



CENTER FOR SURVIVOR AGENCY & JUSTICE

There is no safety without economic security.

2016 Annual Report





“ CSAJ works at the intersection of poverty, violence, and social inequality. Our work rests on one central premise: *There is no safety without economic justice.* ”

Dear Friends:

What does safety for survivors *really* require? Meaningful access to material and economic resources. The Center for Survivor Agency and Justice works at the intersection of poverty, violence, and social inequality. Our work rests on one central premise: *There is no safety without economic justice.*

Domestic violence leads to poverty, and poverty in turn leads to fewer options for safety and increased risk of violence. For survivors, the economic impacts of abuse are not isolated to a particular incident, rather they ripple throughout the life course. And marginalized communities experience disproportionate harms.

CSAJ addresses the root causes of domestic and sexual violence by engaging at three levels of impact—individual advocacy, organizational and community advocacy, and systems advocacy. For over a decade, CSAJ has worked to remedy the economic impacts of abuse by enhancing the capacity of and building partnerships between domestic violence and anti-poverty lawyers and advocates throughout the nation.

We cannot address survivors' economic instability without addressing our systems and confronting social inequality. Therefore, CSAJ builds diverse, national coalitions and leverages their expertise to change systems and policies. In 2016, we launched the Racial and Economic Equity of Survivors Project (REEP), a national initiative that targets the systemic economic barriers facing survivors of color by employing racial equity impact strategies in the violence against women context.

The following Report shares CSAJ's key successes of 2016. While the gains are substantial, our call to action has never been more urgent. The policies of the current administration jeopardize the safety of survivors, particularly those who live on the social margins. That is why, in 2017 and beyond, CSAJ will expand our three national projects to: protect economic and consumer rights, transform advocacy, and improve racial equity; conduct research to illuminate survivors' economic realities; and mobilize for social change at the community and national levels.

With your support, CSAJ will redouble our efforts to achieve our vision of a world where all people have equal access to physical safety, economic security, and human dignity. I hope that the coming pages will inspire you to continue on this journey with us.

With deep gratitude,

Erika Sussman, Executive Director

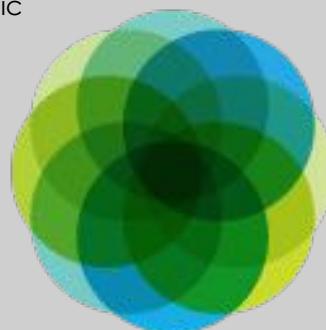




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CENTER FOR SURVIVOR AGENCY & JUSTICE

