



CASA CORNELIA LAW CENTER
2019 ANNUAL REPORT





JUSTICE WITH COMPASSION

Casa Cornelia's Mission and Spirit are rooted in the tradition of service of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, which founded and sponsored the Law Center in 1993 to provide free legal services to indigent victims of human and civil rights violations.

Although U.S. immigration law and policy offer safe haven for persons in perilous circumstances, eligibility for protection under the law is no guarantee of securing protection. Further, while there is a right to legal counsel in these matters, the government does not provide attorneys, so the noncitizen must find their own attorney or proceed without an attorney. Victims unfamiliar with the legal system, language, and culture rarely navigate the intricacies of the legal system successfully on their own. Indigent persons fleeing persecution in their homelands, abused women and men, abandoned and neglected children, and victims of human trafficking are especially vulnerable.

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LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Once again, I write to introduce Casa Cornelia Law Center's Annual Report chronicling the challenges and celebrations that marked our work. As in 2019, and into the current year, our attention remains fixed on the plight of the thousands of persons seeking freedom from persecution, torture and violence from around the globe and who are at our doorstep. Our answer is to take action and respond to the needs of the most vulnerable among us. As I contemplate my 25 years of association with Casa Cornelia, I am reminded that from our humble beginnings through the present, we have remained faithful to our mission of justice with compassion.

The energy and creativity of our dedicated staff and volunteers made it possible to respond to over 2,600 individuals through the Asylum, Children, and Victims of Crime programs. Last year was replete with positive outcomes for many clients but also marked by difficult cases amid the many policy changes that shaped our practice. We did not accomplish this alone and were emboldened to forge ahead thanks to you, our friends and supporters. We remain most grateful.

We are steadfast in our resolve to provide quality legal representation to indigent victims of human rights violations seeking to regularize their immigration status. As you peruse these pages, you will get the sense of the passion and zeal that permeates this shared mission and animates the professionals working to ensure access to justice. There is joy in the work.

There also is cause to celebrate all the good that has happened in 2019, yet we are mindful of the new challenges that lie ahead. In the midst of the present crisis, there remains the voice of the abused child needing protection, the vanquished seeking safe haven, and the silenced victim of domestic violence yearning to be heard. We will be there, one case and one life at a time.

We owe the many successes of our programs to generous support of friends like you. As we address new challenges, we rely on your continuing generosity. For those of you who have contributed, we thank you; your past generosity has enabled us to provide a chance to a new life for so many men, women and children – all done on your behalf in the knowledge that this is vital humanitarian work. For those new to Casa Cornelia, we ask that you be as generous as possible.

With every best wish and blessing, I am

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Carmen M. Chavez'. The signature is fluid and stylized, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Carmen M. Chavez, Esq.
Executive Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Casa Cornelia Law Center is a 501(c)(3) public interest law firm providing quality pro bono legal services to victims of human and civil rights violations. Casa Cornelia's primary commitment is to indigent persons within the immigrant community in Southern California. The Law Center seeks to educate others regarding the impact of immigration law and policy on the community and the public good.

Since 1993, thousands of children, women, and men have turned to Casa Cornelia for critical legal assistance and humanitarian protection. Today, Casa Cornelia employs thirty staff members and benefits from a network of hundreds of volunteer attorneys, interpreters, translators, law students, and community volunteers. In 2019, **Casa Cornelia responded to 2,661 persons seeking legal services** through the Asylum, Children, and Victims of Crime programs.

ASYLUM

Since its foundation, Casa Cornelia has represented individuals who seek asylum in the United States because of the serious harm they escaped in their countries. In 2019, the Law Center responded to **1,181 requests for assistance** from persons fleeing violence and persecution in their homelands. The asylum seekers served came from across the globe, including individuals fleeing persecution in Africa, Asia, Europe, and throughout the Americas and Caribbean.

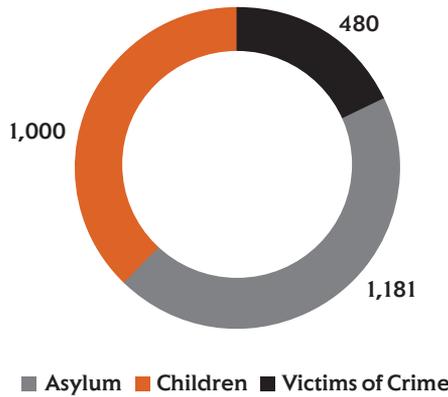
CHILDREN

The longstanding tradition of serving migrant children detained or resident in our community also continued. Casa Cornelia provided services to **1,000 immigrant children** ranging from infancy through age seventeen (and into young adulthood) in 2019. The majority of these children were recent arrivals, but others were residents of Southern California communities. Many suffered physical abuse, parental abandonment, or traumatic separations from families.

