




Shift the Power

2013 ANNUAL REPORT

HER  JUSTICE



"I know what it's like to be in a deep hole and feel like there is no way out. Her Justice gave me the light to guide me out of that dark tunnel."

– Her Justice client

From our founder

I began my legal career at a major law firm in New York City. For 14 years, I represented large corporations, spending most of my waking hours in conference rooms high above the streets of Manhattan. I rarely encountered women struggling to make it from day to day—struggling to give their children a chance to thrive.

I did not understand that we have a two-tiered justice system in our country, one that works well for those who can afford to hire lawyers and one that works very poorly for those who cannot.

That all changed when I joined the board of a battered women's organization. I quickly learned that the overwhelming majority of abused women seeking legal protection have almost no chance of getting a lawyer from over-burdened legal services organizations.

I was confident that I could change this reality by bringing together the two worlds I had come to know—in a way that would benefit both. So, with the strong backing of my family, friends

and former partners, I left my law firm in 1993 to start Her Justice.

This first-ever annual report for Her Justice highlights what we have achieved in our first two decades. You will read compelling stories of the passion and commitment that the women we serve and the lawyers who represent them share and how, together, they transform lives.

I am proud to lead Her Justice as we celebrate our past and set ambitious goals for the future. Our mission today remains as clear and strong as it was 20 years ago—to engage the vast talent and resources of New York City's law firms, bringing together committed lawyers and determined women to secure life-changing results.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to all of you and a warm invitation to continue to invest your energies, ideas and financial support in Her Justice.

Catherine J. Douglass
Executive Director





Women in crisis can't wait

Every day, nearly 90% of the women who go to Family Court proceed without a lawyer. And, when they do, they often lose crucial cases they should win, putting them and their children at risk.

This risk can be life-threatening. New York City police responded to more than 720 domestic violence incidents per day in 2012. The vast majority of Her Justice clients are survivors of domestic violence and most are mothers.

Her Justice recruits attorneys from over 80 law firms and corporations to stand side-by-side with women seeking safety and financial security. We give determined and courageous survivors—women who once felt powerless—the ability to take back control from their abusers.

"I first got involved with Her Justice as a volunteer attorney. I worked on more than 10 cases and helped my clients find safety and security for their families—a few hundred dollars of child support can mean the world. Now I donate to Her Justice so I can continue helping more women who need legal assistance."

– Nathan C. Thomas, donor



TERESA'S JUSTICE

Teresa* is one of the nearly 3,000 women Her Justice helped last year.

After she discovered her abusive husband's many affairs, Teresa fled to a homeless shelter with her younger son. She reluctantly left her older son with her husband. She went to Family Court without a lawyer and got a temporary child support order requiring their father to pay \$50/month. Then Teresa found a small apartment in public housing, returned to Family Court and convinced the judge to grant her custody of both sons.

Teresa earned very little as a nail technician in a salon. She believed her husband, who was self-employed and owned a grocery store, should pay more child support now that both boys were living with her, but he refused to disclose what he earned to her or to the court.

Fortunately, Teresa found the Queens Family Justice Center, where she met with a lawyer from Her Justice. Her Justice quickly recruited a legal team from Willkie Farr & Gallagher and a forensic accountant from Marcum.

They set to work to discover her husband's income. Presented with bank records and an analysis of the grocery store's cash flow, the court ordered Teresa's husband to pay \$961/month.

This huge increase allowed Teresa to pursue career training and secure a better job. And, with her Willkie team by her side once again, Teresa found the courage to divorce the man who for years had berated, hurt and cheated on her. Teresa is now confidently building a hope-filled future for herself and her sons.

* All names changed to protect the confidentiality of Her Justice clients.

"THIS IS WHY I WENT TO LAW SCHOOL..."



A sentiment expressed by many of our volunteer attorneys, and it truly conveys how our externs feel at the conclusion of their time at Her Justice.

