



VOCAL-US

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ANNUAL REPORT

300 DOUGLASS ST, BROOKLYN NY 11217 | (718) 802-9540 | VOCAL-US.ORG

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VOCAL-US is building a movement that builds the power of low-income people dedicated to ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the war on drugs, mass incarceration, and homelessness. We approach this work with a firm belief in reducing harm and ending stigma, and the knowledge that the issues impacting our communities are driven by institutional oppression, not personal failings.

Our model of movement building draws inspiration from three traditions: traditional community-based organizing, direct-action AIDS activism, and Black-led social movements for racial justice. We bring together people who are directly impacted by our core issues—through our powerful state organizations in New York, Kentucky, and Texas—to identify the issues they're facing and develop community-led solutions, and empower them with tools and opportunities to fight for systemic change.

VOCAL-US evaluates our success on our ability to move people to action, the strength and depth of our leadership, our ability to shift the narrative, and concrete victories, and where we offer services, on our ability to save lives and connect people to housing, healthcare, and other resources to improve their well-being.



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2025 HIGHLIGHTS:

- United VOCAL chapters in Washington D.C. to join partners for an emergency mobilization to stop the nearly 50% proposed budget cuts of \$34 billion to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the gutting of programs like Section 8, SNAP, homelessness response federal aid, and Medicaid.
- Leaders traveled to Austin TX, to attend a symposium on homelessness and protest of billionaire-backed policy initiatives to criminalize homelessness, led by VOCAL-TX.
- Marked the 1-year anniversary of the SCOTUS decision in Johnson v. Grants Pass by calling for Housing Not Handcuffs in NYC, Rochester, Austin, Louisville, and Lexington.
- Leaders traveled to Washington D.C. to deliver remarks at a press conference rejecting cuts to HUD.
- Earned media coverage 18 times.

We are deeply appreciative of our partners, donors, volunteers, friends, and allies who stand with us in fighting for systemic change rooted in justice, compassion, and love. To join them, reach out to development@vocal-us.org for more details about upcoming opportunities and events.





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VOCAL-NY

2025 HIGHLIGHTS:

- Succeeded in our #FreeToPee campaign, with a law passed to establish a city-wide public bathroom network, mandating at least one restroom for every 2,000 New Yorkers by 2035.
- Worked with allies to win funding for mental health infrastructure, including:
 - \$7.3 million for re-entry housing and respite centers for homeless New Yorkers.
 - \$15.5 million to expand Mobile Treatment Teams.
 - \$4.5 million to hire 60 peer counselors within DOHMH to support non-police crisis response.
- Stopped Mayor Adams' attempt to increase CityFHEPS voucher holders' rent contribution from 30% to 40% for recipients in their 5th year.
- Blocked Governor Hochul's plan to further criminalize the overdose crisis by scheduling fentanyl-related substances at the federal level.
- Launched "She's So VOCAL" in Rochester to expand women's leadership across NY.
- With TakeRoot Justice, released the WiFi for ALL report on Internet access, with the majority of surveys collected by leaders from our Homelessness Union.

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2025 BY THE NUMBERS:

OVERVIEW:

- 1,420 Contacts made
- 309 New members
- 656 People mobilized 3,582 times
- 52 Leaders
- 117 Actions
- 263 Media hits



SERVICES DATA:

- 12,150 Visits to the drop-in center:
 - 764 Drop-in center enrollments
 - 14,560 Bathroom visits
 - 1,510 Showers
 - 1,015 Loads of laundry
 - 142 Community and wellness groups attended by 998 people
- 120 Safe haven referrals resulting in 52 placements
- 2,086 Syringe Service Program transactions to 1,968 people:
 - 110,030 Syringes distributed
 - 771 Fentanyl or xylazine test strips
- 1,626 Peer Delivered Syringe Exchange encounters through 279 sessions:
 - 149,670 Syringes distributed
 - 165 New service enrollments
 - 5,936 Fentanyl or xylazine test strips
- 11,382 Public health vending machine transactions:
 - 844 Narcan kits
 - 1,592 Fentanyl or xylazine test strips



THANK YOU:



Thank you to our 2025 Gala for Justice, Compassion, and Love sponsors!

The Ali Forney Center – Amida Care – Atolye NYC – Beatrice K. Techawatanasuk – Beldock Levine & Hoffman LLP – Brooklyn Defenders – Coalition for the Homeless, Inc. – Communication Workers of America, District 1 – CrossFit South Brooklyn – CSH – Division of General Internal Medicine, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai – Drug Policy Alliance – FWD.US – GRF CPAs & Advisors – Housing Works – International Society of Haiku Poets – JustLeadershipUSA – Kate Linker and Bernard Tschumi – Malkin & Ross – MetroPlusHealth – Palante Technology Cooperative – People's Action Institute – The People's Forum – Professional Staff Congress/CUNY – Progressive Technology Project – Riders Alliance – Silver Tooth – Threes Brewing – Trinity Grace Church – Anonymous



VOCAL
NEW YORK



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VOCAL-TX

DATA:

- 2,606 Contacts made
- 407 New members
- 772 People mobilized 1,582 times
- 19 Leaders
- 20 Actions
- 61 Media hits

2025 HIGHLIGHTS:

- Mobilized hundreds of people from Texas and beyond for a two-day convening to push back against policies that criminalize marginalized people and narratives that demonize evidence-based, proven solutions of housing, services, and care.
- Advocated successfully for the Austin City Council to pass two policy items increasing enforcement of existing housing rules, including a clause for the Council to consult community groups like VOCAL-TX in new affordable housing plans.
- After joining the ACLU of Texas along with other plaintiffs in a class action lawsuit, we won a major legal victory in Travis County – securing a settlement that guarantees individuals a lawyer at their first court appearance.



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VOCAL-KY

DATA:

- 2,710 Contacts made
- 546 New members
- 1,272 People mobilized 2,074 times
- 15 Leaders
- 31 Actions
- 31 Media hits
- 1,783 People visited the drop-in center
a total of 7,842 times:
 - 72 Participants received care coordination
 - 20+ Partner organizations provided services or received warm handoffs
 - 6,931 Snack bags distributed
 - 444 People had their first contact with VOCAL-KY through our drop-in center
 - 109 Participants became members of VOCAL-KY



HIGHLIGHTS:

- Began holding regular organizing meetings in our third city, Frankfort, and expanded our reach to 64 Kentucky counties.
- Held No More Drug War Kentucky Town Halls in Lexington and Whitesburg.
- Joined Welcome Home Kentucky campaign with 15 coalition partners, including a petition and mobilization to remove dismissed evictions from people's records and prevent children from getting listed on their parents' eviction filings.

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VOCAL KENTUCKY



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