



2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT



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*Submitted by:
Marion Overholt, Executive Director*

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Marion Overholt
Executive Director



It is trite to say that I never expected to be preparing another year's report on our COVID experiences, but here we are. For 2021 we were able to periodically offer some services in person, but most often, our services were delivered remotely. Our clients' tribunal experiences have all been remote hearings. We have continued to advocate for improvements in the digital system and a restoration of in-person hearing opportunities because our clients' ability to participate in digital hearings has been somewhat compromised.

We continued to address challenges caused by CERB income and are working to restore full Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) to those seniors whose benefits were reduced.

The affordable housing crisis continues to exacerbate the housing insecurity experienced by our clients. The conversion of low-income housing into high- and middle-income housing has deepened the problem. We were successful in our long-term advocacy with Windsor City Council when they voted to adopt a landlord licensing bylaw for residential landlords in wards one and two. The bylaw has not been presented to City Council and we are concerned that this initiative is under review.

We are also working systemically with the clinic network to review the proposed modernization plans for social assistance. We are concerned that the centralization of eligibility determination will place our clients' initial and continuing eligibility for Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program benefits at risk.

Our migrant worker clients continued to face significant challenges due to COVID restrictions and varying provincial and federal policies. Our migrant worker groups continue to meet and support each other remotely and in-person where possible.

Our anti-human trafficking project experienced a steady increase in demand for services, recognizing that the isolation restrictions required by COVID created more vulnerability for these clients. Under Jennifer Cline's leadership we were able to distribute phones and data plans through funding received from the Human Services Justice Coordinating Committee.

We were delighted to receive notice from Justice Canada that our application to provide legal advice, representation and support to survivors of gender-based violence and sexual assault was accepted in late December. This project provides over \$1 million dollars in funding for over four years. We are part of a group of nine community legal clinics across the province who have received this funding and we will be working collaboratively with them to coordinate services and develop best practices.

We signed new service agreements with Legal Aid Ontario after extensive discussions. We are pleased that our initial term will be renewed for another three years as long as we remain a clinic in good standing. Now more than ever, stable funding will be critical to allow us to build and reinforce our services to the community.

Our Sojourner Committee (Equity, Inclusion and Diversity) worked on the Anti-Black Racism Guide for CLA/LAW. We participated in a series of anti-black racism workshops. We are grateful to Tomee Sojourner-Campbell and Professor Jillian Rogin for their thoughtful and thorough preparation of the report.

I am continuing my second term of service on the Advisory Board to the Legal Aid Ontario Board of Directors. We remain active in the 672 Committee and the Human Services Justice Coordinating Committee. I presented workshops with Tribunal Watch Ontario and to the Society of Adjudicators and Regulators addressing the changing practices for administrative tribunals.

In 2021, we welcomed Tori- Lee Jenkins, Kristen Jeavons, Bianca Colaluca and Jade Wallace. Tori-Lee is our new landlord-tenant Staff Lawyer, replacing Anna Colombo who has left clinic practice. Kristen was helping out with our Indigenous Justice work. Jade Wallace is our new Service Coordinator. Bianca is our new Anti-Human Trafficking Project Coordinator and is a former LAW social work student. We are really delighted to welcome these new staff and look forward to the day when we are able to work together in person in the office at the same time! All of our staff have done a tremendous job of advocating for our clients in this ever-changing and worrisome climate. Their dedication and commitment to the clinic's program for students and services to clients is laudatory.

Hugo Vega is leaving the Board after a stellar term of board membership. Hugh Carpenter is also leaving the board and relocating outside of the region. The Board has done an amazing job in overseeing the work of the clinic throughout this time and their guidance and support is much appreciated. Rielly McLaren has provided exceptional leadership and support as our Board Chair.

We were pleased to welcome Acting Dean Beverley Jacobs in June 2021 who ably filled in until Dean Reem Bahdi commenced her deanship. It is wonderful to work with a leader who is so thoroughly committed to access to justice for our community and we look forward to continuing our close relationship with the law school.