VICTIMS OF CRIME

Immigrant survivors of serious crimes also continued to find support and a pathway to safety and new opportunities with Casa Cornelia's assistance. During 2019, **480 individuals** sought the assistance of the Law Center through the Victims of Crime Program. Seventy-five percent of these applicants were women between the ages of 26-45 years old and many of whom are responsible for children, both in the United States and abroad. These survivors have often lived in the shadows of society isolated by trauma, language, poverty, and fear, but have had new doors opened to them through this work.

INDIVIDUALS RESPONDED TO BY PROGRAM IN 2019



The Law Center also continued its unique services for very recent arrivals, which started in 2018, by dispatching staff to provide legal information to those migrants briefly in shelters in San Diego. Last year, Casa Cornelia **provided legal information to 1,724 individuals housed at the San Diego migrant shelters.**

THE CHILDREN SERVED BY CASA CORNELIA CONSISTENTLY RECOUNT HISTORIES OF SEVERE ABUSE, PARENTAL NEGLECT OR ABANDONMENT, AND DESPERATE FLIGHT MARRED BY OVERWHELMING VIOLENCE.

The work of Casa Cornelia depends upon the contributed services of volunteers and partners in the community, including those who dedicate their time and skills as part of the **Pro Bono Program for Volunteer Attorneys** and the **Volunteer Interpreters and Translators Program**. In 2019, **522 volunteers donated a total of 24,296 hours of service.** Casa Cornelia trained **322** volunteer attorneys and **125** volunteer interpreters and translators in support of its work throughout the course of the year.

The Law Center also continued its efforts to **remove barriers to accessing justice by connecting clients to necessary social service resources** including food and housing assistance, counseling and mental health services, non-immigration legal needs, and many others.

In addition to providing direct legal services, Casa Cornelia Law Center seeks to educate others on the impact of immigration law and policy on the public good. Law Center staff are frequently invited to share their expertise in the San Diego community and beyond.

MEETING THE NEEDS

Humanity is on the move and violence is a common cause. In June 2019, the United Nations refugee agency reported there were 70.8 million individuals forcibly displaced worldwide, an increase of 3.4%. The global impact of those fleeing violence was felt along the U.S./Mexico border and in San Diego County. Domestically, noncitizens found themselves increasingly vulnerable to victimization and marginalization in a society that clamors for their labor but too often ignores their dignity.

Despite the increasing fluctuating migrant flow to the region and the constant changes in immigration policy during 2019, Casa Cornelia remained agile and effective. While access to legal protections for vulnerable immigrants was severely curtailed by the United States government, those served by the organization continued to receive zealous and capable representation. **Last year, Casa Cornelia Law Center responded to over 2,600 individuals seeking legal services through its Asylum, Children's, and Victims of Crime programs in addition to providing legal information for over 1,700 individuals in temporary migrant shelters in San Diego.**

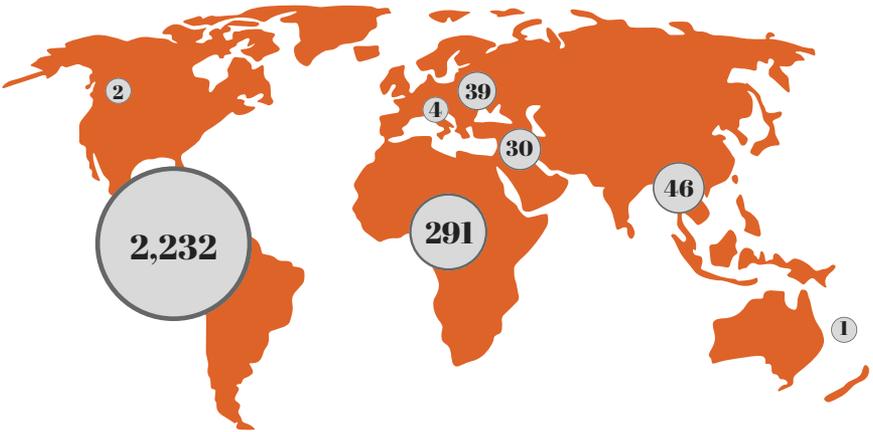
Depending on eligibility under the law and the Law Center's programs, these individuals received specific legal information or referrals to additional resources. The majority of these individuals had the opportunity to speak confidentially with an attorney and receive specific information about immigration law. Many of them were accepted for representation, which may range from brief advocacy to full representation in an affirmative immigration application with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services or defense against deportation before an immigration judge. Most importantly, each individual was treated with the dignity they deserve as Casa Cornelia continued its tradition of seeking justice with compassion.

ASYLUM PROGRAM

Asylum—protection for individuals fleeing persecution because of their race, religion, or other identifying characteristics—has been a hallmark of United States humanitarian immigration law for generations. A noncitizen granted asylum in the United States is given not only safe haven but also the opportunity to become a permanent member of the community. Seeking asylum has always been difficult; asylum seekers who fled horrific violence and torture with only the clothes on their backs are given no assistance from the government in processing their asylum claim. Instead, they may have to seek asylum while defending against deportation and may have to do so while in a detention facility. The whole case is processed in English, even if this is a language that they do not understand. No lawyers are provided to asylum seekers by the government to fight their cases.

