



Pursuing Justice for Women and Girls

SUMMER 2019

CWLC Trainings and Community Outreach

Advocating to Protect Women's Reproductive Rights

Fighting for Survivors' Safety in the Courts

Join Us! #WeAreWomen with the LA Sparks & Handbags of Hope

Letter from the Executive Director

When chants of "Equal Pay" erupted after the U.S. Women's National Team won their fourth World Cup, two of CWLC's priority issues were in the spotlight: Title IX and equal pay. As a leading voice on both subjects, CWLC is proud to have authored several pieces that ran in the [Los Angeles Times](#), [the Argonaut](#), and [Ms. Magazine](#) which underscored the positive impact Title IX has had on women's sports as well as recognize the persistent wage gap yet to be addressed across professions.

Pay inequality significantly contributes to many women's struggles for economic security for themselves and their families. In May, CWLC convened an expert panel headlined by nationally-renown pay equity champion Lilly Ledbetter. Lilly's lived experiences as both a worker and an activist continue to inspire other women to share their stories and demand fair compensation. CWLC remains on the frontlines of this struggle as we assist women fighting pay discrimination and sexual harassment. Whether through litigation,

policy, or public education, we continue to support women in their fight for equal pay.

At our 30th annual Pursuit of Justice Awards in May, CWLC was proud to honor three individuals who have dedicated their lives to the fight for gender equality. We are grateful to have been able to acknowledge U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein, Chris A. Hollinger and Cindy Robbins for their commitment to addressing gender discrimination.

For 30 years, CWLC has pursued justice for women and girls. Our work is rooted in strong partnerships and, now more than ever, your support is appreciated. On behalf of the CWLC Board and staff, we thank you for your ongoing commitment to equality.

With gratitude,



Betsy Butler
Executive Director



Left: CWLC Executive Director Betsy Butler, UCLA Law Professor & Associate Dean of Public Interest Brad Sears, pay equity advocate Lilly Ledbetter, Feminist Majority Foundation Executive Director Kathy Spillar & CWLC Board Member Lois Thompson



Right: CWLC's 2019 Pursuit of Justice Awards honoree Cindy Robbins

Community Trainings and Outreach

Guiding Survivors to Legal Resources: In July, CWLC completed a guide for people in search of information and options regarding their domestic violence case. Most people seeking protection through restraining orders represent themselves in court, and the majority of these people are women. Navigating the court system and performing legal research is challenging for lawyers and non-lawyers alike. CWLC seeks to help reduce this burden by providing all-inclusive resources [like this one](#).

Combatting Homelessness: Many women and families live on the brink of financial collapse, and even one unexpected expense can drive people into homelessness. With a lack of affordable housing throughout Los Angeles and the state, CWLC continues to facilitate monthly legal clinics in the beach cities to address tenants' rights and legal options when challenged by their landlords. With our partner, Venice Community Housing Corporation, CWLC has assisted over 100 community members with their tenant and home-owner rights issues. As a result of a recent clinic, CWLC and co-counsel Venskus and Associates were introduced to a resident who needed our assistance in a case involving the California Coastal Commission. This lawsuit involves a violation of the Mello Act, which mandates developers replace affordable housing units in California when they rebuild or redevelop their properties. Because housing issues are likely to remain a concern for tens of thousands of people across California, CWLC stands ready to assist those with questions about tenants' rights matters.

Elevating the Needs of Aging Women: The many discriminations women face over a lifetime are compounded and contribute to an unpleasant reality: more than two thirds of the elderly adults living in poverty are women. CWLC has prioritized the needs of aging women and is collaborating with community members and stakeholders to address these needs, especially since many aging women have experienced pay inequity throughout their lifetime. In May, Executive Director Betsy Butler, who also chairs the California Commission on Aging, discussed these issues on an expert panel hosted by KPBS. This filmed event can be seen [here](#).

CWLC as Policy Advocates

Fighting for Reproductive Rights: As other states across the country pass extreme anti-abortion laws and the federal government continues to attack health care access, CWLC remains dedicated to protecting women's health and reproductive freedom. Our focus includes funding for Title X, the national family planning program which provides millions of women with affordable birth control, STI testing, and cancer screenings. Federal regulations were recently enacted to "gag," or prohibit, health care providers that receive Title X funds by restricting them from providing or even being able to refer women for abortion services. Earlier this year, [CWLC submitted our official opposition](#) to the proposed regulations with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, and this summer we filed an amicus brief in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeal outlining the specific harm faced by women and health centers in rural areas should the regulations be implemented. Click here to read our [amicus brief](#).