In conclusion, I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to the staff, students and board of LAW who have innovated, adapted and persevered through this challenging time. We look forward to the return of in person services and community engagement to rebuild our community in a manner that enhances the contributions and importance of the clients we serve.

2021-2022

LAW STAFF

Executive Director	Marion Overholt
Coordinator of Social Work Programs	Shelley Gilbert
Staff Social Worker	Jennifer Cline
Anti-Human Trafficking Project Coordinator	Bianca Cololuca
Youth In Transition Worker	Gillian Golden
Housing Support Worker	Yannin Ramirez
Rural & Remote Outreach Worker	Maria Amato
Migrant Worker Outreach Worker	Claudia Membreno
Migrant Worker Outreach Worker	Amanda Morales
Staff Lawyer	Laura Stairs
Staff Lawyer	Tori-Lee Jenkins
Staff Lawyer	David Cote
Part-time Staff Lawyer	Karly Lyons
Indigenous Justice Co-ordinator	//
Service Coordinator	Jade Wallace
Intake Worker	Sarah Whalen
Support Staff	Kelly Demers
Articling Student	Taneeta Doma

LAW BOARD

President	Rielly McLaren
Vice President	Dean Reem Bahdi
Treasurer	Daniel Stronks
Secretary	Marion Overholt (<i>Ex officio</i>)

LAW DIRECTORS

Marion Fantetti	Adrian Guta
Hugh Carpenter	Hugo Vega
Adam Wydrzynski	Jillian Rogin (<i>Ex officio</i>)
Emilia Coto	

Shelley Gilbert
Coordinator of Social Work Services

As Coordinator of Social Work Services, I am responsible for supporting and supervising staff and students working in the anti-trafficking project and the migrant worker project, and I act as senior social worker to the staff social worker.



We were pleased to receive funding through Public Safety Canada to increase LAW's capacity to provide supports to migrant workers using a trauma-informed community capacity-building perspective.

We were also able to provide additional resources in the county and surrounding areas dedicated to outreach and service coordination for trafficked people.

I continue to work with the City of Windsor and community partners to establish housing policies and develop programs reflecting the needs of our community.

As co-chair of the Canadian Council for Refugees' Anti-Trafficking Committee, we have established resources and tools to assist service providers to better understand and assist exploited people and have advocated directly with IRCC (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada) to fulfill their promise to end closed work permits and recognize the needs of internationally trafficked and exploited people in policy.

During this pandemic, I supported and advocated for migrant worker health supports directly with those affected by COVID and systemically through media, at City Council and at health tables.

As one of three co-chairs of the Violence Against Women Coordinating Committee Windsor-Essex, I have advocated for and supported public awareness, education and programming and ensured additional financial resources are available to ensure needs, trends and best practices are recognized and operationalized.

I am on national advisory committees considering and piloting a tool to assist individuals to identify employment violations and potential remedies and considering the forced migration of women.

I continue to carry a case load supporting vulnerable and marginalized people in all areas of LAW's mandate.

Jennifer Cline
Staff Social Worker



This year has continued to challenge us to adapt our social work practice to the ever-evolving needs of our clients, community and students while in a pandemic. Social Work intakes have continued to increase via word of mouth and community referrals. My work continues to be all-encompassing: advocating for and supporting individuals with issues related to mental health, addiction, physical health, housing challenges and income insecurity.

A need for safe, affordable housing continues to be a high priority need of many clients. I am an active member on the By-Names List facilitated through the City of Windsor, which focuses on matching people experiencing homelessness with agencies providing support. Through this committee, I have been able to match and access rent supplements for eight of my clients who were experiencing homelessness. Through other rent supplement programs offered by the city, I have been able to house fifteen individuals ranging in age and needs. I work closely to continue to support these individuals to ensure their tenancy is maintained and to help resolve any issues as they arise, as well as connect them to ongoing long-term community supports.

