIDS, an arts and advocacy project in New York City. Chloe was also a resilient fighter with the public action group, Transgender Menace a fierce survivor who lived with AIDS for over 20 years, and an outspoken leader.

We remember Isaac for his thoughtfulness, his style, his gentleness, his brilliance, his humor – especially sarcasm – and the amazing ideas and energy he brought to our work. As a collective member at SRLP from 2007 through 2009, Isaac served actively on our Board team, as well as various SRLP committees and projects. He played an instrumental role in setting our five-year goals and vision through our strategic planning process. In addition, Isaac was involved in countless other organizations governed by and serving people of color, low income people, young people, queer people, and transgender people in New York City. He gave so much of his life to social justice work, and to our communities.

All of us at SRLP want to thank and honor Vincent, Chloe and Isaac for the joy and vision they shared with us. Each of them in their own authentically beautiful ways modeled a revolutionary vision. We carry their vision forward with love as we build communities, strategies, and mass movements for transliberation.
Gabriel Foster, our new Outreach Director, works to connect and engage community members by spreading the word about SRLP while working closely with Membership Director, Reina Gossett and the Movement Building Team. He also coordinates outreach to our imprisoned community members through our Prisoner Advisory Committee and Prisoner Pen Pal Project.

Reina Gossett, our new Membership Director, focuses on building and maintaining relationships with new SRLP members to grow leadership and deepen their involvement in our work supporting gender self-determination and changing policies that impact our communities.

Doyin Ola, our new Director of Grassroots Fundraising, is focused on maintaining and growing our community of supporters, as well as working with Daniel McGee, Director of Finance and Development, to coordinate our financial management systems.

Chase Strangio has been awarded an Equal Justice Works Fellowship. Chase’s fellowship focuses on addressing the legal and organizing needs of transgender, gender non-conforming and intersex people with psychiatric disabilities and deepening SRLP’s connection to and support of the disability justice movement.

The mission of SRLP is 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.
POLICY REFORM

WELFARE JUSTICE!

Since the successful and historic organizing campaign to push the Human Resources Administration (HRA) to issue a new policy to protect trans and gender nonconforming people from discrimination when accessing benefits, SRLP has continued to work with the Welfare Justice Campaign to end transphobic discrimination and harassment in New York City’s Welfare system.

As with all policy wins, we know that implementation through training can be the most important part of ensuring real change. We successfully urged HRA to allow us to train agency staff and have begun training over 8,000 employees and trainers at HRA’s HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA). For trans and gender-nonconforming people trying to access benefits, HASA has been the most challenging agency to navigate. The first two trainings were at the HRA training headquarters in Queens, NY. We trained both HRA trainers and staff on definitions, legal frameworks and protections, and the HRA policy. HRA workers acknowledged that it was the first time they were trained on these issues or had even read the policy since it was implemented in December 2009.

Since those initial trainings, we have begun hosting ‘Train the Trainers’ workshops so that more community members can get involved and broaden their leadership and training skills. There are now about 15 trans and gender non-conforming people of color—many of whom are welfare recipients—participating in the providing the trainings to HRA.

In the words of Pooja Gehi, “It is clear that without the hard work of trans and gender non conforming people organizing in New York City, these trainings would not happen and HRA would continue to be a hostile place for trans and gnc people. This is an unmistakable example of the power our communities hold and can leverage.”

COMBATTING SEXUAL ASSAULT IN DETENTION

SRLP, in coalition with the American Civil Liberties Union, The Equity Project, Lambda Legal, National Center for Lesbian Rights, The National Center for Transgender Equality and the Transgender Law Center, submitted comments on the Department of Justice’s proposed regulations for the implementation of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), a law intended to reduce sexual violence and exploitation in prison.

