

FY2019 / Annual Report

# HER JUSTICE

Shift the Power



“My lawyer and Her Justice changed my life.”

Tanya E. Kent (L), Deputy General Counsel, General Insurance, AIG  
Gladis Azucena Mendez (R), Client

**Our Mission:** Her Justice stands with women living in poverty in New York City by recruiting and mentoring volunteer lawyers to provide free legal help to address individual and systemic legal barriers.

[HerJustice.org](https://HerJustice.org)



# FY2019 / Highlights

Her Justice continues to lead the way in producing life-changing outcomes for women living in poverty by harnessing the power and dedication of New York City's private legal sector. **This past year, more than 4,500 women living in poverty found help thanks to Her Justice;** 69% are moms, 75% are survivors of domestic violence, and more than a third of them need an interpreter to access the courts. All of them are better off now.



Two-thirds of our clients need the courts to resolve disputes about child custody, support payments, and divorce. **We listen to each and every client, and our policy work emerges from these discussions.**

This past year, Her Justice volunteers observed and recorded information from over 800 child support court proceedings, the majority of which took place without the help of a lawyer. These results, interpreted and developed by Ankura Consulting Group, LLC into the largest dataset we know of its kind, will be incorporated into our first policy publication due out next year.

Our child support policy position is clear—parents should pay the most they can afford to support their kids. Sounds simple, but without a lawyer, it almost never happens.

Calls to our Help Line continued to increase this past year. With our 'live' Help Line, every caller gets some kind of help instantly. **Over half of these calls lead to legal representation from a highly-skilled, pro bono lawyer on a family or matrimonial case.** Intake for immigration cases is done in person, and at all of those meetings as well, clients receive some form of assistance. Other Help Line support ranges from referring women to services outside of our organization (such as a housing advocate in another state), to reviewing legal documents to help women advance their own cases. With every call, our Help Line is a source of comfort and support to a woman in legal crisis.

Our immigration work continues to be tumultuous, as federal rules and practices change on an almost daily basis. **Clients who could have obtained work authorization in six months in 2014, now wait up to four years for the right to work legally.** All are women who have survived intimate partner violence, and most have children.

Due to these dramatic increases in processing times for immigration procedures, it's challenging to handle new lawful status applications while still providing enough support to those clients whose cases have been pending for years. One of our goals for the coming year is to increase our capacity overall so that we can meet the growing demands of both new and existing clients.

As part of a broad coalition of immigration agencies, **Her Justice contributed to a positive policy change for foreign-born clients** by advocating in person and on paper concerning the chilling effect of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents arresting people in the courts. On April 17, the NYS Court System adopted the coalition's proposed rule, requiring that ICE agents meet the same standard as law enforcement, and make arrests in courthouses only if in possession of a judicial warrant.

Continuing to improve and expand our client services, this year **we also launched our Marital Debt and Language Access Projects,** highlighted in this report.

None of these accomplishments would have been possible without your support. Thank you all for standing with us to give our clients justice, a voice, and the power to prevail!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Amy Barasch'.

Amy Barasch  
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Patricia Ferrari'.

Patricia Ferrari  
Chair, Board of Directors

# Who We Serve

We serve women in all five boroughs of NYC

9% White (Not Hispanic)  
8% Asian or Pacific Islander, South Asian, East Asian  
3% Native American, Other  
25% Black (African-American, Caribbean, African)



55% Hispanic

Manhattan 16%

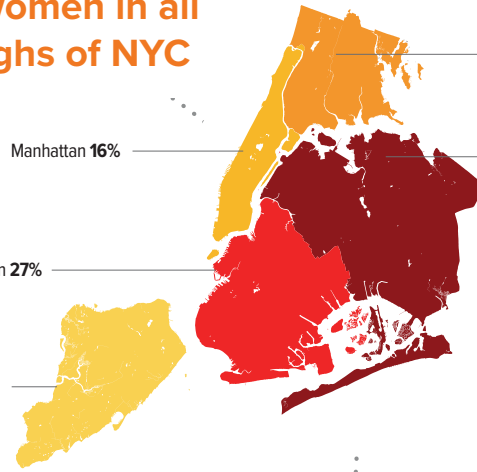
Brooklyn 27%

Staten Island 2%

Bronx 22%

Queens 30%

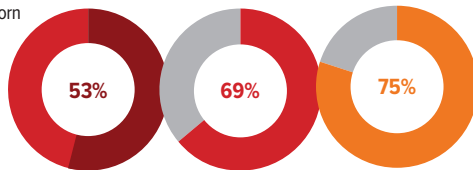
Other areas 3%



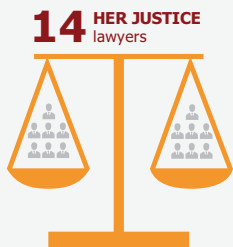
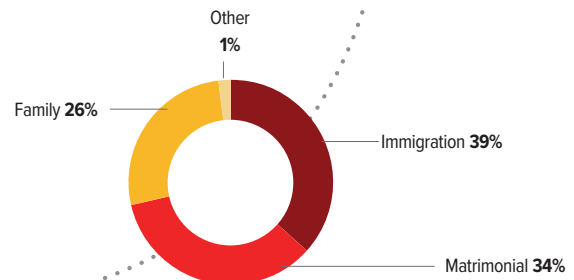
53% of Her Justice clients were born outside of the U.S.

69% of Her Justice clients are mothers.

75% of Her Justice clients are survivors of intimate partner violence.

