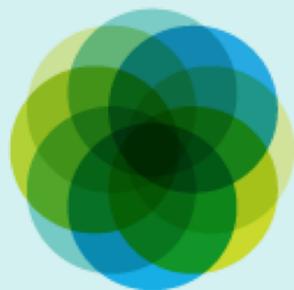


# Accounting for Costs in Access to Justice: Project Launch and Discussion

April 24, 2019  
12:00PM ET



**CENTER FOR SURVIVOR  
AGENCY & JUSTICE**

**Yvette Butler**, Director of Capacity Building and Systems Change  
**Sara Wee**, Director of Research & Programs  
**Erika Sussman**, Founder & Executive Director

# Today:

Attendees will:

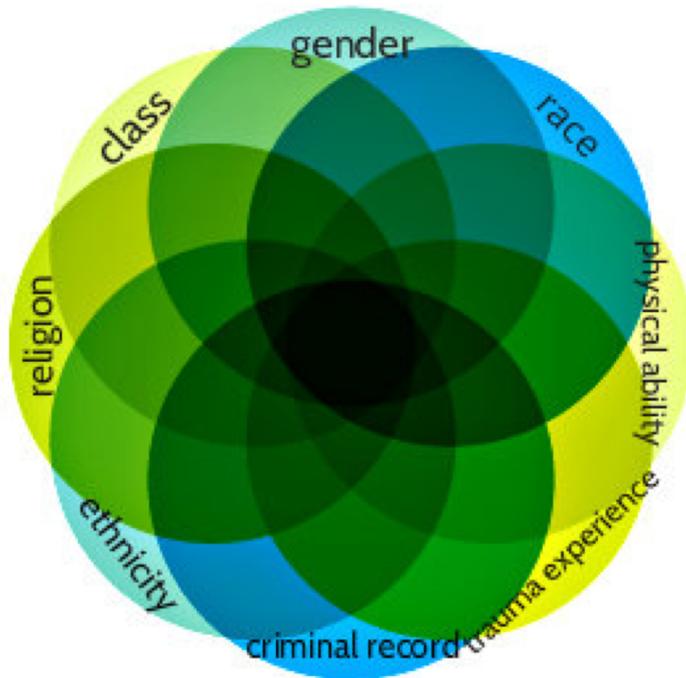
- Become grounded in CSAJ's mission and approach
- Learn the scope of the Access Project
- Share their experiences as legal advocates
- Help guide the format of the project

# Introduction and Poll

Introduction to Yvette,  
Sara, Erika

Tell us about yourself!  
Geographic area  
Organization  
Type of Work

# 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.

# A Multi-Level Approach to Economic Advocacy for Survivors

**Enhanced Individual Advocacy:** Addresses both the physical safety *and* the economic safety needs of the survivor.

There is no safety without economic justice.

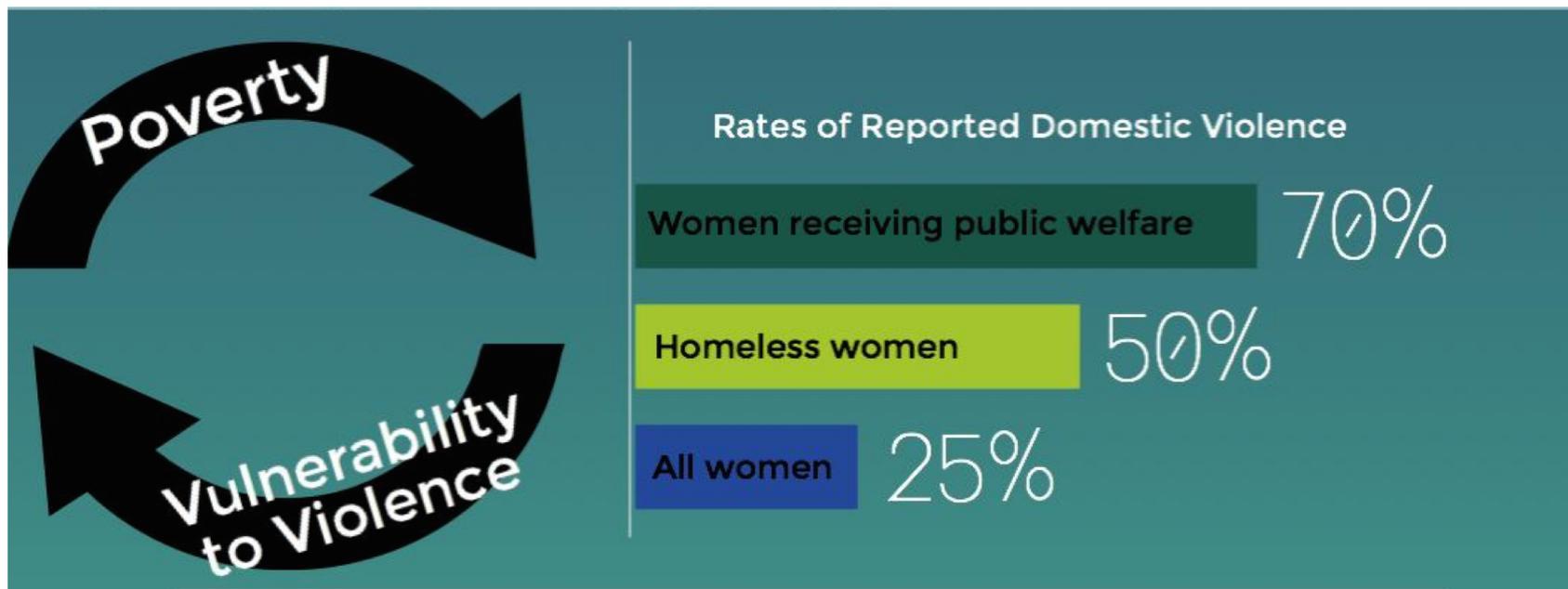
Economic advocacy and asset building strategies are ineffective without attention to the safety and privacy needs of survivors.

