

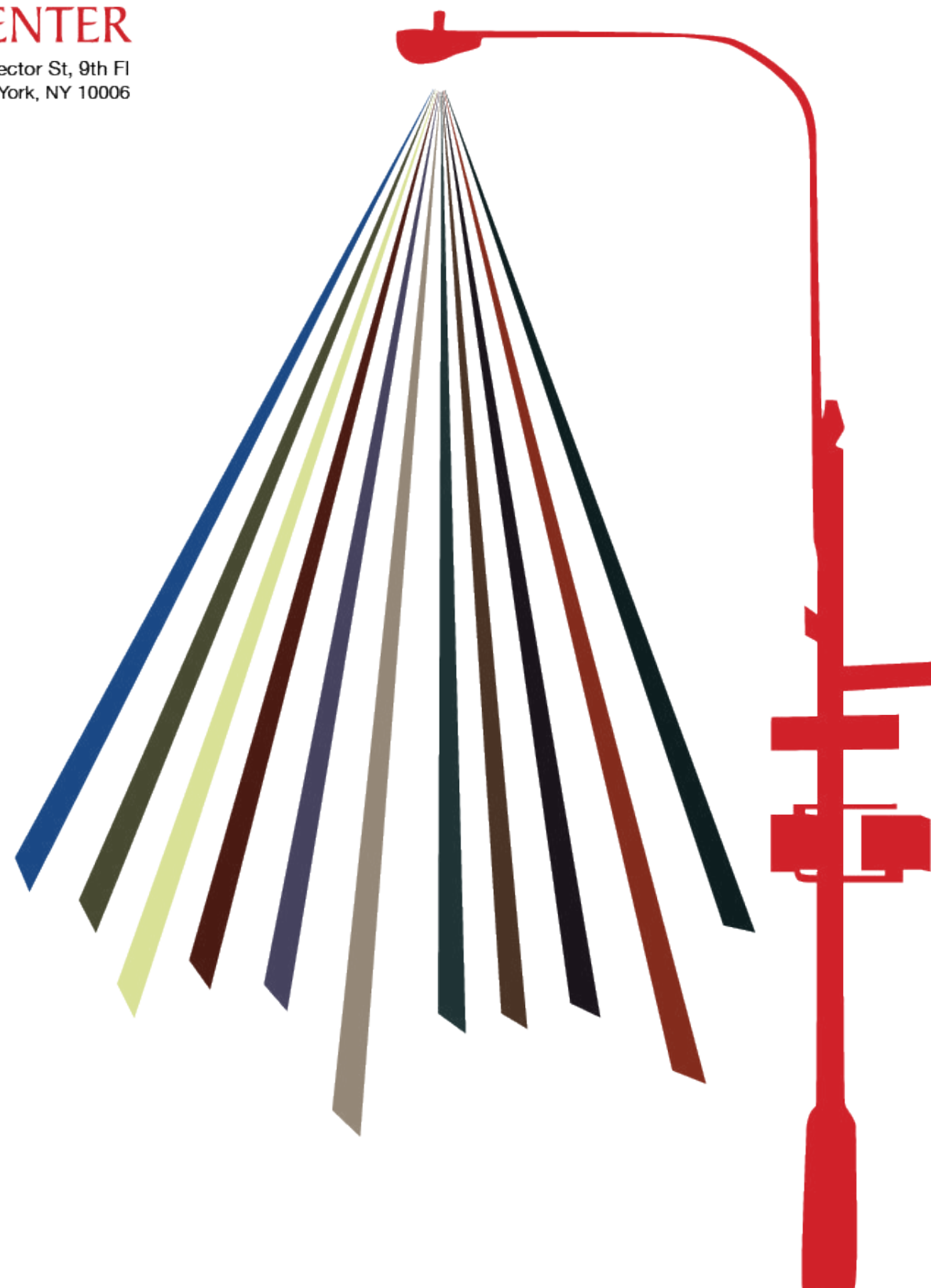
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YOU
TO OUR
DONORS**

**JULY 1, 2015 -
JUNE 30, 2016**

URBAN JUSTICE CENTER

40 Rector St, 9th Fl
New York, NY 10006



JUSTICE FOR FAMILIES



This September, the Urban Justice Center added a new project to our family of legal initiatives:
The Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP) / Proyecto de Apoyo para Solicitantes de Asilo (PASA).



Founded by four Yale Law students - Conchita Cruz '16, Swapna Reddy '16, Dorothy Tegeler '16, and Liz Willis '17 - in the Spring of 2015, ASAP works with refugee women who have been held in U.S. immigration detention facilities with their children. Their work is an exciting addition to our existing portfolio of projects.

"UJC bolsters creative law projects and provides crucial administrative support without bogging project directors down in bureaucracy or trying to change the way they do their work. We are thrilled to come on board," said co-founder Swapna Reddy.

