

February Newsletter: Criminal Justice Advocacy



**Los Angeles
Center for
Law and Justice**

February Newsletter

Dear LACLJ Supporter,

Survivors face many challenges when seeking safety and justice. Will others believe me? Will I ever feel safe again? Where do I even start?

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month - a reminder that survivors are struggling with these challenges at such a young age. That's why our [Criminal Justice Advocacy](#) work is so important. Without someone to inform survivors of their rights and be there alongside with them, the process can be overwhelming and traumatic.

I am so grateful these services exist for teen survivors who are feeling lost. And that we are continuing to build a community of supporters ready to advocate for their safety. Read more about our recent efforts below.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Norayma Cabot".

Norayma Cabot
Executive Director

Note: LACLJ serves survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, and some client stories may be triggering.



ADVOCATING FOR A TEEN'S RIGHTS

Cassandra* is 16 years old. She had been dating her 19 year old boyfriend for nearly a year, but wanted to break up with him. He was controlling and violent. **After she ended the relationship, he began harassing her.** He messaged Cassandra non-stop and even parked his car outside of her home.

The District Attorney filed charges against Cassandra's ex, but **she was nervous about testifying in a criminal case.** So, she came to LACLJ for help.

We helped Cassandra navigate the criminal justice system, asserted her Marsy's rights as a victim, and advocated with the D.A. to address her concerns.

With our support, Cassandra felt empowered and chose not to testify. She was relieved that she wouldn't have to face her abuser in court. He was convicted in his criminal case and now Cassandra can focus on healing from the trauma she experienced and finishing high school.



LACLJ ATTORNEY JOINS LAAC BOARD

We are proud to share that Yeison Soto Valdez was elected to the Board of the Legal Aid Association of California. Yeison is passionate about serving our low-income community and is an exceptional advocate for survivors.

"I am very excited of having joined LAAC's board because I strongly believe in the very important work that they do. LAAC is dedicated to advocating for additional funding for legal services organizations which directly benefit low income Californians who otherwise would not have access to free high quality legal services.

LAAC's work helps ensure that organizations like LACLJ can continue to provide survivors of crime with access to justice. LAAC's work today is more important than ever, given that Californians continue to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, leaving already vulnerable populations far more vulnerable than before."

- Yeison Soto Valdez, Esq.



CRISTINA PEREZ, J.D.

We are so excited to welcome Cristina Perez to the LACLJ Board of Directors! Cristina is a Partner with Leech Tishman and is a member of the firm's Employment & Labor Practice Group, focusing on Immigration.

Cristina is a successful lawyer, three-time Emmy Award-winning television personality, radio host, speaker, entrepreneur/business owner, national author and featured columnist.

Over the past 10 years, LACLJ's Immigration Law practice has grown significantly - over 70% of survivors served are immigrants. We are happy to bring Cristina's expertise to our leadership and work with her to best serve immigrant survivors in our community.

[Click here to learn more about Cristina Perez](#)



PRO BONO SPOTLIGHT

After volunteering for our Virtual Domestic Violence Restraining Order Clinic for a week in both October and December 2020, our trailblazing partners at [DLA Piper](#) committed to provide coverage for our clinic for the entire month of February 2021!

Thanks to DLA Piper, survivors of domestic violence can have their temporary restraining order petitions expertly reviewed. Thank you to everyone at DLA Piper for your work with our clients, for your support of our office and for prioritizing survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

We are so grateful to the incredible pro bono team supporting our clinic night after night. We rely on attorneys like you to keep our clinic going—to make sure there is always someone ready to support survivors pursuing the safety and justice they deserve. Thank you!

*Name and photo changed to protect client privacy.



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Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice

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