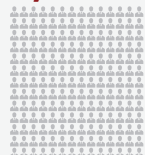


Subject Matter of Service Provided



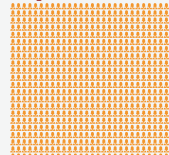
14 HER JUSTICE lawyers

MENTORED  
2,089



volunteer lawyers

SERVING  
8,650



women and their children

FOR A TOTAL OF  
77,990



hours donated

REPRESENTING  
42,069,821



in value



## Volunteer Attorneys

“My pro bono work is one of the most rewarding parts of my practice.”

Pro bono work is essential for affecting these women's lives in a positive direction, for providing them the opportunity to be heard so they can tell their stories and do the best things for themselves and their families.”

Kate Swisher (R), Associate, White & Case LLP  
Amanda Feliciano (L), Client

# New Initiatives



## Marital Debt Project



Consumer debt and low credit scores trap women in poverty. An estimated 78 to 99 percent of domestic violence survivors are also victims of financial abuse – husbands taking out loans or buying cars in their wives' names without permission, and defaulting on payments, or otherwise racking up debt that can make it too expensive to leave an unhealthy marriage. Deficient credit scores also make it almost impossible for women to start their lives over post-divorce.

An Equal Justice Works Fellow is implementing a two-year Marital Debt Project, expanding existing services offered by Her Justice by providing holistic legal representation and financial advocacy in consumer debt defense cases involving clients seeking divorces. The fellow is sponsored by Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP.



## Language Access Project

Our clients come from increasingly diverse backgrounds, with different languages of origin, levels of English proficiency, and literacy. The Language Access Project was created to broaden the scope of languages with which we serve our clients. As a first step, we rewrote our client materials into 'plain' English to ensure that they fully understand the legal documents. We then contracted with a remote interpretation service we now use for client calls to the Help Line, enabling us to work with women who speak over 50 languages.

In the next phase of the project, we will train staff and volunteers on best practices in working with interpreters, and develop curricula to enable Her Justice to implement these language trainings for our pro bono volunteers in the future. The initial phase of the project was managed by an AmeriCorps VISTA Fellow.

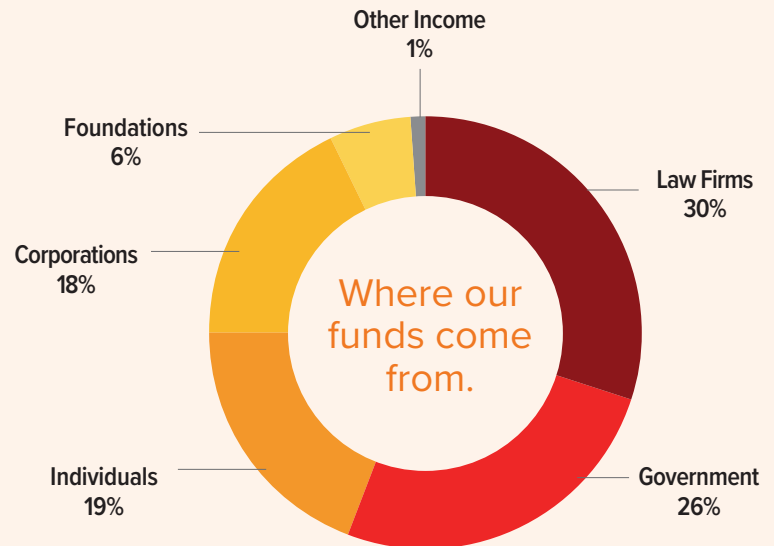


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Fiscal Year July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

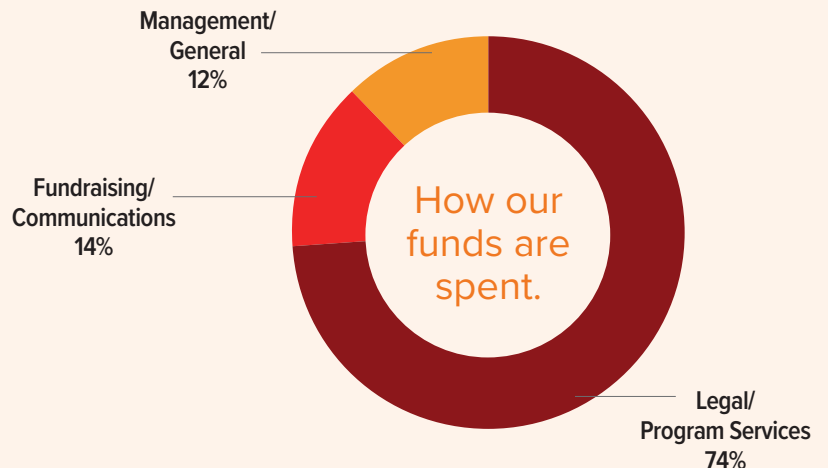
## Operating Revenues

Individuals	\$ 1,016,978
Law Firms	\$ 1,625,352
Corporations	\$ 950,088
Foundations	\$ 291,500
Government	\$ 1,406,508
Interest/Other Income	\$ 51,942
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 5,342,368</b>
Donated Legal Services*	\$ 42,069,821
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 47,412,189</b>



## Operating Expenses

Legal/Program Services	\$ 3,956,532
Fundraising/Communications	\$ 765,877
Management/General	\$ 623,859
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 5,346,268</b>
Donated Legal Services*	\$ 42,069,821
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 47,416,089</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ (3,900)</b>



<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 5,359,060</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 604,468</b>
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 4,754,592</b>

\*Unaudited as of October 2019



# With Gratitude

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**Kira M. Whitacre, Esq. (Co-Chair)**  
Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP

**Yiru Zhu**  
Grant Thornton LLP

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