Greetings

In our quiet way, working case by case, St. Louis Volunteer Lawyers and Accountants for the Arts (VLAA) connects the creative community with lawyers and accountants who share our belief that success in the arts should depend on creative energy and talent, not on the ability to afford professional services.

We are grateful to the foundations, corporations, law and accounting firms, public funding agencies, law students and individuals who support our work.

New Website, New Logo

We introduced a new logo and launched a new website. The “responsive design” site provides easy reading and navigation across a wide range of devices. Our forms are now electronic, and a law student blog debuted during the summer.

Referrals

During FY15, 171 new clients received free one-on-one assistance from our volunteers, a 21 percent increase compared to FY14 and an all-time record. Many more artists, arts administrators and board members received on-going assistance.

Ellen Norrenberns, audit principal, Brown Smith Wallace, has assisted New Music Circle, Paul Art Space and Cherokee Photobooth since she became a volunteer in 2010. “Growing up, I was into band, chorus and theatre, as were most of my friends, so I have a strong attraction to the artistic community,” she said. “I like giving back and hanging out with the artists. They add a bit of flavor and creativity to my life.” After providing bookkeeping and tax services to RiverStyx, which publishes an award-winning journal of poetry, fiction, essays, interviews and art, and hosts a reading series, she recently agreed to join the organization’s board of directors. “Ellen is one of the best things that ever happened to Riverstyx,” said Richard Newman, editor.
Workshops & Clinics

In the fall and spring, we offered Accidental Arts Administrator, which provides basic training for new and emerging organizations. Our Business Edge seminar series for individual artists — 10 sessions — was complemented by three clinic programs. In November, we sponsored our first LLC clinic, which combined a short presentation with one-on-one consultations with attorney-accountant teams. Thirty-five artists attended our copyright clinic, which also included a presentation followed by consultations. Law students were invited to observe both clinics. Thanks to our partnership with Gateway EITC Community Coalition, we offered free tax preparation to the residents of Metropolitan Artist Lofts and Leather Trades Artist Lofts.

Outreach

Our Upstart initiative reached more than 750 college students during the 2014-15 school year. By providing both volunteers and working artists as guest speakers and distributing our easy-to-understand guides, this program helps visual arts, music, theatre, dance and film students make the transition from the academic environment to their artistic careers and exposes young artists to VLAA.

Our grassroots Every Artist Insured campaign, made possible by support from the Regional Arts Commission, helps artists navigate the changing health insurance landscape. We co-hosted free information and enrollment sessions, posted easy-to-understand online information and sent email blasts. Our community partners included Saint Louis University health law students, KDHX and the Community Action Agency of St. Louis County.

In May, we hosted our annual free continuing education training program for lawyers and accountants. Real World Ethical Issues in Pro Bono Practice and our rooftop reception were co-sponsored by the Greater Saint Louis Community Foundation. Step Out, our fourth annual networking and public service event for summer associates, new hires and other law and accounting firm employees was held at Jazz St. Louis. Finally, six law students spent their summer vacation learning how the law relates to the unique issues raised in the arts and by artists.
Financial Highlights  

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES  
Year Ended 6/30/15

REVENUES  
Public Funding .......................................................... $42,465  
Private Funding .......................................................... 41,948  
Program Revenue ......................................................... 14,167  
Investments ............................................................... 2,143  
Total ............................................................... $100,723

EXPENSES  
Program ................................................................. $75,795  
Management & General .............................................. 11,661  
Fundraising ............................................................. 9,717  
Total ............................................................... $97,173  
Net Income ............................................................. $3,550

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
Total Assets 6/30/14 ................................................... $107,875  
Total Assets 6/30/15 ................................................... $118,575

By the Numbers

1982  
St. Louis Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts is incorporated. 
Accountants were added and our name changed to St. Louis 
Volunteer Lawyers and Accountants for the Arts in 1984.

18  
New volunteers joined our panel in FY15, bringing our total 
number of volunteers to 300+.

171  
Number of new clients who received one-on-one assistance in 
FY15. Since FY07, annual referrals have increased by 144 percent.

752  
Number of college students reached by our Upstart program. 
Our speakers made 50 presentations at 10 area colleges and 
universities.

$17,795  
Amount donated by law and accounting firms and other corporate 
sponsors. Thank you!

$150K+  
Pro bono services provided by our volunteers each year.

Mission

St. Louis Volunteer Lawyers and Accountants for the Arts (VLAA) supports the creative 
community by providing free legal and accounting assistance and a wide variety of 
affordable educational programs. We serve artists of every discipline and career level, 
nonprofit cultural organizations and small arts-related businesses. Our organization 
enhances the region’s cultural fabric and offers rewarding volunteer opportunities.