

URBAN JUSTICE CENTER

2021 Annual Report



UJC IN 2021

12,481 CASES CLOSED

24,042 PEOPLE IMPACTED

by our direct services.

\$2,017,780.67 RECOVERED

in public benefits for clients in desperate need.

OUR BOARD

Joe Hamid, Chairman
Debevoise & Plimpton

Arnold B. Peinado III, Secretary

Joel M. Frank, Treasurer

Michael A. Barasch
Barasch McGarry Salzman & Penson

Pat Budziak
Newark Academy

Joan Chan
PwC

Kenyatta Cheese
Everybody at Once

Michael Coyne
Union Bank

Richard A. Edlin
Greenberg Traurig

Marc Falcone

Helen Hershkoff
New York University School of Law

Charlene Jones
Citi Institutional Client Group

Stephen Loffredo
CUNY School of Law

Mitchell A. Lowenthal
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton

Michal Miernowski
Ardea Partners

Fred Mwangaguhunga
Mediatakeout.com

Johnny Perez
National Religious Campaign Against Torture

Brooke Richie-Babbage
Brooke Richie-Babbage Consulting

David A. Singleton
Ohio Justice & Policy Center

Joshua W. Thompson
Sidley Austin LLP

Edward Turan

LETTER FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Friends,

I can't lie: this has been another difficult year. Lockdowns, disinformation, disease, economic insecurity – if a plague of locusts came next, I don't think I'd be surprised.

But here at the Urban Justice Center, our work continues. Some of our court appearances might be telephonic; our staff meetings might be in a park; and I'm still not 100% sure how to use our company Zoom account. But those are just the details. **Our work – protecting the rights of the vulnerable; organizing marginalized communities; fueling the future of social justice – continues unabated.** If anything, the pandemic has shown how critical our services are, as you'll see in these pages.

As we've all shared the challenges of this past year, I'm excited to get to share some of our successes with you now: our Street Vendor Project's successful campaign to expand legal licenses for vendors in NYC for the first time in decades; our Sex Workers Project's legislative wins around the country; our Safety Net Project's tireless defense of the economically vulnerable who are simply trying to survive our strange new normal.

Next year, our fight for hope will continue – bolstered by a new cohort of brilliant, committed activists in our Social Justice Accelerator. **None of their work – none of our work – would be possible, however, without your support.** Thank you for sticking with us though 2021, and beyond.



Yours in hope,

A stylized, handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'DL'.

Doug Lasdon
Executive Director



ORGANIZING STREET VENDORS FOR JUSTICE

The Street Vendor Project has made historic wins in 2021, first with the passing of Intro 1116 and second with the launching of the Fund for Excluded Workers (FEW) Campaign, which called on the New York State Legislature to create funds for excluded workers. **We won the campaign when the NYS legislature and former Governor Cuomo agreed to a budget establishing a \$2.1 billion excluded workers' fund.**

Rarely are the impacts of a legislative campaign so directly and immediately felt as with the FEW campaign. Excluded workers who attended marches, rallies, and campaigned for victory themselves were unsure if they would be eligible for the fund, as years of system exclusion have conditioned them to believe they would always be excluded. Members of the Street Vendor Project have been encouraged by the power and speed of this campaign, and overall organizing potential and commitment among membership has grown throughout the campaign.

An example of an emerging leader is Gabriela Almaraz, a street vendor in Corona, Queens. She became a vendor at the beginning of the pandemic after losing her job as a domestic cleaner. Gabriela attended the first direct actions of her life during the FEW campaign, crossing the Brooklyn Bridge and calling for relief.

Afterwards, she joined the Street Vendor Project's campaign committee to directly engage in planning for upcoming actions, phonebanking elected officials, and sharing her testimony with the Commissioner of the Department of Labor. Both she and her husband were direct beneficiaries of the fund, and she has stated her commitment to fighting for expanded funding so that her neighbors and friends who were unable to apply can receive the same relief.

