VOTERS FOR ANIMAL RIGHTS

OUR TEAM

Our Team & History

Voters For Animal Rights was founded in 2016 by Allie Feldman Taylor, a New York City animal advocate who believed that lasting change for animals requires political power, not just awareness. Today, VFAR is a nonpartisan 501(c)(4) multi-issue political advocacy organization dedicated to animals in New York. It lobbies for strong laws, mobilizes voters, holds elected officials accountable and helps elect candidates who protect animals. Its 501(c)(3) sister organization, the VFAR Civic Engagement Fund, leads public education on animal protection. Meet the leaders who make this work happen.

Leadership

Julie Cappiello

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD PRESIDENT

Julie is a longtime nonprofit leader, animal activist, and an expert on political and advocacy campaigns for animals, with more than two decades of experience across various organizations. She helped co-found Voters For Animal Rights in 2016 and officially joined its board in 2018.

Mian Osumi

ADVOCACY AND POLICY MANAGER

Mian leads Voters For Animal Rights' policy work across New York, with a focus on New York City. Mian builds support for the organization's priority bills in the City Council, coordinates its endorsement process and volunteer program, and serves as a spokesperson for the organization.

Michelle Aptman

TREASURER AND BOARD MEMBER

Michelle has been involved with Voters For Animal Rights since its founding in 2016. An art director and graphic designer, she leads visual communications for the organization and, as Treasurer, helps oversee its finances as it grows its political work across New York.

Suriya Khan

BOARD MEMBER

Suriya is a lifelong animal and social justice advocate with a background in public policy and nonprofit fundraising. She holds a Master's in Public Policy from Vermont Law and Graduate School with a focus on animal protection law and systems change.

Our Founder

Allie Feldman Taylor

FOUNDER, BOARD PRESIDENT EMERITA

Allie is the founder and former Board President of Voters For Animal Rights, and remains an advisor to the organization. She founded VFAR in 2016 and built its electoral program, which interviews and endorses candidates for New York City, New York State and federal office each election cycle and has helped elect hundreds of animal-friendly candidates. She also managed the "Anybody But Quinn" campaign, which brought animal rights into mainstream New York City politics for the first time.

Under her leadership, VFAR helped pass New York City laws prohibiting wild animals in circuses (2017), the sale of foie gras from force-fed ducks and geese (2019), wild bird trafficking (2019), guinea pig sales in pet stores (2023) and the sale of animals from residences (2024), along with New York State's industrial octopus farming prohibition. She also secured $2 million in city funding for affordable spay/neuter services and companion animal food pantries.

Allie previously worked for the New York State Senate, Obama for America and the New Jersey Department of the Public Advocate. She was named to the New York Observer's Political Power 80 and City & State's 40 Under 40, and is a graduate of Florida State University. She currently serves as the Director of the Mayor's Office of Animal Welfare in New York City.