For many years, SRLP and our Prisoner Advisory Committee have been involved in fighting for changes to protect trans, gender nonconforming, and intersex (TGNCl) people in detention. The new regulation, published on February 3, 2011, reflects many of SRLP’s previous suggestions, including requiring correctional agencies to consider placing TGNCl individuals in the facility, male or female, that would be safest for them. During this round of comments, we encourage prohibiting all searches of TGNCl individuals for the sole purposes of “determining” genital status, including searches done in private by a medical practitioner. We emphasize that all such searches constitute assault and must be prohibited under the Act. We also advocate for clearer guidelines regarding placement of vulnerable individuals in involuntary protective custody and re-emphasize the importance of providing safer placements for TGNCl individuals.
MOVEMENT BUILDING TEAM

Last Summer, SRLP launched the all new the Movement Building Team (MBT)! MBT’s work centers on developing the skills, leadership and political power of low-income transgender people and transgender people of color while increasing our capacity to improve access to respectful and affirming social, health, and legal services for our communities. MBT works to build and strengthen relationships with community members, and support members’ participation in SRLP’s work. In this way, SRLP is building a broader membership base, increasing both our organizational capacity and the scope and scale of our leadership development.

SRLP’s MBT hosts a monthly workshop and skills building event called HOT STUFF! This series focuses on building and strengthening our communities and developing the leadership of our members through ongoing skill-shares, workshops and “Know Your Rights” trainings. Over the past few months, HOT STUFF! has provided education & tools to our communities. We build power and knowledge by demystifying legal processes around legal name & gender marker changes, navigating the immigration system, and most recently on healthcare, specifically medicaid and its trans exclusion policy.

HOT STUFF! happens on the 3rd Thursdays of each month. All HOT STUFF! events are FREE and refreshments and Metrocards are provided.

COFFEE TALK

In addition to HOT STUFF! MBT hosts another all-new ongoing monthly event, Coffee Talk. Coffee Talk is a member-led, informal political education space for our community members. Recent Coffee Talk events have featured films, documentaries and discussions on trans people in the media, the history of trans activism, and the ways trans people navigate their family lives. Coffee Talk offers the rare space BY and FOR trans, intersex, and gender non-conforming people who are low income and/or people of color to build community together through conversation and truth telling while we “Chit, Chat and Chew”.

Coffee Talk is FREE and refreshments and Metrocards are provided.

Please join us and support this new work by helping us spread the news as we continue to build momentum and mobilize community!

For up to date info about HOT STUFF! and Coffee Talk, make sure you’re on our mailing list, visit our website at www.srlp.org or “like” us on Facebook!
PUBLIC EDUCATION

In 2010 SRLP reached over 700 students, activists, service providers, attorneys and judges at over 24 trainings and speaking engagements across the country! Our public education increases awareness and support of transgender, gender non-conforming and intersex people — making services and basic necessities more accessible and reducing discrimination and violence. We also speak out to ensure that issues of poverty and gender identity discrimination are prioritized.

In addition to training 275 attorneys and judges last year, we have also been working to ensure that the lawyers of tomorrow are equally well-prepared to address the intersections of gender identity, race and class as well as provide safe legal services for transgender people. In the last few months alone, SRLP spoke to over 175 law students at the Yale Law School Rebellious Lawyering conference in Connecticut, at Rutgers University School of Law in New Jersey, at Brooklyn Law School, and CUNY School of Law in Queens, New York.

- This April, three SRLP staffers attended the 2011 Reproductive Justice Conference hosted by the Civil Liberties and Public Policy Program at Hampshire College. SRLP spoke about trans inclusion to emerging leaders in reproductive justice at the New Leadership Networking Initiative meeting prior to the conference. At the conference, SRLP presented our intersectional analysis on two panels, Colonized Spaces, Criminalized Bodies, and Reproductive Justice in our LGBTQ+ Communities, reaching over 100 students and activists.

- In October, Staff Attorneys Pooja Gehi and Elana Redfield were invited to speak at the Seattle University School of Law Symposium, The Edge that Cuts: Intersections of Transphobia, Racism, Economic Injustice, and the Law. Pooja, Elana, and Collective Member, Gabriel Arkles presented on their paper about the role of lawyers in social justice movements. They examined decision-making structures in trans legal advocacy and discussed the ways lawyers can take leadership from and support the goals of community organizing projects. They also participated in a roundtable discussion on “Trans Healthcare Access: Local, State, and National Perspectives.”

MEET OUR 21st CENTURY FELLOW!