For many street vendors across New York City, the COVID-19 pandemic devastated their families and their ability to make an income, and SVP's advocacy and services have never been more in demand, with the two historic legislative wins. **We continue to champion for the rights of New York City's smallest business owners, that make New York City what it is, beautiful and diverse.**



**DEFENDING
THE RIGHTS
OF NEW
YORKERS
IN NEED**



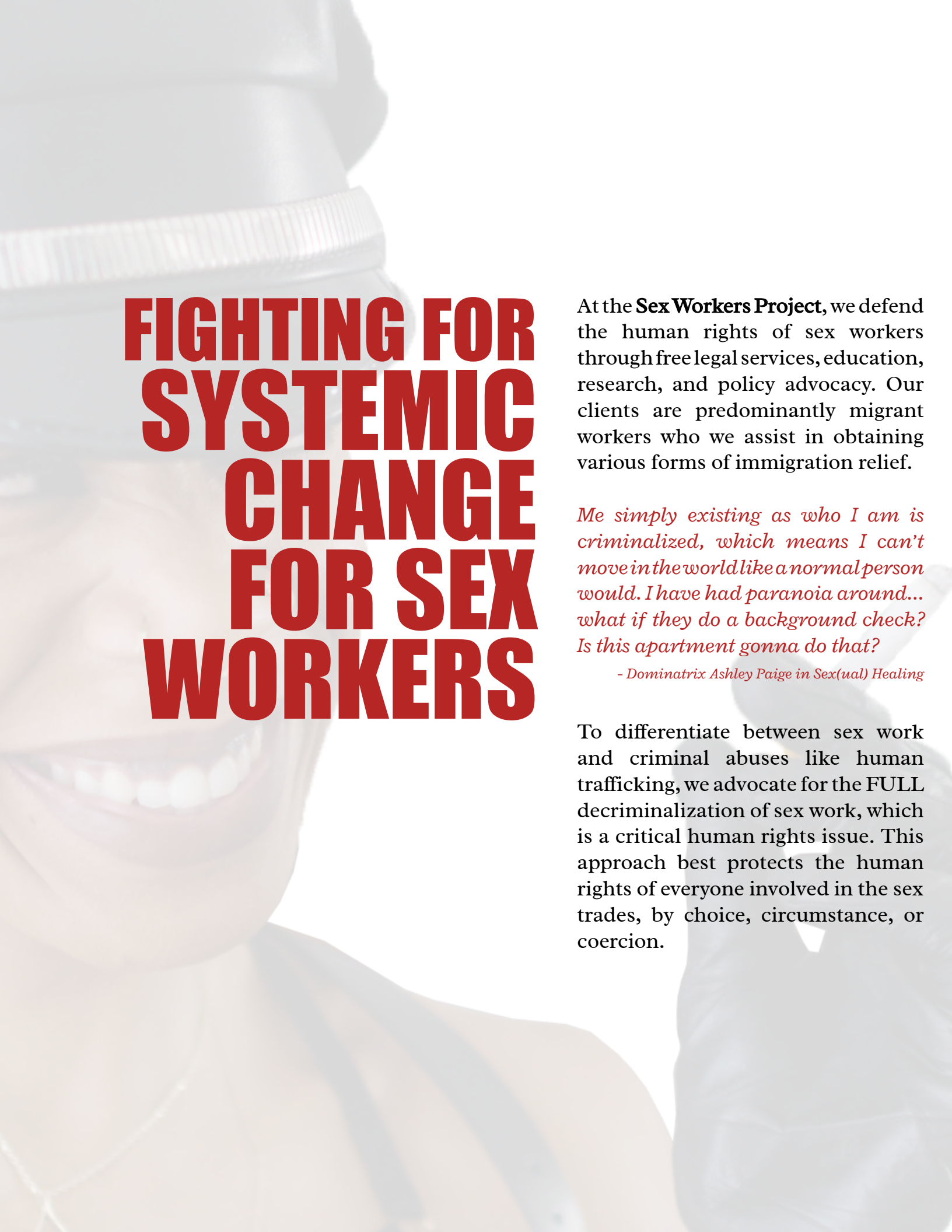


Ms. W is a Bronx tenant who, like so many New York workers of color, lost her job as a data entry specialist at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. She then contracted and survived COVID, only to face eviction because she couldn't keep up with her rent payments. Ms. W has lived in her apartment for 22 years and with no employment, her chances of securing a new apartment were next to none.

