

2022 Spring Grant Making – Epidemic of Violence: Missing and Murdered Women of Color Awards

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| A Long Walk Home | 2022 Spring Epidemic of Violence: Missing and Murdered Women of Color - New Freedom from Violence | Award: \$12,000 |
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Project Name: General Operating Support Black Girlhood Altar Project

Organization Description and Proposed Use of Funds:
 A Long Walk Home, is a Chicago-based art organization that advocates for racial and gender equity and an end to violence against all women and girls. Founded by Black feminist artists and sisters, Salamishah and Scheherazade Tillet in 2003, ALWH is an expert leader in the movement to end domestic violence and sexual violence in black communities. ALWH evolved out of the creation of the Story of Rape Survivor performance produced in 1998 — more than 20 years before the #MeToo movement. Two decades later, ALWH is now our country’s foremost organization that empowers Black girls and young women to use their voices and artistic visions to organize themselves and their communities to be free of gender-based and racial violence. To manifest this vision, we have developed a powerful collective of artists, activists, healers, and scholars whom we train, collaborate with, and work together to advocate for change.

ALWH is the only organization in the city of Chicago that offers culturally specific strategies to address sexual violence among Black girls and gender non-conforming Black youth. We expanded our work, in the spring of 2021, ALWH was awarded the Weinberg/Newton Gallery (WNG) art and advocacy residency to create a series of community installations of The Black Girlhood Altar as a temporary monument to missing and murdered Black girls and young women. The Altar would travel to 4 specific sites in Chicago, culminating in a Juneteenth event at WNG called The Healing Sanctuary to celebrate the lives of Black girls, who are too often overlooked despite being vital caregivers and advocates in their communities.

Much of popular coverage of the racial justice conversation has not yet made the necessary connections between gender-based violence and state violence. The first site for The Black Girlhood Altar grew out of a necessity for protest, led by a select group of racial and gender justice organizations called the Protect Black Girls Coalition, co-founded by ALWH specifically to demand justice for a 10-year-old girl, given the pseudonym, “Hope”, a child survivor of human trafficking. We traveled with the Altar to the Grand Motel on the south side of Chicago where Hope was found after she had been held and repeatedly assaulted by multiple abusers. After the ALWH’s art and advocacy residency, ALWH translated its grassroots, community altar into an existing collaboration with young artists and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. The altar became a part of a retrospective exhibition of work by Andrea Bowers, a feminist artist who opened her exhibition space to organizations doing the most important work in Chicago. ALWH was chosen by the MCA’s youth program Teen Creative Agency (TCA) to focus on missing and murdered Black girls.

The Black Girlhood Altar contributes to an important conversation at the intersections of sexual and racial violence to address systemic failures that place Black girls in ongoing danger. The altar is an ongoing project that engages Black girls as citizen-artist-researchers to assemble and activate each installation of the altar and advocate for change within their communities. The overall goal of expanding The Black Girlhood Altar project is to bring awareness to the issue of missing and murdered women of color, promote

community accountability, end gender-based violence, and increase visibility. The project will accomplish the following objectives:

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| Brave Space Alliance | Freedom from Violence | Award: \$15,000 |
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Project Name: General Operating Support

Organization Description and Proposed Use of Funds:

Brave Space Alliance (BSA) is an LGBTQ+ center based on the South Side of Chicago that prioritizes and advocates for BIPOC transgender and gender-nonconforming people. A Black-led, all-transgender-staffed organization, BSA was founded in 2017 by community organizer LaSaia Wade to resource and uplift the most underserved members of Chicago's LGBTQ+ community. Today, over 2,000 LGBTQ+ people each year visit our Hyde Park community center to access mutual aid and direct support, service provider navigation, cultural events, opportunities to strategize and build community, and more. BSA also operates an independent food pantry with multiple locations that serves 100,000 members of the general public each year, and conducts trans advocacy and training within Chicago-area community organizations, workplaces, and service providers.

Brave Space Alliance is requesting support for the Trans Relief Fund, which supports trans and gender-nonconforming people who have lost income due to COVID-19, and our Funeral Fund, which supports families of murdered Black trans women who are struggling to pay the cost of burying their loved ones.

Through the Trans Relief Fund, payments of up to \$400 per individual are distributed to help combat the economic strain that has left our most vulnerable community members without resources.

The Funeral Fund pays the funeral expenses up to \$6,000 of any trans person who died by trans-antagonistic violence in the city of Chicago. This ensures that our murdered community members can be buried under an affirming name and gender, as well as relieving the financial burden of funeral expenses on their friends and families.

