# find more lawyers

inMotion

#### DOUGLASS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



We would assign a pro bono lawyer to every woman who requested one from us—if we could. So far, we have recruited and trained lawyers for 2,500 women. But every day, we field at least 11 calls from women desperate for a lawyer and we have to tell more than 70% of them that we do not have volunteers ready and willing to take their cases.

Earlier this year, 12 women for whom we were unable to find volunteer attrorneys participated in a focus group. Each called inMotion seeking a lawyer. As we do for all callers, we did as much as we could to assist

them—our staff answered each woman's questions, supplied basic written materials and advised her on how to proceed in court without representation.

For some of the women—those with urgent deadlines—we drafted responsive pleadings and then coached them through the process of filing these court papers pro se. We explained what the next steps in their cases would be. And we gave them all referrals to bar associations and other legal services organizations that might be able to link them to the legal representation they sought, hopefully before their next scheduled court appearances. We hoped our focus group would help us understand whether this type of assistance was meaningful and, if so, how we could do it better.

And what did we learn from these women? Driven by courage and determination, they entered courtrooms without lawyers and gained divorces from abusive husbands and orders granting them child custody and child support. They expressed deep appreciation for inMotion's guidance and encouragement. They also described the enormous stress they experienced, dealing with complex legal issues and a system that's far from user-friendly. In the end, when we asked for suggestions, the resounding response was, *"Find more lawyers."* 

**Proceeding on their own had taken an immeasurable toll on these women.** And we and they will never know whether they might have obtained more, or better, relief had lawyers been at their sides, speaking the language the judges speak, eliciting testimony and presenting other evidence in the most forceful way possible.

In January 2004, New York State's Unified Court System published an important two-volume report entitled, *The Future of Pro Bono in New York*. It documented the pro bono activities of lawyers in our state in 2002. Sadly, in spite of the adoption in 1997 of a Pro Bono Resolution by the Administrative Board of the Courts urging all attorneys to provide a minimum of 20 hours of pro bono service annually, **only 27% of New York's attorneys fulfilled that minimum requirement in 2002.** In fact, pro bono services declined slightly over those five years, and pro bono service in civil matters, including the critical family issues our clients face, experienced the greatest decline.

At the time the report was released, Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye stated,

"It is a sad reality that the poor are often left to fend for themselves in New York's challenging arenas because they cannot afford to hire a lawyer. In particular, the lack of legal representation for poor persons in civil matters is reaching epidemic proportions and threatens to create an unfair system of justice in this state... This is a situation that we as a democratic society cannot tolerate."

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#### INMOTION VOLUNTEER WINS NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION AWARD

**Volunteer attorney David Tomlin** recently received the New York State Bar Association's 2004 President's Pro Bono Award for his work representing inMotion clients. On May 3rd, Ramonita Cordero, legal program director, and Gabriella Richman, staff attorney, accompanied Dave to Albany and proudly watched as he received special recognition for his extraordinary service to indigent women living in the Bronx. Dave Tomlin has been an active member of inMotion's pro bono panel since July 2002. He has volunteered at 14 walk-in clinics, providing free advice and counsel to over 40 women.

Dave has also represented two pro bono clients, one a hearing-impaired domestic violence survivor. He helped this client obtain an order of protection and divorce from her batterer, who now has only supervised visitation with their two young children. In addition, Dave intervened



David Tomlin (left) with Thomas Levin, president of the New York State Bar Association.

with the client's landlord after her daughter was attacked by a neighbor's dog in their apartment building. While his client is able to speak and read lips, she does not hear well enough to communicate on the phone. Dave frequently travels to his client's Bronx home to speak 'face-to-face' about the details of her legal cases.

Dave's volunteer work is performed entirely on his own time. As the assistant general counsel at the Associated Press, Dave is not able to work on his pro bono matters during office hours. Instead, he uses vacation time for court appearances and

consultations, often meeting with clients on weekends. For this compassionate attorney who always goes 'above and beyond,' we applaud this well-deserved recognition; Dave Tomlin is truly one of New York City's unsung heroes.

# photography auction & benefit

InMotion celebrated 11 years of providing free legal services to low-income women at Sotheby's on March 8th. We are honored to count as friends the many of corporations, law firms and individuals who came together to make this evening our most successful fundraising event to-date—raising over \$1.1 million to assist women and children living in domestic crisis.