As part of the City's Right to Counsel initiative, UJC's Safety Net Project (SNP) took on Ms. W's case. SNP represented Ms. W in housing court during the pandemic, appearing virtually. **Through creative litigation practice, SNP were successful in getting the eviction case against Ms. W dismissed entirely and the decision in her case was even published in the New York Law Journal.**

Without an eviction case hanging over her head, Ms. W went on to apply to New York's Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), so she can clear any outstanding rental arrears and continue recovering from the impact of the pandemic.

**Image is an actor*



FIGHTING FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE FOR SEX WORKERS

At the **Sex Workers Project**, we defend the human rights of sex workers through free legal services, education, research, and policy advocacy. Our clients are predominantly migrant workers who we assist in obtaining various forms of immigration relief.

Me simply existing as who I am is criminalized, which means I can't move in the world like a normal person would. I have had paranoia around... what if they do a background check? Is this apartment gonna do that?

- Dominatrix Ashley Paige in Sex(ual) Healing

To differentiate between sex work and criminal abuses like human trafficking, we advocate for the FULL decriminalization of sex work, which is a critical human rights issue. This approach best protects the human rights of everyone involved in the sex trades, by choice, circumstance, or coercion.

Through our policy advocacy we are working to dismantle NYPD Vice, and support state level decriminalization legislation. **A few successes to date include the introduction of a decriminalization bill in Oregon and the repeal of the loitering for the purposes of prostitution law in New York (also known as the Walking Whiles Trans Ban).**

Also this year, we had the debut of Sex(ual) Healing, a mini-doc series that talks about the healing powers of sex work, from both the worker and client perspective. Sex(ual) Healing is on display now through February 2022 at the Museum of Sex.

Stay tuned for our next episode, which will focus on Sex Worker Families.



THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

\$200.1k +

NYC HRA AHTP
NYC HRA IOI
Robin Hood
Foundation
NYS OCA
NYC HRA HPLP
Sex Workers Rights
Fund
Schwab Charitable
NYC HRA DSS Non Res
NYS OTDA DAP
NYS IOLA
NYCC DoVE
HRA CSBG (DVP)
NYC DOHMH
Advocacy
NYS OTDA STEHP
H. Van Ameringen
Foundation
Stavros Niarchos
Foundation
Ford Foundation

\$200k - 50.1k

New York Women's
Foundation
NYC DOHMH Reentry
NYC HRA CSBG
Omni Prepaid, LLC
FEMA Emergency Food
and Shelter National
Board Program
ICAN - Independent
Consumer Advocacy
Network
Estee Lauder Inc.
NYC Mayor's Office
NYC SBS Vendy Plaza
New York Foundation
Brenda Berry and Jon
Lopatin for the Lopatin
Family Foundation

Brooklyn Community
Bail Fund
NEO Philanthropy
Hunger Solutions Of
New York, Inc.
The New York
Community Trust
Make The Road New
York, INC.
Trinity Church Wall
Street
North Star Fund
NYS OCFS Co28772
NYC DYCD
Discretionary
NYC HPD HPI

\$50k - 25.1k

Alfred P. Sloan
Foundation
Coca Cola Foundation
David Rockefeller Fund
Deloitte Financial
Advisory Services LLP
Ernst & Young LLP
Joel Frank
Mertz Gilmore
Foundation
New York City Council
NYC City Council
Ohrstrom Foundation
Queens Economic
Development Corps
The Tow Foundation
NYS DCJS T563137
Barasch & McGarry, P.C.
Charles H. Revson
Foundation
DOHMH MCCAP
Service Year Exchange
Brooklyn Community
Foundation
Cahill Gordon and

Reindel LLP
Debevoise and
Plimpton LLP
Goldman Sachs
Levitt Foundation
Schulte Roth & Zabel LLP
The Calamus
Foundation
Valerie Block and
Alexis Romay
National Religious
Campaign Against
Torture
"NYS OCFS T012569
Pandemic Relief"

