

MOBILIZATION FOR JUSTICE

Our mission is to achieve social justice, prioritizing the needs of people who are low-income, disenfranchised, or have disabilities. We provide the highest quality free, direct civil legal assistance, conduct community education and build partnerships, engage in policy advocacy, and bring impact litigation, with a focus on four key areas: Housing, Economic Justice, Disability & Aging Rights, and Children's Rights.

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2020
YEAR-END REPORT



Unprecedented Work
in Unprecedented Times

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100 William Street, 6th Floor
New York, NY 10038
212.417.3700

Bronx Office:
424 East 147th Street, 3rd Floor
Bronx, NY 10455
212.417.3800

Email: info@mjllegal.org
Website: mobilizationforjustice.org

MOBILIZATION FOR JUSTICE VICTORIES – THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT!

An Amazing Victory: Saving a 100-year-old Man's Lifelong Home from Foreclosure



Mr. B is 100 years old and has lived in his Brooklyn home for almost his entire life where, for a time, his family was the only Black family on the block. He came to MFJ in 2019, after having defaulted on a foreclosure complaint that was of questionable legitimacy. The MFJ attorney represented Mr. B in court and shared his case with the media. Before an article ran in a NYC newspaper, the bank made an offer which was unacceptable.

The article placed Mr. B's story in the context of a century of racist housing and lending policies. After the story ran, the bank issued a statement that it would not "evict" Mr. B. A few weeks later, they also offered to partially forgive \$100,000 of mortgage debt. But MFJ's attorney countered that the only acceptable response was to forgive the loan completely due to the questionable legality of the bank's original actions. After our legal pressure and strategic press exposure, the bank finally agreed to do just that.

In addition to addressing his foreclosure issue, MFJ's attorney also worked to lower Mr. B's property tax payments, connected him with a pro bono attorney for trusts and estates services, and introduced him to an MFJ social worker. As a result, MFJ ensured that Mr. B will be able to live at his home and remain a neighborhood institution for the rest of his life. When Mr. B passes, his home equity, which has been building for a century, will remain in his family rather than going to a bank. Mr. B celebrated his 100th birthday on Juneteenth. The supervising attorney on the case made a birthday cheesecake at Mr. B's request. Now that's dedication!

MFJ Saves a Gay Man from Almost Certain Death in El Salvador

Mr. H feared returning to El Salvador because he is a gay man from a country with a long history of harassment and violence against members of the LGBTQ community. In May 2019, when he came to MFJ for an intake, Mr. H believed asylum was unlikely because he was six years past his one-year filing deadline. The MFJ attorney asked Mr. H about any recent changes in his life that could affect his application; Mr. H. shared that he was diagnosed with HIV in February 2019. This would be a death sentence in El Salvador due to the lack of available treatment, lack of anti-retroviral medications, and refusal by many medical professionals to treat members of the LGBTQ community due to their homophobia.

MFJ drafted an application on Mr. H's behalf and submitted it, but his immigration interview was scheduled in March 2020 when the offices were closed due to the pandemic. When they reopened for limited interviews on June 29, Mr. H was seen right away, and the officer acknowledged that Mr. H did indeed have a valid fear and should be granted asylum because of his sexual orientation and HIV-positive status. An asylum victory is a special victory under normal circumstances, but especially under the current administration's restrictive policies, with the COVID pandemic causing additional interview hurdles, and a seven-year gap between entry and application. A job well done!

MFJ's Social Work Team Saves an 80-Year-Old's Home

The MFJ social work team saved the home of Mr. S, an 80-year-old man who had been renting his home in the Bronx for approximately 40 years. Mr. S, a dapper, friendly, and charismatic man who has memory problems, fell behind on his rent, so the owner of the co-op unit wouldn't renew his lease. After MFJ became involved, the landlord offered to renew Mr. S's lease if all arrears were paid, but at an unaffordable new rent. In order to access financial housing assistance from the City, an MFJ social worker referred Mr. S to Adult Protective Services (APS), the City agency charged with protecting vulnerable New Yorkers. APS denied services so the case went to trial.

MFJ subpoenaed the APS case worker to explain why APS denied services to Mr. S. On the day of trial, APS sent the caseworker and an attorney to court. When they saw Mr. S's confusion and the danger he was in, they agreed to a re-assessment and approved Mr. S for services. MFJ then convinced the landlord to reduce the renewal lease to an amount Mr. S could pay, and the City agreed to pay the \$23,075 that Mr. S owed in arrears. Thanks to the collaboration between the MFJ legal and social work teams, an 80-year-old man was saved from homelessness and can now age in place in his home of 80 years.