Protecting Health Care Access: [CWLC recently submitted comments](#) to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services opposing the proposed changes to the anti-discrimination provision of the Affordable Care Act. Enacted under the Obama administration, Section 1557 of the ACA prohibits health programs and facilities receiving federal funding from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. The Trump administration's proposed changes would remove important protections for LGBTQ people and allow blanket religious exemptions to reproductive health care. Should the proposed changes take effect, women in need of family planning services, including abortion, will be unable or delayed in their ability to access critical, time-sensitive care.

Advancing State Legislation: CWLC has been an advocate for a number of bills this year that are important to women and families' health, well-being, and success. They range from improving childcare access for low-income families to extending employment protections for survivors of sexual harassment. One of CWLC's priority bills, SB 24 (Leyva) would require all UC and CSU campus clinics to offer medication abortion. CWLC was also a strong advocate for a resolution authored by Senator Leyva urging the

Trump administration to rescind the harmful Title X regulations passed earlier this summer. In July, SB 233 (Weiner) was signed by Governor Newsom which gives sex workers immunity from arrest when they report sexual assault, domestic violence, or other violent crimes. As we begin the final month of this legislative year, please join us in advancing equality by [contacting your legislator](#) and urging their support on our priority bills. For a comprehensive list and the status of CWLC's supported legislation, visit CWLC.org

Helping Victims Through Litigation

Protecting Survivors of Domestic Violence: In May, CWLC secured a victory for survivors of domestic violence when we helped overturn a flawed trial court decision involving a survivor who had been denied a restraining order against her abusive partner by a civil court on the basis that she already had a criminal protective order in place. Because civil and criminal restraining orders provide different types of protection, CWLC filed an [amicus brief](#) with the California Court of Appeal arguing that having one restraining order should not preclude the granting of the other. Working with our partners at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, we successfully persuaded the Court of Appeal to reverse the trial court's decision in a [published opinion](#). This ruling protects the safety of the plaintiff involved and improves the likelihood that in the future courts will grant the protections women deserve without delay.

Upcoming Events

LA Sparks #WeAreWomen Game, August 25, 2019: The Los Angeles Sparks' annual #WeAreWomen event spotlights women leaders from around Los Angeles and seeks to empower young women in the community through athletics and mentorship. Our Sparks will celebrate at a home game on August 25th at the Staples Center. For tickets, click [here](#).

Handbags of Hope, October 12, 2019: CWLC is proud to support Handbags of Hope again this year and their collection of new and gently used handbags filled with toiletries and personal care products for survivors of domestic violence. This year's local collection event takes place on October 12 at the LASD Youth Athletic League. For more information on this national campaign and how to get involved, click [here.](#)



Spotlight on the CWLC Team

New Staff Member: CWLC welcomes our new Development Associate, Kathryn Zabloski. Prior to CWLC, Kathryn worked as a Citizen Correspondence Specialist for the Minnesota Attorney General. Kathryn follows in the footsteps of Erin LaMere who, after 2+ years with CWLC, is pursuing a law degree at Loyola Marymount University this fall.

New Board Members: CWLC welcomes our newest board members, **Karen Rigberg** and **Jessica Ludd**. Karen works as legal counsel for Arnold & Porter in Los Angeles and specializes in consumer protection and anti-trust law. Prior to that, she was Managing Counsel for Toyota Motor Sales. Jessica serves as General Counsel to the United Nurses Associations of California/Union of Health Care Professionals in San Dimas, a labor organization representing over 32,000 health care professionals throughout Southern California. Prior to UNAC/UHCP, Jessica was in-house counsel at the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television & Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA). Welcome Karen and Jessica!

Alumni Update: Lauren Huennekens was an intern with CWLC in the Summer of 2017. She graduated from UCLA Law School last year and became an associate at Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld. Congratulations Lauren!



Summer Interns: This summer, CWLC was thrilled to host law school students **Katherine Godar** and **Maria Callahan**. Katherine is a 2nd-year student at the University of Pennsylvania and Maria is a 3rd-year student at the College of William and Mary. Their work this summer included researching economic justice and women's health issues. We are proud to add Katherine and Maria to the CWLC family!

In order for the California Women's Law Center to advocate, provide legal services, and conduct educational trainings on behalf of women and girls, we rely on your support. Any donation you can make is greatly appreciated.

DONATE NOW

About the California Women's Law Center - Since its founding in 1989, the California Women's Law Center (CWLC) has worked to eliminate the barriers that keep women and girls in poverty. CWLC advances the potential of women and girls through transformative litigation, policy advocacy and education. CWLC addresses issues pertaining to Title IX education and enforcement, domestic violence, sexual assault, equal pay, homelessness, women's health, and advocates for the unique needs of women veterans. For more information, visit cwlc.org.

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