\$25k

Amalgamated
Charitable Foundation
Barasch McGarry
Ben & Jerry's
Foundation
Clinique
Cryptomeria Grove of
the Goldman Sachs
Philanthropy Fund
The Fred I. And Gilda
Nobel Foundation
The Lucius N. Littauer
Foundation
Valentine Perry Snyder
Fund

\$24.9k - 10.1k

MUFG Union Bank
Aon Foundation
Barclays
Hispanics In
Philanthropy
Kendall Hamid
King and Spalding LLP
O'Melveny and Myers LLP
Quinn Emanuel Urquhart
and Sullivan LLP

Ropes and Gray LLP
Sculptor Capital
Shearman & Sterling LLP
Smashbox
Immigrant Justice
Corps
Reflex Media, Inc.
WIEGO
Food Chain Workers
Alliance
Rebecca Katz
Vanguard Charitable
NYS OCFS T012407
Nike, Inc.
Wiego

\$10k - 5.1k

Akin Gump
Bank of America
BNY Mellon
Bryan Cave Leighton
LLP
Cooley LLP
Epstein Teicher
Philanthropies
Fiserv
J.P. Morgan Securities
Kenyatta Cheese
Kinney Memorial
Foundation
McKool Smith PC
Rebecca Karpay and
Lev Polinsky
Subir Chatterjee
The Future Hope
Foundation
UBS
Viasat, INC. Corporate
Everybody At Once LLC
Jewish Communal Fund
Marc Falcone and
Caitlin Halligan

Donors from 7/1/20-6/30/21

Rashawn Howze	Justin Pollack	Leslie Sim	Eric Fox
Neal Kwatra	Maxwell Schiano	Katten Muchin	Father Michael
Paul Levy	Herbert McLaughlin	Rosenman Foundation,	Zampelli
Perlmeier Family	Children's Trust	Inc.	Hearst
Foundation	Paul, Weiss, Rifkind,	Vito Fun Tumbarello	Heller Media LTD
John Laing Charitable	Wharton & Garrison LLP	JP Morgan Chase	Ira Lichtiger and Joyce
Trust	The Herbert	Foundation	Bluestone
\$5k - 2.1k	McLaughlin Children's	Diane Englander and	Janice Y Lee
Anderson	Trust	Mark Underberg	Jeffrey S. Trachtman
Benjamin Thypin	The Robert M.	Freedman-Robins	Joan Chan
Caitlin Halpern	Schiffman Foundation	Family Charitable Fund	John and Nancy
Christopher Tahbaz	Marwan Atalla	Marion Appel	Cassidy Family
Credit Suisse Securities	Hayley Champoux	Raymond James	Foundation
Elyse Levesque	Albert Zhou	Robbie Narcisse Giving	Joseph and Margot
Geoffrey Potter and	Arnold and Sandra	Fund	Calabrese
Peggy Brown	Peinado	Societe Generale	Joseph Neumeyer
Kirkland & Ellis LLP	Daniel Gallancy	Matching Gift	Katrina Baker
M K Reichert Sternlicht	Guilford Publications, Inc.	Marco DaSilva	Kimberly Ima
Foundation	JP Morgan Chase & Co.	Michael Coyne	Lasdon Family
Maples And Calder	Kevin and Rie Haggerty	Jessica Shrum	Foundation
Michal Miernowski	Paycom Payroll	Josue Arguelles	Leo F. Kearns Inc
MKM Foundation	Salesforce.com	The Hitt Family	Mark Holland
Morris A. Hazan Family	Foundation	Foundation, Inc.	Matthew Willner
Foundation	Marisa Wood	Antony Gemmell	Michael F Williams
Pat Budziak and	\$2k - 1k	Arthur Zuch	Partizan Entertainment
William Beecher	Bombas LLC	Benjamin McKee	Michael Vogel
Paul, Hastings,	Carolyn Gemmell	Bill Lambert	Michael Volkovitsch
Janofsky & Walker LLP	Francis Greenburger	Botanica	Misha Nasrollahzadeh
Stephen Milliken	Charitable Fund	Bradford and Kate Peck	Mitchell Lowenthal and
The Hyde And Watson	Isaac and Ellen Kier	Cathy Seligman and	Ann Lowenthal
Foundation	James Rashid	Fred Seligman	Nolan Miller
The Morris A Hazan	Jonathan Springer	Christopher J. Berman	Proskauer Rose LLP
Family Foundation	National Philanthropic	Christopher Meade &	Schwartz Hanessian
Wayne Cohen	Trust	Stella Schumacher	Family Charitable Fund
Winky Foundation	New York University	Chubb Charitable	Shawn Harrington
Zach Vonnegut	Sofia Yakren	Foundation	Silicon Valley
Ruth And Peter Metz	Solomon Family	Claire Pappas	Community Foundation
Family Foundation	Foundation, Inc.	Daniel Bergey	Thomas Ochs
J.P. Morgan Charitable	Starmar Foundation	Douglas Marron	Timothy Boyle
Giving Fund	GiveGab	Elena Feliciano	Tom Flaschen
Gretchen Begley	Cecilia Lim	Elizabeth Mayers	
		Eric and Laurie Roth	