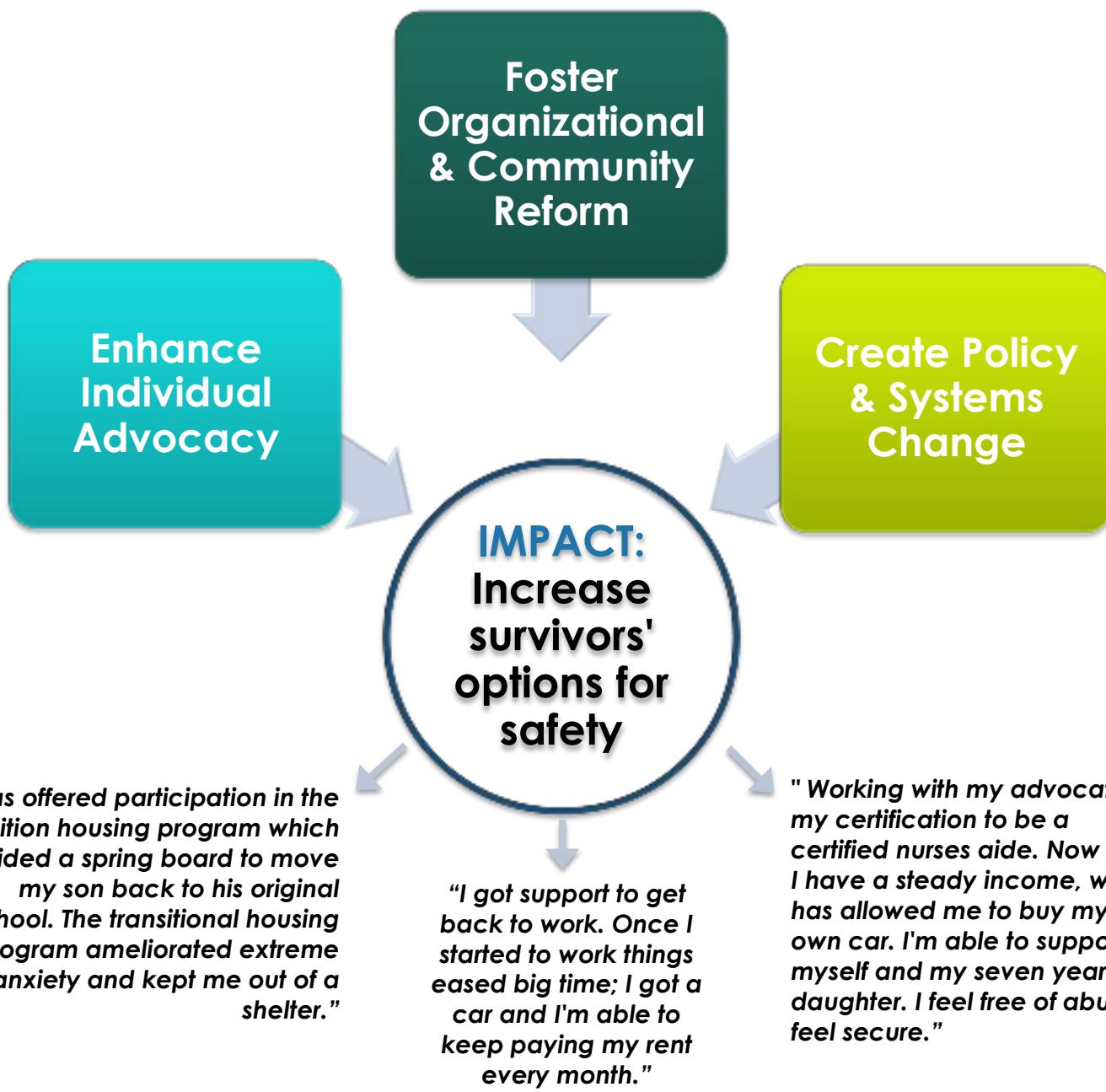
CSAJ envisions a world where all people have equal access to physical safety, economic security, and human dignity.

CSAJ's mission is to develop and promote 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.



CSAJ's Vision for Social Change

CSAJ works on multiple levels – individual, organizational, community, systems – to increase survivors' options for safety.



In 2016, CSAJ enhanced **individual advocacy** for survivors by:

Providing over **100** strategic consultations on cases and community reform efforts



- ✓ Protecting privacy during a bankruptcy proceeding for a victim of stalking.
- ✓ Disentangling a survivor from insurance fraud she discovered after being awarded a home in divorce.
- ✓ Discussing strategies to address the high incidence of fraud and predatory lending in minority communities.

Releasing **4 advocacy briefs** and an **Atlas** that enhance consumer and economic advocacy for survivors. Accessed over **5,000** times.



- ✓ Accounting for Survivors Economic Security: An Atlas for Direct Service Providers [link](#)
- ✓ Advocacy Briefs on Survivor Centered Advocacy Approaches, Credit Reporting & Repair, Filing Tax Returns [link](#)
- ✓ The Debt Trap for Survivors, Infographic [link](#)

- ✓ Coerced Debt in the Context of Safety
- ✓ Tax Advocacy for Survivors
- ✓ Economic Relief in Protection Orders
- ✓ [View all CSAJ webinars](#)

IMPACT

Providing **9 national trainings** to **1,735 practitioners** that translate survivor centered economic advocacy principles into practice



80% of training attendees reported being immediately equipped with strategies to enhance their advocacy.