In 2019, Casa Cornelia’s asylum program responded to 1,181 individuals. Of those, 640 were detained in immigration custody—detained not for any crime that they had committed but simply because they sought safety in this country. Nine hundred and twenty-nine of these individuals were new applicants seeking Casa Cornelia’s assistance in their immigration case, while the rest were cases that had continued from 2018 since a case may take months or years to complete. On December 31, 2019, 243 asylum cases remained open. **Across all programs, a total of 62 clients were granted asylum or similar protection.**

REGIONAL ORIGIN OF APPLICANTS IN 2019



In 2019, Casa Cornelia responded to 2,661 people seeking legal services from around the world. Of those, 2,232 are originally from Latin America and the Caribbean, 291 from Africa, 46 from Asia, 39 from Eastern Europe, 30 from the Middle East, 4 from Europe, 2 from Canada, and 1 from the South Pacific.

2019 saw more human beings around the world displaced from their homes because of violence than at any time since the Second World War. So it is not surprising that Casa Cornelia interacted with asylum seekers from every corner of the globe. While certain countries were especially represented—including Guatemala, Honduras, and Cameroon—in 2019, Casa Cornelia staff responded to asylum seekers from 70 countries. The diversity of those seeking asylum in our region continued to be evidenced by the many languages and dialects spoken. Last year the asylum program interacted with individuals who spoke 41 non-English languages. Apart from Spanish, the languages most largely represented included Arabic, Creole, French, Kanjobal, Portuguese, Pulaar, Russian, and Tigrinya.



Miguel Angel, a minor from Venezuela (left) is photographed with volunteer attorney Jeff Sheriff from Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP after being released and granted asylum. In 2019, Casa Cornelia responded to a growing number of Venezuelan nationals who fled socio-political violence and persecution.*

The pathway to protection in the United States is narrow, and the government has greatly restricted access to asylum protection in the last few years. Law Center staff

ASYLUM SEEKERS WHO FLED HORRIFIC VIOLENCE AND TORTURE WITH ONLY THE CLOTHES ON THEIR BACKS ARE GIVEN NO LEGAL ASSISTANCE BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO FIGHT THEIR CASES.

prioritizes consideration of the cases of the most vulnerable. Individuals identified as not having a legally-recognized basis to apply for asylum receive legal information and/or orientation as to law and procedure. Representation is offered to those who are eligible for protection under the law consistent with Casa Cornelia's mission and



Board member and volunteer attorney Nancy Aeling (left) reviews closing documents with her client Adamo who was successfully granted asylum. Like many clients in 2019, Adamo escaped torture, conflict, and persecution in Africa.*

to the extent resources will allow without compromising the highest quality of legal services. For those who become Casa Cornelia clients, Law Center staff and volunteers prepare complete applications for asylum and present the cases before either an asylum officer or an immigration judge. When necessary and appropriate, that representation may continue to include an administrative or federal court appeal.

The majority of individuals who contacted the asylum program in 2019—62%—were detained in San Diego's Otay Mesa Detention Center, a for-profit prison existing to hold immigrant detainees. Others, however, have been permitted to reside in the community while their cases are pending and come to the Law Center diligently seeking to comply with their legal obligations and find the opportunity to seek permanent safety in the United States. All are desperately in need of free legal counsel.

MARTIN'S JOURNEY FROM GRIEF TO HOPE

For years, Martin* had supported democratic initiatives in his Central American country. As an activist, volunteer, and democracy advocate, Martin trained individuals to work at electoral tables, mobilized people to rally for candidates, and participated in peaceful protests in support of the opposition. After the country's controversial presidential election in December of 2017, Martin was viciously attacked in the street. A car intercepted him and his friend, and the officers from the vehicle, who wore ski masks and military uniforms, assaulted him and threatened to end his life. Luckily, after fighting and struggling, Martin was able to escape.



The threats and attacks happened again a few days later. This time, Martin heard shots and barely dodged them as he ran among tear gas and chaos. He did not know where to turn, but

with the support of his pastor and congressperson, Martin left his country in early 2018. Everything happened so suddenly that he did not have a chance to say goodbye to his children or even quit his job. He fled to Guatemala and then to Tapachula in Mexico. The Mexican government granted him a humanitarian visa for six months, and he then traveled by bus to Tijuana, where he stayed in a shelter patiently waiting and hoping that he would be able to present himself at the U.S. border.

