

WE SEE YOU FUND GRANTEE PROFILES

Just Beginnings Collaborative | Summer 2020

THE BRAVE HOUSE

New York, NY

How They Identify Leadership

Executive Director Lauren Blodgett is an immigration attorney. Prior to founding the Brave House, she provided legal representation to refugee children fleeing gender-based violence. The Brave House's Board of Directors consists primarily of immigrants, people of color, and LGBTQIA individuals. In addition, the Brave House has assembled a Youth Advisory Board to listen to the voices of immigrant girls and implement their ideas and concerns into the work.

Population Served

Immigrant girls and young women, ages 16-24, in New York, with a focus on those who are survivors of gender-based violence. The Brave House welcomes youth who identify as female as well as those who are gender nonconforming.

How They Do It

The Brave House grew out of the recognition that immigrant girls and young women who have experienced child sexual abuse and other forms of gender-based violence need much more than just legal assistance. As such, in addition to providing free legal services, the Brave House supports its clients on their healing journeys by offering community space and holistic services, including English lessons, art therapy, meditation, career advising, and a mentorship program. The Brave House also offers

rapid response services like grocery delivery and “Brave Baskets,” care packages full of necessities and tools for easing anxiety.

What Makes Them Unique

The Brave House recognizes that fleeing one's country due to gender-based violence and then navigating a complex legal system can be both traumatizing and isolating. The organization positions itself as a sisterhood and a community—a place for survivors to not only access free legal and healing resources, but also to gain a sense of belonging while starting a new life.



Lauren Blodgett, Executive Director of The Brave House

EMBODIMENT PROJECT

Based in San Francisco, CA

How They Identify Leadership

Founder and Artistic Director Nicole Klaymoon works at the intersection of conceptual live performance, trauma research, and personal testimony. People of color comprise EP's company of performers, vocalists, and major collaborators. Among its community partners is JBC's inaugural grantee, Ahimsa Collective (Sonya Shah).

Population Served

EP's primary mission is to "illuminate narratives silenced by inequities" and one of their central values is to celebrate Black liberation and its relationship to the birth of hip-hop. Through concert performance they are making the stories of BIPOC/QTBIPOC survivors more visible, thus serving such populations as well as the broader public.

How They Do It

EP is a San Francisco-based street dance theater company that illuminates narratives silenced by social inequities, including child sexual abuse, to inspire critical conversation and healing. EP's practice uplifts artistic performances as a means to bear witness and transform individuals and communities. Founded in 2008, EP offers dynamic programming in: 1) performance and dance film 2) education 3) community arts partnerships with social service organizations. Performances include dance workshops, speaker panels, documentary films, and restorative justice

circles. EP requested funding to galvanize technology, find innovative approaches beyond live performance, and pay its artists at a time when performances and festivals are being cancelled.

What Makes Them Unique

EP taps into performance as a healing, educational, connective, and transformational modality. Their work speaks to the power of artistic creation to both transmit cultural and embodied wisdom and act as a critical counterpoint to more sedimented and staid "discourse" about child sexual abuse and survivorship. EP's most recent performance, "X RATED PLANET" is an original work of documentary hip-hop dance theater that engages a critical conversation around the root cause of sexual violence and the myriad journeys to healing. Embodiment Project's signature approach to dance emphasizes the sacred practice of voicing stories of trauma to reclaim power.



Nicole Klaymoon, Founder + Artistic Director,
Embodiment Project

FATHERS & FAMILIES OF SAN JOAQUIN

Stockton, CA

How They Identify Leadership

FFSJ is operated by the very population it serves. Approximately 60% of staff is formerly incarcerated, including Executive Director Sammy Nuñez. After experiencing first-hand the trauma of community violence and incarceration, Nuñez founded FFSJ to be a catalyst for healing, policy change, and community empowerment. He is now a state and nationally recognized expert in the field of youth development, violence prevention, and community organizing for social change.

Population Served

The most vulnerable families in Stockton and the greater San Joaquin Valley, with an emphasis on fathers and men returning to their community from prison.