**Organizational & Community Reform:** Requires a *partnership* between the DV, anti-poverty, and anti-racist fields that attends to the ways in which physical and economic risks facing survivors fundamentally shape their opportunities for securing safety.

**Systems Change:** Local to federal efforts to remove institutional barriers, identify and implement laws/policies, and conduct impact litigation that addresses systemic inequalities.



# CSAJ'S Framework



## Reciprocal relationship of abuse and economic hardship

Women living in poverty experience violence at twice the rate of those who do not.

# Economic abuse

“Economic abuse involves behaviors that control a woman’s ability to *acquire, use, and maintain* economic resources, thus threatening her economic security and potential for self-sufficiency.”

Adams, Sullivan, Bybee, Greeson, [Development of the Scale of Economic Abuse](#), 14(5) Violence Against Women Journal 563 (2008).

# Economic impact of domestic violence

**Domestic violence is linked to a range of negative economic outcomes, including:**



Income &  
Job Loss



Housing  
Instability



Limited  
Transportation

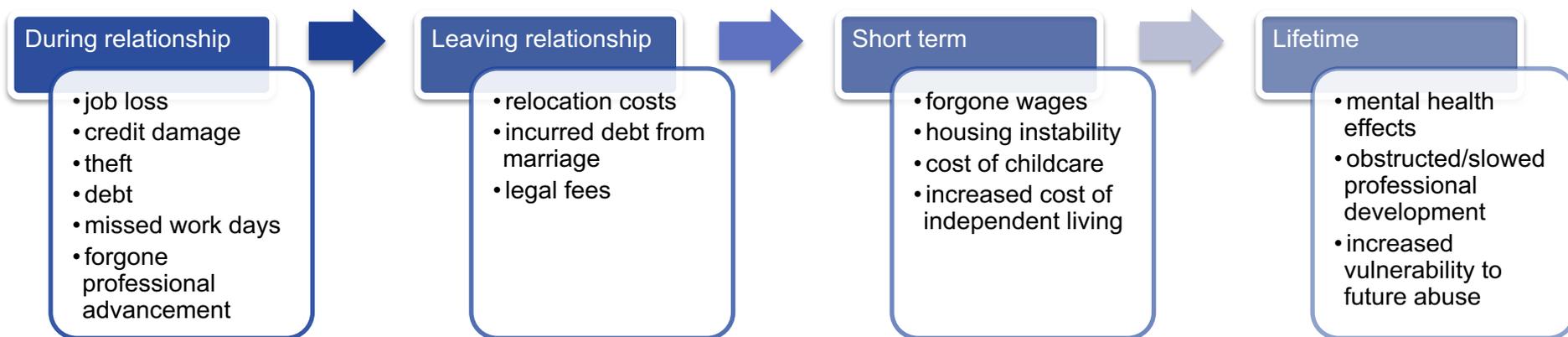


Decreased  
Access to  
Childcare

Decreased safety options

Increased risk of future violence

# The “Economic Ripple Effect” of Domestic Violence



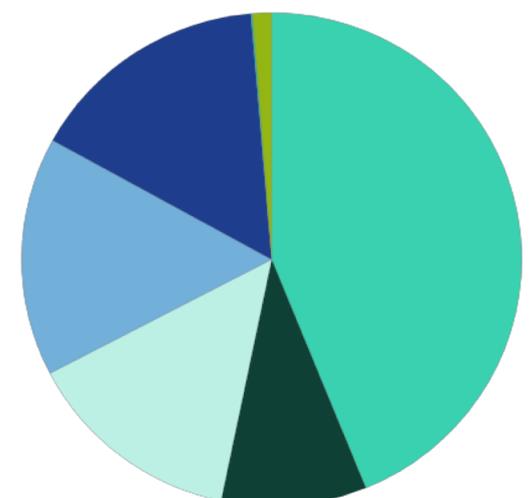