In the fall of 2018, Martin presented himself at the U.S. port of entry in San Ysidro and requested asylum. While his request was processed, Martin was detained at the Otay Mesa Detention Center, where he learned about Casa Cornelia Law Center and applied for legal representation. Under the guidance of Senior Litigation Attorney Arwa Kakavand, one of Casa Cornelia's dedicated volunteer attorneys took Martin's case and applied for asylum before the immigration court, arguing political persecution on his behalf. Martin's application was successfully granted without appeal. Martin hopes to be reunited with his family soon. ■

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Noncitizen children are subject to deportation from the United States just like adults for the simple fact of not having lawful immigration status even when the United States is the only home they have ever known or there is no “home” for them to return to in their country of citizenship. While all noncitizen children are vulnerable, an especially vulnerable subset of children are unaccompanied children—migrant children present in the United States who have no parent or legal guardian to care for them. Yet if encountered by immigration officers, these children are expected to defend against deportation just like adults.

In 2001, Casa Cornelia committed to represent every detained child in San Diego County in deportation or removal proceedings. For eighteen years, the Law Center has honored this commitment despite the escalation of need: the number of children served by Casa Cornelia has increased six-fold in the last two decades. **Last year, Casa Cornelia's Children's Program provided free legal services to 1,000 children and adolescents.** Of them, over 70% were detained by the government at the time they were assisted by Casa Cornelia. On December 31, 2019, 312 cases remained open in



Through the Children's Program, Marieanella (left) was granted a humanitarian visa. Here she's photographed with Legal Director Jesse Imbriano.*

the Children's Program, demonstrating a need for continued legal attention to the children and young adults whose cases had not been resolved by year's end.

The majority of children that Casa Cornelia serves are from the northern triangle countries of Central America: El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. However, in 2019, Casa Cornelia also saw a growing number of children from remote parts of Mexico and from other parts of the world including South America, the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, and Africa. Many of the children speak Spanish, but others—including children from indigenous communities in Mexico and Guatemala—speak languages of much lesser diffusion.

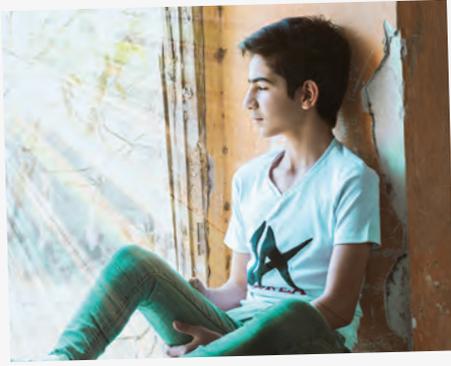


Rodolfo (left) smiles as he receives his paperwork from Matt Cannon, Managing Attorney of the Children's Program. Rodolfo escaped violence and neglect in his country of origin in Central America. As an unaccompanied child, he was granted humanitarian protection in the United States.*

Given the unique vulnerability of children, especially detained children, extra attention is given to the handling of cases and training for staff and volunteers. Each detained child receives a know-your-rights presentation and a legal consultation with an attorney. When a child is required to go to court, an attorney explains the court process to the child and then goes to court with the child and speaks for them.

Children who meet the legal requirements may seek to remain lawfully in the United States, but the process for doing so is complex, convoluted, and nearly impossible for a child who does not have a lawyer. The children served by Casa Cornelia consistently recount histories of severe abuse, parental neglect or abandonment, and desperate flight marred by overwhelming violence. These children may seek asylum, special immigrant juvenile status (immigration status for abused, neglected, and abandoned children), or other humanitarian protection from deportation if they can navigate the process. Unfortunately in 2019, these protections were intentionally eroded by the United States government. Nonetheless, Casa Cornelia volunteers and staff continued to fight to ensure that qualifying children can find the protection the law promises them.

SAFE HAVEN FOR GABRIEL



Gabriel* grew up in a small town in Central America with his parents and siblings. His childhood was simple, but his father passed away and his sick mother could not look after him. His mother sent him to live with his aunt and uncle, whom

he credits with not letting him die of hunger. He lived quietly for a few years under the care of his relatives until a gang began threatening the family. At 16, his aunt and uncle sent him to live with another relative in the U.S. Unaccompanied, he made the trip to the U.S., was detained at the border, and later released to this relative. Fortunately, Casa Cornelia represented him, and he is now a legal permanent resident. He no longer has to live with the fear of being returned to his country and possibly killed by the gang he fled from. He hopes for a new life. ■

VICTIMS OF CRIME PROGRAM

Among the most marginalized in the immigrant population are undocumented victims of crime, including survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking. Many victims are long-term residents of San Diego County and members of the community as doting parents, dedicated employees, and active members of the faith community. They, however, live with trauma and fear due to their victimization, and their lack of immigration status and indigency keeps them in the shadows and vulnerable to abuse.

Some crime victims are eligible to seek lawful immigration status in the United States. **During 2019, 480 individuals, including undocumented victims of domestic violence, assault, and human trafficking** sought and/or received services through Casa Cornelia's Victims of Crime Program. A vast majority of those served by the program are women. Most of them are between 26 and 45 years old and many are responsible for children, both in the United States and abroad.

