

2026 BATTLE OF THE BANDS

IMPACT REPORT

BANDING
TOGETHER TO
END DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE



CELEBRATING 14 YEARS OF IMPACT

Family Violence Appellate Project hosted the 14th Annual Battle of the Bands, **Banding Together to End Domestic Violence** Event on Thursday, June 25 at The Chapel in San Francisco. FVAP is committed to providing free, high-quality legal representation to survivors of domestic and gender-based violence to reverse dangerous court rulings.

FVAP was created in 2012 to fix a legal system that often fails survivors of domestic violence. At that time, the number of California's published domestic violence-related cases could be counted on just one hand. Now there are an additional **78 published family law cases in California and 9 in Washington** that clarify or strengthen legal protections for domestic violence survivors due to FVAP's work.



This year, we brought together California's legal powerhouses for **an electrifying fundraiser unlike any other**—a night where justice met rock 'n' roll to raise critical awareness and funds to end domestic violence. **Five incredible bands**, made up of staff, families, and friends from leading law firms—**Lieff Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein, Covington & Burling, Cooley, Schaerr Jaffe, Hanson Bridgett, Peter Logan Law, and Morgan Lewis & Bockius**—took the stage and proved that advocacy doesn't stop in the courtroom. The energy was electric, the crowd was all-in, and the message was powerful: **together, we can end domestic violence.**

THE LINEUP of rockstar lawyers



Morgan Lewis & ROCKius (Morgan Lewis & Bockius) | **The R23s** (Lieff Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein)



Cov'R Band (Covington)



12th Root of Two (Hanson Bridgett, Peter Logan Law) |

Soul Practitioners (Cooley, Schaerr Jaffe)

THE WINNERS



BEST LAWYER BAND IN THE BAY

The R-23s

Lieff Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein

2nd
place

Cov'R Band

Covington

3rd
place

**Morgan Lewis
& ROCKius**

Morgan Lewis & Bockius

Judges'
Choice

**Morgan Lewis
& ROCKius**

Morgan Lewis & Bockius

Total Raised: \$133,777

Donors: 167

Tickets Sold: 432

Sponsors: 14

Bands: 5

Community Awards

FVAP is proud to honor three extraordinary advocates whose contributions have made a lasting impact—on our work, on the appellate profession, and on the broader community committed to justice and safety for survivors of domestic violence. Each of these awardees exemplifies what it means to right wrongs, uphold the law, and ensure that legal protections truly protect those they were designed to serve.



Advocacy Champion of the Year

Through all her work, both in and outside of the legislature, **Senator Susan Rubio** has ensured the voices of survivors are heard. She has championed legislation to enable survivors to seek safety and justice from the courts, including adding coercive control and reproductive coercion to the Domestic Violence Prevention Act, working to ensure the juvenile dependency system doesn't punish domestic violence victims, enacting Piqui's Law, and fighting for funding and laws so survivors can have a record of what happens at court proceedings.



Pro Bono Award

Since 2018, **Horvitz & Levy** has been our fierce and fearless partner in standing up for the rights of survivors. Across nearly 3,000 hours of pro bono time and counting, Horvitz has co-counseled with FVAP on numerous appellate cases, assessed cases for appeal, helped us prepare for oral argument in cases, and been a resource for us as the issues survivors face on appeal increase in complexity. As pro bono co-counsel, Horvitz & Levy has not only helped secure appellate relief for many survivor clients year after year but created published case law that has been cited repeatedly to help countless survivors at trial and on appeal.



Volunteer of the Year

Jenn Protas has been a steadfast volunteer with FVAP for over a decade—a tenure that spans nearly the entire life of our organization. From FVAP's earliest days, when we were still finding our footing, Jenn was there. That kind of longevity is rare and remarkable, and it speaks volumes about her character. She didn't show up once and move on; she stayed, grew with us, and continued showing up year after year with the same dedication and care she brought from the very beginning.

The bands are ready, the stage is lit, the crowd is hyped. But who decides who takes home the coveted Judges' Cup? Every year, three guest judges from around the Bay Area's music scene to evaluate the bands in four categories: Talent, Presentation, Reaction, and Performance.



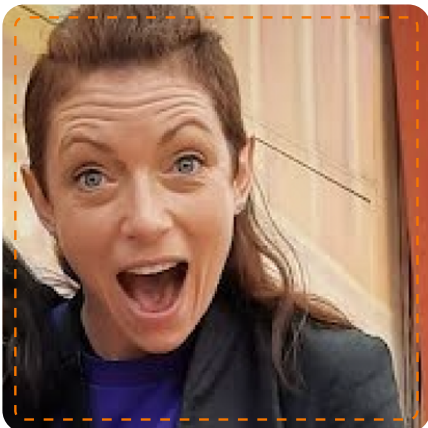
Megan Correa, LiL MC

LiL MC is a bilingual rapper, singer, producer, and battle rap champion from the San Francisco Bay Area. Classically trained in piano, she taught herself to rap as a teen and quickly carved her lane in the underground battle scene, becoming one of the only women to take home championship titles. She effortlessly flows between English and Spanish, weaving sharp punchlines with hypnotic hooks over beats that fuse raw Hip Hop with Latin rhythms, trap, punk, favela funk, and global sounds. Inspired by cyberpunk futurism, her music and visuals explore dystopian themes with a fierce feminine edge.



Eli Reyes, Ritmos Tropicocosmos

For over a decade, Eli Reyes has cultivated microcosms of belonging for artists and subcultures in the East Bay. Reyes currently brings that passion to the stage with electro-trio Tropisphere, and as the charismatic, body-shaking front woman of Ritmos Tropicocosmos!



Suzanna Sitomer, Harmony Project Oakland

Suzanna Sitomer is a credentialed string music educator with 23 years of experience in four states, in 4 countries, and on three continents. Growing up in inner city Washington, D.C., she developed a strong sense of community. Since moving to the Bay area in 2018, this sense led her to found Harmony Project Oakland and Oakland Music Matters, organizations which offer and collaborate with music and arts programs working in underserved communities, especially East Oakland. She lives in Oakland with her two children and two cats.

Event Sponsors



PLATINUM RECORD

HORVITZ & LEVY

ADVOCACY AT A HIGHER LEVEL

GOLD RECORD

**Lieff
Cabraser
Heimann &
Bernstein**

Attorneys at Law

HEADLINERS

Cooley

COVINGTON & BURLING LLP

Morgan Lewis &



ROCK STARS



Bicycle

GIBSON DUNN

O'Melveny

SHOOK
HARDY & BACON

ROADIES

HOGGE • FENTON



PHOONG LAW

SCHAERR

JAFFE
LLP

At and leading up to the event, FVAP recognized our sponsors on print materials, social media, and by displaying sponsor logos on the screen behind the stage.

Event Team

Planning Committee

Tammi Relyea
Deborah Son
Andrew Seko

Vendors

The Chapel
Misti Layne
Lightbox Creative
Craig Relyea

Staff

Arati Vasan
Cory Hernandez
Elaine Ding
Elissa Gray
Jennafer Dorfman Wagner
Julia Brunner

Board Members

Breanna Alvarado Jones
Damali Taylor
Ming Chen
Nora Puckett
Samantha Low

Volunteers

DJ Penny Royal



Judge Eli Reyes with Emcee DJ Penny Royal



Board member Ming Chen addresses the crowd



Pictured: FVAP Staff



The Soul Practitioners rock out

Photos Courtesy of Misti Layne