

A blue-tinted photograph of volleyball players celebrating on a court. One player in the foreground has her mouth wide open in a shout, with her arms raised. Other players behind her also have their arms raised, some reaching towards the net. The net is visible in the background.

CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S LAW CENTER  
CELEBRATING

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# 30 YEARS

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Pursuing justice for women and girls  
**1989-2019**

Annual Report  
**2019**

CALIFORNIA  
WOMEN'S  
LAW CENTER



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**Betsy Butler**  
Executive Director

**Amy Poyer**  
Senior Staff Attorney

**Mariah Lindsay**  
Staff Attorney

**Kathryn Zabloski**  
Development Associate

A message from the

# Executive Director



When the California Women's Law Center was founded in 1989, we were the only organization devoted to addressing the unique legal needs of women and girls in the state. At the time, California women earned just 74 cents for every dollar a man made, there were less than 150,000 high school girls playing sports, and women experiencing workplace harassment or discrimination had limited paths to seek justice.

Three decades of CWLC's education, policy advocacy, and impact litigation have helped California become a stronger and more equitable state.

While CWLC has worked to enforce Title IX over the last thirty years, girls' athletic participation has exploded by 150% in California. CWLC has also sponsored legislation protecting the rights of sexual assault survivors and helped shrink the gender wage gap for all women. Our lawsuits have brought justice to some of the most vulnerable individuals in the state and prompted policy changes on an array of issues ranging from female veterans' housing to breastfeeding accommodations. In addition, our legal trainings have equipped attorneys around the state to become better advocates for women and girls.

The people we assist have diverse needs and CWLC is proud to prioritize matters that impact women and their family's ability to thrive, including women's economic security, gender discrimination, violence against women, and women's health. Our three-pronged role—as trainer and educator, policy advocate, and litigator—gives us the tools necessary to create change and meet the evolving and intersectional needs women and families face.

We remain grateful for the support of our colleagues and allies who have worked with us to advance opportunities for everyone.

On behalf of the CWLC Board and staff, we are grateful for your partnership and hope we can count on your continued generosity. Our pursuit of justice for women and girls has never wavered, and we look forward to working with you to meet the challenges ahead.

**In gratitude,**

**Betsy Butler**

*Executive Director*

**California Women's Law Center**



# Training and Education

*“Title IX is a powerful tool for advancing gender equity, and CWLC has helped me understand the nuances of this law. I am a more effective advocate thanks to their training and have even referred several of my colleagues to CWLC’s trainings and tools.”*  
– Stephanie Rector, Esq.

## Why Our Work Matters



Title IX was passed in 1972, but many schools still do not comply with this law prohibiting gender discrimination in education programs. Enforcement of Title IX requires skilled legal advocates who can ensure the law is being followed and that girls are treated equitably.



Many non-lawyers need advocacy tools, as well. For example, most women seeking domestic violence restraining orders represent themselves in court. And, frequently tenants facing eviction cannot afford to hire attorneys to assist their cause.

**1989**

CWLC is founded as the first legal support center in California dedicated to serving the unique needs of women and girls.

**1991**

The Civil Rights Act of 1991 allows victims of workplace discrimination and sexual harassment to sue for damages.

**1993**

CWLC works with the Los Angeles Police Department to address police response to violence against women.

## Supporting our Community by Training Advocates

CWLC serves as a resource to legal professionals and community members by regularly hosting trainings and public education events. We equip attorneys with the expertise and tools they need to be effective advocates, and we empower our community by teaching people about their legal rights. With your support, we will continue to grow our network of strong advocates throughout the state, thereby impacting change across the country.

### + Legal Trainings

As policies and laws change, CWLC helps legal professionals stay informed about the meaning of these changes and ways to effectively apply laws and regulations to benefit women and girls. CWLC shared our expertise at 10 legal trainings last year, covering Title IX athletics enforcement, breastfeeding accommodation in schools, sexual assault and harassment, domestic violence, and reproductive health care access.

### + Educational Tools & Resources

CWLC develops issue-specific legal guides for advocates around the state. Last year, we produced a detailed guide to help lawyers and non-lawyers navigate the court system and more easily access restraining orders from abusive partners.

### + Community Outreach

People are often unaware of their legal rights. CWLC identifies urgent issues facing women, including veterans, and hosts free legal and policy workshops. For two years, CWLC has held monthly clinics created to help families better understand their rights as renters and avoid homelessness.

### + Youth Focus

When girls understand their rights at an early age, they can better advocate for themselves and others. Last year, CWLC applied this philosophy by training staff at schools and the Los Angeles City Department of Parks and Recreation on Title IX compliance. We also facilitated trainings on healthy relationships in high schools.

### + Public Engagement

Keeping issues impacting women and girls in the spotlight is critical to advancing progress. CWLC frequently serves as an expert voice on panels and in classrooms, collaborates with community partners on policy discussions and outreach events, and hosts educational forums. Topics last year ranged from pay equity to the needs of aging women to the battle to protect reproductive rights.