To give an idea of their tremendous efficacy, just this year, they prevented the imminent deportation of more than 200 detained refugees through emergency

legal filings, and ensured universal representation for all refugees forced to go to trial in the nation's largest family detention center, winning every case. Along the way, they have mobilized more than 200 volunteers country-wide to carry out this work.

But their work doesn't end when families secure their release from detention. One of the most interesting aspects of ASAP's approach has been their creation of tech-based utilities to simplify and routinize communication with the 10,000+ refugee families around the country who need guidance through our immigration system. They also recently brought the first federal lawsuit ever to seek monetary damages from Immigration and Customs Enforcement on behalf of a refugee family mistreated while they were detained.

"ASAP not only helped me win the right to stay in the United States, but they listened to me and helped me when I told them I wanted to hold the government accountable for the abuses my son and I suffered while detained." - Suny Rodriguez

To find out more about ASAP's work, visit:
asap.urbanjustice.org



**23,187
PEOPLE**
AFFECTED BY
UJC'S WORK

DOUBLING PERMITS



After a two-and-a-half-year campaign, our **Street Vendor Project** persuaded the City Council to introduce a bill that would double the number of available food vendor permits in New York City over the next seven years, from roughly 4,000 to 8,000. This vendor cap, created in the 1980s, has forced many vendors to work illegally or rent permits at vastly inflated rates through the "black market."

Backed by City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and Council Member Mark Levine, the bill has had a public hearing and will soon be voted on. We hope to prevail in this crucial campaign to improve working conditions for our members.

"The permit is the most important issue we are facing as vendors," said Mohamed Megahed, who sells hot dogs on Vesey Street in Lower Manhattan. "If we can win, it will make a big difference to so many people."



Stay updated with SVP's work at:
svp.urbanjustice.org



3,499

HOT & WARM LINE
CALLS TAKEN

244 CASES
TAKEN PRO-BONO



PLAYING BIG

FOR JUSTICE

UJC Board Member Vanessa Selbst's poker and charity event, **Justice is Blinds**, gathered professional poker players and celebrities with players of all levels to play a tournament on behalf of our organization. The event raised an unprecedented \$180,000!

Join next year's event and get updates at: poker.urbanjustice.org



12,916
CASES

CLOSED IN 2015



Interested in
joining the YPN?
Learn more at:
urbanjustice.org/ypn!

UJC HIGHLIGHT: HELEN STROM



Helen Strom is the Outreach & Education Coordinator at the **Safety Net Project**. We caught up with Helen to learn more about her social justice work and experience at UJC.

How did you get started in this line of work?

My interest in anti-poverty work partly comes from my family. My dad works for a labor union, and my mother and grandmother were both very involved in local politics trying to fight to improve people's lives. Spending time abroad throughout college also helped me realize the importance of finding solutions through grass-roots engagement at the community level.

How has your role at UJC evolved?

I started my work with SNP as an advocate by staffing legal clinics at food pantries and advocating for the restoration of clients' public assistance and SNAP benefits. In 2014, I co-wrote a report that laid out the systemic issues faced by our clients (degrading treatment at the centers,

lack of clarity in procedures, long waits, etc.). Around the same time, I helped found the Safety Net Activists group, composed of current and former public assistance recipients working to change the culture and treatment of clients. Though we're constantly working toward a better system, **the group has already helped recipients gain necessities like acquiring appointment documentation at the agencies so that their benefits aren't cut.**



Learn more about SNP's work at:
snp.urbanjustice.org

UJC'S NIGHT OUT



This year's Night Out Gala, our annual fundraiser hosted by the **Young Professional Network** & held at the Museum of the City of New York, featured virtual reality experiences on solitary confinement, Cuban dance, a Syrian refugee's story, and plenty more.

A NOTE FROM OUR DIRECTOR



I started this letter writing about the "sigh of relief" with which I was prepared to greet the end of 2016 - how naive that seems now!

This has been a bitter, difficult year. No other election in my memory has so laid bare the contradictions, cruelties, and challenges that still roil the heart of our great nation. And no matter what more challenges await in 2017, I assure you that the UJC is here to meet them.

In 2016 alone, we added 30 staff members and an entirely new project, the Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project, which fights for the rights of immigrant families seeking asylum. And all of our Projects continue to fight for the rights of the marginalized and the working poor - as the pages of this annual report will show you.

All of the work we do rests upon your generosity. I hope you will continue to enable us to provide free legal services to some of the world's neediest people during the next four years.

Sincerely,
Doug Lasdon

“And in case you need us to fight for you, I've enclosed a magnet with our hot and warm-line numbers.”

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11 PROJECTS. 1 ORGANIZATION.



The projects of the **Urban Justice Center** operate independently with a common goal of achieving **social justice** and **individual rights**. Although our projects serve different client bases, they all face the challenge of making legal services easily accessible to people living on the streets and in poverty, and of making social advocacy and law reform efforts directly responsive to the daily struggles of those individuals. The UJC has developed a unique model to achieve both of these ends.