Denise Bethel kicks off the evening by auctioning *Designer's Window, Bleecker Street* by Berenice Abbott for a record \$12,000!



Photographer Stephen Wilkes poses with the photograph he donated to the auction.

Benefit co-chairs Richard Roberts, of Goldman, Sachs & Co., and Lynette Koppel, of Shearman & Sterling LLP, welcomed 650 guests for a lively evening of celebration and competitive bidding. Denise Bethel, senior vice president and director of photography at Sotheby's, took the podium for the 9th straight year to auction the 40 extraordinary works curated by art dealer committee co-chairs, Deborah Bell and Yossi Milo. We are deeply grateful to the dozens of gifted artists and gallerists who donated works to this year's auction.

Much of the evening's financial success is owed to our *Justice inMotion Award* honoree, Kathryn Wilde, president and CEO, Partnership for New York City, and to co-chairs, David Heleniak, senior partner, Shearman & Sterling LLP, and Pamela Zilly, senior managing director, The Blackstone Group. Each played a crucial role in expanding the ranks of corporations and law firms who contributed financially to the event.



Board member Roslyn Tom with co-chair Richard Roberts.



Our long-time friend, photographer Morris Engel, with his donated image.



Honorary co-chair David Heleniak congratulates honoree Kathryn Wylde upon receiving the 2004 *Justice inMotion Award*.



Guests from Weil, Gotshal & Manges enjoy dinner and the revelry of the evening.

#### LETTER FROM CATHERINE J. DOUGLASS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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There were some bright spots around the state where pro bono participation increased, including two counties in New York City where inMotion has focused our recruiting and training efforts: Bronx and Queens counties. We would like to take some of the credit for that positive change. And we're proud that every year the number of pro bono cases we place with volunteers increases significantly. We believe that most lawyers are more than happy to assist people who cannot afford to pay for lawyers at times of need, so long as they can turn to programs like ours for training and support when they need it.

The report offers wide-ranging recommendations for expanding pro bono service in the future to achieve the goal of justice for all, and not just for those who can pay. These two, in particular, resonate with me, as I have seen them work at inMotion:

- Educate law students and newly-admitted lawyers about pro bono; and
- Establish pilot projects for delivering discrete task representation ("unbundled" legal services).

InMotion is doing its part to encourage pro bono service at every level. For the past 10 years, we have involved law students in our work through a summer associate program at the major law firms. Today, a large and growing cadre of law students intern in our offices year-round. They are an invaluable resource for assisting women who proceed to court without representation. Under the close supervision of our staff attorneys, they draft court papers (a form of unbundled services) that our unrepresented clients file with the courts themselves, papers that usually mean the difference between defaulting on a case and achieving a fair outcome.

Despite the sobering news of this recent report, I'm encouraged to see forces from every segment of the legal community focusing their efforts on the crushing need:

- Judiciary leaders who called convocations and mandated surveys that culminated in the recent report, judges who are committed to continuing to explore ways that the courts can assist in building pro bono participation among lawyers.
- Law schools that emphasize pro bono participation to their students, some to the extent of making it a mandatory requirement for graduation.
- And a growing number of law firms where senior partners and heads of departments direct all lawyers, including themselves, to undertake significant pro bono work.

We cannot forget the 12 women in our focus group, and the thousands they represent, who are forced to proceed with less than they are owed. We must all be led by their rallying cry—**find more lawyers.**  We are thrilled to announce that Sidley Austin Brown and Wood LLP, one of our long-standing corporate partners, established a new externship program at inMotion in January. An associate from the firm works full-time at inMotion's Manhattan office on a four-month rotating basis, taking on emergency cases that we would not otherwise have time to place with a volunteer attorney or through our referral network. Sidley's extern joins our White & Case extern in the tremendously satisfying work of advocating for the City's neediest families and seeing the positive impact of forceful legal representation on the lives of dozens of women and their families.