How They Do It

FFSJ works to transform its community through a variety of criss-crossing departments and programs focused on trauma recovery, family strengthening, racial, youth, and health justice, elder support, and policy change. Executive Director Sammy Nuñez explained the philosophy behind FFSJ's work in *Measuring Love in the Journey for Justice: A Brown Paper*: "When working with our brothers and sisters returning from incarceration, we go from 'What's wrong with you?' to 'What happened?' Through that stance, I myself will be changed. All the great people I've studied

and admired, it's about being in kinship and relationships, pushed to the fringes, with the 'hard to love.' Despite that, still love them. That's the most radical thing you can do, is to stay and love them." We chose to partner with FFSJ because their systemic, trauma-informed approach speaks to the reality that individual healing does not happen in a vacuum; the systems surrounding that individual—family, community, and government—must also be healed.

What Makes Them Unique

FFSJ is truly of and for its community. Conceptualizing those they serve as part of an extended family, FFSJ utilizes practices rooted in Indigenous teachings that enable that family to find and embrace its shared strength. "In a society that teaches us to hate ourselves, learning to love and heal ourselves and our community is a revolutionary act." - FFSJ Website



Sammy Nuñez, Executive Director,
Fathers + Families of San Joaquin

THE HIVE COMMUNITY CIRCLE

South Carolina

How They Identify Leadership

The Hive prominently states its status as a survivor-led and focused organization. Executive Director Ashley Thomas is a survivor whose educational background includes a master's in social work. Black women make up the majority of the Board of Directors.

Population Served

Young women and teen survivors in South Carolina, especially those most impacted by child sexual violence yet least aided are the group of focus for The Hive's various programming/activities.

How They Do It

The Hive characterizes itself as a peer-based organization that “partners with survivors wherever they are on their journey.” One standout program, The Bee Box, is a physical outreach tool designed to provide support as a survivor embarks on their journey of healing in public spaces such as healthcare settings, police stations, schools, and churches. The box consists of grounding tools, wellness resources, and powerful affirmations written by fellow survivors. The Hive also offers prevention training, plans events, and conducts other outreach activities. We are happy to support The Hive's ongoing work bringing not just services, but hope, to the young women and girls it serves.

What Makes Them Unique

The Hive is a stellar example of the power of peer support and survivor-led/built communities. Testimonials from participants emphasize a degree of solidarity, empowerment, and deep caring that acted as a reservoir of strength.



Ashley Thomas, Executive Director, The Hive Community Circle

HUMAN RIGHTS FOR KIDS

Based in Washington, D.C. with a national focus.

How They Identify Leadership

Inspired by his own personal experiences of child sexual abuse and child labor trafficking, as well as his work fighting to end child trafficking and the use of cruel punishments imposed on children who were convicted of serious crimes, James Dold founded Human Rights for Kids in May of 2017 in response to the human rights abuses that children in the U.S. and around the world face on a daily basis.

Population Served

Children are the focus of the organization, and specifically cases of the abusing or harming of children that are motivated by race, ethnicity, and/or gender. Human Rights for Kids is particularly recognized for its work with child survivors of sex trafficking.

How They Do It

Although Human Rights for Kids is more “involved” with systems than other WSYF grantees, they seek to affect systemic change on multiple levels, and grasp that legal reform and policy advocacy is but one of a host of necessary interventions. The organization also centers multiply vulnerable children (BIPOC, immigrant, QT, etc.) and uses an “intersectional human rights lens” to reduce adverse childhood experiences. Human Rights for Kids requested funding to advance their work around Sara’s

Law—a legislative measure to prevent child sex crime victims from serving lengthy prison sentences when they commit crimes against their abusers.

What Makes Them Unique

Human Rights for Kids centers children in a way that none of the other WSYF organizations do; they advance dignity, autonomy, and human rights for children with thoughtfulness and boldness, as well as a sophisticated understanding of how to achieve their goals both within and outside of systemic response.



James Dold, Founder, Human Rights for Kids

THE INNER TRUTH PROJECT

Port St. Lucie, FL

How They Identify Leadership

The Inner Truth Project is founded and led by Mindi Fetterman, a survivor of childhood sexual abuse and adult sexual assault. The organization's staff and board members are primarily women, including women of color, women from marginalized populations, and women who identify as survivors.

Population Served

Survivors of sexual trauma from St. Lucie, Okeechobee, Indian River, Martin, and some parts of Palm Beach counties in Florida.