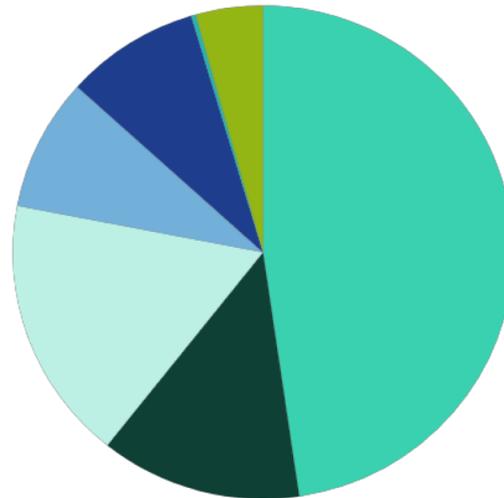
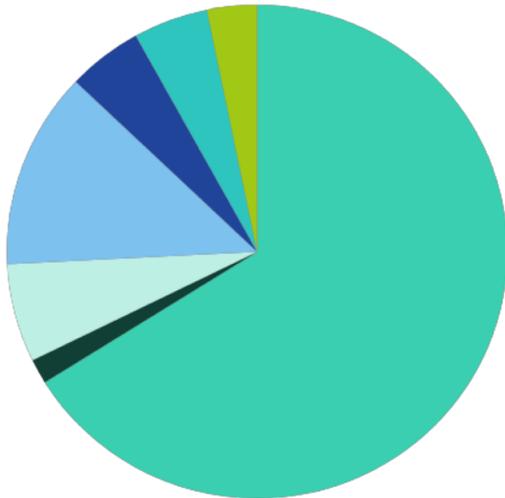
Shoener & Sussman. (2013). Economic Ripple Effect of IPV: Building Partnerships for Systemic Change. *Domestic Violence Report*. Aug/Sept, 83-95.

# Predictors of IPV Across Race

Black

White

Hispanic



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

# Systemic Barriers Impede Survivors Access to Economic Stability

Services and systems often present tremendous barriers that are outside of survivors' control and frequently thwart their efforts. Systemic barriers limit a survivor's access to economic security and constrain safety options available to them; this is particularly true for those who are living in poverty.



## Resource Availability

**Access to:** Transportation, Housing, Education, Employment

### Looks Like:

- Distance to court or services (across the state)
- Slow response time
- Have to stay in same court for all legal actions



## Service Response

**Experience with:** Few, dispersed, short-staffed services; lack of staff information/ awareness

### Looks Like:

- Judges preference for 2-parent homes
- Turn over of court decision makers
- Caseworkers make survivors jump through hoops (requirements, eligibility)



## Impact of Policies

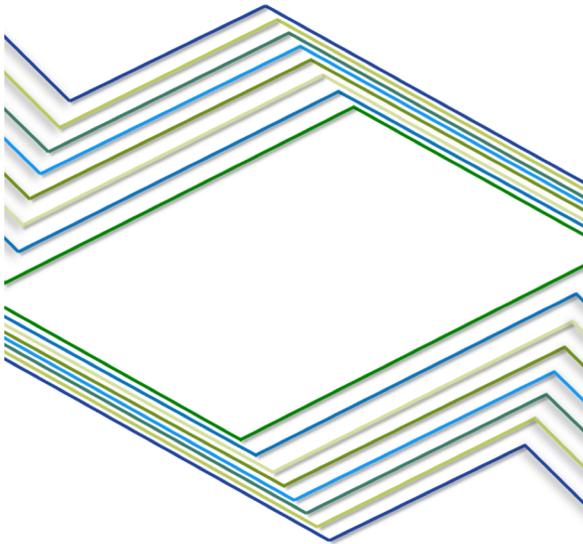
**Outcomes of:** Geographic isolation combined with a lack of privacy

