



# Southwest Detroit Immigrant and Refugee Center

## 2019 IN REVIEW

This year the Southwest Detroit Immigrant and Refugee Center passed a significant milestone: we turned 5! When I started this organization five years ago I did so in hopes of meeting an immediate need. Two of the most prominent resources for free legal help in the Detroit area closed within a short span of time. I had been volunteering with one of them and got the call to come help when the service provider didn't show up but the clients seeking help did. More than five years of Wednesdays later and the Southwest Legal Clinic is our strongest program, having helped hundreds and hundreds of families in that time.

2019 has been a year of superlatives for us as well: we've served more people, seen more volunteer hours, and delivered more legal services than ever before! The Southwest Legal Clinic has always been our most popular but we are seeing accelerating growth in our Pontiac and Eastside Clinic as well.

SWIRC is also making progress on the property we have purchased on West Grand Blvd. in Southwest Detroit. We have completed immediate structural renovations and have started work with the Detroit Collaborative Design Center and 4545 Architecture on plans for the house. I am excited to share the design renderings as our vision comes to life, even if it is still just on paper.

Despite the national rhetoric around immigrants, despite shrinking budgets and changes in giving, I am hopeful. Our volunteers, who contribute so much time, skill and energy for our clients make me hopeful. Our clients, who continue to fight for a better life for themselves and their families, make me hopeful. You, who cared enough to read this whole message, make me hopeful!

If you have not yet joined our family of donors, please do so! Contributions from individuals help offset the cost of legal representation for many of our clients who can't afford to pay us anything and whom we are privileged to serve. If you have not yet seen what the clinic is all about, come volunteer or arrange a visit, we would love to see you there!

Together, we are having a tremendous impact.

*Kevin Piecuch,  
Executive Director, Southwest Detroit Immigrant and Refugee Center*

Our New Home at  
329 W Grand Blvd.

Today



Tomorrow



## Get Involved in 2020

You may have been a supporter in 2019, we would love for you to do more in 2020! We serve a community that is on the edge, we are always looking for more opportunities to bring more resources to bear on helping them.

CONTACT US AT  
[info@detimmigrantcenter.com](mailto:info@detimmigrantcenter.com)  
TO GET INVOLVED!

# CLIENT NEEDS THIS YEAR

WE HELPED

**742**

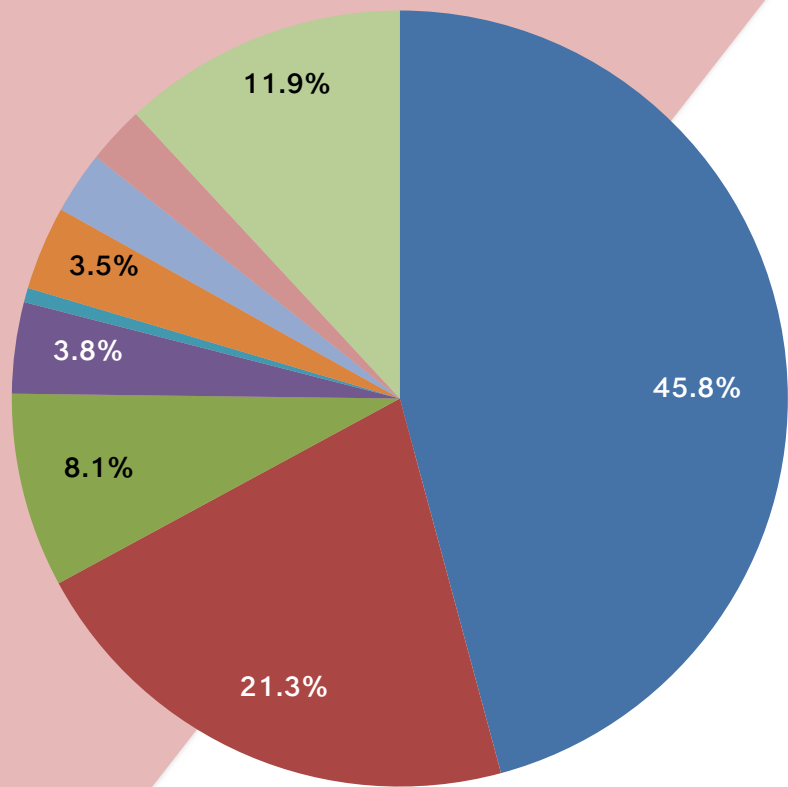
FAMILIES WITH

**817**

UNIQUE LEGAL  
ISSUES AT

**1888**

CLINIC VISITS



*This represents the client issues presented at our three legal clinic locations.*