**Madhu Goel,** Sidley's first extern, reflecting on her experience at inMotion states, "The extern program offers a unique balance between skills-training and personal growth—the skills I developed at inMotion are fundamental to my every day work as an attorney. As an advocate for indigent women, I was challenged to strengthen my oral presentation, writing and negotiation skills. Having this opportunity to help women secure a sense of justice and move to a better place in their lives has brought me a feeling of great accomplishment and success." Madhu's successor, **Faith Jenkins**, who joined us in May adds, "I truly wish every litigation associate could have this experience of interacting directly with clients and opposing counsel, and appearing in court on a regular basis. This experience, although emotionally challenging at times, is allowing me to grow as a lawyer in ways I never imagined. And at the end of the day, it's nice to know I am helping women who are in need."

## nywba BEFRIENDS INMOTION ONCE AGAIN

First it was a grant from the foundation of the New York Women's Bar Association (NYWBA) to support a fellowship at inMotion for an NYU law student. Most recently, inMotion was the recipient of another generous contribution from NYWBA.

At the Association's Annual Dinner on May 20th, hundreds of lawyers and judges honored the Honorable Jacqueline W. Silbermann with the inaugural Joan L. Ellenbogen Award. Joan was a formidable attorney, a past president of NYWBA, and a founder and the first president of the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York. This new award is sponsored by past president of NYWBA, Sheila Birnbaum, and provides a stipend for an organization to be designated by the award winner.

Judge Silbermann was applauded for her amazing impact on the matrimonial courts statewide and on the Supreme Court, New York County. She knows inMotion's work and she thrilled us that evening by bringing executive director Catherine Douglass to the podium to receive the check accompanying the Joan L. Ellenbogen Award. To be linked in this way to two extraordinary women in the legal profession and to bar associations working to advance issues of importance to women is a true honor.

#### WELCOME ON BOARD!

The name of the game is teamwork—all in support of our mission. This spring we were delighted to add four incredible team players to our board of directors.

**Reneé Brown** is both the WNBA's vice president of player personnel and the chairperson for the 2004 Women's Olympic basketball team. She has played, coached, scouted and inspired women athletes throughout the United States. Her enthusiasm is catching!

**Drew S. Fine** rejoins the inMotion team, after a one-year break in the action. We are thrilled that we were able to sign up Drew, a former chair of our board, once again. A partner in the Global Transportation Finance Group of Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy LLP, Drew personifies the commitment and compassion of the perfect inMotion board member.

**Marla J. Mayer** has devoted the last 15 years of her career to Goldman, Sachs & Co., exhibiting the old-fashioned type of loyalty rarely seen these days. Until recently on the investment banking team, Marla now is vice president of Goldman's human capital management division. She combines genuine warmth with strong drive—an unbeatable combination.

**Roslyn Tom** focuses on public and private mergers and acquisitions, capital markets transactions and restructurings as a corporate partner at Dewey Ballantine LLP. Fluent in both Mandarin Chinese and Japanese, Roslyn will undoubtedly help inMotion find new ways to reach out to Asian women in need of our services and new links to lawyers interested in assisting them.

# changing lives for good

InMotion extends its deepest gratitude to OgilvyOne Worldwide and its creative partners, @radical media, Outpost Digital and PULL, for their collaborative work in producing *Changing Lives for Good*, our new video, which debuted at our March 8th Photography Auction and Benefit. For the second year, under the direction of Carla Hendra, president of OglivyOne North America and inMotion board member, Ogilvy once again marshalled its considerable resources and talent to help inMotion tell its story. Narrated by Whoopi Goldberg, the video focuses on the positive changes inMotion brought to the lives of three women and their children, providing insight into the dire situations many of our clients face and documenting the life-changing impact of our free legal services. We are very grateful to each of these brave women, who shared profoundly personal moments of their lives with us. Here are their stories.



#### Samantha<sup>\*</sup> and Andre

Samantha is an immigrant from Jamaica. She met and married her husband in New York in 2001. Soon after, his severe verbal and physical abuse of Samantha began. Whenever she attempted to leave, her husband threatened to take their son and to have her deported.

Describing the day that she was forced flee her home, Andrea recounts, "He came in and was in a real rotten mood—he raced over and started to hit me—with Andre screaming at the top of his lungs, "Leave my Mommy! Leave my Mommy!" I managed to dial the police and they came. They looked at me, I had bruises on my face—they took pictures and did the report... I could not believe that my ex-husband could have done that, and then to do it in front of his son that he claims that he loves more than anything in the world..."

