Racial & Economic Equity for Domestic & Sexual Violence Survivors

Camille Holmes   Bill Kennedy

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CSAJ’s Mission & Vision

Mission:
The Center for Survivor Agency and Justice promotes advocacy approaches that remove systemic barriers, enhance organizational responses, and improve professional practices to meet the self-defined needs of domestic and sexual violence survivors.

Vision:
The Center for Survivor Agency and Justice envisions a world where all people have equal access to physical safety, economic security, and human dignity.
Reciprocal relationship of abuse and economic hardship

Women living in poverty experience violence at twice the rate of those who do not.
The “Economic Ripple Effect” of Domestic Violence

During relationship
- job loss
- credit damage
- theft
- debt
- missed work days
- forgone professional advancement

Leaving relationship
- relocation costs
- incurred debt from marriage
- legal fees

Short term
- forgone wages
- housing instability
- cost of childcare
- increased cost of independent living

Lifetime
- mental health effects
- obstructed/slowed professional development
- increased vulnerability to future abuse

Predictors of IPV Across Race

- Income
- Employment
- Education
- Childhood victimization
- Age
- Number of children
- Marital status

Consumer Rights for Domestic and Sexual Violence Survivors Initiative

- A national project that enhances economic justice for survivors by building the capacity of lawyers and advocates to provide consumer and economic civil legal advocacy and engage in systemic advocacy to remove barriers to economic security for survivors.

- Began in 2007

- Partners include:
  - National Consumer Law Center
  - Home Free
  - Wider Opportunities for Women
  - Center for Court Innovation
  - Expert Advisors
Program Activities

- Guidebook & Advocacy Briefs
  - Stay tuned! Advocacy Brief on Survivor Centered Economic Advocacy

- Consumer Practice Webinars
  - Survivor Centered Economic Advocacy: Expanding Our Approach to Safety
  - Building Partnerships for Economic Justice: A Report on CSAJ’s Innovative Pilot Projects
  - Credit Reporting & Repair for Survivors
  - Credit Checks: An Illegitimate Barrier to Employment for Survivors
  - Federal Tax Advocacy for Survivors
  - TODAY!

- Individualized Technical Assistance

- Innovative Demonstration Sites
  - Texas Council on Family Violence
  - Women’s Resource Center
  - Indiana Legal Services, Low-Income Taxpayers Clinic
  - University of Denver School of Law, Civil Litigation Clinic
Women of color experience higher rates of DV and SA than their white counterparts.

People of color live in poverty at a rate disproportionate to whites (27% vs. 10%)

Poverty has compounding and reciprocal effects on violence (i.e., ripple effect).

Access to economic resources is critical to the long term safety of survivors.
Economic Barriers Facing Communities of Color

**Place Based**
- Poor opportunity structure: Service availability, access to material resources, transportation, employment opportunities, concentrated poverty.
- Example: DV fatality reviews reveal that neighborhoods with sparse resources and high poverty are “hot spots” for domestic homicide.

**Race Based**
- Differential treatment by law enforcement, prosecutors, lack of translation services
- Implicit racial bias in policies, protocols, remedies.
Key Questions:

- What are the *concrete economic structural barriers* facing survivors of color?

- What strategies are needed to remove these *systemic barriers* to create access to the economic opportunities necessary for safety?
Today’s Objectives

- An understanding of the REEP Project's purpose and activities
- A general understanding of Race Equity Approaches to policy, legal, and systems change
- Connection with a community of VAW and Race Equity advocates to work with as you strategize approaches (REEP partners and each other)
- Approaches to aid in identifying and addressing the systemic barriers facing survivors in your community
Legal Impact for Racial and Economic Equity of Survivors Project (REEP)
Purpose

REEP seeks to address the barriers of discrimination (whether by intent or by effect), institutional bias, and structural oppression to enhance access to economic justice for survivors of domestic and sexual violence.
REEP Includes:

- National Impact Agenda
- National Impact Survey Assessment
- Impact Sites
- Race Equity Webinar Series
- Survivor Story Corps & Race Equity Resource Library
National Impact Agenda

Impact Assessment:
ID Barriers & Strategies

Listening Sessions:
In-depth experiences

Strategy Calls:
Coalition building and issue strategizing

National Strategic Impact Agenda Report:
Tools/resources back to the field, national initiatives to steer future work
National Impact Assessment

- Areas of Focus:
  - Do survivors marginalized by race, ethnicity, place, and/or legal status face different economic barriers to safety than White survivors?
  - Do those challenges respond to or require specialized solutions?
  - What innovative strategies are advocates/communities using to address racial and economic inequity for survivors?

- Timeline:
  - Piloted: Dec 5 – Jan 13
  - **Release Date: Coming soon**
  - Deadline: 6 weeks post-release
Impact Sites

- **Phase I**: Gathering Voices and Planning
- **Phase II**: Strategic Advocacy, Litigation and Policy Learning and Planning
- **Phase III**: Disparate Impact Forum
- **Phase IV**: Reflection & Strategic Learning
Race Equity Webinar Series

- **January 25:** Towards Racial & Economic Equity for Survivors
- **March 23:** Race Equity in the Context of Safety (Race Equity Lawyering)
- **May 25:** Advocacy (with Women of Color Network & Casa de Esperanza)
- **June 29:** Advocacy (with AP Institute on GB Violence & SW Center LP)
- **August 24:** Race Equity in Practice Part II (featuring Impact Sites)
- **October 26:** A National Strategic Impact Agenda: Impact Strategies to Advance a Race Equity Approach to DV
Survivor Story Corp & Race Equity Legal Resource Library

- **Survivor Story Corps**: an online bank that documents survivor narratives to drive training, program development, and systems change work targeting systemic inequality.

- **Race Equity Resource Library**: Online Resource Library to house a specialized collection of Strategic Impact Legal and Policy Resources (case law, legal and policy briefs, journal articles, training guides, and mapping tools) particularly geared towards racial equity, community lawyering and impact litigation strategies.
Partners’ Discussion

- Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence
- Casa de Esperanza
- Southwest Center for Law and Policy
- Texas Council on Family Violence
- Women of Color Network, Inc.

- Principles of your work
- Example of what you do
Why Racial Equity?
CSAJ Core Resources

CSAJ’s National Needs Assessment Report

Economic Ripple Effect DV Report Article

CSAJ’s Pilot Site Report

CSAJ’s Assessment Tool for Attorneys & Advocates

- CSAJ’s Resource Library
- Past webinars on consumer issues
Coming Up!

- Impact Assessment Release: February

- Webinars
  - March 23rd: Race Equity in the Context of VAW
  - May 25th/June 29th: Advocacy Approaches to Racial Equity
THANK YOU!

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