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| Illinois Prison Project | 2022 Spring Epidemic of Violence: Missing and Murdered Women of Color - New | Award: \$12,000 |
| | Freedom from Violence | |

Project Name: Incarcerated Women & Survivors Project

Organization Description and Proposed Use of Funds:

Founded in 2019, IPP advocates on behalf of people who are incarcerated in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC). IPP directly represents hundreds of people while also working to raise awareness about the harms of incarceration. IPP is the only legal organization in Illinois fully dedicated to representing incarcerated people without traditional innocence or other legal claims; we represent individuals whose sentences, while technically legal, are simply inhumane. We have freed 70 clients, sparing them 733 years in prison, and saving Illinois over \$59.5M. We have also helped hundreds of individuals and their loved ones through our 2x/monthly legal clinic, as well as our educational resources, trainings, and toolkits through our website and via mail. We also engage in advocacy efforts, including urging the DOC to make changes to policies and practices to maximum the use of existing statutory mechanisms for early release.

IPP's Women & Survivors Project (WSP) provides legal representation to incarcerated survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), including survivors who acted in self-defense or in defense of their children, as well as survivors who were forced or coerced to assist their abuser in committing a crime. Of people in the

women’s prisons in Illinois, 75% are domestic violence survivors, and 98% have survived GBV of some kind. Many of these survivors literally would have been among the missing and murdered had they not acted to save their own lives or the lives of their children. These are the survivors whose stories of experiencing life-threatening violence were met with skepticism despite the statistics about missing and murdered women—when they survived, against all odds, they were incarcerated and they continue to be excluded from conversations about “real victims.” These survivors often do not conform with preconceived notions of how a “real victim” should talk and act. In parallel to missing and murdered victims, incarcerated survivors are disproportionately people of color, LGBTQ-GNC, and have mental health or substance-use needs. Yet they are not seen as “real victims” due to powerful competing stereotypes as well as the pervasive centering of white cisgender middle class women’s experiences in research and literature on victimhood and trauma. Like missing and murdered women, incarcerated survivors have also been taken from their families and communities, yet because of the powerful silencing effect of incarceration, their absence is normalized. These are the would-be missing and murdered women, and this project is designed to fight for their freedom and to amplify their voices in this conversation about the pervasiveness of lethal violence against women of color and LGBTQ-GNC people.

Direct Services: The WSP currently represents 16 incarcerated survivors in 22 pending or active cases; this representation will continue. In addition, we will launch a new cohort through which we will pair 12+ gender-based violence survivors with pro bono attorneys. Cases will be under the supervision of the WSP’s Director, and WSP will provide direct representation in concert with a robust advocacy and public awareness campaign. We will represent each client in (1) negotiating with the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office for a sentence reduction and (2) filing a petition for executive clemency. Through documentation of abuse, research, and affidavits, these advocacy efforts will educate decision-makers about GBV and survival.

Education & Advocacy: We will align our work to represent a new cohort of 12+ incarcerated gender-based violence survivors with education and policy efforts to raise awareness about the criminalization of women and survivors, as well as the separation of families by incarceration.

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| Kenwood Oakland Community Organization | 2022 Spring Epidemic of Violence: Missing and Murdered Women of Color - Renewal Freedom from Violence | Award: \$15,000 |
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Project Name: Girls Lead

Organization Description and Proposed Use of Funds:

KOCO is a Black-led multi-issue, membership-based nonprofit powered by the voices of the disadvantaged residents in the North Kenwood and Oakland communities. Since our inception, KOCO has engaged community members in developing actionable strategies that are tackling inequities in power, education, housing, medical care, and violence. Last year, support from grantee partners like the CFW helped KOCO advance equity and justice in South Side Chicago communities through winning campaigns that: 1) grew public awareness of and demanded action on the disappearances and deaths of Black women and girls (the focus of this application); 2) ensured accessible healthcare for the community’s disadvantaged and uninsured by saving Mercy Hospital and Mercy Medical Center; 3) resulted in the passing of the landmark housing equity legislation, the Woodlawn Housing Preservation Ordinance; and 4) moved Chicago closer to enacting fair and just rent control laws.

“Doing this work helps me lead with the truth, while standing in my own. Never forgetting the history and voices of the Black woman...our stories matter!” – Tanisha, Girls Lead Organizer

This quote sums up what KOCO's Girls Lead project is all about – a Black-young woman led community-based project that aims to shine a brighter light on the problem of Chicago's missing and murdered Black women and girls by developing young Black women as grassroots leaders and community organizers.