SRLP is very proud that Daniel McGee, Director of Finance and Development, has been selected as a 2011-12 21st Century Fellow of the Pipeline Project, a recruitment, retention, and leadership advancement effort that aims to increase the level of diversity in the leadership of the LGBT movement. The 21st Century Fellows Program is a year-long leadership program for people of color managers currently working at national and international LGBT human rights, service and advocacy organizations. The program consists of leadership trainings and mentoring and is structured to build community and connection within the cohort. The 21st Century Fellows Program is coordinated in partnership with the Flexible Leadership Investment Program and Rockwood Leadership Institute with Funding Support from the Arcus Foundation, the Gill Foundation and the Evelyn & Walter Haas Jr. Fund.
Every year, SRLP provides free legal services to over 250 transgender, intersex and gender non-conforming low income people and people of color yet we have never considered ourselves a traditional service provider. In the traditional model of legal services, lawyers intervene to help low-income individuals exercise their legal rights against more powerful parties such as government agencies, criminal prosecutors, and landlords. Representation is intended to protect, rather than expand, the person’s existing rights. Outcomes are often limited to whatever short-lived improvements may be available, rather than the client’s long term needs and goals.

SRLP provides legal services with the understanding that real improvements in our community members’ lives will not come from within a legal system that intentionally perpetuates wealth disparity, racism, hetero-normativity, and ablism. This system can only thrive when people at the margins – poor people, people of color, immigrants, transgender people, queer people, and people with disabilities – can be surveilled, manipulated, and imprisoned by people in power. The legal remedies available in our current system are limited and often serve more to legitimize and perpetuate the legal system than to actually help people in the long run.

However, we know from experience that a name change, or green card, or access to hormones really makes a difference in a person’s well-being and survival. We believe that as people at the margins of the system, we are the ones who will bring real social change when we are powerful and have strong community. We see legal services as a means to that end – to building the capacity of trans and gender nonconforming people to survive, resist marginalization, organize, build community, and shift power. Through the provision of direct legal services to communities facing the worst consequences of transphobia and poverty, we are removing barriers to participation while building one-on-one relationships with individuals who are directly affected by the systemic gender-based injustices we are fighting. These relationships are the foundation to building meaningful participation and leadership in our quest for gender justice.

NEW LEGAL CLINICS
In partnership with the Audre Lorde Project’s 3rd Space program, we now host a drop-in clinic on the second Tuesday of every month in ALP’s Brooklyn office. We have also begun holding drop-in clinics at the Jackson Heights, Queens office of Make The Road NY on the fourth Tuesday of every month. These clinics provide an opportunity to broaden the reach of our legal services to transgender communities outside of Manhattan, and also serve to deepen our organizational relationships with the Audre Lorde Project and Make the Road NY. Meanwhile, we continue to provide our long-standing monthly clinic at the Bronx Community Pride Center, which means that we now have four of New York City’s five boroughs covered. So far the clinics have been a great success!
We are happy to share that 77% of our expenses went to Programs & Services between July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010.
COMMUNITY SUPPORT

SRLP is proud of the diverse income streams that make up our annual fundraising plan! Our Grassroots Fundraising Plan includes annual events such as house parties, Small Works for Big Change and the Summer Reception; individual donor campaigns; and earned income strategies including sales of our documentary video Toilet Training and workshop and speaking gig honoraria. These strategies build support for SRLP and raise community awareness about trans issues while bringing in crucial funds.

In Fiscal Year 10, the economy slowly rebounded from the fiscal crisis of 2009. Consequently, SRLP saw a substantial spike in our Grassroots Fundraising income. Though we experienced a small dip in the number of total individual donors (as compared to last year), we saw a 45% increase in the number of Major Donors! Many of our donors and supporters who were impacted by the economic crisis generously stepped up and gave more this year.

As we head into the 4th Quarter of FY11, we are pleased to see support for SRLP continue to grow, giving us confidence in our sustainability.

All of this is possible because of SRLP’s incredible community of supporters and donors!

HOW TO SUPPORT SRLP

To make a tax-deductible donation, send a check to SRLP at: 147 W 24th St, 5th Fl/NYC NY 10011. You can use the enclosed envelope you’ll find attached to this annual report.

at www.srlp.org/support you can
• donate easily online
• Join our mailing/email list,
• fill out a volunteer form
• join our Allied Attorney Network
• find out more about making a donation of stock

Purchase our Toilet Training documentary DVD, or an SRLP t-shirt, poster, or tote bag!