UJC IN 2022

FIGHTING FOR HOPE

Mental Health Project

In 2022, the Mental Health Project's dedicated staff will **support our individual clients in navigating obstacles to their health and wellness while working to dismantle these obstacles for all New Yorkers with mental health concerns.**

MHP will fight for the humane treatment of our community members held in New York jails and prisons; help clients access SSI/SSD, Medicaid, and other crucial benefits; provide peer-led community workshops, and support clients in crisis.

We will continue to lead advocacy for systems change in the areas of criminal justice, health justice and disability justice while bringing a client-centered harm reduction approach to our work.

Domestic Violence Project

In the year ahead, DVP will take the lessons learned during the pandemic and apply them to continuously improve the way we approach our work. When we pivoted services to the remote world, we noticed a greater ability to access survivors who would normally be unable to physically reach our offices.

We reached 6X the number of people through outreach efforts this year than in the year previous. So, while the need remains, our services will adapt to our new way of living and offer hybrid access to survivors, allowing them to choose the path that works for them.

Freedom Agenda

Our community of formerly incarcerated leaders, family members, and allies is knowledgeable and fierce, and **we will continue supporting them to build power to decarcerate New York City and transform our criminal legal system.**

We'll hold elected officials to account, demanding the new mayor and City Council follow through on the plan to close Rikers Island, including implementing the recommendations of the Commission on Reinvestments in Communities Impacted by Rikers Island.

We'll continue to elevate the narratives of the people and communities most impacted by the continuing crisis in New York City jails, and work together to redefine public safety and create a more just post-Rikers New York City.



JOIN THE FIGHT FOR HOPE JOIN THE JUSTICE INITIATORS

This year, we launched an exclusive educational initiative for our our monthly recurring donors, called the Justice Initiators. JI members take part in monthly, behind-the-scenes video conferences with leaders from our projects, giving them the opportunity to hear the real stories behind the often-confusing news headlines about politics, social justice, and New York City.

CONCERNED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE EVICTION MORATORIUM?

CONFUSED ABOUT WHY STREET VENDORS ARE SO OFTEN HARASSED BY THE POLICE?

UNSURE ABOUT WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU SEE SOMEONE HAVING A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS?



Join the Justice Initiators and get the answers to all of these questions, and more. Just scan this QR code with the camera on your smart phone to find out more, or visit:

[URBANJUSTICE.ORG/JOINJI](https://urbanjustice.org/joinji)

OUR SOCIAL JUSTICE ACCELERATOR MENTORS FUTURE LEADERS

Through our Social Justice Accelerator, we incubate future social justice leaders who are organizing around some of our country's most pressing issues. In 2021, we graduated our first SJA cohort, and we are currently recruiting the second. Being part of the SJA enables these projects to leap over the hurdles of being early-stage nonprofits and get directly to serving their constituencies. Within just the first year of the program, members of our initial SJA cohort:

- Expanded their capacity to bring critical services to people in need by an average of 150%
- Grew their fundraising base (the lifeblood of all nonprofits) by more than 166%
- Expanded their social media presence by 756%, and saw a massive 525% uptick in media coverage of their work

By supporting young organizers, and bringing them into the Urban Justice Center fold, we are able to stay nimble and respond to emerging issues - from the COVID-19 pandemic to the ongoing crisis of police brutality against Black and brown communities. To find out more, visit [SJA.urbanjustice.org](https://www.sja.urbanjustice.org).