I am an active member at the Situation Table, offering support and assistance to agencies working with high-risk individuals and families as needed. I continue working with the Treatment and Recovery Working Group and have developed a close relationship with the Community University Partnership, as well as the Housing Information Service's Water World program to coordinate services as necessary to ensure documents are exchanged appropriately to minimize gaps and delays in service provision.

We successfully received a grant through the United Way Emergency Response Fund to provide an Access to Technology Phone Program. This program ended on March 31, 2021. The purpose of the program was to connect individuals with a cell phone and data/phone plans to provide access to essential services including court matters, support services, crisis programs and medical professionals. In total we were able to assist 115 individuals through this program. We were then able to continue this program through another grant from the Human Services Justice Coordinating Committee. Through this program we were able to assist 40 individuals in accessing justice.

Over the last year I have become active in Community Legal Clinic Committee work. I am currently one of the Southwest OPICCO representatives on the Executive Committee. I also worked with the other social workers within the clinic system to revitalize the Social Work list serv and bi-monthly networking meetings as the co-chair.

Despite being virtual, we continue to have BSW and MSW social work students supporting the clinic's work and learning about their profession under our

supervision. Our students have been supporting clients through supportive counselling, assistance with completing applications and advocating to support clients' housing and income insecurity. Students have also completed the By-Names List training, trauma-informed practice training and other relevant training as available. I also provide consultation and supervision to law students as needed regarding barriers clients may be experiencing in accessing supports and legal remedies.

Bianca Colaluca
Anti-Human Trafficking Project Coordinator



WEFiGHT has provided support to survivors of human trafficking in the Windsor-Essex community for over 20 years. We are now proudly operating under a new name: Windsor Essex Counter Exploitation Network (WECEN)

This rebranding reflects both the evolution of the project, as well as its vision for the future. To complete this transition, a newly redesigned project logo has been formed and a new website is planned to launch by April 2022.

The WECEN project will predominantly focus on providing both direct services to survivors of trafficking and those experiencing exploitation that could lead to, or make people vulnerable to, trafficking, as well as on offering education to service providers. Our history of providing and enhancing the knowledge of trafficking and related exploitation has driven our work, with both provincial and national partners, in developing prevention tools both locally and nationally.

WECEN provides direct services to survivors of domestic and international exploitation. This includes labour exploitation, sex trafficking, and forced marriage. Direct services include: advocacy with basic needs, translation and interpretation, support when dealing with law enforcement or judicial systems, referral to appropriate counsel including immigration lawyers, orientation to local social services, skills development, and counselling to support individuals facing challenges due to trauma. We are currently supporting approximately 100 individuals through this program.

WECEN works with community organizations to identify risk factors and vulnerabilities, as well as providing intensive care management, which allows us to assist in addressing those risk factors to help prevent recidivism and to facilitate coordination of services. This includes direct engagement with service users and coordinators, as well as providing education tools to our various community partners.

Despite the constant changes in COVID policies and protocols, we continue to work on systemic advocacy that fosters seamless service delivery for our clients. Using various virtual formats, we have continued to fulfill our commitments to outreach, advocacy and education to those who are and/or who service exploited individuals.

Our work requires people with a strong vision and belief in our community's ability to work together to take action to eliminate the exploitation of people. This work is only made possible through our strong collaborative partnerships with community and national organizations, as well as chairing the WECEN Steering Committee.

The WECEN Steering Committee is a committee with more than 30 members who meet regularly to coordinate, take action, educate and advocate for long-term change to

improve the lives of survivors of human trafficking and exploitation. This includes influencing public policy, leading awareness and prevention programs and continually building and sharing our knowledge.

Gillian Golden
Youth In Transition Worker



The Youth In Transition Worker (Anti-Human Trafficking Program) was created in May 2017. My work is committed to providing direct service to youth survivors of human trafficking aged 13-24 years old, within Windsor and Essex County and focusing on the unique needs of each client. We emphasize identifying risk factors, building community supports, assessing safety concerns and advocating on behalf of clients. I currently have more than 25 active clients who are receiving intensive case management supports and in five years I have provided direct service to more than 100 new clients of LAW/WECEN.

