



## Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice

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*September 2019*

Dear LACLJ Supporter,

As the new Executive Director of LACLJ, one of the aspects of our service model that stood out to me most is our Community Care Advocate program. CCAs serve as advocates on the legal team and provide wraparound supportive services for survivors. **Whether it's connecting them to a shelter, helping them access public benefits or supporting them when at court, LACLJ's dedicated social workers empower clients to engage fully in the legal process.**

Every year, we're proud to host MSW and BSW student interns to serve as CCAs under the guidance of our 3 full-time CCA staff. This year, I'm excited to share we're welcoming **15 students** to support survivors!

I am also proud to share a recent story of the kind of impact CCAs have on clients and why they are important members of LACLJ's legal team. Read more about these and other highlights below.

Warmly,

Norayma Cabot  
Executive Director

When her boyfriend became violent in front of their son, Ana knew she had to stand up for herself and her little boy.



### Young Mom Finds Support in an Advocate

Ana\* is a 25 year old mother and DV survivor. Her boyfriend threatened to kill her family and was violent with her even as he held their 9 month old son. **LACLJ was able to secure a 3 year restraining order and sole legal and physical custody with no visitation rights for her ex-boyfriend. But Ana's journey to secure justice did not stop there.**

The DA's office picked up the case in criminal court. **Ana was terrified of testifying** and did not want to relive the abuse in front of a jury and judge. **Thankfully, she had an LACLJ Community Care Advocate supporting her throughout the process.** The CCA not only provided interpretation for Ana, but also helped her understand the trial process, **accompanied her to court every day**, and prepared her for the intense questioning she would be subjected to on the stand.

Because of her preparation with the CCA, Ana knew her rights and refused to answer questions she didn't understand and corrected the prosecutor when he cross-examined her. **She was able to remain calm while sharing her story and felt at ease** seeing a friendly face in the courtroom.

Thanks to this support, Ana was able to endure two days of intense testifying. As a result, the jury found her ex guilty. **She feels proud that she was able to stand up for herself.** Ana can now move forward and build the kind of life she always wanted for her and her son - filled with love and safety.



LACLJ is proud to welcome 15 new Community Care Advocates this year! The 2019-2020 cohort of **Master of Social Work** and **Bachelor of Social Work** student interns come from various schools, including University of Southern California, Azusa Pacific University, CSU Los Angeles, CSU Northridge, and CSU Long Beach.

**CCAs are an integral part of LACLJ's legal team providing support with client assessments, community referrals, litigation support, and outreach & education.** Macro students also support the administrative team helping to manage LACLJ's volunteer program and assisting with fundraising activities and program development.

**Please join us in welcoming the 2019-2020 CCA Cohort to the LACLJ team!**



## CCA Spotlight: Estefania Alvarez Melo

Estefania Alvarez Melo is an MSW student at California State University Los Angeles. She has been interning with LACLJ as a Community Care Advocate since the summer and will be graduating in Spring 2020.

“I want to be a social worker because **I believe that everyone’s voice deserves to be heard regardless of race, sex, gender, religion, immigration status, etc.** In certain situations, some individuals/groups do not have a voice to express themselves. As a social worker, I can be their voice. In addition, as a social worker, **I hope to continue my advocacy for the immigrant population, bring awareness and educate others about the different encounters that immigrants experience.**”

As an immigrant herself, Estefania recently shared her story with the Center for American Progress Action Fund. [Click Here to Watch](#)

At LACLJ, our team is passionate about the work we do with immigrant survivors because many of us can identify ourselves or our family members in the stories of our clients. Our shared history helps us not only connect with the population we serve, but also fuels our resolve for our mission.

**Thank you Estefania for helping and inspiring others in the community!**

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**Support CCA Services for Survivors Today**

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\*Actual names and photos are changed to protect the privacy and safety of our clients.