While women of color should not just disappear, they do here in Chicago and across the nation. According to Black and Missing Foundation, nearly 40% of missing persons are Black Americans, albeit only 13% of the nation's population. Since last year, the number of missing Black women in Chicago jumped from 50 to 75. Disappearances of Black women do not attract attention in either the local or national media, as the Foundation points out, due in large part to centuries of racism that have shaped a systemic behavior and attitudes in law enforcement and local and national media that has marginalized this population of women.

The Girls Lead project is helping to raise the consciousness, especially among disadvantaged Black women to see their political power as being seen and heard and to see that they have the agency and power to make change in their own backyards. The project is helping the community see that that organizing works and the effectiveness of grassroots organizing for structural and systems change in historically under-resourced communities of color.

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| Mitchell Museum of the American Indian | 2022 Spring Epidemic of Violence: Missing and Murdered Women of Color - New Freedom from Violence | Award: \$12,000 |
| <p>Project Name: General Operating Support</p> <p>Organization Description and Proposed Use of Funds: The Mitchell Museum of the American Indian's mission is to promote and share a deeper understanding of Indigenous people's histories, cultures, and contributions, both past, and present. As one of only a handful of museums across the country that focus exclusively on Indigenous peoples' art, histories, and cultures throughout the United States and Canada, our goal is to serve as a model institution.</p> <p>Native communities throughout the United States continue to be plagued by the highest violent crime rates in the country. This public health crisis includes verbal, domestic, physical, sexual violence, and trafficking with adverse effects on generations of Native women and families in urban, rural, and reservation-based communities. The lasting impact of colonization, combined with a complicated jurisdictional framework that limits the authority to prosecute perpetrators, continues to undermine the safety of victims, resulting in intergenerational trauma and the vulnerability of Native women.</p> <p>A study by the National Institute of Justice found that nearly 85% of Native women will be victims of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, or stalking in their lifetimes. This study also found that non-Native perpetrators victimized 96% of these women. Native women also face murder rates more than ten times the average in some counties. With staggeringly high rates of violence, protections and resources are still lacking. Native women are 2.5x more likely than non-Native peers to lack access to needed services.</p> <p>Before colonization, Native women were held in high regard, and many societies were matrilineal, giving women distinctly important social roles. Contrary to today's environment, violence against Native women was not traditional and rare in Native communities. High rates of violence towards Native women have existed for centuries, from early white settlers to more recent efforts to forcibly assimilate Native children in residential boarding schools throughout the United States and Canada. These actions and policies that allow the rampant sexual, physical, and emotional abuse have devastated traditional family structures for generations and have profoundly affected today's Native communities.</p> | | |

Further damaging is the strict, western view of gender imposed on Native communities. This rigid gender structure has been especially devastating to Native communities who value non-binary gender roles and consider Two-Spirit individuals sacred for the ability to see life through the eye of both genders. Consequently, forced assimilation into a heteronormative Western culture has put our LGBTQ-Two Spirit relatives at risk for gender-based violence and are more likely to be assaulted than heterosexual Native or non-Native women.

Native children, women, and LGBTQ2S relatives deserve to be protected and safe. Sadly, they are often invisible, and awareness among the broader public remains unknown. It is critical to raise the visibility of missing and murdered Indigenous women, strengthen voices, and amplify the stories at the state and national levels of Native women and LGBTQ2S relatives who have experienced violence.

As a museum, we have the unique opportunity to connect these critical issues to a wider and more general audience through numerous interdisciplinary approaches and programs, advocating for action on a policy level and through public awareness.

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| Mothers Opposed to Violence Everywhere | 2022 Spring Epidemic of Violence: Missing and Murdered Women of Color - New Freedom from Violence | Award: \$10,000 |
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Project Name: We Fight For Them: Justice for Missing and Murdered Women & Girls

Organization Description and Proposed Use of Funds:

Founded in 2008, MOVE engages in community organizing and leadership development to take on issues prioritized by local community residents, including:

1. Reducing the number unsolved cases of missing/murdered Black women and girls by addressing statewide and local system failures.
2. Raising the alarm around fentanyl overdoses that now kill at a higher rate than gun violence and identifying ways to get fentanyl off the streets.
3. Reaching victims of fraudulent reverse-mortgage scams so that they can receive restitution through a partnership with the Bluhm Legal Clinic at Northwestern University.
4. Increasing the cadre of trained youth organizers to ensure that MOVE is intergenerational in both its membership and priorities.