This past year we continued offering outreach and public education virtually due to COVID restrictions. I adapted most presentations to continue reaching service providers and youth in Windsor/Essex. I continue to conduct extensive outreach to youth in the community. During the 2021-2022 year I conducted outreach to more than 150 youth in the community. Training to community partners and youth-serving agencies provides information regarding the elements of human trafficking, indicates the potential role of service partners in addressing human trafficking in our community, as well as best practices when working with victims. I focus on collaborative intervention strategies and protocol development to ensure a seamless referral process. A highlight of this past year for outreach was the facilitation and implementation of our Peer Support Group on an ongoing basis.

The Peer Support Group, facilitated by WECEN, is for survivors of exploitation. The group provides non-clinical emotional support to survivors experiencing trauma with the goal of being able to improve their mental health and restore healthy social connections. Peer support can help people develop problem-solving and decision-making skills, re-establish a community and improve level of resiliency to stressful situations.

The core value of peer support is that survivors of exploitation choose freely to participate, which creates an environment that builds trust and connection among participants. The Peer Support Group meets regularly to participate in a shared activity while developing life skills and sharing knowledge and access to resources.

There are opportunities available to our Peer Support Group members to receive training and certification as peer support leaders. The leadership survivors provide can improve self-advocacy while offering empathy and validation to other group members with shared life experience. Peer support leaders help group members develop their own goals and create strategies for self-improvement and encourage taking action towards building fulfilling lives for themselves.

Yannin Ramirez
Housing Support Worker

The WECEN housing support program was created in late 2019 through funding from the Provincial Anti-Trafficking Coordination Office (PATCO).

The Housing Support Worker's primary role is assisting exploited people to obtain and maintain housing, provide housing supports based on the needs of survivors and assessing clients' strengths and needs in order to advocate for adequate and affordable housing.



I continue to build my repertoire in understanding the current housing market and trends as well as the barriers facing our clients with both acquiring affordable housing and remaining safely housed. A key portion of my role is also building relationships with housing providers and landlords. I continue to build on these relationships with other professionals, which further assists our clients with their housing needs.

This past year, LAW/WECEN supported over 16 victims of human trafficking in obtaining housing with the assistance of the rent subsidy program supported by the City of Windsor. I have also supported many other LAW/WECEN clients with obtaining housing through the Central Housing Registry and in the private market.

It is crucial to work collaboratively with the LAW/WECEN team in the development and implementation of appropriate support plans for clients in order to help them define their goals and develop personal plans to achieve these goals.

It is also important to encourage the development of life skills for independent living and to assist survivors in accessing resources needed to increase their housing stability. By offering housing support on an ongoing basis, we can help our clients to be successful in their tenancy and continue their process of healing from trauma and rebuilding their lives.

Outreach and public education continues to be affected by COVID and we have transitioned to virtual education and housing support check-ins with clients when available. COVID has also had an effect on our ability to view available units in a timely manner and build relationships with our housing partners, however we continue to find ways to overcome these barriers to service.

Robyn Hodge
Rural and Remote Coordinator

&

Maria Amato
Rural and Remote Outreach Worker



The Rural and Remote facet of the Anti-Human Trafficking Program has been part of the Windsor-Essex Counter Exploitation Project (WECEN) at Legal Assistance of Windsor for just under two years. The focus of this program has been providing direct service to survivors of human trafficking and exploitation, within the rural and remote communities of Windsor and Essex County. Building on the partnership with the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) the Rural and Remote program continues to work primarily in the Leamington, Kingsville and Amherstburg areas of Essex County.

Rural and Remote direct service prioritizes creating individualized plans to address safety concerns and implementing safety plans with exploited people, as well as collaborating with community partners to arrange emergency shelter or affordable long-term housing. We also focus on providing and/or connecting clients with resources to fulfill basic and immediate needs such as food and clothing.