After this incident, Samantha and Andre took refuge in a domestic violence shelter. The New York Association for New Americans helped her apply for legal residency under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and referred Samantha to inMotion for help with securing a divorce and legal custody of her son.

InMotion immediately placed Samantha's cases with caring attorneys at Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP. Carolyn Renzin represented her in her custody case. Samantha was awarded full custody of Andre by default when the father failed to appear in Brooklyn Family Court on three consecutive court dates. And Keeley Wettan then helped Samantha obtain an uncontested divorce.

Freed from her abusive relationship and with the piece of mind that she had permanent custody of Andre, Samantha began to move forward with her life. She enrolled in a nursing program and secured a part-time job at a department store to support Andre and pay for school. Carolyn Renzin marvels, "Samantha is a superstar. She has juggled so much and persevered! She will be receiving her green card in the very near future and has now graduated from nursing school." We are all rooting for Samantha as she prepares for her final certification exams!



#### Paulette<sup>\*</sup> and Kareene

Paulette, also an undocumented Jamaican immigrant, came to the United States in October 2000 on a work visa. She met her future husband while employed as a housekeeper at a resort hotel in Indiana. Paulette thought she had met the man of her dreams, but soon after becoming pregnant and marrying him, her prince charming turned into her worst nightmare.

Paulette survived a year of horrific violence and, miraculously, gave birth to a healthy baby girl, Kareene. "I got beaten throughout my whole pregnancy, throughout my *whole* pregnancy. He gave me nothing to eat and he beat me... He came in one night, hitting my head, my back, my stomach. He beat me and I started hemorrhaging. I was bleeding like—I didn't know if I'd live. I had to crawl to the phone. When I eventually got to the phone, I dialed 911, I could not talk. That man, he leave [left] me to die."

After this incident, Paulette fled to New York with Kareene, taking refuge with her aunt and cousin. Paulette's work visa had long expired and, as an undocumented immigrant, she found herself in a seemingly endless series of impossible catch-22s. She could not get an official state identification card because she did not have a social security number, driver's license or any other acceptable form of identification. She could not enter a government building to request a social security number or assistance of any kind because she did not have an identification card. "Without a social security number," Paulette explains, "I was eligible for nothing. Before I came to inMotion, everywhere I turned, the door closed in my face."

InMotion helped Paulette apply for legal residency. Our staff attorneys and interns worked with Paulette to draft a persuasive VAWA self-petition, documenting countless instances of abuse. Paulette's application was accepted within a few months, allowing her to regain her work permit and obtain other important benefits while her green card was pending.

Pieces of paper have very special meaning to Paulette. "I sometimes lay all that I have accomplished out on my kitchen table. I put them all out, I sit and just look at them—my computer technology certificate, my work permit, my social security card, my driver's license, my CPR certification and now, my nursing degree—I look in disbelief and cry tears of joy."

This April Paulette began her first full-time job as a registered nurse in a hospital in Yonkers, NY.



#### Jacqueline<sup>\*</sup> and Raven

When Jacqueline came to inMotion she was unemployed, in arrears on her rent and struggling to provide for her daughter, Raven. Jacqueline's family in Texas had drained their retirement accounts and nearly bankrupted themselves helping her

#### CHANGING LIVES FOR GOOD

#### continued from page 4

win a bitter custody fight. For over three years, Jacqueline had been trying, on her own, to get child support from Raven's father. Even though he earns a six-figure salary, the father had not paid one cent of child support; his team of attorneys had successfully fought off Jacqueline's pro se petitions.

Jacqueline explains her state of mind when she first contacted inMotion, "You never imagine that the person you love, or says that they love you is going to do the things that they do. He sued me for full custody; we were in court for 2½ years just dealing with the custody matter. I was falling apart. We were bankrupt. I thought I was going to have a nervous breakdown."