How They Do It

The Inner Truth Project provides outreach and healing through services and programs including individual and group counseling, workshops, awareness campaigns, and training in the community. A few of the organizations currently available offerings include an LGBTQ+ group, a teen group, and a parent of survivors workshop, where parents and guardians of child survivors learn about sexual abuse, including common myths, impacts, and how to move forward.

What Makes Them Unique

The Inner Truth Project places a large emphasis on peer support, raising awareness, and reducing the shame and stigma around sexual violence. In the last eight years, they

have worked with more than 4,000 survivors throughout Southeast Florida. Their approach departs from narratives of darkness, victimization, and pain. In fact, the first words that appear on their website landing page are “Strength, Hope, and Health.” The site includes a quiz that addresses myths and misconceptions about sexual violence and an FAQ page with answers to common questions about sexual violence and seeking help.



Mindi Fetterman, Founder, Inner Truth Project

MUSIC BEYOND MEASURE

Based in New Jersey + serving tri-state area/NYC

How They Identify Leadership

Founder and Director Tamara C. Williams is a jazz vocalist and composer with expansive experience developing music programs with non-profit organizations, colleges, and universities. Prior to arts administration, Mrs. Williams volunteered with domestic violence and sexual assault organizations in the greater St. Louis area. Using spoken word poetry, she became a spokesperson and advocate for the prevention of violence against women, HIV/AIDS prevention, and recovery for substance abusers. Mrs. Williams founded Music Beyond Measure in January 2013. Approximately 58% of board leadership are men and women of color.

Population Served

Trauma survivors (DV, sexual assault, child abuse, and PTSD) are the primary population served by Music Beyond Measure. MBM also works with justice-involved youth and sparks community discussions about trauma through the arts to promote healing and understanding about these issues.

How They Do It

There are four major arms to the organization's work: The "Sing Your Story" Project partners professional musicians with trauma survivors to compose and perform lyrics and music to their own original songs as part of their healing process; out of school time music education and

resilience-building programs for youth; free community arts-based workshops, and the Montclair Community Chorus, which is a public performance extension of the "Sing Your Story" Project to engage communities in healthy "musical discussions" about trauma. As one of two arts-centered We See You Fund grantees, Music Beyond Measure gifted JBC with a learning opportunity to provide spacious support while the organization thoughtfully shifts its offerings during and post-pandemic.

What Makes Them Unique

MBM embeds preemptive support strategies and in depth communication about trauma into their arts-focused work. They are not only using creative engagement to help communities come up with their own strategies for negotiating issues like child sexual abuse, they are doing so on all three levels of the issue in terms of healing from, interrupting, and preventing.



Tamara C. Williams, Founder + Director,
Music Beyond Measure

NATIVE JUSTICE COALITION

Anishinaabe Aki (Michigan), the organization partners with Native-led organizations, Native communities in the Great Lakes, regional + national Native led initiatives.

How They Identify Leadership

NJC describes its leadership: “We are an Anishinaabe, Two-Spirit, and sober led grassroots organization based in Anishinaabe Aki (Michigan) ... We emphasize healing and sobriety in our leadership as a true form of decolonization. Our social and racial justice work is led by and for our people and communities. We emphasize centering Native people in racial justice and decolonization through our various programs. Our work is about our people and the transformation within the individual, family, and community as everyday resistance. Our staff, interns, and volunteers are equipped with various life experiences, education, tools, skills, and resources to do this critical work in Anishinaabe Aki and beyond! We work mostly in our rural and remote Native communities where little grant or philanthropic dollars go.”

Population Served

Native and First Nations people and communities throughout Michigan, the Great Lakes, and North America.

How They Do It

The NJC has an annual Anishinaabe Racial Justice Conference, an Anishinaabe Healing Stories on Racial

Justice program, Harm Reduction Project, Two-Spirit (pan-Native American term for gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation) Program, as well as maintaining an Anishinaabe Racial Justice Coalition. NJC names child sex trafficking as one of the prominent CSA-related issues affecting the communities it serves. The organization has initiated an awareness-raising campaign called MMIWG2S, standing for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit People. The MMIWG2S Project is less than a year old yet our billboards have appeared in 6 locations and a total of 7 times in the Great Lakes between August 2019 to the present.