Throughout the year, attorneys from five law firms work full-time at our offices providing immediate in-court representation to women with complex cases. Typically, our client is facing an emergency situation involving her physical safety and that of her children. Backed by our expert staff attorneys, and eager to take on the most challenging cases, our externs often appear in court within 24 hours of being assigned a case. Each extern handles a caseload of 20–25 matters, and averages three court appearances per week, gaining valued litigation experience and shifting the power for women facing pivotal life-changing moments.

Her Justice plays an essential role in our diverse city

Her Justice is a trusted presence in all five boroughs of New York City. Women in insular, ethnic communities, with limited English language skills, fear leaving the neighborhoods they know to seek help. Uncertain of their rights, navigating a foreign legal system seems impossible.

Half of our clients are Latina, 24% are African-American and 15% are Asian or from another minority group. One of every six women we help needs an interpreter to access the courts. Her Justice staff members are fluent in many languages and we recruit volunteers who are eager to represent women from many cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Last year, thanks to fellowship funding from Kirkland & Ellis and Greenberg Traurig, we conducted focused outreach to Muslim and South Asian women and to Spanish-speakers threatened with deportation, advising them all of their legal rights and connecting them with lawyers.

“It’s hard to come out and say it, but I’m a victim of domestic violence. You have to face that first—then you become stronger. And when it comes to defending your kids, there’s nothing that can compare to that.”

– Her Justice client



MARTA’S JUSTICE

Marta*, a young mother from Mexico, nearly died before she found Her Justice. Her husband, a gang member, had terrorized and severely beaten her for years. He threatened to harm Marta’s family if she disclosed what he was doing to her.

When Marta became pregnant with their third child, Jose became consumed by paranoid thoughts that she was cheating on him. He hit Marta in the face, threw her on the floor and kicked her in the stomach, screaming that he was not the father of their baby.

Left on the floor, bleeding and in severe pain, Marta managed to reach her cell phone and call 911. Her injuries were so severe that she was hospitalized for two weeks. The medical team alerted the police who arrested Jose.

The assistant district attorney responsible for prosecuting Jose immediately contacted an

attorney at Her Justice—a connection easily made as both lawyers worked at the Brooklyn Family Justice Center.

Marta was terrified that she would be deported to Mexico and separated from her children, who are U.S. citizens. Her Justice assured her that she was legally entitled to remain in this country and recruited two teams of caring pro bono attorneys—from Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson and Proskauer Rose—to represent her. They secured Marta a two-year order of protection and sole custody of her children and filed her petition for legal status based on her cooperation in the criminal prosecution of Jose.

Marta now supports herself and her children in a household free of fear and violence.

* All names changed to protect the confidentiality of Her Justice clients.



REACHING WOMEN IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

Last year, Her Justice helped women and their children from the Bronx (33%), Queens (29%), Brooklyn (21%), Manhattan (13%) and Staten Island (1%).

Our legal team works at all four of the City’s Family Justice Centers—Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan and Queens—where survivors of domestic violence, no matter what their cultural backgrounds or language capabilities, can walk in and find all of the legal and other supportive services they need, provided in over 170 languages.



“I didn’t have a penny to my name,
and I got the best lawyer in the city.”
– Her Justice client

Share the strength

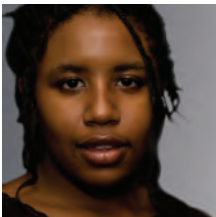
Her Justice specializes in leveraging the human talent and resources of private firms, which increases exponentially the number of women who go to court with their own lawyers.

A dozen lawyers on our staff—with over 135 years of collective experience practicing family and immigration law—focus their time on recruiting, training and mentoring volunteer attorneys, rather than going to court with clients themselves.

They convince thousands of lawyers and other professionals to step forward to assist clients on difficult and complex cases in unfamiliar practice areas. Her Justice delivers in-depth Continuing Legal Education courses and ongoing, responsive mentoring whenever volunteer lawyers need documents reviewed or advice on strategy. For women who reach us through the Family Justice Centers, we are able to assure them that supportive social services offered by our collaborative partners at the Centers are available, so that both our clients, and the lawyers representing them, are less likely to be derailed from pursuing their cases by non-legal complications.