"Not only was the information helpful to my work, but I'm going to use the PowerPoint as a tool to educate our Board of Directors and Funders on how to support survivor centered advocacy."

In 2016, CSAJ fostered ***organizational and community reform*** by:

- ✓ Illuminating gaps and capacities in the field related to economic issues in **four community or statewide assessments.**
- ✓ Developing models of collaborative economic justice through demonstration site work in **Pennsylvania, Texas, Colorado, and Indiana.**
- ✓ Developing protocols and best-practices for organizations and communities.



The Women's Resource Center

"Assessment provided the opportunity for WRC advocates and attorneys to come together as the WRC Economic Advocacy Team and broaden our understanding of the economic needs and long term affects to survivors while inspiring organizational response. It provided the opportunity for survivors to give voice to their successes and dreams."



The Texas Council on Family Violence

"We've used assessment and planning tools to help program across the state better understand their work. We've also leveraged our partnerships to look at chronic homelessness among survivors in Texas."



The Civil Litigation Clinic at the University of Denver Sturm School of Law

"The Clinic doesn't think about economic justice as separate from our work anymore. Plus, partners are now talking about economic relief, and coming to us to talk about it."



Indiana Legal Services' Low Income Taxpayer Clinic

"Demonstration Site work has helped us think less about the obvious partners we should work with (e.g. local DV organization), and think more about surveying the community to find intersections of need."

IMPACT



Sites led 4 community assessments, convened 28 new partners, and gave over 6 regional and state trainings on issues related to chronic homelessness, economic relief in family law, tax advocacy, housing and education for low-income survivors.

In 2016, CSAJ changed **policies and systems** by:



✓ Challenging systemic and institutional barriers by targeting payday lending.

- CSAJ led a national **coalition of 25 domestic violence and anti-poverty advocacy organizations** in submitting comments to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to strengthen their rules to curb payday lending practices.

[View Press Release & Comments Letter](#)



✓ Shifting the paradigm and building public awareness of transformative violence against women advocacy through national media and communications:

- 5 Financial Challenges Facing Survivors of Domestic Abuse [link](#)
- Thank You, Anita Hill [link](#)
- The Hidden Impact of Domestic Violence on the Gender Wage Gap [link](#)
- Reflections on Police Violence & Implications for Survivors [link](#)



✓ Engaging in strategic partnership with experts and organizations working at the intersection of anti-violence, poverty, and race equity.

- The United State of Women Summit, [website](#)
- White House Forum, [Advancing Equity for Girls and Women of Color](#)

Systems, policies, decision makers, and parallel social justice movements better reflect and respond to survivors' economic realities.

IMPACT

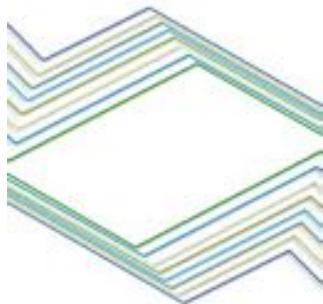


CSAJ Key Projects

CSAJ roots its work in three basic pillars:

- 1) a commitment to economic agency for survivors; 2) an appreciation for the power of civil legal advocacy; and 3) a multilevel and intersectional advocacy approach.

Consumer Rights for Domestic & Sexual Violence Survivors Initiative



CRDSVSI is a national project of CSAJ, funded by the U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women (OVW). In addressing the intersection of poverty and violence, CRDSVSI utilizes consumer rights and law to address the various and complex economic harms that many survivors have experienced. Consumer and other economic civil legal remedies have the potential to provide survivors with the legal tools to address issues such as debt collection, credit discrimination, bankruptcy, damaged credit, tax liability, and foreclosure. Leveraging the power of consumer law, this work seeks to build capacity of advocates and attorneys as well as forge collaborative partnerships between domestic violence organizations and consumer lawyers and advocates. We do this through: advocacy tools and resources, webinar trainings, national conferences, individual technical assistance, and Building Partnerships Demonstration Sites. [Learn more.](#)

Legal Impact for Racial and Economic Equity of Domestic & Sexual Violence Survivors Project