Two decades ago, Congress determined that immigrant survivors of crime should not continue to be victimized for fear of deportation. As a cure to this reality, it created several different pathways to lawful immigration status to help survivors escape victimization and to support law enforcement efforts to bring perpetrators to justice. Qualifying victims are able to regularize their immigration status and leave the shadows in which many have had to live for years or decades.

The process of seeking this form of immigration protection is long, often ranging from two to ten years. In seeking this protection, noncitizens put their faith—and their fate—in the hands of immigration officers. Previously, these individuals were assured that their cases would be adjudicated fairly and, until adjudication was complete, they need not fear deportation. Unfortunately, in the last several years, the government has decided to no longer shield these victims from deportation even while their cases are pending review. As such, many immigrant victims of crime have been driven back into the shadows while years of progress in ending victimization in immigrant communities has been undone. Nonetheless, Casa Cornelia volunteers and staff have stood by those victims who continue to find the courage to come out of the shadows and seek the protection that the United States has offered them.



Juliana (center) shows her legal permanent resident card along with Legal Assistant Cecilia Dougherty and Associate Attorney Evelyn Lopez (right) who represented her successfully through the Victims of Crime Program. Juliana is one of the hundreds of women who apply for humanitarian protection, escaping violence and trafficking in San Diego County.*

Valeria (right) signs her final legal paperwork after receiving a successful humanitarian visa. Associate Attorney Lissette Cartagena successfully counseled and represented Valeria in her search of justice.*



SOFIA'S TRIUMPH ACCESSING JUSTICE FOR HERSELF AND HER CHILD



Sofia* suffered severe abuse at the hands of her husband for years before finally leaving him. Initially, Sofia's husband was sweet and supportive, but later he became controlling, abusive, and unhappy about her first pregnancy. Sofia left him, but she allowed

him to have contact with the children. On a weekend visitation, he kidnapped the children and took them out of the country. Law enforcement in the U.S. and in the foreign nation could not help her because he was the biological father. Within a year, Sofia was contacted by her husband; he used the children to get Sofia to return. She returned to him and the children, but he had alienated the children with lies. She made the best of the situation and continued to live with him, until she reached a tipping point. He would routinely inspect her after work to check for signs of infidelity. One day she had enough and refused the request. Enraged, he tried to kidnap the children again, but this time they were older and refused to leave with him. After the incident, she forced him out of the home with a restraining order. She then reached out to the Center for Community Solutions (CCS), a non-profit organization that serves victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. CCS referred her to Casa Cornelia. A staff attorney at Casa Cornelia is representing her. She is three years away from being granted legal status. In the meantime, she holds a work permit that enabled her to get a job and provide for herself and her children. ■

MIGRANT SHELTER

In late October 2018, without advance notice, guidance, or resources, hundreds of family units were released by immigration authorities into San Diego County. This was an abrupt change to prior government policy to ensure such families were safely released to their family members already residing in the United States. The San Diego Rapid Response Network (SDRRN), made up of social, legal, and faith-based organizations, set up an emergency temporary shelter to provide respite and assistance for these family units until they were able to safely continue their journeys and reunify with their family members in other parts of the country.

HUNDREDS OF FAMILY UNITS WERE RELEASED BY IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES INTO SAN DIEGO COUNTY WITH MINIMAL INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR IMMIGRATION STATUS OR CASES.

These families were provided minimal information about their immigration status or cases. Many were likely to find themselves out of compliance with their legal obligations simply because those responsibilities had never been explained to them in a clear



Diego, a young man who escaped extreme violence in Venezuela, is photographed (right) with Associate Attorney Liza Perkins-Cohen. Through the Asylum Program, Liza represented Diego who was successfully granted asylum in the U.S.*

and simple manner in their own language. As an active legal services member of the SDRRN since its foundation, Casa Cornelia was called upon to provide accurate and consistent legal information to these families during their brief stay in the shelter. Daily legal information sessions provided by qualified attorneys began occurring within days of the shelter's opening.

The migrant shelter served thousands of families caught in these circumstances, and the shelter itself relocated several times. After changing needs and migration flows, Casa Cornelia was called upon again in 2019 to provide this vital service. As before, the response was rapid and bold and again attorneys were present at the shelter each day to provide crucial information to these families. **Last year, Casa Cornelia provided information to 1,724 individuals housed at the migrant shelters.**

New changes in federal immigration policy again changed the flow of migration and the number of families arriving to the migrant shelter decreased. Having developed a proven model for providing these families with accurate and helpful legal information, Casa Cornelia handed this work over to the shelter operators confident that this community need had been well met.