InMotion placed Jacqueline's case with Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP attorneys Michelle Krusko and Darin McAtee. They were able to prove that Raven's father was hiding assets in a family-owned business and that he had recently purchased an apartment valued at over \$1 million, despite his claims that he earned less than \$35,000 a year. To prevent Cravath from subpoending information about the assets of his fiancé, who did not know that he had a child from a previous relationship, the father agreed to settle the case. Jacqueline states, "We were able to reach a settlement, almost entirely on my terms, that leaves the door open for upward modification every two years. My daughter currently receives \$1,200 per month in child support, full medical and dental coverage and [future] college tuition. The bond formed between my attorneys and myself has turned into a lasting friendship. We cried together and ultimately celebrated together. They have committed to protecting my daughter's support until she is emancipated!"

Three months after reaching the settlement, Jacqueline landed a terrific job in the cast of *Mamma Mia!* She is currently on national tour with the traveling production of the Broadway hit. Speaking about her experience with inMotion, Jacqueline states, "It changed my life, it changed my daughter's life, and I think my attorneys would tell you, it changed their lives too. We are all different, we are all changed from this experience."

\*All client names have been changed to protect their identities.

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## in Motion in the news

Have you caught us in the news? Since the beginning of the year, six media outlets have profiled inMotion, helping us get out the word about the free legal services we offer to low-income, abused and immigrant women.

On April 6th, Catherine Douglass, executive director, and Ramonita Cordero, legal program director, made their first prime-time television appearance on **One-On-One with Steve Adubato**, a public television series featured on the Comcast Cable Network. In a 30-minute, in-depth interview, Cathy and Ramonita spoke to the tremendous need for attorneys to donate their legal services to assist low-income women in the areas of family, matrimonial and immigration law.

In March, Ramonita appeared on BronxNet's popular telephone-talk TV show, **Bronx Talk AM**, which airs weekday mornings on channel 67. In a 20-minute exchange with host Gary Axelbank, Ramonita discussed the pressing legal issues facing inMotion's clients.

**Bronx Beat,** a student newspaper run by the Columbia School of Journalism, featured inMotion in a February issue. Profiling the harrowing abuse that one Bronx immigrant survived and the critical legal assistance she received from inMotion, the article highlighted legal options available to undocumented women under the Violence Against Women Act. Our Bronx walk-in clinic was also in the media spotlight. In January, Chrisena Coleman from the **Daily News** bylined a piece that ran

on the front page of the metro section. The article explained how women could take an important first step toward resolving a domestic crisis by obtaining free, bilingual legal advice and counsel at inMotion's monthly clinic. The Spanish television station **Univision 41 Neuva York** picked up the *Daily News* story and included it on the evening news. The response we received from this coverage was



*One-On-One* host Steve Adubato with Catherine Douglass and Ramonita Cordero.

tremendous. On the day of the *Daily News* article, we received more than 40 calls and a record number of women attended the January clinic. The clinic was featured again when **News 12 The Bronx** aired a special Valentine's Day piece on legal remedies that women can seek when love goes wrong.

#### INMOTION WINS DENISON RAY AWARD

Ramonita Cordero, legal program director for inMotion, expressed our enormous pride as she accepted, on behalf of inMotion, the Denison Ray Award.

This award, made annually by the New York State Bar Association at its Partnership Conference in June, is named after career legal activist Denny Ray, who served as the executive director of legal services programs in New York and several other states. The award honors extraordinary commitment to:

- Strengthening access to justice initiatives;
- Delivering or facilitating the provision of civil legal services to low-income and disadvantaged clients;
- · Increasing provision of pro bono services; and
- Marshalling resources to maximize resources to the community.

In her acceptance remarks, Ramonita praised the volunteer lawyers, legal assistants and law students who are at the heart of our program, as well as the many legal services organizations, law firms and law schools we have partnered with throughout the City.

She also thanked Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP, whose lawyers have represented more than 160 clients referred by inMotion since 1995, for nominating inMotion for the award. Bill Russell, co-chair of the firm's pro bono committee, reflected on the firm's work with us, "But for inMotion's services, thousands of women would almost certainly have proceeded without counsel in court when they needed access to essential legal protections. With their services, these women obtained meaningful access to justice—for themselves and for their families."

#### SUMMER PARTY - SECOND ANNUAL EVENT FOR YOUNG SUPPORTERS OF INMOTION



With generous underwriting from American Express and sponsorship from Zurich Financial Services, inMotion hosted its second annual Summer Party at Gotham Hall on June 17th. Young professionals gathered for a 1920's inspired evening of cocktails, dinner and dancing to music spun by DJ Jason and a very special live performance by the fathers of rap, the Sugar Hill Gang. We thank Wonder Mike and everyone in the Sugar Hill Gang for their warmhearted support of inMotion and the women we serve.