What Makes Them Unique

The intersection of Native-centered, non-institutional racial justice work, a plethora of youth-oriented initiatives, and conversations around trafficking, sexual violence and Indigenous women, and healing justice positions NJC as a vibrant community that is actively cultivating/amplifying solutions to various issues that directly and indirectly “contact” that of child sexual abuse. They are a multilayered organization guided by a “decolonizing philosophy” and working to “provide a safe and nurturing platform for Native people based on an anti-oppression framework.”



Cecelia Rose LaPointe, Founder + Executive Director, Native Justice Coalition

PROSTASIA FOUNDATION

Based in San Francisco, CA. Services are available internationally but primarily serving the US.

How They Identify Leadership

Executive Director Jeremy Malcolm is a lawyer and human rights activist. Other leadership positions are held by individuals who represent Prostasia's intersectional and sex-positive lens. The funded project (see "How They Do It") will be co-run by Honey Sampson (a Black queer sex worker, who is also on the Advisory Council), Pearl Regalado (a first generation Filipino-American sex worker, who is also a co-founder and on the Board of Directors), and Meagan Ingerman (a disabled sex worker who is on the permanent staff and is also a former Director). Among its community partners is JBC's inaugural grantee, Ignacio Rivera of the Heal Project.

Population Served

Prostasia's work as a child protection organization is entirely prevention-focused, through a variety of interventions targeted at different populations of interest. For the peer support forum, which is a secondary prevention intervention, the population served is those at risk of offending.

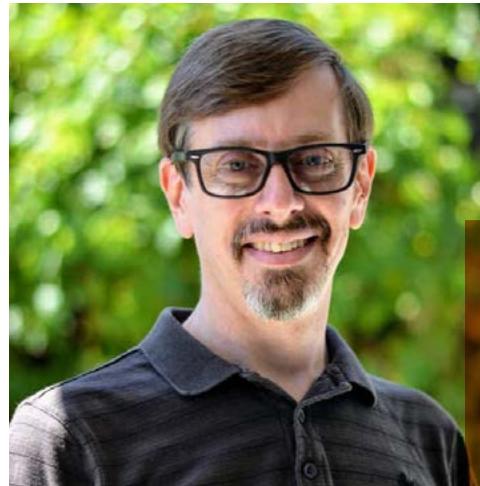
How They Do It

Prostasia's prevention activities include providing information and support to those at risk of offending (for example, through the aforementioned online

forum), raising money for research into prevention and communicating findings to policymakers, and giving voice to marginalized communities whose insights into prevention would not otherwise be heard. Prostasia requested funding to make updates and improvements to its professionally-supervised peer-support online forum for populations at high risk of online offending against minors.

What Makes Them Unique

Prostasia is unique among child protection organizations in taking a sex-positive, non-carceral approach to prevent child sexual abuse before it happens, rather than merely tracking down and punishing those who offend. Prostasia believes we can end child sexual abuse without ending freedom of speech, sex worker rights, or sexual freedom.



Jeremy Malcom, Executive Director,
Prostasia Foundation

S.O.U.L. SISTERS LEADERSHIP COLLECTIVE

Miami, FL & NYC

How They Identify Leadership

SSLC is a definitively Black-led organization with Co-founder/Executive Director Tanisha “Wakumi” Douglas at the helm. 100% of the co-founding youth members are BIPOC and many identify as LGBTQIA+, and the Board of Directors is made up entirely of Black women, half of whom identify as LGBTQIA+. Among its community partners are JBC’s inaugural grantees, sujatha baliga and Joanne Smith of Girls for Gender Equity.

Population Served

Girl and transgender and gender nonconforming (TGNC) youth of color ages 13-24 in Miami, FL & NYC. 100% of participants are at low to moderate income with 76% being at or below the poverty line.

How They Do It

SSLC mobilizes systems-involved girls and non-binary youth of color to interrupt cycles of state violence, poverty, and oppression. The organization’s work is rooted in four pillars that permeate all of its programming: leadership, healing, social justice, and the arts. Programs and services include workshops in detention facilities, group homes, schools, and shelters; restorative and transformative justice interventions; community organizing and policy advocacy; and training and professional development.