### 1993

CWLC participates in a lawsuit against Berkeley Unified School District to protect students from sexual harassment on campus.

### 1994

President Bill Clinton signs the Violence Against Women Act, allocating resources for the investigation and prosecution of violent crimes committed against women.

### 1999

CWLC sues Borders Books for breastfeeding discrimination, leading to better employee training to prevent discrimination.



# Policy and Advocacy

“CWLC is on the front lines of the fight for justice for women and girls. Together we have passed legislation that enhances protections for survivors of sexual assault and expands access to reproductive health care. CWLC shares my commitment to advancing gender equality, and I am proud to work with them in these efforts.”

– **The Honorable Connie M. Leyva, California State Senate, District 20**

## Why Our Work Matters



Sexual harassment and assault are widespread, but few victims formally report incidents to their employer, school, or a law enforcement agency. Policies that empower survivors and hold perpetrators responsible are necessary to help end abusive behavior.



Family caregiving responsibilities fall disproportionately to women. We can support healthy families by implementing and enforcing policies that allow women to plan their pregnancies, breastfeed at school or work, and take paid time off from their job to care for themselves or a family member.

**2000**

The U.S Supreme Court invalidates portions of the Violence Against Women Act, eliminating survivors' ability to sue their attackers in federal court.

**2002**

CWLC matches volunteer attorneys with women seeking writs of habeus corpus to include their stories of intimate partner battery in courtroom testimony.

**2003**

Congress passes the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act, paving the way for future abortion restrictions and legal battles.

## Advancing Policies that Protect

Enacting, implementing, and enforcing strong public policies are some of the best ways to advance and protect our civil rights. Because of your support, CWLC is able to help create and pass legislation in Sacramento, advocate for strong policies at the local level, and work to ensure laws are implemented effectively.

### + Sexual Assault and Harassment

CWLC's co-sponsored legislation, SB 820 (Leyva), was signed into law last fall. This bill bars non-disclosure provisions in settlement agreements related to certain sexual offenses. Non-disclosure agreements routinely silence victims of sexual assault and harassment. By working with Senator Leyva to pass this law, we helped put power back in the hands of survivors. This effort builds on CWLC's 2017 legislation eliminating the statute of limitations on survivors of rape seeking criminal justice in the courts.

### + Breastfeeding Accommodations

Title IX and California state law require equal access to educational opportunities, including ensuring breastfeeding accommodations for pregnant and parenting students and school employees. After two years of working with schools in Los Angeles County to enforce student and employee breastfeeding policies, CWLC proudly reports a 530% increase in compliance with state and federal laws and guidelines, as outlined in our 2019 *ABC's of Breastfeeding* report.

### + Challenges at the Federal Level

CWLC has consistently pushed back on the Trump administration's attacks on women's rights and their ability to lead healthy, autonomous lives. Last year, we submitted official comments denouncing attempts to block immigrant women from receiving health care, federal efforts to reduce schools' responsibility to protect students from sexual assault, as well as proposed limits for low-income women's access to family planning services.

### + Abortion Access

CWLC has been committed to passing a state law requiring all California public universities with on-campus health centers offer medication abortion at their campus health centers. Vetoed by Governor Brown in 2018, CWLC and coalition partners redoubled our efforts to ensure SB 24 (Leyva) was passed and signed into law this year.

**2004**

CWLC files a class action lawsuit against the city and school district of Alhambra for restricting new sports fields to boys' teams only.

**2007**

CWLC files a class-action lawsuit against the Sweetwater Union High School District for failing to provide equal athletic opportunities to girls. CWLC ultimately prevails in 2014.

**2009**

President Barack Obama signs the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, increasing the ability of women experiencing pay discrimination to file a complaint against their employer. CWLC honors Lilly Ledbetter with the Pursuit of Justice Award in 2015.



# Litigation



“ My softball team was playing on a dirt field while the boys’ team got to use new facilities. CWLC helped my teammates and me stand up and get the equal treatment we deserve. It was empowering to know our rights and to advocate for ourselves. CWLC helped us every step of the way, and the experience changed my life. ”

– Veronica Ollier Lewandowski, High School Student-Athlete, Plaintiff in *Ollier v. Sweetwater Union High School*

## Why Our Work Matters



Girls who play sports are more likely to graduate from high school and earn a college degree. It is critical that we ensure schools provide equal athletic opportunities, treatment, and benefits to their female students.



The gender wage gap persists, and women of color continue to be disproportionately impacted. Addressing pay inequality and other factors of discrimination that compound over a lifetime helps prevent aging women from poverty.

### 2015

CWLC releases the first public report of breastfeeding accommodations in Los Angeles County schools. CWLC assists failing schools by bringing them into Title IX compliance and releases two subsequent progress reports.

