



LOTUS Legal Clinic

ANNUAL REPORT

2023

www.lotuslegal.org

Dear friends of LOTUS Legal Clinic,

Engage. Elevate. Challenge.

These are the principles that guide our work each day.

This year we looked inward and reflected on the statement “nothing for us without us” – resulting in an awareness that we need more intentional space for survivors to share and provide input on our work, our messaging, and our own perceptions of what we think is just and fair. We will never stop evolving.

We have focused our resources on providing meaningful access to the legal system for survivors to exercise their rights as victims, to seek justice and compensation for human rights violations, and to bravely hold the legal system accountable when harm was caused by its shortcomings. Survivor voice was woven through the sacred circles of the Untold Stories writing workshops, restoring strength, cultivating empathy, and embracing the diverse meaning of healing.

We have celebrated many client successes this year, providing the energy and momentum to make our services more accessible and inclusive allowing us to more effectively meet the individualized needs of those that we serve . We could not have accomplished so much this past year without your support, and we are abundantly grateful.

LOTUS is facing one of its biggest fiscal challenges with state-wide reduction of Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) funding that will significantly impact the ability of our communities to meet the complex needs of crime victims. This is not the time to turn our backs on the challenges survivors of sexual violence and human trafficking face when seeking justice and healing. There is so much more work to be done together to create communities free of human exploitation and violence.

In solidarity,



Good evening Lotus Team,

Happy New Year, wish many blessings to your awesome Lotus Team, i sending this email to let you know that i made it successfully in the trucking academy, i am very thankful with all of you that make this happen, now i am ready to start a new chapter in my life to provide more opportunities for my family back in Honduras that sadly i was not able to provide when i was in my country, thanks for all the good work you are doing and all support.

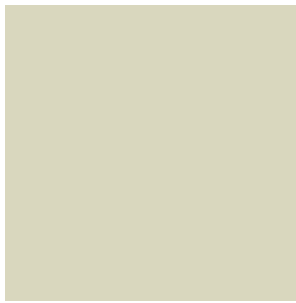
Regards,

J



LEGAL SERVICES IMPACT

- LOTUS attorneys were successful in securing immigration protections for FOURTEEN survivors of human trafficking and completed the application process for another NINE survivors in 2023, granting our clients temporary legal status to remain in the United States, authorization to work legally, and access to life stabilizing public benefits - all vital components to recovering financially from trafficking experiences and preventing revictimization.
- LOTUS provided victim's right representation to 39 clients in 2023, helping survivors navigate the legal system, ensuring their rights were upheld, their voices were heard, and their privacy was protected as they sought justice.
- LOTUS attorneys negotiated a \$17,000 restitution order for a survivor of sexual assault. this award was immediately paid in full and covered many of our client's out-of-pocket expenses related to her post-assault supportive treatment needs.
- LOTUS attorneys successfully facilitated the family reunification of three survivors of labor trafficking, two from Mexico and one from Honduras. Family reunification is an important component of the reintegration process that provides support, strength, and long-term stability for survivors.
- LOTUS attorneys assisted a survivor of sex trafficking in being granted restitution based on the amount of income she earned for her trafficker as her trafficker pleaded guilty and was sentenced in federal court.





THERAPEUTIC ARTS PROGRAMMING

- LOTUS was invited back to the Capital to participate in the National Crime Victims' Rights Ceremony, where 2022 Rise & Thrive resident artist Marielle Allschwang took advantage of the beautiful acoustics in the rotunda and played a sampling of songs from the LP *Somewhere To Swim*. The audience experienced the impact of the spoken word as Rise & Thrive writers Hannah and Jeannie read the original poetry they created in the program.
- Through innovative partnerships and collaborations, LOTUS expanded our writing workshop curricula to meet the needs of the diverse and unique community of survivors that we serve. In 2023, LOTUS partnered with Wise Women Gathering Place, Midwest Mujeres, CORE El Centro, and author Eileen Cruz to provide programming to Native American, African American, and Latinx survivors throughout southeast Wisconsin.
- LOTUS partnered with survivor advocate and writing facilitator Kat Klawes to host a workshop for survivors of sexual trauma to explore the literary arts as a method of facilitating change in their communities. This powerful workshop gave survivors the opportunity to hear about the many different ways to use their voices and stories to educate, inform, and inspire the community through legislative writing, op-eds, and organized advocacy events.
- LOTUS contracted with Milwaukee musician and songwriter Chris Porterfield as our new Rise & Thrive resident artist. Dr. Austin Reece assisted the participants with the writing process in 2023, and Chris will begin working with the writers in the spring of 2024 to compose on-of-a-kind music inspired by their work. The poetry and songs will be featured in LOTUS' Rise & Thrive Concert Fundraiser on September 12, 2024.

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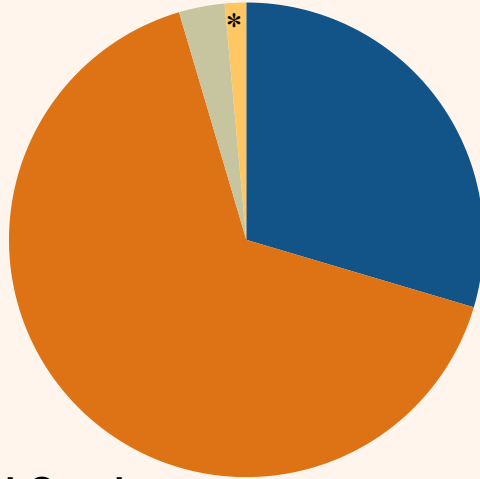
2023 IMPACT

Individual Donations

3.1%

Foundation Grants

29.6%

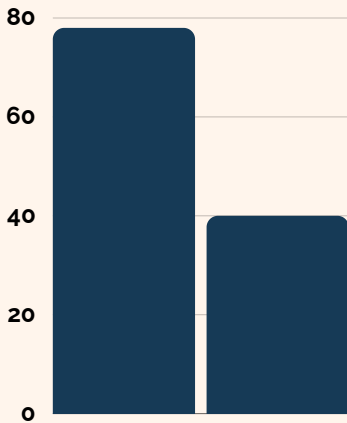


Government Grants

65.8%

Revenue Sources

- Annual Fundraiser 1.5%



Legal Service Clients
Therapeutic Arts Participants



\$5,688
Client
Emergency
Funds
Distributed



\$4,000
Client
Scholarship
Awarded

2023

Caseload