Presently, the Rural and Remote program is supporting 18 clients who have experienced exploitation. A large component of our direct service is connecting and advocating for survivors with community agencies to help them obtain resources and support. One of the primary challenges for rural and remote clients is the geographical distance to emergency shelters, addiction and mental health supports, which are generally located within the City of Windsor. Our work consists of identifying and overcoming those barriers to services through the maintenance of essential partnerships within the community.

Due to COVID, we continue to offer both in-person and virtual outreach, training and public education across the county. COVID presented unique challenges with service delivery and outreach. We have focused on ensuring community partners within the county are aware of WECEN's specialized supports, as well on building relationships with and providing education to agencies and services providers on how to access our services.

With this focus, we have been able to build new partnerships, including with the South Essex Community Council and The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, which have allowed us to collaborate and to facilitate services based on client needs. We continue to maintain and build connections with existing Essex county partners and service providers such as The Bridge Youth Resource Centre, The Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society and The Windsor-Essex Community Housing Corporation. We have

established a plan for specialized staff training on best practices when supporting exploited people and the development of protocols to ensure collaboration and seamless service delivery.

Amanda Morales & Claudia Membreno

Migrant Worker Women Group & Migrant Worker Group

Initially, the Migrant Monarchs group was created in 2019 to bring migrant women together in community activities. Originally, cooking activities were the primary focus. The intention was to bring people together to address various problems faced by migrant women, such as gender violence, human rights, human trafficking and labour rights, among others. We soon observed the need to involve more community actors and expand the project, and the group developed from there.



The objective of our program is to generate community development and to create a safety net and a safe space where migrant workers can talk about issues and barriers they face. The central idea is to create a community action group that furthers the community development of migrant workers in the Essex area. Through this project, various activities and community development objectives are being pursued.

We have addressed prevention, knowledge and action with respect to several important issues that affect the migrant worker community. Such issues include: human rights; gender-based discrimination and harassment; human trafficking; immigration counselling; community participation; general information about social support networks; and, community connections with institutions and migrant support groups. We also refer migrants to community supports, facilitate their ability to carry out cultural and recreational activities that generate knowledge, support and community among migrants as well as carry out educational activities that contribute to the personal growth and development of the migrant workers.

A large component of our direct support is to work with individual group members to provide assistance with basic needs, supportive counselling, information sharing, and referrals to the community. One of the primary outcomes of the Monarch Migrant Group is that individual members have been empowered and grown into leaders and activists within their community.

Achieving community development in the migrant community has three essential components for the participants of this program. The first component is to empower individuals, which requires informing workers and ensuring they are aware of their rights and knowledgeable about the context in which they find themselves. The second component is to help individuals come together in solidarity with their community and connect to services and people. This allows the migrant worker to become an enhancer of solidarity and advocacy actions, and eventually be of assistance to other members of

their community. The final component is the establishment of migrants as part of the Canadian community, as an essential part of the society that needs recognition and participation.

Laura Stairs
Staff Lawyer

SOCIAL BENEFITS LAW

We represent clients with appeals to the Social Benefits Tribunal (“SBT”) including Ontario Disability Support Program (“ODSP”) and Ontario Works (“OW”) denials, cancellations, suspensions and overpayments.



This year we continued to develop our practice to effectively represent clients in virtual hearings. In 2021, the SBT shifted from primarily telephone hearings to offering video hearings over Teams initially, then later in the year through Zoom. Our clients have adapted to this shifting technological landscape and we provided additional support to access the resources needed. As a result, our clients have been able to successfully participate in their virtual hearings.

The SBT hired a substantial number of adjudicators this year, increasing the availability of hearings. We had a hearing-heavy fall 2021, as old appeals and new were scheduled quite quickly as a result of the adjudicator hiring spree. This created substantial pressures on the clinic to support the large number of hearings scheduled by the SBT. Our clients began experiencing a much more efficient adjudication of their appeals, with approximately 6 months between filing their appeal and having the matter heard. There is concern about the expertise and knowledge of these new adjudicators, many of whom have no legal training or experience in the appeal areas of the SBT. We continue to monitor these concerns.