### 2015

CWLC helps pass the California Fair Pay Act, making progress toward closing the gender pay gap.

### 2016

CWLC co-authors the Justice for Victims Act, protecting the rights of survivors of sexual assault who are seeking justice.



## Pursuing Justice in the Courts

When necessary, CWLC litigates. Our impact litigation brings justice to plaintiffs and set legal precedent which will benefit future generations of women and girls. We are proud to do this work in partnership with law firms around the state, and grateful for the generous support that makes these efforts possible.

### + Title IX Athletics

We receive frequent calls from students, parents, and coaches seeking equitable athletic opportunities for girls. CWLC remains active on numerous Title IX cases, including successfully reaching a settlement with Sierra Vista High School in early 2019. Because of our litigation, the school made numerous changes to its facilities and made sure an equal number of coaches and sports teams are available to female and male students.

### + Domestic Violence

We engaged in several domestic violence cases. In one victory, the California Court of Appeal overturned a flawed trial court decision in a published opinion that clarified the right of a domestic violence victim to seek congruent civil and criminal restraining orders. This ruling improves the likelihood that courts will grant the protections women deserve without delay in the future.

### + Wage Discrimination

In 2015, CWLC helped pass California's Fair Pay Act and we continue to fight for women to receive the compensation they deserve. Last year, we successfully sought justice for a plaintiff who was paid less than her male counterparts. This case is important because it not only provides justice for the worker, it incentivizes employers to examine and rectify company cultures that discriminate based on gender.

### + Safe and Affordable Housing

Many families live on the brink of financial collapse and homelessness. CWLC helps renters understand their rights at our monthly housing clinics in Los Angeles. In one important and ongoing case, we represented a woman whose rights were violated when developers failed to replace affordable housing units in her community.

### + Women's Health

When the Trump administration threatened to restrict family planning funding under Title X last year, CWLC put our opposition on record with the Department of Health and Human Services. When states sued the federal government, we supported California's litigation efforts by submitting an amicus brief in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals to prevent implementation of these harmful regulations that will hurt low-income women and families the most.

## 2016

CWLC represents a homeless female veteran who experienced military sexual trauma and was denied safe, female-only veterans' housing. This case leads to policy changes to protect female veterans, and CWLC trains attorneys to better advocate for those who have served our country.

## 2017

The #MeToo movement and Women's March bring national attention to the many inequalities women face.

## 2018

CWLC launches free housing clinics and litigates to help low-income people and veterans stay in their homes.

# Statement of Financials

July 1, 2018 - Jun 30, 2019

	FY 17-18	FY 18-19
<b>TOTAL ASSETS:</b>	<b>\$2,781,514</b>	<b>\$2,932,285</b>

## EXPENSES

Program Services	\$387,209	\$882,882
Rent & Utilities	\$67,822	\$132,562
Fundraising	\$34,615	\$48,364
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$489,646</b>	<b>\$1,063,808</b>

## REVENUE

Court Awarded Fees & Rewards	\$32,418	\$67,305
Grants & Contributions	\$454,799	\$532,828
Donated (In-Kind) Legal Services	N/A	\$444,456
Other Revenue	\$69,382	\$169,785
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$556,599</b>	<b>\$1,214,374</b>

## ASSETS

Total Liabilities	\$14,155	\$37,482
Net Assets	\$2,781,514	\$2,932,285
<b>TOTAL Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$2,795,669</b>	<b>\$2,969,767</b>

<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS:</b>	<b>\$66,953</b>	<b>\$150,771</b>
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*CWLC works with a network of highly skilled attorneys who generously contribute their expertise to assist our legal efforts on a pro bono basis.*

Last year, attorneys donated over

**643 HOURS**

of pro bono legal support to CWLC and the women we serve.

Pro bono legal efforts totaled more than

**\$445,000**

of in-kind donations last year.



# CWLC Supporters

*We gratefully acknowledge our generous supporters and thank you for your ongoing partnership in the pursuit of justice for women and girls.*

## **Pursuing justice with gifts of \$10,000 and above**

O'Melveny and Myers LLP  
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## **Fueling our mission at \$5,000-\$9,999**

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Pardis Zomorodi

*“I have been a Board member and proud supporter of CWLC for over a decade. Much of the legal progress CWLC and its allies worked so hard to attain requires ongoing vigilance and continued advocacy. I am especially grateful to CWLC for its unflagging commitment to fight to protect and expand the legal rights of women and girls.”*

*– Lois D. Thompson, Immediate Past CWLC Board President*

CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S LAW CENTER

# MISSION

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The California Women's Law Center breaks down barriers and advances the potential of women and girls through transformative litigation, policy advocacy and education.

CALIFORNIA  
WOMEN'S  
LAW CENTER

California Women's Law Center  
360 N. Pacific Coast Highway, Suite 2070  
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