REEP is a national project funded by OVV that seeks to address racial and other structural and institutional biases that pose barriers to economic stability for survivors of color. Anti-poverty and race equity advocates provide an innovative method for addressing systemic racial barriers: community narrative, mapping and data visualization, and systems thinking. Project activities include a National Impact Assessment, two Impact Sites, a webinar series on intersectional advocacy, a Legal Impact Resource Library and Survivor Story Bank. This work seeks to increase advocate, attorney, and community capacity to focus on systems change, exchange stories and strategies, elevate legal frameworks, and build collective strategy for racial and economic equity. [Learn more.](#)

Accounting for Economic Security: An Atlas for Direct Service Providers



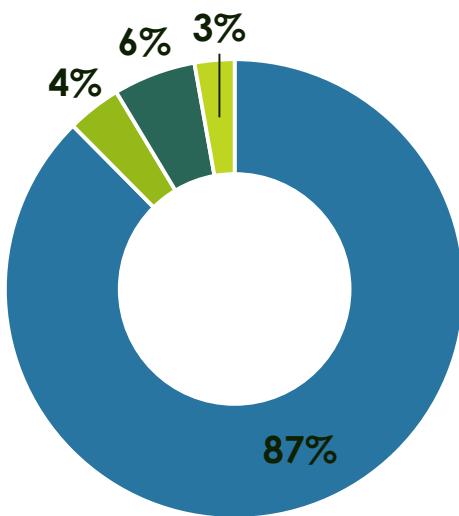
A project originally funded by JP Morgan Chase, **the Atlas** is a seminal written advocacy resource that offers a conceptual framework and concrete guidance to direct service providers (such as lawyers, advocates, and case managers) on achieving economic security for domestic violence survivors. The Atlas seeks to shift the current underlying advocacy goal from one of individual economic self-sufficiency to economic agency. All of our advocacy strategies must place the intersecting identities of survivors at the center of our work. Only then can we forge individual, community, and systems change interventions that enhance access to the economic and material resources needed for long-term safety. The Atlas will be a series of three Map Books that assist in **mapping, navigating, and changing the economic terrain** that domestic violence survivors navigate on their paths to safety. [Learn more.](#)



CSAJ Financials

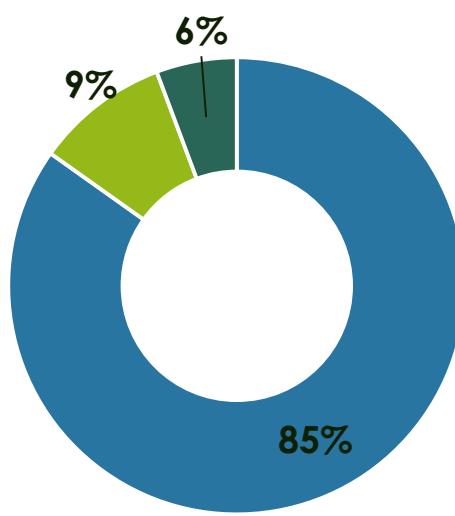
CSAJ's operational model supports cross-movement and interdisciplinary partnerships and strives towards equity.

Funding Sources



- Government Grants
- Individual Giving
- Corporate Funding
- Pro Bono / In-Kind Support

Operating Expenses



- Program Expense
- Management & General
- Fundraising

Funding Achievements

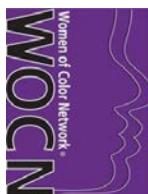
- + Increased revenue from 2015 to 2016 by 51%.
- + Received in-kind support and services from Barretto Consulting LLC, Epic PR Group, Holistic Planners Network, Chris Malven Design, R Ramos Design, Raffa, PC, Marna Schoen, and WeWork.

Operating Achievements

- + Hired 2 new staff in 2016: Policy & Legal Director and Administrative and Legal Assistant.
- + Increased partnership funding to 6 national organizations and consultants.
- + 17% of CSAJ's program expenses support partnerships and on-the-ground experts.