While MOVE continues to work on issues that are a priority for members, addressing the missing and murdered women and girls has been a top priority and will continue to be. Rev. Robin Hood, one of MOVE's organizers, partnered with Discovery Channel to ensure their documentary was from the perspective of Black community and not another "sensational" show. MOVE is harnessing the attention from the documentary series to bring key decision-makers to community panel presentations, including Cook County States Attorney Kim Foxx, Senator Patricia Van Pelt and State Representative Lakesia Collins. MOVE leverages these relationships to make sure this issue is not pushed aside. Next steps:

1. Hold another State hearing on the DNA backlog. While there has been a 40% reduction, there are still hundreds of DNA kits left unprocessed. Those results could provide pertinent information and leads for detectives.
2. Create a Community Task Force that consists of family members of murdered women, concerned community members, and representatives from partnering community organizations. The Task Force will continue to shine a spotlight on this issue, since that seems to be the only thing that keeps this moving. The Task Force will develop strategies to reach and motivate local and state government, law enforcement and media outlets to focus on these crimes and solve them.

3. Right now there is no publicly available information resource to track new crimes, solved crimes, and newly missing or found women and girls -- only sporadic news from the police or media outlets. MOVE youth have created an App that could do exactly this. MOVE will support the dissemination of the App so that partner organizations, family members and trusted others can provide and share this information.

4. In addition to the Kenwood Oakland Community Organization, additional organizations have expressed interest in partnering on this campaign, including Enlace and Good Kids Mad City. More organizations means more power, and increased ability to keep this issue in the spotlight.

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| The Dreamcatcher Foundation | 2022 Spring Epidemic of Violence: Missing and Murdered Women of Color - Renewal Freedom from Violence | Award: \$15,000 |
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Project Name: General Operating Support

Organization Description and Proposed Use of Funds:

The Dreamcatcher Foundation (TDF), 501c3 tax exempt nonprofit organization. TDF is survivor founded, led, driven and focused agency working to prevent human trafficking. TDF programming falls into three areas: Drop-in-Center Services, Outreach Services and Education and Advocacy. TDF fosters confidence, courage and strength within people in disadvantaged areas. Our harm reduction approach allows Chicago's most disenfranchised participants an opportunity to take advantage of our services.

This funding is to help support our Drop-in -Center survivor services. The Drop-in-Center is a safe, welcoming space where participants can access a full continuum of services under one roof, including showers, meal services, change of clothes, wellness assessments, referrals for services (drug treatment and rehabilitative services), as well as weekly Prostitutes Anonymous groups. We have many women who utilize the center for their needs to date. Staffing to meet the needs of the women is becoming overwhelming and more costly than initially budgeting for. We aim to overcome these obstacles by hiring four part-time survivors and partnering them with the right volunteers to work on an as -needed basis . Currently, we employ two full time case managers and two part-time case managers who were previous participants. Its important for the new participants to connect with familiar faces as much as possible.

We have significant success in continuing to build relationships with community partners who understand and care about organizations' relevance to the community. This includes partnerships with the Mayor's Office Gender-Based Violence Committee, and the Project Black Girls (Justice for Hope) campaign which TDF led in conjunction with other other community organizers , and local policymakers including Chicago Police department to demand change and action for trafficked victims.

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| Women's All Points Bulletin - WAPB | 2022 Spring Epidemic of Violence: Missing and Murdered Women of Color - Renewal Freedom from Violence | Award: \$9,500 |
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Project Name: General Operating Support / Project Always Serve and Protect

Organization Description and Proposed Use of Funds:

Women's All Points Bulletin WAPB is a 13 year old social entrepreneurship that is the premier organization advocating on behalf of women victims of police violence at all levels of government. One of the first organizations to collect, mine and disseminate data on police violence against women, we continue to influence those who were before us as well as those who have followed in our footsteps or taken on projects we have assisted in developing.

Always envisioned as a boutique shop we seek to become a clinic. Our advocacy is by and for directly impacted women survivors and families.

The WAPB focuses on police oversight, civil & human rights, legal and policy remedies. Our model is successfully efficient although stealthy & underground.

Client results include; visibility, support, terminations & criminal cases against perpetrators, and/ or civil reparations. WAPB's campaigns include the DOJ investigation resulting in the historic civil suit for the Chicago Police Consent Decree

Project ASAP continues

We have collected data through FOIA requests (CAARPR partners) and are in the process of trying to collect more and mining what we have.

Beneath the Surface, a data mining project we worked on by the Invisible Institute centering police violence against women was presented to the United Nations by Trina Tyler Reynolds, a first.

We have uncovered an average of 2 in-custody deaths per year that were until our advocacy were not disclosed to the public.

Our work with Irene Chavez' family immediately addressed the need and London Marquez' death was announced immediately.

Project ASAP (Always Serve and Protect) has been in talks with Kim Foxx and the SAO team and we have her support in writing and presenting the Bland-Chavez Act. The Bland-Chavez Act will address in-custody deaths in jails and holding and will address the special needs of women of color, veterans suffering from PTSD and LGBTQA+ issues.