### Looks Like:

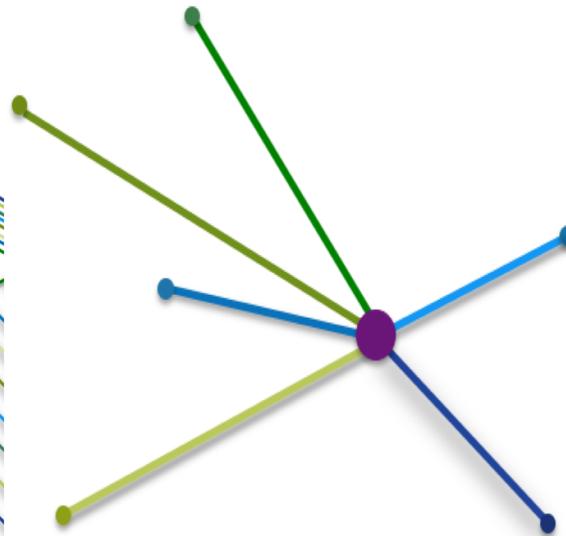
- Reduction of absuer's charges/ increased plea deals
- Women on parole who call 9-11 violate probation
- Institutions defer responsibility, "passing the buck"
- Time frame from arrest to conviction is too long

# CSAJ Key Projects

## Consumer Rights for Domestic & Sexual Violence Survivors Initiative



## Racial and Economic Equity of Domestic & Sexual Violence Survivors Project



## Accounting for Economic Security: An Atlas for Direct Service Providers



# Access Project

# Purpose

The Project seeks to work with non-lawyer legal advocates to address the costs and remove the systemic economic barriers and inequities related to domestic violence and sexual assault.

# Primary Audience

## “Non-Lawyer Legal Advocate”

Derived from OVW Solicitation, includes things like: legal advocacy, safety planning, court accompaniment, and pro se clinics offered by non-attorney staff

Could also include: support fact/information gathering, supplement case decisions with broader advocacy (i.e. housing, employment)

Advocates (of many kinds) who engage the legal system.