Welcome Our

NEWEST BOARD MEMBERS

We are delighted to welcome Joan Chan (PwC) and Joshua W. Thompson (Sidley Austin LLP) to the Board of the Urban Justice Center! The UJC Board provides critical guidance and fundraising for UJC, and we are excited to have their decades of combined expertise on our side.

Joan Chan

Born and raised in Hong Kong and now living in NYC as a management consultant, I am in awe of the opportunities this country offers but at the same time recognize the inequities that we still need to overcome. I value the work UJC does, the lasting impact it makes, and the passion the team brings every day. I am honored to join the UJC board of directors and will do everything I can to support UJC's mission and expand its reach.

Joshua W. Thompson

UJC's leadership and forward momentum is strong and deep, and it is a privilege to have the opportunity to hopefully contribute in the coming years.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR YOUNG PROFESSIONAL BOARD

Our Young Professional Board is a group of passionate supporters who volunteer their time to spread the word about our work, raise critically needed funding for our initiatives, organize UJC themed events, and have a good time while doing it! From running the NYC TCS Marathon in November, to organizing our virtual wine tasting for #GivingTuesday, they find all kinds of new and exciting ways to promote UJC.

Don't just take our word for it, though. Meet two of our YPB leaders:



When Morgan's not working as the Business Development Director at OBERLAND, she's YPB's talented and tireless Fundraising Co-Chair.

"The past year on UJC's YPB has been an amazing experience and one of the silver linings of COVID. I'm excited to see how each project continues to evolve in 2022 + the new projects that come through the Social Justice Accelerator. I always look forward to connecting each month with Gretchen (our fearless leader) and the rest of the YPB team."

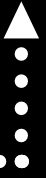


As a long-standing YPB member, Yasmin brings the vast communication expertise she's gained as a Senior Account Executive at GCI Health.

"Since joining YPB, I have had incredible opportunities to leverage my professional skills and contribute to the UJC mission. I cherish the connections I have formed in a network of likeminded, passionate individuals who are committed to amplifying our great work benefitting marginalized communities. I am continuously inspired by the amazing people who make up the UJC family. This has been a truly rewarding experience and I look forward to continuing this important work!!"

If you're interested in joining YPB in 2022, email Development@urbanjustice.org

IF YOU BELIEVE NYS NEEDS A REAL, ROBUST PANDEMIC RECOVERY PLAN, SCAN THIS QR CODE TO SIGN OUR PETITION.....



Governor of New York Kathy Hochul
New York State Capital Building
Albany, NY 12224

TO: Governor Kathy Hochul

WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic has placed – and continues to place –unprecedented economic stress on the State of New York, and, in particular, on the state’s most marginalized communities, including the homeless, survivors of domestic violence, BIPOC communities suffering from government disinvestment and environmental racism, undocumented frontline workers, street vendors, and those with mental health concerns;

WHEREAS, 800,000 New York City residents have been cut off from Federal pandemic benefits as of Labor Day, 2021 – a figure that represents 10% of all people cut from our national security net post-pandemic, at a loss of some \$463 million per week to NYC residents;

WHEREAS, Candid, the leading nonprofit resource, estimates that up to 38% of all nonprofits may be forced to close their doors because of COVID-19, imperiling an incredible range of desperately needed services for the marginalized communities and low- and no-income people that comprise the Urban Justice Center’s clients,

THEREFORE, We, the undersigned, call upon you to provide urgently needed funding and visionary leadership as we recover from this pandemic, with an eye towards prioritizing marginalized communities and the organizations that serve them.

UJC 2021 PROJECTS

Domestic Violence Project
Freedom Agenda
Human Rights Project
Mental Health Project

Safety Net Project
Sex Workers Project
Street Vendor Project