VOLUNTEER COLLABORATORS IN THE MISSION

Casa Cornelia's staff is relatively small, but years ago the Law Center realized that it could amplify the work of its small staff through the dedicated collaboration of volunteers. Today, the success of Casa Cornelia depends upon the contributed services of volunteers and partners in the community. **In 2019, a total of 522 volunteers donated 24,296 hours of service.**

THE PRO BONO PROGRAM FOR VOLUNTEER ATTORNEYS

All attorneys have a professional obligation to dedicate some time each year to using their professional skills for the benefit of those in need. Licensed attorneys are authorized to represent individuals in immigration matters even if their ordinary practice does not include immigration as long as they receive proper training and guidance. Given the absence of court-appointed attorneys in immigration matters, the good will of volunteer attorneys has long been a crucial bridge to justice.

The Pro Bono Program recruits and trains attorneys from the private bar and then matches each trained attorney with an appropriate case. Once an attorney is trained and assigned to a case, the attorney becomes the lead attorney in that matter, preparing

the case documents and appearing in court or before immigration officers. A senior attorney at Casa Cornelia is assigned to mentor each volunteer attorney, accompanying the volunteer attorney throughout the case and providing expert guidance, advice, and support. Law Center staff also provides support to the volunteer attorney in tracking the case, communicating with the client, and performing other administrative tasks.



Ondobo (left) signs final paperwork after he is released from detention, as asylum has been granted to him. Volunteer attorneys Dillon Chen and Shelby Kroeger (right) from Dinsmore & Shohl LLP successfully represented Ondobo who escaped persecution from an African nation.*

Last year **Casa Cornelia trained 322 volunteer attorneys** for service in the Asylum, Children's, and Victims of Crime programs. Ninety-four cases were placed with these volunteers, an increase of 12% compared to 2018. Additionally, many trained volunteers participated in short-term volunteer opportunities such as clinics at the Law Center where potential clients are screened for eligibility for legal representation.

Between new cases begun last year and cases that continued from prior years, more than **320 volunteer attorneys donated 13,942 hours** in screening, counseling, preparing materials, and litigating on behalf of Casa Cornelia clients in 2019. These donated hours of legal services were **equivalent to the work of six full-time staff attorneys**. This model, which has been developed and honed for years, allows the Law Center's staff to greatly expand its reach to clients in need.



In 2019, Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP landed first place in the Attorneys Who Care Campaign by raising the highest amount per attorney. In this photo Katherine Paculba Lacher, Managing Attorney, Pro Bono Program, and Rosa E Mitsumasu Scotti, Development Manager (right) present the First Place certificate to Brandon Randolph, Director of Administration, and Steve Hamilton, Partner at Pillsbury (left).

THE VOLUNTEER INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS PROGRAM

It is crucial that attorneys are able to communicate with their clients in the language most comfortable for the clients. All immigration proceedings in the United States are conducted in English, even though English is not the first language of most individuals going through the immigration process. Foreign language documents must be translated to English and forms must be written in English but interpreted to the client in their language, but commercial interpretation and translation services are expensive. Further, because clients served by Casa Cornelia have often experienced severe trauma in the past, it is crucial that each attorney that does not speak their client's language be accompanied by a competent, trained, and sensitive interpreter.

To meet this need, Casa Cornelia developed a robust and innovative program to leverage bilingual and multilingual volunteers who wish to serve the community. Members of the community who are fluent in English and one or more foreign language receive a thorough training in interpretation and translation skills and techniques as well as

professionalism, trauma-informed interpreting and translating, and ethics for individuals performing these services. Once trained, they are assigned to work with staff and volunteer attorneys to assist in case preparation.

In 2019, Casa Cornelia responded to clients and potential clients from **70 different countries speaking 54 languages**, including Spanish, Kanjobal, Tigrinya, Mam, Russian, French, Creole, Punjabi, Portuguese, Somali, and Arabic. The Law Center relies on the generosity of volunteer interpreters and translators to bridge the language gap between clients and their attorneys; their participation is crucial for attorneys to be able to competently represent their clients. **One hundred twenty-five volunteer interpreters and translators donated 3,878 hours** in support of Casa Cornelia's legal programs.



Volunteer interpreter and translator Monique Caron (center) is photographed with Jabari (right) and Staff Attorney Elena Gutierrez after concluding a French interpretation during the closing of Jabari's case who was successfully granted asylum. Monique has volunteered her language skills with Casa Cornelia for many years.*

*All names have been changed to protect clients' identities.

LAW CLERKS, UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

As part of its mission to educate others regarding immigration law and policy, each year Casa Cornelia hosts law student and undergraduate interns. Each of the interns is supervised by an attorney or senior staff member. In 2019, Casa Cornelia worked with 43 of these students, and the Law Center benefited from their legal and administrative support. Many come with a personal history of activity in support of human rights, and all come with a passion for the mission of Casa Cornelia. Similarly, the Law Center relies on the generosity of community volunteers. Thirty-four of these volunteers supported fundraising activities as well as the execution of the annual La Mancha Awards in 2019.