CSAJ's Expert Advisors & Organizational Partners



SOUTHWEST CENTER FOR LAW AND POLICY



Over Thirty Years of Building a Safer Texas



KIRWAN INSTITUTE
for the Study of Race and Ethnicity



- Sara Shoener, DrPH
CSAJ Strategic Advisor
- Camille Holmes, J.D.
Strategist & Race Equity Expert
- William Kennedy, J.D.

- Katie VonDeLinde, MSW, LCSW
- Jamie Andree, J.D.
- Karen Tjapkes, J.D.
- Laura Russell, J.D.
- Susan Morgentern, J.D.



CSAJ Staff, Interns & Board of Directors

Erika Sussman, JD, LLM

Founder & Executive Director

Lisalyn R. Jacobs, JD

Policy & Legal Director

Sara Wee, MPH

Director of Research & Programs

Salma Attia

Administrative Assistant & Legal Fellow

In 2016 CSAJ welcomed & supported activated interns and fellows:

Alex Jacobs, JD

Northwestern Law School, Chicago, IL
CSAJ Legal Fellow

Netanya Perluss

Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA

CSAJ Intern

A partnership with Religious Action Center, a Reform Judaism program for advocacy and activism in social justice.

Santos Gonzales, MSW

Washington University, St. Louis, MO
CSAJ Social Work Practicum Student

Board of Directors

Nancy Hay, JD, Board Chair
Vice President & Counsel,
AllianceBernstein L.P.

Tamara Kuennen, JD

Professor of Law, Sturm College of
Law, University of Denver

Debra BenAvram, CAE

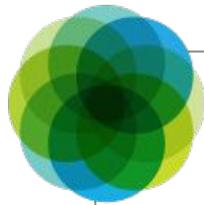
Chief Executive Officer, American
Society for Parenteral and Enteral
Nutrition

Mona Bhalla, JD

V.P. and Assistant Vice President, TIAA

Darci Bailey

EVP, General Counsel & Chief Human
Resource Officer, S'well Bottle



A Note From Our Board Chair

Dear Friends,

2016 was a tremendously busy year for CSAJ and we are pleased to share some of the organization's recent accomplishments with you. As you can see from the preceding pages, CSAJ continues to transform advocacy for survivors and, in doing so, increase survivors' options for safety. CSAJ understands that the needs of survivors are complex and has designed an advocacy approach that recognizes the intersection of race, poverty and violence on the lives of survivors.

This past year, CSAJ's groundbreaking work on economic justice was published in its *Atlas for Direct Service Providers*, an extraordinarily practical and first of its kind manual designed to guide direct service providers on achieving economic security for survivors. Also in 2016, CSAJ significantly expanded the scope of its impact through strategic partnerships with other organizations, most notably with respect to its recent race equity work. CSAJ also continued to effect change at the national level through policy changes, successfully strengthening protections for survivors available through the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

CSAJ has made great strides this past year, and your generous support has made these accomplishments possible. As we head into 2017, a year that promises political uncertainty and potentially drastic cuts to government spending in a multitude of areas directly impacting survivors, CSAJ's work is now more critical than ever. We hope you will continue to support us as we strive to create a world where all people have equal access to physical safety, economic security and human dignity.

Nancy Hay

Now More Than Ever: 2017 Commitments

CSAJ's work rests on one central premise: There is no safety for survivors without access to economic security. And while our advances are great, the road ahead is uncertain. With Trump as President, CSAJ's work is more important now than ever before. In 2017, CSAJ will:

- **Mobilize to preserve the economic legal rights** of domestic and sexual violence survivors through impact litigation and policy advocacy.
- **Organize at the community, state, and national level** to safeguard existing protections and ensure equal treatment of marginalized survivors.
- **Conduct research (in a post-truth era) that illuminates barriers to safety** in order to implement transformative, evidence-based advocacy strategies and community responses.

Support CSAJ's Commitment to Social Change.

www.csaj.org/support-us/



Deep Gratitude to CSAJ's Donors & Supporters

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Eleanor Hay
Evan Mallah

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