# The Access Project will enhance non-lawyer legal advocates' capacity to



Engage in Individual Advocacy



Build Partnerships



Break Down Structural Barriers

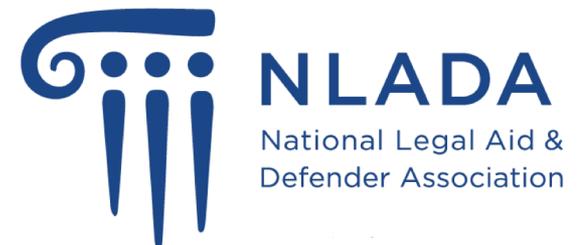
# Project Partners



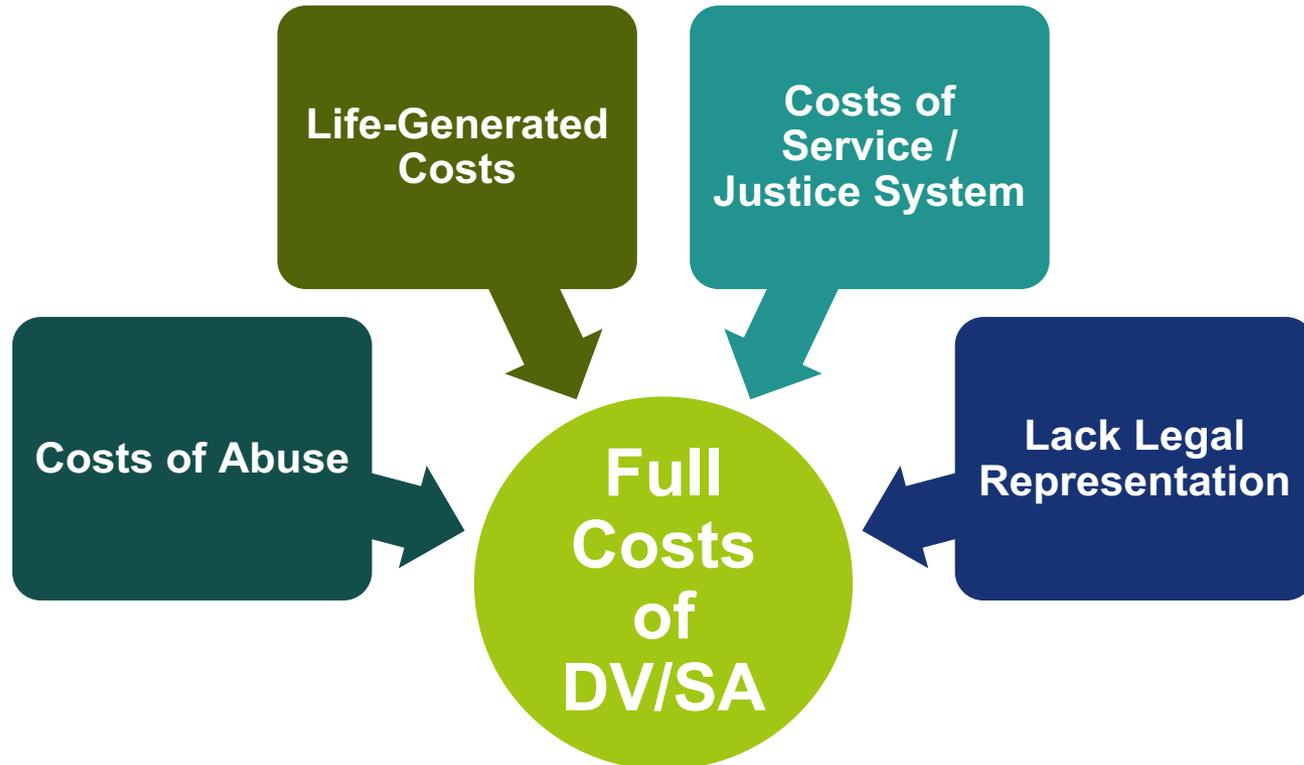
CAMILLE D. HOLMES



Katie VonDeLinde,  
KMCV Consulting, LLC



# Legal Advocates can attend to full costs of DV/SA



# Costs of Abuse / Ripple Effect

4/24/2019

- Batterer-generated costs (e.g. physical, economic, initiate or manipulate systems involvement)

**76% of survivors** indicate that abusers are largely responsible for their economic hardship (Adams, 2008).

# Life-generated costs (Davies)

- Housing, food, utilities, transportation, health care, and childcare
- Structural inequality (e.g. debt collections suits concentrated in black neighborhoods)

Even accounting for income, the rate of collections judgments was **twice as high in mostly black neighborhoods** as in mostly white neighborhoods (ProPublica).

# Costs of navigating service system

4/24/2019

- Time, work, transportation, childcare
- Overlook economic impact of decisions
- Impose fines and fees for minor infractions, then criminalize unpaid debts
- Bias in “gatekeeping” (e.g. language access, racial stereotyping, disproportionate enforcement or leniency of decisions/resources)

***“The court system doesn’t seem to have any sympathy for people... [who don’t get] paid much and have to take off work for these numerous court appearances, childcare issues...you could lose your job. And then they say you can’t have any contact with your abuser when they rely upon them for childcare. It isn’t realistic.”*** (REEP Listening Session)

# Lack legal representation

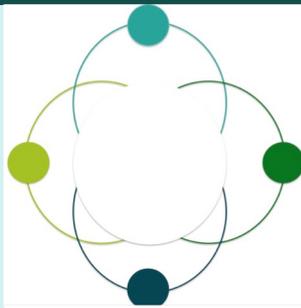
4/24/2019

- OVW data: Majority receive general advocacy
  - 29% legal advocacy
    - 15% non-lawyer legal advocacy
      - 2% receive economic/material assistance in legal advocacy context

In the protection order context alone, research shows that “a combination of legal representation and advocacy” results in the best outcomes for survivors, advocates are often rated as the most helpful part of survivors’ process, and **advocates often serve as “the bridge” to the justice system** (Goldfarb, 2008).

# Questions?

# Project Activities:



- **ACCESS Institute** (February 2020,2021) Agenda and Training Curricula
- **Individual Technical Assistance:** provided by CSAJ
- 90 minute **webinar trainings** (1 per year).
- Bi-Monthly **Peer exchange Calls** (starting June 2019).

# On the Ground

What barriers  
impede survivors  
access to  
economic  
security and  
safety?

How are you  
currently  
addressing debt  
and economic  
barriers facing  
survivors and other  
marginalized  
communities?

# On the Ground

Based on what you've heard today and on your own experience, what issues, topics, or barriers should this project be most attentive to?

# Looking Ahead

What would you like to learn or be doing in your work? How could this project support that?

What are you most looking forward to? Or what sounds most exciting to you?

# Getting Engaged

What would  
make this project  
more appealing  
to you?

Any other  
thoughts,  
questions,  
comments?

# Thank you!

This project is supported all or in part by Grant No. 2018-TA-AX-K010 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in the publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.