HUMAN AND SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

While pursuing their cases, Casa Cornelia clients often experience the need for essential human and social services, including housing, access to healthcare, and education. If these basic needs remain unmet, the clients' ability to participate effectively in the preparation of their cases is impaired. Several years ago, Casa Cornelia committed itself to connect clients to needed social support services, which continued in 2019. Now in full operation for two years, the organization has adopted the social service support component as a permanent and sustaining program. A staff member is assigned full-time to connecting clients with social service resources as well as non-immigration legal resources. Last year, **this program assisted 136 clients and their families** in connecting with resources for housing and emergency shelter, counseling, education, medical care, transportation, and access to food banks among other needs. Additionally, support from various groups allowed Casa Cornelia to pass on hundreds of gift cards and backpacks filled with toiletries to clients in need.

CASA CORNELIA CLIENTS OFTEN EXPERIENCE THE NEED FOR ESSENTIAL HUMAN AND SOCIAL SERVICES, INCLUDING HOUSING, ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE, AND EDUCATION.

Accessing these resources for clients requires being an active participant in the non-profit community in San Diego. Casa Cornelia has a long history of collaboration with community organizations. In 2019, the Law Center actively participated in community roundtables, including the San Diego Refugee Forum, City Heights Roundtable, and the San Diego Domestic Violence Council, among others.

CORNELIA'S CHILDREN'S TOY SHOP

Casa Cornelia was once again fortunate to have the kindness and generosity from the faith community, law firms, and individual donors who collected toys for the children served by Casa Cornelia (both child clients and the children of adult clients) and small gifts for the adult clients. The Law Center continues its commitment to the tradition of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus by serving others in the spirit of simplicity, honesty, kindness, and cheerfulness. With the Toy Shop in its 16th year, Sister Mary Wayne Gradon, SHCJ, again played a critical role in garnering support from local parishes and congregations.



Pro Bono law firm Duane Morris LLP collected and donated several items for Cornelia's Children's Toy Shop.

In early December, staff and volunteers received adult clients at Casa Cornelia to select a toy or two to give to their children as presents. This year, Casa Cornelia received 83 clients and distributed gifts for over 250 children. Additionally, each parent received a gift for him/herself.



A client and her three daughters are photographed with Casa Cornelia's Santa.



A little boy high-fives Ana Jerez, Legal Assistant of the Children's Program while his mom chose presents for him.

Casa Cornelia staff photographed together with Founder Sr Ann Durst, SHCJ after hosting Cornelia's Children's Toy Shop.



EDUCATING THE COMMUNITY ON IMMIGRATION POLICY

Pursuant to its mission, Casa Cornelia seeks to educate others regarding the impact of immigration law and policy on the community and the public good. Last year Casa Cornelia's leadership and staff participated in many community events, speaking at hundreds of public gatherings and private events. Formal presentations were made to various groups, including the San Diego County Board of Supervisors, San Diego Diplomacy Council, High Tech High, the San Diego Refugee Forum, the Lawyers Club of San Diego, St. Germaine Children's Charity, and This Is About Humanity. Training sessions were also held for social service workers, community partners, and legal professionals.

Similarly, the Law Center implemented Mission Mondays, which are monthly in-person conversations with community members and supporters wherein the legal staff provides updates on the challenges faced by the populations served by the Law Center.



In August of 2019, advocacy organization Immigrant Justice League hosted a fundraising event for Casa Cornelia and the ACLU of San Diego and Imperial Counties at Border X Brewing in the historical district of Barrio Logan. From left: Executive Director Carmen Chavez; Development Manager Rosa Mitsumasa Scotti; Managing Attorney, Children's Program Matt Cannon; and Legal Assistant Evelyn Hernandez.

Mission Mondays, a periodic gathering at Casa Cornelia, was launched in 2019 to build community and provide in-person updates about changes in the immigration landscape to donors and volunteers.



12TH ANNUAL LA MANCHA AWARDS

Every year, Casa Cornelia presents the La Mancha Awards to exceptional volunteers who help further access to justice for the vulnerable populations served by the Law Center.

The 12th Annual La Mancha Awards took place on Saturday, October 19, 2019. The Law Center celebrated the dedication of the legal community and their commitment to the success of Casa Cornelia's clients and their cases. The event was held at the Shiley Theatre at the University of San Diego and brought together over 400 guests.

The following awards were presented:

LA MANCHA AWARDS

DISTINGUISHED PRO BONO ATTORNEY OF THE YEAR

Nancy Aeling, Esq.

PRO BONO LAW FIRM OF THE YEAR

Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati

THE LUCY HOWELL LA MANCHA HUMANITARIAN AWARD

Hon. Dana M. Sabraw

For his commitment and dedication to furthering fairness, justice, and the rule of law.

PRO BONO PUBLICO AWARDEES

Melissa Brayman, Ph.D. Esq. Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C.

