

URBAN JUSTICE CENTER



RESIST

SAFETY NET

COMMUNITY

RESOURCES

EDUCATION

RALLY

LGBTQIA

PROTEST

LEGAL RECOURSE

OUTREACH

PRO-BONO

PUBLIC SECTOR

TESTIMONIES

ANTI-POVERTY

ADVOCATE

LEGISLATION

REPRESENTATION

ASSISTANCE

DREAMERS

FAIR TREATMENT

Social Justice Accelerator

Class I: 2019-2021

URBAN JUSTICE CENTER



From the beginning, the Urban Justice Center has been dedicated to trying new approaches to intractable problems, from homelessness to police brutality to domestic violence. We have mentored incredible young advocates like Senator Cory Booker and MacArthur-Genius-award-winners Becca Heller and Lisa Dugaard, and served as a launchpad for important organizations working to reform the criminal justice system, resettle global refugees, advocate for civil rights for transgender people, and fight for economic and family justice, among other causes.

Last year, we formalized our incubator activities into a new program called the Social Justice Accelerator, through which we brought five exciting new projects into the UJC fold. In the following pages, you will read about their urgent, groundbreaking work - from providing social services to young survivors of gender-based violence, to building a global network of resources for LGBTQ asylum-seekers.

I won't steal their thunder, but I will say this: each Project is a nimble, forward-thinking response to an overlooked need or a forgotten community, developed by an expert in the field. By providing them with critical early stage support, the SJA enables them to leap over years of hurdles, and get right to addressing the problems they were created to solve.

You don't need to be psychic to know that our immediate (and perhaps long-term) future will be plagued with economic instability, sickness, and continued violence against communities of color. The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to disrupt everything from medical services, to immigration, to small business ownership. Racism and white supremacy are part of our country's very DNA, but the most recent ferment for freedom has opened new avenues for fighting these old enemies. Already we are seeing increased demand for our services from existing clients who are under new and tremendous pressures - but also from people who have never before needed our services in the past. I cannot predict the problems that are coming. But I know there are people out there who will have the answers, and they will need our support.

In the Fall, we plan to bring in another class of five new Social Justice Accelerator projects. Already, we are in discussions to expand this model beyond New York City, and to bring it to places such as Detroit, Seattle, LA, and Cincinnati. I hope I can count on your support as we move forward into these uncertain times.

*Vulnerable Americans need our Projects
- our Projects need you.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DL', written in a cursive, stylized font.

Doug Lasdon
Executive Director

**ASYLUMCONNECT
PROVIDES A
TECH RESOURCE
PLATFORM FOR
THOSE FLEEING
PERSECUTION
DUE TO SEXUAL
ORIENTATION OR
GENDER IDENTITY**



AsylumConnect's free technology connects users to verified LGBTQ+ affirming and immigrant friendly legal, medical, mental health and social services in seconds, 24/7. The first-of-its-kind resource platform is designed to address the unique needs of the most vulnerable members of the LGBTQ+ community.

This past year, we expanded our free resource website and mobile app to list verified safe services across 25 U.S. states and launched in Canada. During 2019, our platform was accessed by over 12,000 users across 147 countries (over 9,500 users in America). For their work helping persecuted LGBTQ+ people find safety, our executive director was also named to the Forbes 30 Under 30 Class of 2020 (Law & Policy).

When AsylumConnect reaches scale, every LGBTQ+ person will know where it is safe to go for help regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status or income level.



**LEARN MORE AND JOIN THE FIGHT AT
WWW.ASYLUMCONNECT.ORG**



THE BRAVE HOUSE IS A SISTERHOOD FOR YOUNG IMMIGRANT WOMEN (AGES 16-24) IN NEW YORK CITY

We focus on supporting survivors of gender-based violence and we strive to protect the legal rights of our members, enhance their career opportunities, and co-create a space where they can connect, have fun, and be brave.

As the only non-profit in NYC working specifically with immigrant girls, we are able to offer specialized, trauma-informed services and events, which range from art therapy to dance class to financial literacy and English tutoring. Since launching in spring of 2019, we have grown membership to 65 young women from 12 different countries across the world. Our mission is to promote wellness, life skills, and a sense of belonging so that all girls can thrive regardless of where they are from or what they have been through.



THE BRAVE HOUSE

**LEARN MORE AND JOIN THE FIGHT AT
WWW.THEBRAVEHOUSE.COM**

THE COLLEGE ATHLETE ADVOCACY INITIATIVE HAS HELPED LEAD THE CHARGE FOR COLLEGE ATHLETE RIGHTS



This past year we worked with lawmakers and fellow advocates to help shape and influence historic reform in college sports.

We have also represented college athletes in challenging matters, including the Nebraska softball team, which made national news in speaking out against the abuse and mistreatment they suffered.

Our executive director has been called upon to offer testimony in support of proposed legislation and is frequently cited in the media as a leading voice for the College Athlete Advocacy.

We have made enormous strides in 2019, but the progress has just begun!



**LEARN MORE AND JOIN THE FIGHT AT
WWW.4COLLEGEATHLETES.ORG**

THE POWER OF PURPOSE (POP) SUPPORTS AT- RISK YOUTH BEFORE THEY BECOME GANG OR CRIMINALLY INVOLVED



Since their official launch almost a year ago, PoP has mentored over 250 Bronx youth through their various programs.

Over last summer, PoP launched a 12-week basketball tournament for at-risk youth. The tournament teams were purposely devised to include youth who were affiliated with rival gangs, and all youth were required to receive mentoring before and after each game.

Fresh off this success, the leaders of PoP were mentored by Urban Justice staff to successfully apply for their first major grant, creating a school-based mentoring program at the Urban Assembly Charter School for Computer Science (“Comp Sci High”).

With the help of the UJC, PoP has grown from an idea to a non-profit poised to change the lives of Bronx youth.



LEARN MORE AND JOIN THE FIGHT AT POP.URBANJUSTICE.ORG

**S.T.O.P. IS
PROTECTING
PRIVACY BY
FIGHTING
EXCESSIVE
SURVEILLANCE**



S.T.O.P. was founded in 2019 to highlight the discriminatory impact of surveillance on Muslim Americans, immigrants, and communities of color.

In our first year, S.T.O.P. brought suits against the NYPD and MTA on behalf of vulnerable New Yorkers demanding transparency, accountability, and an end to biased surveillance tactics. We backed legislation requiring serious reforms to the NYPD disclosure and use of high-tech surveillance tools. And S.T.O.P. held dozens of know your rights trainings, panel discussions, and other educational events.

We've helped build national coalitions and appeared in hundreds of articles and op-eds to change the public discourse on the most pressing privacy issues in the country.