Every year, that means thousands—rather than hundreds—of women have lawyers standing side-by-side with them in court.

**We transform every dollar of your financial support
into \$6 of services delivered.**



ANGELA’S JUSTICE

Angela* and Edward met in the Bronx and had a son together, but never married. Edward regularly beat Angela, telling her repeatedly, in every way imaginable, that she was worthless. When their son was one year old, Edward was arrested for gun possession. Fearing for their safety, Angela left Edward, with her son.

Edward served a three-year prison term. Upon his release, Edward found Angela and insisted that he be able to spend time with his son. When she resisted, he petitioned the Family Court for custody. The judge issued an order of joint custody, permitting Edward to see his son as the parents agreed. This arrangement proved both unworkable and dangerous for Angela. After spending time with their son, Edward frequently returned the boy late, and Edward constantly harassed Angela. Finally, one evening, Edward and his friends cornered her and violently assaulted her.

Angela was determined to find a way to protect herself and her son. She sought help at the Bronx

Family Justice Center, where she found Her Justice. Our staff attorney quickly recruited a volunteer attorney from Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz. Angela’s lawyer was tenacious and resourceful throughout the lengthy litigation that followed in Family Court. She often sought advice from Her Justice, as this was her first time ever in Family Court.

Angela and her attorney successfully petitioned the court to modify its original order by limiting visitation to alternate weekends and requiring Edward to pick up and drop off his son at a police precinct. They next obtained court-ordered child support requiring Edward to pay for Angela’s child care costs so that she could actively look for a job.

Angela recently started her new job as a product coordinator at a large manufacturing company, and she and her son, now 10, have the opportunity to build a brighter future.

* All names changed to protect the confidentiality of Her Justice clients.

The power of volunteers

Last year, Her Justice secured life-changing results for 7,000 women and children, thanks to the dedicated work of over 3,000 volunteers—attorneys, legal assistants, students and business professionals. Two volunteer lawyers—Susan and Ed—and Susanna, their mentor at Her Justice, share their experiences here.

COMPASSION, TEAMWORK & TRUST

Susan: I always thought abuse was an important issue, but until I started volunteering I didn't know what I could do. I assumed social workers or counselors would be better equipped to handle these awful situations.

Ed: It's one thing to see a case on paper, but then you meet the client and you see how she is suffering. She's worried about her safety and her children's safety. She might not feel confident about anything going on in her life.

Susanna: We conduct an extensive interview with each client, reviewing all the details of her case, and then we connect her with a well-matched volunteer team.

Susan: It's not until you hear firsthand about her family, what she's been through and what she wants to accomplish that you understand her courage and the impact of your legal advocacy. We spend a lot of time building trust. We're listening. We're working together to make a plan for something better. When she's in our office, she starts to feel safe.

Ed: Everyone has a story. The way you frame that story matters a lot to the legal results. Right now, we have a client who went through so much to make it to this country. We had to develop a compelling case for why she and her sons deserved to be U.S. citizens.

Susan: The dossier is complex. Whoever reviews this application must see our client as the whole person we do. It's great to be able to call Susanna for advice. She assists us with legal issues and scenarios that are common to Her Justice. Believe me, we've reached out for training and support.

Susanna: Susan and Ed are both incredibly dedicated. We ask our volunteer attorneys to take the lead and use our staff attorneys as mentors. Each volunteer and each firm adds to the resources that Her Justice clients can call on. Her Justice makes the connections.

Ed: It's easy to lose perspective when you go to law school and work long hours.

Susan: Yes, but by volunteering with Her Justice, you come to a new understanding about how insidious and powerful abuse becomes. Our clients' abusers tell them they won't be believed or that they will be deported. Through the law and with Her Justice, women can shake off that crippling fear.