Getting a Young Student with Autism the Education to Which He is Entitled

AA is a student with autism who was struggling in the Department of Education's (DOE) specialized "District 75" for many years. Year after year, he received the same special education program. According to a 2019 report, he was reading and performing math at a 1st grade level in 6th grade. Taking a risk, the parent applied for admission to Gersh Academy – a specialized private school for students with autism. AA's mother was thrilled when AA was admitted and reported that for the first time he is able to read, but the DOE refused to pay, even though it is required to do so under federal law. MFJ represented AA at a hearing spread over five days in AA's challenge to the DOE refusal. On September 15, the hearing officer ordered the DOE to pay full tuition for AA's school for the 2019-20 academic year. Finally receiving the education to which he was entitled, AA was able to return to the school for the 2020-21 school year as well.

MFJ Obtains U.S. Residency for an Ace Student

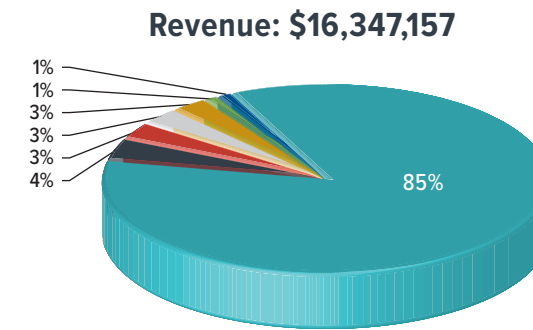


Karol's aunt and uncle took her into their Bronx home after her mother died in the Dominican Republic because she had no one to care for her. MFJ first assisted Karol's aunt and uncle in family court, obtaining guardianship of Karol, and filing a motion for special juvenile immigrant status (SIJS) that was granted. MFJ then filed the necessary immigration paperwork for Karol to gain full legal status. Karol was approved and became a legal permanent resident. With this security, she was able to thrive in school, getting good grades throughout high school and a scholarship for college. Her aunt and uncle shared the following with us:

Wanted to drop u a line to thank u again. Karol Graduated from St Barnabas H. S. with honors and a scholarship to Mt. St. Vincent in Riverdale in their nursing program. She carried a 94 average all thru hi school. She will start in August. Her birthday is 8/26; she will be 18. This was all because of your dedication and expertise. Karol's first semester of her sophomore year: 4 A's and 1 A minus! Thanks to you. Will keep you updated. We all wish you well and thank you. We will never forget you.
Sincerely, Robert & Antonia C., Karol S. J.

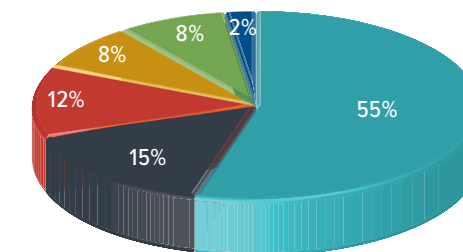
2020 Audited Financial Overview FY 2020

July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020



- Government **\$13,960,877**
- Foundations & Corporations **\$674,000**
- Attorney & Training Fees **\$521,821**
- Annual Fund **\$425,240**
- Donated Services **\$400,000**
- Theatre Benefit **\$189,674**
- Interest & Misc **\$175,545**

Expenses: \$17,151,268

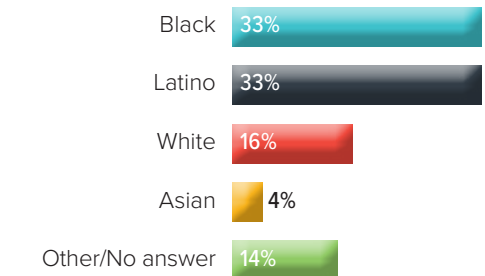


- Housing **\$9,275,691**
- Disability & Aging Project **\$2,625,620**
- Economic Justice & Immigration **\$2,003,929**
- Children's Rights **\$1,421,585**
- Administration **\$1,413,000**
- Fundraising **\$411,443**

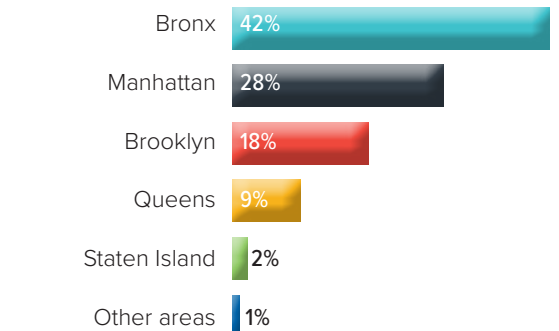
Client Profiles and Services FY 2020

July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

FY 2020 Clients by Race



FY 2020 Clients by Residence



FY 2020 Client Cases