We also love in-kind donations! Office supplies and food and beverages for events are always on our wish list!

Questions? Write to info@srlp.org
SMALL WORKS FOR BIG CHANGE!

On February 12, 2011 we held our 6th Annual Small Works for Big Change--an annual benefit art auction that brings together our creative community to support social justice. Over 70 artists generously donated their amazing work and over 300 people attended this year! Thank you to everyone who came and packed Jack Studios to the walls, and to MC Emily Nepon, DJs Healthy Pleasures & Ben Haber, Nicholas Gorham, Gay Banjo, and the Rude Mechanical Orchestra for keeping the crowd moving. We raised about $20,000! Thanks also to Hey Queen! for hosting the fabulous after-party!

LEGAL RECEPTION HONORING GABRIEL ARKLES!

SRLP honored Gabriel Arkles, dedicated trans advocate, at our July 2010 Legal Reception. Gabriel, a current collective member and former staff attorney at SRLP, has published numerous articles, including Safety and Solidarity Across Gender Lines: Rethinking the Segregation of Transgender People in Detention, which appeared in the Temple Political & Civil Rights Law Review in 2009. About 75 people, representing over 20 nonprofit organizations and legal firms, came to support SRLP and learn more about the work we are doing to fight discrimination based on gender identity and expression. We raised over $9,500 and welcomed many new people into the SRLP family.

STONENWALL HONORS POOJA GEHI!

We are pleased to announce that staff attorney Pooja Gehi was selected by the Stonewall Community Foundation as one of 20 Remarkable Leaders honored for their leadership and dedication to the LGBT community. Pooja’s achievements were celebrated at Stonewall’s signature Honors Event on December 2, 2010 at the Highline Ballroom.

SRLP COLLECTIVE MEMBERS 2009-2010

Gabriel Arkles  
Mila Khan  
Elana Redfield

Félix E. Gardón  
Mickey Lambert  
Stefanie Rivera

Naomi Clark  
Daniel McGee  
Dean Spade

Pooja Gehi  
Emily Nepon  
Chase Strangio

Catherine Granum  
Rachel Peters Qadir  
Alisha Williams

Gael Guevara  
Nadia Qurashi
DONOR SUPPORT JUNE - DECEMBER 2010

SPECIAL GIFTS

In memory of: Samantha Jane Dorsett, “Kassandra” Miguel Sevilla.

FOUNDATION SUPPORT FY 2010 (JULY 09-JUNE 10)

SRLP thanks our generous In Kind Donors (May 10 - April 11):
ARTFORUM, Asahi , Babeland, Browning Frames, Cinereach LTD, Home/Made Brooklyn, Izze Sparkling Juice, Ilana Lobet Framing, Jack Studios, Latis Imports, Translation Department, and Richard Peebles.
SAVE THE DATE!

SRLP’s 1st Annual GALA-SPECTACULAR!

Wednesday, June 29, 2011 - 8:00pm - 11:00pm

The Knitting Factory-Brooklyn, 361 Metropolitan Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11211.

Featuring performances by I.G. Rivera, Geo Wyeth of Novice Theory, Tactical Spectacle, Lana Carroll of the Low and the Lonesome, and the Legendary Stefanie Rivera! MC, Lucia Leandro Gimeno aka LLG, will keep you entertained and titillated, while DJs Benjamin Haber (JUDY) and Brian Belukha (JUDY), will keep you moving all night. PLUS! Fantastic raffle prizes, hors d'oeuvres, and drinks.

Honoring:

Jay Toole, Director of the Shelter Organizing Project, Queers for Economic Justice
John Boston, Director of Prisoners’ Rights Project, The Legal Aid Society
Kit Yan, Award-winning Slam Poet & the 1st ever Mr. Transman 2010
Rickke Mananzala, former Executive Director of FIERCE!

$20 - $100 sliding scale, but no one turned away. RSVP on Facebook.
For more information email Doyin@srlp.org or call 212.337.8550 x300