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services is undertaking a transformation of the social assistance system, including changes to ODSP and OW. Our clinic, along with our community and provincial partners, have always advocated for changes to these systems but the changes we are getting are not the ones we asked for. We have many concerns about the impact these changes will have on our clients. We are working locally and provincially to advocate for amendments to the plans that put our clients first and recognize the realities of their lives.

Most notably, the proposed plan purports to prioritize helping clients stabilize their lives by facilitating access to supports and resources; however, the plan does not include any funding to raise the social assistance rates, increase affordable housing, or invest in community resources. Additionally, the plan takes decision-making power away from local caseworkers and places it into a centralized office in Toronto where staff will not have a relationship with our clients or our community. We are very concerned that decisions will be made without taking into consideration the client’s situation, history and needs. Additionally, this shift will make it more difficult for LAW and other community partners to advocate for immediate assistance for our clients or resolve issues with their benefits.

The plan also includes “modernizing” the system to enhance the role of technology, including centralizing intakes and online applications. We want a system that is more efficient and client-centered, taking into account the various barriers facing our clients, including language barriers and access to different technologies. The current plan will leave many of our clients behind and create additional systemic issues for us to address on an individual and provincial level. Modernization has already created substantial work for the clinic as the OW and ODSP computer system automatically generates decision letters which are cutting clients off or assessing overpayments, often inaccurately and improperly denying clients.

COVID relief benefits offered by the federal government continue to create challenges for our clients in receipt of social assistance and federal pensions. We are seeing a high volume of clients coming to the clinic with OW and ODSP overpayments arising from receipt of federal benefits. We continue to advocate for amnesty for low-income recipients of these benefits and to assist clients who are facing requirements to repay from the federal government or social assistance programs.

An additional consequence of these benefits received in 2020 is how it affects our client’s eligibility for other pensions and programs for 2021, such as OAS and GIS and other income-based programs. We participated in local, provincial and federal advocacy efforts to help seniors get back the money they lost as a result of CERB being included in their income for OAS and GIS. The campaign was successful and eligible seniors will receive a lump sum payment in April to account for the income lost.

Tori-Lee Jenkins
Staff Lawyer



HOUSING LAW

I took over the position as staff lawyer in LAW's Housing Law division from Anna Colombo in August 2021. Previously, I worked as a sole practitioner with a focus on criminal defence. I also worked in two of the largest criminal defence firms in Canada. I am excited to bring my background and experience back to the Windsor-Essex community.

Housing files and the landscape of housing law have been deeply affected by COVID. The Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) has held all of their hearings by video and/or telephone. This has posed significant barriers to members of our community as the province's "digital-first" strategy assumes that everyone has access to reliable internet or phone, understands how to use videoconferencing technology and has the ability to find a quiet place to participate in their hearing. All elements of the hearing including providing testimony, submitting evidence, and communicating with adjudicators has been significantly impaired by this policy. There is no accounting for the realities of tenants who face challenges with their mental health, speak English as a second language, or are not able to understand the paperwork they receive.

With the "digital-first" policy, the Tenant Duty Counsel (TDC) program has also been impacted. Multiple hearing blocks for Windsor matters are scheduled at the same time, requiring lawyers to move quickly through multiple online hearing rooms to connect with tenants. TDC do not have access to tenants' paperwork and are often rushed by virtual room moderators as the blocks are so large.

On December 8, 2021, the LTB launched an online portal for the filing of some landlord and tenant applications. Notably, T2 (tenant's application regarding the reasonable enjoyment of their rental unit) and T6 (tenant's application about maintenance) applications were moved to this portal. These are the most common tenant applications and often times the only method for tenants to seek recourse for landlords who do not comply with the requirements in the Residential Tenancies Act. The portal continues to have province-wide processing issues and some problems cannot be remedied without contacting the Registrar of the LTB directly to fix the issue. This presents obvious significant difficulties for our clients. We continue to advocate for changes to this system.