## Income

Grants - \$116,000

Property Renovation - \$50,000

Religious Community Contributions - \$23,000

Oakland County Bar Foundation - \$20,000

Client Contributions - \$13,000

Individual Donations - \$11,000

## Expenses by Program

329 W Grand Blvd. Renovation – 21%

Legal Representation – 20%

Southwest Clinic – 19%

Pontiac Clinic – 17%

Eastside Clinic – 10%

Fundraising & Grants – 7%

Educational Programming – 4%

# Thanks to Our Community of Supporters

## Donors

First Presbyterian Church of Troy  
Ford Fund  
Oakland County Bar Association  
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance  
Presbytery of Detroit  
Sisters of St. Joseph  
University Presbyterian Church  
Kirk in the Hills  
Molly Barlow  
Olivia Beebly  
Martha Blenman  
Randall Cline  
Christine Convey  
Ken Collinson  
Tamara York Cook  
Ebony Daniels  
Adam Delezenne  
Don and Jill Fleischman  
Suheb Haq  
Lucy Hirina  
Geoffrey Hoyer  
Kathryn Little  
Matthew Merritt  
Luis Mendez  
Kathleen Murphy  
Leah Salas  
Pamela Sharrow  
Graham Simmington  
Karen & Paul Stunkel  
Carol Wright

## Volunteers

Rosemarie Abate  
Ahmad Abuzniad  
Raquel Adam  
Amanda Attipoe  
Amanda Atwy  
Elena Barone  
Veronica Beltran  
Kalel Blanford  
Sara Calderon  
Donna Campbell  
Stephen Carr  
Ethan Cheers  
David M Conca  
Tamara York Cook  
Ava Deloach  
Ebony Daniels  
Miya Davis  
Briana DeMaster  
Josefina Diaz-Orsi  
Catalina Erwin  
Perla Espinal  
Elaria Essak  
Maria Flores  
Elena Fly  
Gina Goldfaden  
Cory Gutterman  
Leslie Haggood  
Francisco Herrera  
Grayson Huldin  
Rosemary Insley  
Kevin Johnson  
Kelsey Komich  
Alexandra Krutz  
Ani Lekhi  
Sophie Loeb  
Lucy Lukasavitz  
Susan Matthews  
Johnny Montero  
Kathleen Murphy  
Renee Okenka  
Noemi Feijoo Ortiz  
Julie Pflanzner  
Felicity Risca  
Gloria Rivera  
Ulises Rubio  
Stefan Sapiano  
Grace Scarfone  
Taylor Seals  
Pamela Sharrow  
Giordano Silvaggi  
Jennifer Stark  
Samantha Tabor  
Stephen Thomas  
Krister Ulmanis  
Carol Wade  
Samanta Walling  
Kenneth Watkins II  
Kristyn Webb  
Jessa Webber  
Genevieve Wilson  
Fatima Yahya

## Volunteer for Southwest Immigration & Refugee Center

We are always on the lookout for more volunteers for our legal clinics. Many of our volunteers are legally trained but just as many have no legal experience and help as researchers, translators or client intake.

CONTACT US AT [info@detimmigrantcenter.com](mailto:info@detimmigrantcenter.com) TO GET INVOLVED!

# Stories from Our Clients

**Mario** is a 22-year old native of Detroit. He's active in his church and loves his country. During a visit with family in Mexico in 2018, he fell in love with Juanita and decided his life would only be complete if they marry and she joined him in the U.S. In the past, the application process for immigrants who married U.S. citizens was rather simple. Recently, however, fees have risen dramatically and applicants must prove that they can support a family here without public assistance. Since these new rules were established, the rate of rejected visa applications has doubled.

Mario first sought help from a private attorney, but he could not afford the legal fees on top of the application costs. He came to SWIRC and we helped him prepare his applications, assemble all the documents and identify a financial sponsor who pledged to support the couple if they needed assistance. Because of our help, this new family's applications were approved! She nailed her interview at the U.S. Consulate in Ciudad Juarez and was granted permission to enter the United States as a permanent resident.

## Help Us Connect with more People

Bring SWIRC to your community. We are always looking for opportunities to connect with more people who believe that everyone deserves justice. We would love the chance to come to speak to your congregation or community group!

### CONTACT US AT

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### TO GET INVOLVED

## Become a Donor

Join our family of donors or renew your support. We are often in immigration and other area courts fighting for our clients. Many of these clients are unable to afford legal services but we believe that should not get in the way of their access to a just outcome. Contributions from individuals help offset these costs.

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TO GET INVOLVED!

**CHARLENE**, seventy-two years old, has lived in Southwest Detroit her entire life. Her parents moved here when she was a child. Her father worked in a factory and her mother kept their seven children fed, dressed, and focused on school. The house where they all lived has been owned by their family for more than 50 years. Before her mother died in 2017, Charlene moved back to her childhood home to care for her. After both her parents had passed she didn't know how to change the title to her own name, so she came to the Southwest Legal Clinic for help.

Together, we prepared all the documents for the onerous Wayne County Probate process and helped her get written approval from all her relatives that she should be given the title. The Wayne County Probate Judge agreed and awarded her the house.

Thanks to SWIRC, Charlene has the peace of mind knowing that her home belongs to her. For Charlene and clients like her who do not have the financial means to hire private attorneys or the experience to navigate local courts, our free legal clinic offers a means of fulfilling their obligations under the law.