For a second year, benefit co-chairs Louisa Childs, Claire Heleniak, Stephanie Anne Golden and Colleen O'Loughlin recruited friends and colleagues to serve on the party's organizing committee. Our heartfelt thanks to all for their enthusiasm in organizing this event and for introducing inMotion's mission to so many new friends. A special thank you as well to our beverage sponsors Chivas Regal, Wyndham Estate and Anheuser World Select for their in-kind support.

### Ourthanks 2004 Institutional sources of income

We gratefully acknowledge the following corporations, foundations and law firms for their financial and in-kind support over the past year. Their generosity has made it possible for inMotion to help women and children throughout New York City find hope and freedom.

#### \$50,000 & OVER

Anonymous IOLA Fund of the State of New York OgilvyOne Worldwide\*\* @radical.media\* Zurich Financial Services\*\*

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#### AN UPDATE ON ALICIA'S CASE

In our last issue, you read about Alicia, a young mother who suffered years of abuse at the hands of her twin sons' father, Patricio. Alicia was forced to flee the Dominican Republic with her sons after an appeals court upheld a judgment giving custody of her sons to their abusive father. Patricio followed Alicia to New York City, demanding the return of the children. White & Case externs Averie Hason, Paul Godinez and Justin Brown took on Alicia's case, which resulted in a landmark decision allowing the Bronx Integrated Domestic Violence Court to modify a child custody order granted by a court in the Dominican Republic. This ruling gave Alicia a second chance to prevent her two young children from suffering further abuse at the hands of their father—an option she didn't have in the Dominican Republic.

## When we left off, a trial to determine permanent custody had been scheduled

**to begin in January.** Prior to the trial date, Patricio appealed the decision. And to prevent the court from awarding custody to Alicia before his appeal was heard, Patricio requested a stay of the civil and criminal proceedings pending before the Bronx Integrated Domestic Violence Court.

In their appeal brief, the White & Case team argued, contrary to Patricio's claim, that a stay would not be

beneficial to the parties or the children and that a trial on the merits would be a waste of judicial resources. They also highlighted the dilatory behavior of Patricio's attorney, citing his numerous missed court appearances, refusal to return phone calls and unwillingness to respond to discovery requests. In late March, after reviewing briefs from both parties, the Appellate Court ruled in Alicia's favor and denied Patricio's petition for a stay. The trial to consider permanent custody was scheduled to begin on April 1st.



The White & Case team prepared Alicia for trial and accompanied her to court on April 1st. Moments before the trial started, **Patricio consented to awarding Alicia full custody of their sons and agreed to supervised visitation.** As part of the settlement agreement, the father withdrew his appeal of the Court's decision asserting jurisdiction. Alicia was also granted a two-year order of protection.

The lives of Alicia and her children are forever changed, thanks to the perseverance and

professionalism of Averie, Paul and Justin. Commenting on the case, Paul states, **"How often do you get the chance to be involved in a case where you receive drawings from kids decorated with hearts thanking you for keeping their family together?** Working on a case like this makes you feel pretty good at the end of the day. Although this was one of the most difficult pro bono cases I've worked on, it was the most gratifying."



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Since 1993, inMotion has helped thousands of women free themselves from abusive relationships, stay in their homes and win the financial support to which they—and their children—are legally entitled. Our mission is to make a real and lasting difference in the lives of women—lowincome, under-served, abused—by offering them legal and related services designed to foster equal access to justice and an empowered approach to life. We fulfill our mission by providing free legal services, primarily in the areas of matrimonial, family and immigration law, in a way that acknowledges mutual respect, encourages personal growth, and nurtures individual and collective strength. Informed by this work, inMotion promotes policies that make our society more responsive to the legal issues confronting the women we serve.



## InMotion served over 5,000 women and children this past year.



70% are mothers who head their households. 60% are survivors of domestic violence.

49% of inMotion's clients live in the Bronx and 22% reside in Queens, the City boroughs with the highest concentrations of immigrant families.

66% of the women who come to us are Latina. 24% are African-American.