In the housing law department, it is our priority to continue to work with other community organizations and conduct Public Legal Education Sessions. We have delivered education sessions to Windsor Family Services, Canadian Mental Health Association, the Welcome Centre Shelter for Women, the Children's Aid Society, WEST of Windsor, the Multicultural Council of Windsor and the New Canadians' Centre of Excellence. We

have developed and maintained great relationships with these community groups and have many education sessions planned for 2022.

Our office is also involved in the City of Windsor's Residential Rental Licensing ("RRL") By-Law Project. The first victory for this project came when City Council approved a pilot project in Wards 1 and 2. During my time at LAW, we have continued to gain momentum on this project. We continue to advocate for more protections for our clients and accountability for landlords who do not adhere to property standards and risk the safety of their tenants. The RRL By-Law is to be before City Council this spring.

David Cote
Staff Lawyer



IMMIGRATION LAW

This has been an active year in the immigration program due largely to world events including the crisis in Afghanistan and the outbreak of war in Ukraine. COVID has continued to cause delays in the system, but also new opportunities as government implements measures to increase economic immigration to Canada despite worldwide travel restrictions. Our students have been exposed to a number of different emergency programs and have taken up the challenge of helping our communities in need.

Of particular importance is our ongoing collaboration with workers in the Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) program and continuing to provide assistance to non-national workers who face abuse, such as physical and psychological abuse, in the workplace. We have assisted a number of workers in our area with obtaining Open Work Permits for Vulnerable Workers, a program put in place by government to provide alternative work authorization. We have also provided advice to workers who may qualify for alternative economic programs, particularly for frontline workers during the pandemic and those in the agricultural sector.

We worked collaboratively with the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit to address concerns relating to COVID restrictions on farms in our area.

We have also provided assistance to survivors of family violence in accessing the Temporary Resident Permit for Victims of Family Violence which provides temporary residence, an open work permit and health care to people who have left abusive relationships where they are reliant on an abusive person for immigration status.

LAW partnered with a number of organizations to provide information and legal assistance to families whose relatives were fleeing the violence in Afghanistan after the fall of the government in that country. These activities included evening information sessions, discussions with the media and advice to individuals. While the programs implemented to assist Afghanistan nationals were disappointingly restrictive, these events gave us the opportunity to strengthen networks and support structures within the community. We remain focused on the safety of our clients affected by the situation in Afghanistan, while also monitoring the developments in Ukraine.

LAW continues to provide our regular program assistance to the community in the area of refugee claims, family sponsorship applications, admissibility hearings and judicial review applications before the Federal Court of Canada. We were successful in reuniting three families who had been separated for a number of years. One of our main program areas has been permanent residence applications on humanitarian and compassionate grounds. This is often the last available recourse for vulnerable people

who would face undue hardship if they had to return to their countries of nationality. We have seen a number of our clients' files finally resolved after years of uncertainty and waiting.

We look forward to continuing our efforts, particularly with workers in the TFW programs, and ensuring that everyone has the right to a safe and dignified workplace. A big thank you to our students who have demonstrated adaptability and innovative thinking during this difficult year!

Karly Lyons
Part-Time Staff Lawyer

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE (SHIW) PROGRAM

In May of 2020, this new program was introduced and we have continued to expand the program throughout 2021-2022. This program is one being offered across the province by 20 legal clinics and agencies assisting anyone who has experienced sexual harassment in the workplace.

As the program continues to build, we have provided public legal education, training and materials to various service providers and community partners throughout Windsor-Essex. We have also begun to assist clients by providing summary legal advice and helping them navigate through their various legal options. We have also connected with other specialized clinics such as the Human Rights Legal Support Centre to ensure clients are obtaining their desired legal outcome.

We've provided public legal education sessions, trainings, or materials to over a dozen service providers/community partners and are looking to expand that number in 2022-2023.

In addition to continuing to provide excellent legal services to our clients and continuing our relationship with existing community partners/service providers, it is my goal for 2022-2023 to specifically target outreach to groups which are traditionally under-served and disproportionately affected by sexual harassment in the workplace, such as youth.

I look forward to continuing to build the program, develop relationships with community partners and service providers and serve our clients.