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"One of the most vital ways we sustain ourselves is by building communities of resistance, places where we know we are not alone." - [bell hooks](#) (sic)

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. We are fortified by the sense of community we feel as our staff of survivors and advocates fight to end domestic violence. In this month's newsletter we share the important work and progress that is inspiring us to continue the fight to end domestic violence.

Onward,
Deborah

FVAP's All-staff Meeting on 10/3 with Virtual Backgrounds for Domestic Violence Awareness Month.



Every survivor experiences domestic violence differently, therefore every survivor heals in their own unique way. **Listen to the [Healing from Domestic Violence podcast](#)** where sujatha baliga (sic) shares how she responded to abuse as a child and how restorative justice offers opportunities for survivors to address what they need and want the most—not what society tells them they need.

Domestic violence and sexual abuse are often called "women's issues." However, these are intrinsically men's issues and we all must call out unacceptable behavior and be leaders of change. **Watch this old but still good [TedTalk](#).**

ADVOCATE TESTIMONIAL

“ FVAP’s positive impact goes far beyond advocacy in family law and restraining order cases.

I used published decisions arising from FVAP’s successful litigation in a U visa immigration case for which USCIS sent me a Request for Evidence asking for more evidence that my client had suffered substantial abuse as the underlying reported crime was a violation of a no-contact order and a stay-away order with no physical injury.

In addition to highlighting the unreported history of domestic violence and the stalking pattern, I was also able to show that California statutes as interpreted through case-law took violations of domestic violence restraining orders seriously because such acts are also incidents of domestic violence in and of themselves and they fall within the type of behavior that disturbs the peace as they break the mental and emotional calm of the protected party.

My client’s U visa was approved, resulting in her getting legal status, obtaining a 4-year work permit, and putting her on the path to be able to eventually apply for Lawful Permanent Residence. I attached the published decisions arising from FVAP’s successful litigation as exhibits.

In Community,
Mélody Saint-Saëns, J.D.

”

Last month FVAP was delighted to receive these words from Mélody Saint-Saëns, J.D. Thank you, Mélody, for taking the time to write this beautiful testimonial and for the work you do to help survivors!

NEW AND IMPROVED LEGAL RESOURCE
LIBRARY COMING SOON!

ACCESS TO

FREE

Toolkits

Templates

Case Summaries

Cases You Can Use

FAMILY VIOLENCE APPELLATE PROJECT'S

Online Resource Library

FOR SELF-REPRESENTED SURVIVORS, ADVOCATES, AND
PRO BONO ATTORNEYS

FVAP's new resource library was funded by the California Access to Justice Commission's Infrastructure and Innovation Grant Program.

New and Improved Legal Resource Library Coming Soon!

Did you know that FVAP's website houses an Online Resource Library with thousands of resources for survivors, advocates, and pro bono attorneys? We are excited to announce that we are launching a new, improved, Online Resource Library soon! This revamped resource library offers **thousands of legal documents** through **easy-to-sort** categories and a search option that **improves user access** to helpful toolkits, samples, writs, opinions, trainings and articles.

As the only nonprofit organization in California and Washington dedicated to providing free appellate representation to survivors of domestic violence and other forms of intimate partner, family, and gender-based abuse, FVAP recognizes the importance of providing robust access to **critical information** for those escaping violence at any time, anywhere. We hope this library serves your needs today.

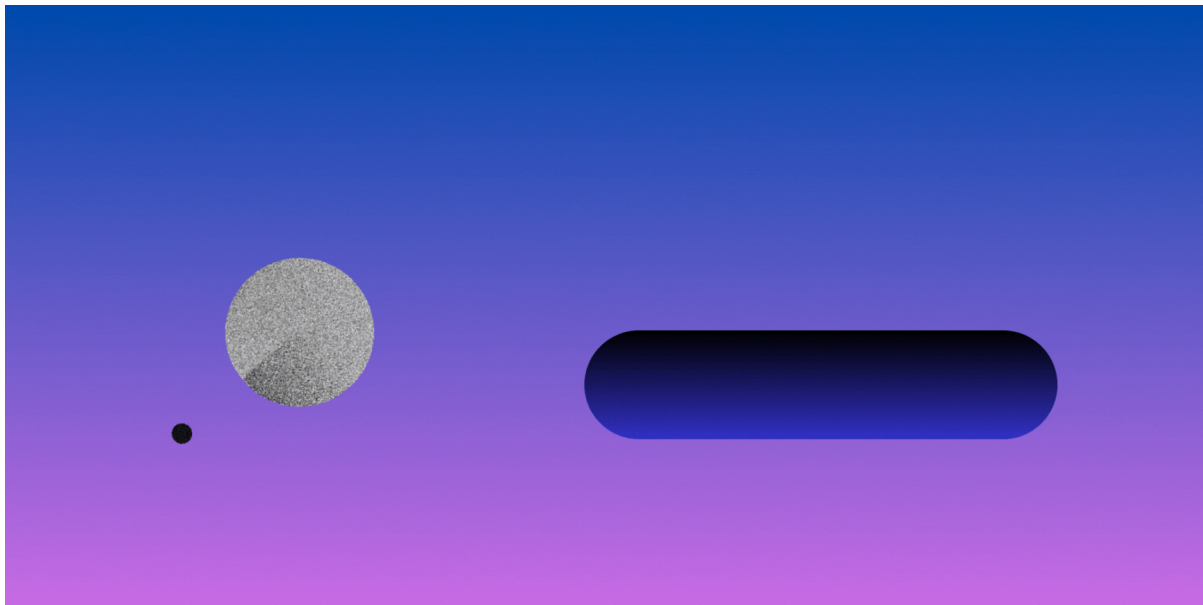
A special thank you to Amanda Case, Monica Katz LaBoskey, our website developer **Giant Rabbit** and **our Content Reviewers** for overseeing the project and ensuring its success, and to the **California Access to Justice Infrastructure and Innovation Grant Program** for its support of this project. We look forward to launching this important resource and to continuing to improve access to justice and information for survivors everywhere.