One activity that JBC funding will support is sending therapeutic art kits and care packages to nearly 100 systems-impacted girls and TGNC youth of color as well as girls and TGNC youth of color CSA survivors in Miami and NYC as part of continued virtual programming and wellness support. “When provided with opportunities and support, these young leaders will help lead community transformation. First, they must be afforded the right to heal.” - SSLC Website.

What Makes Them Unique

While SSLC does not necessarily “center” child sexual abuse in its work, the reality is that the vast majority of girls & TGNC youth in the juvenile legal system have experienced early childhood trauma, including CSA. One of SSLC’s references described the organization’s relationship to CSA work by explaining that while the issue permeates everything it does, SSLC is intentional in not naming CSA in its programming (for example, by not labeling a support group a “child sexual abuse group”). This strategy actually helps bring more survivors into groups where the topic is sure to come up, but if named outright could be intimidating or alienating. In this way, SSLC gently empowers survivors to learn, understand, and seek support for such experiences as part of a larger, integrated healing journey, and at their own pace.



Tanisha Wakumi Douglas, Co-Founder/Executive Director, S.O.U.L. Sisters Leadership Collective

SOVEREIGN BODIES INSTITUTE

Based in Eureka CA. Services are aimed at Indigenous peoples of the Americas, + bulk of work is within the US.

How They Identify Leadership

SBI's board, staff, and community partners are all Indigenous, and most if not all are survivors of violence and/or a family member of someone who is missing or murdered. SBI is also guided by a Survivors Leadership Council that is entirely comprised of Indigenous survivors of trafficking and survival sex work.

Population Served

Indigenous peoples of the Americas, with a focus on survivors of violence and missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people.

How They Do It

SBI builds on Indigenous traditions of data gathering and knowledge transfer to create, disseminate, and put into action research on gender and sexual violence against Indigenous people; for example, a nationwide study on missing and runaway Native youth, examining intersections with sexual exploitation, incarceration, and the foster care system. In addition to data collection, SBI also engages in activities like awareness building, community organizing and empowerment, and survivor healing through services like virtual art therapy circles and virtual support groups. By partnering with SBI, we are uplifting transformative

work by Indigenous leaders pursuing new knowledge and understanding to better protect and heal their communities.

What Makes Them Unique

Coming forward and disclosing is a big barrier to healing in Indigenous communities. SBI helps to address this barrier by offering safe spaces separate that guarantee confidentiality for those seeking services. In addition, SBI recognizes that many Indigenous people heal in non-traditional ways and thus connects people to forms of healing that speak to their traditions; for example, through dancing.



Annita Lucchesi, Executive Director, Sovereign Bodies Institute

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP PROJECT

South Los Angeles, CA

How They Identify Leadership

Women of color comprise all identified and visible leadership at WLP; Dr. Hutchinson's publishing and intellectual background indicate that the work is deeply rooted in Black feminism and gender and LGBTQ studies. The foster care, criminal justice, and immigration systems are specifically named as important considerations to further contextualize advocacy and education. Among its community partners is JBC's inaugural grantee, Aishah Shahidah Simmons.

Population Served

High school age women of color in South Los Angeles, with an associated ally group—Young Male Scholars (YMS)—geared toward young African-American men. The majority of WLP youth are the first in their families to go to college.

How They Do It

Youth spearhead peer education trainings, conferences, articles, and mini-documentaries, as well as engage affinity groups and coalitions focused on anti-racism, queer and LGBTQI youth rights, sexual violence prevention advocacy and the multicultural arts literacy. High school and college alumni from the program facilitate these initiatives with the support of adult Black and Latinx mentors. Current WLP students and alumni are also eligible to receive paid summer and year-round internships

with a focus on sexual violence prevention, mental health and public policy. These internships have been tailored to allow students to do virtual peer outreach and community engagement during the pandemic, as girls of color experience increasing levels of sexual abuse.

What Makes Them Unique

For over fifteen years, the WLP program has been focused on providing resources, platforms, and leadership opportunities for child sexual abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment survivors who are young women of color. Eradicating sexual violence and sexual abuse are central to the program's curriculum and outreach strategy. The program has a special emphasis on identifying and redressing the impact of rape culture, misogynoir and white supremacy on Black girls and young Black women. The program conducts in-class trainings that amplify the voices of survivors and connects participants with strategies and community resources.



Dr. Sikivu Hutchinson, Founder,
Women's Leadership Project