Taylor Dimler, Esq. Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati

Reid Gardner, Esq. Morrison & Foerster LLP

Bob Gralewski, Esq. Kirby McInerney LLP

Austin Marsh, Esq. Morrison & Foerster LLP

Liliana Menzie, Esq. DLA Piper

Rebecca Roberts, Esq. DLA Piper

Jeff Sheriff, Esq. Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP

Ximena Solano Suarez, Esq. Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP

Ruth Spillane, Esq. Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen & Loewy, LLP

Jessica Thompson Duran, Esq. Procopio, Cory, Hargreaves & Savitch LLP

Nicole van de Leuv, Esq. Cooley LLP



Legal Director Jesse Imbriano (left) and Executive Director Carmen Chavez are photographed with Nancy Aeling as she receives the 2019 Distinguished Pro Bono Attorney of the Year Award.



Hon. Dana M. Sabraw takes the podium as he accepts the Lucy Howell La Mancha Humanitarian Award.



Enjoying the reception, from left to right: Co-Founders Mary Wayne Gradon, SHCJ and Ann Durst, SHCJ, benefactors Mr. Robert Price and Ms. Allison Price, and Executive Director Carmen Chavez.



Doug Carsten, Litigation Partner at Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati (center) is photographed with Carmen Chavez and Board Chair Deacon Jim Vargas, OFS as he accepts the Pro Bono Law Firm of the Year Award on behalf of the firm.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDEES

Sharzad Attaran
Kelsey Burns
Mayra Castro
Lora Dotson
Nadia Farjood
Samantha Greenberg

Edna Henriquez
Belkis Miller
Francisca Olvera
Eugenia Ruibal Luken
Valeria Santillan
Jacob "Dino" Smith



Board Vice-Chair Gloria Bader (left) and VIT Program Assistant Alice Bendinelli enjoy the reception.



Pop Nouveau providing the entertainment during the 12th Annual La Mancha Awards reception.



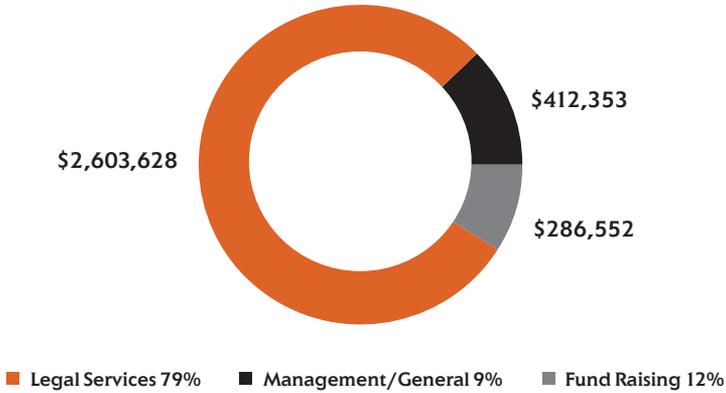
Katherine Paculba Lacher, Managing Attorney, Pro Bono Program (center) is photographed with Amanda Zemel (left) and volunteer attorney Elizabeth Balfour, Partner at Sheppard Mullin.



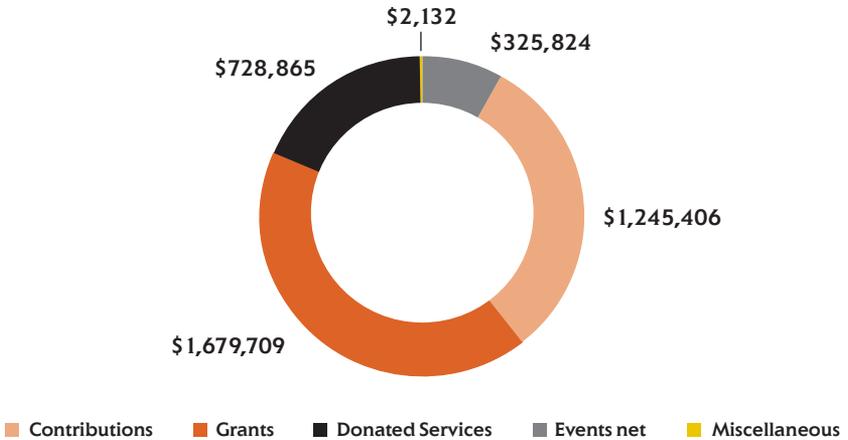
Board member Steve Keane (left) and his wife Nancy Keane are photographed with Reid Gardner (Morrison & Foerster LLP) who received one of the Pro Bono Publico Awards.

2019 FINANCIALS

\$3,302,533: Expenditures 2019



\$3,981,936: Fund Raising Income / Donated Services 2019



In 2019, Net Assets increased by \$1,551,439. Of this amount, \$861,680 was attributable to the 25th Anniversary Fund, \$678,388 was unrestricted, and \$11,371 was restricted to legal programs.

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