FVAP is dedicated to breaking the cycle of abuse and creating a world that is better for future generations. We accomplish this by overturning dangerous trial court decisions and setting new legal standards when we win appeals for our clients. So far in 2023, FVAP has won **10** appeals and authored **3** amicus briefs.

Click on each case name to learn how we helped each survivor access the protection they deserve.

California
[JAN F. v. NATALIE F.](#) | Unpublished



The lack of public court reporters in California jurisdictions is a systemic problem. FVAP's Director of Programs in California, Jennafer Wagner, was quoted by Bloomberg Law in this article that explains the challenges that survivors face when no official reporter is available.

(Bloomberg Law) [Break the Law or Leave No Record, California Courts Face Dilemma.](#) September 2023.

We love it when our work and our volunteers are recognized for their contributions to lift up survivors. Thanks to BarNews Washington State for doing just that!

(BarNews Washington State) [The Family Violence Appellate Project: How Adrian Helped Janae.](#) October 2023.

Higher Court Confirms that Lower Court Can Require Change to Life Insurance Beneficiary where Abuse via Financial Control has Occurred

[CHRISTOPHER U. v. PARRIS J.](#)

Published

October 2023

This case is significant because it affirms that trial courts can include provisions in restraining orders related to financial control such as naming life insurance beneficiaries. Additionally, the higher court recognized a pattern of financial actions that constituted coercive control which underscores the significance of addressing such patterns of behavior as a form of abuse. This ruling serves as an important legal precedent in acknowledging and addressing financial and coercive control within spousal relationships.

FVAP is thankful to have co-counseled this matter with Goodwin Procter, LLP; and to the many domestic violence organizations that filed an amicus (friend of the court) brief in this case to help the court of appeal understand coercive controlling abuse, which includes, Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, Domestic Violence Legal Empowerment and Appeals Project, Stopping Domestic Violence, California Protective Parents Association, Center for

Domestic Peace, Sanctuary for Families,
The National Family Violence Law Center at
George Washington University Law School,
the Law Foundation of Silicon Valley,
California Women's Law Center, Community
Overcoming Relationship Abuse, Los
Angeles Center for Law and Justice, and
Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles.



FVAP is pleased to share that **Zyreena Choudhry**, Staff Attorney in Washington, has been appointed to serve on the **Domestic and Sexual Violence Committee** of the **Gender and Justice Commission**. The committee oversees the Commission's work on the court system response to gender based violence. Learn more about the [commission's role here](#).

FVAP is excited to announce that **Evangeline Stratton**, Senior Managing Attorney in Washington has been appointed to serve on the **Crime Services Workgroup** as established by the Washington State Legislature through SB 5187. This work is, similarly led by the **Washington State Supreme Court Gender and Justice Commission**, to convene stakeholders to discuss and recommend to the Legislature evidence-based training needs, standardization and expansion of assistance for crime victims, assessment of funding, and development of a sustainable funding formula.

Both Zyreena and Evangeline will play a vital role in elevating the needs of survivors in the justice system and the work of FVAP. A big congratulations to both of them AND thank you for boldly representing survivors in Washington! Learn more about them and our entire staff on [our website](#).



INTAKE SPECIALIST CALIFORNIA OFFICE

ACCEPTING RESUMES NOW!

WE'RE HIRING

Do you know someone that believes that nobody should endure abuse? Or someone who wants to help end domestic violence? Share our job postings with them!

[Apply for Full-Time, In-take Specialist, California](#)



Donate to FVAP Today

Your gift enables us to continue the fight to end domestic violence.



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