Susan A. Turk, Esq., Her Justice volunteer

Edward V. Torres, Esq., Her Justice volunteer, associate, Jones Day

Susanna Saul, Esq., senior staff attorney, Her Justice



CORPORATE PARTNERS—CHAMPIONS FOR JUSTICE



Our Corporate Partners are truly partners in our mission, helping us transform the lives of the most vulnerable New Yorkers. Her Justice is funded almost entirely by donations from private institutions and individuals. Our 32 Corporate Partners are the cornerstone of that network of support.

Last year, our Corporate Partner law firms and corporations donated 22% of our operating income and assisted Her Justice clients in 79% of our legal matters. This significant level of participation greatly enhances our ability to provide legal assistance to women who cannot afford a lawyer, but who have urgent legal needs.

Thanks to the extraordinary support from our Corporate Partners, our legal volunteers provided almost 75,000 hours of service to our clients in 2013, valued at just under \$33 million.

2012–2013 financials

Audited statement of activities for fiscal year 2013, ending June 30, 2013

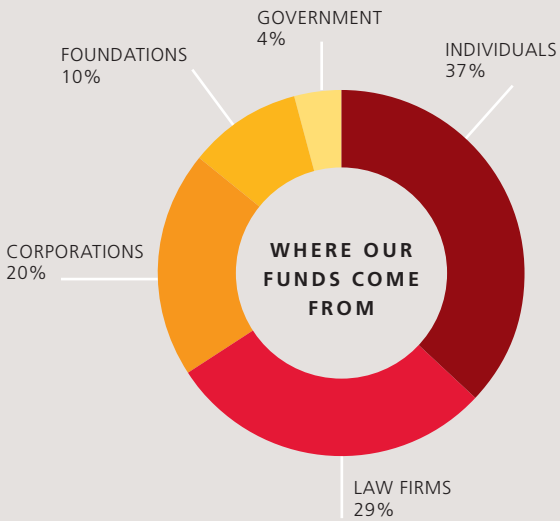
OPERATING REVENUES

Individuals	\$ 1,797,378
Law Firms	\$ 1,430,536
Corporations	\$ 981,998
Foundations	\$ 471,500
Government	\$ 222,653
Interest	\$ 612

TOTAL OPERATING REVENUES \$ 4,904,677

Donated Legal Services \$ 32,878,097

TOTAL REVENUE \$ 37,782,774



OPERATING EXPENSES

Legal/Program Services	\$ 3,475,256
Fundraising/Communications	\$ 580,781
Management/General	\$ 278,029

TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES \$ 4,334,066

Donated Legal Services \$ 32,878,097

Event Expenses \$ 631,583

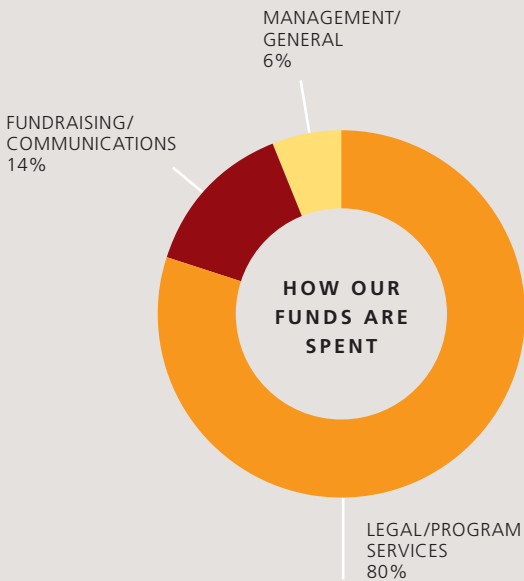
TOTAL EXPENSES \$ 37,782,774

NET INCOME \$ (60,972)

TOTAL ASSETS \$ 4,723,235

TOTAL LIABILITIES \$ 342,540

TOTAL NET ASSETS \$ 4,380,695



With gratitude

Your support connects women in crisis with the most powerful legal network in New York City

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“Each donation and individual case has a ripple effect.”

– Mary G. Singh, donor

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