

Dear UnRestrict Minnesota Supporter,

In a single, historic legislative session, we've made major progress toward making Minnesota a national leader in reproductive rights and justice, abortion access, and health care access. Your support made this possible!

Thanks to community members like you, we've dismantled five decades of anti-abortion restrictions. We've enshrined the right to abortion in Minnesota law. And we've made our state a safe haven for everyone who needs, provides, or helps someone get abortion care.

But there's still more to do.

Significant barriers to abortion access are still keeping too many people in Minnesota from getting the care they need, when they need it. And while the legal rights and safeguards we've established are important, they don't mean much to people for whom affordability and other obstacles stand in the way of equitable access to essential reproductive health care. With your continued support, we will not rest until we've cleared those barriers away once and for all.

Gender Justice is proud to be the organizational and financial home of UnRestrict Minnesota, the powerful multi-racial coalition and reproductive freedom campaign that has led Minnesota to become a national leader for reproductive freedom. In this Gender Justice newsletter and annual report, you'll find more details about all that UnRestrict Minnesota accomplished and the work ahead on pages 9-15.

Together, we can fulfill the promise of reproductive rights, justice, and health care access for all Minnesotans—and everyone who comes here seeking care.



Sincerely,

Abena Abraham

UnRestrict Minnesota Campaign Director

Donate to the Fight for Reproductive Freedom in Minnesota

Your gift will support the only multi-racial, cross-sector campaign in the state working to protect every Minnesotan's right to make healthy decisions about if and when to become a parent.



UnRestrict Minnesota is a multi-racial coalition of more than 30 organizations representing LGBTQ+ advocates, faith communities, clinicians, activists, doctors, abortion funds, lawyers, organizers, healthcare clinics, doulas, podcasts, and more.

Welcome to these new partners!

AYADA LEADS

Ayada Leads understands active political participation is a necessary component of a representative democracy. Their purpose is to harness the political and social power of diaspora women and New Americans so that they can incorporate their values and policies into the public sphere.

ERA MINNESOTA

ERA Minnesota is a coalition of activists and organizations dedicated to having an equal rights amendment (ERA) in the Minnesota State Constitution and the U.S. Constitution. They are dedicated to working to make equal legal rights for all a reality in Minnesota and across the United States of America.

RED RIVER WOMEN'S CLINIC

Established in 1998, Red River Women's Clinic was the only abortion provider in North Dakota for over 20 years. In August 2022, after the *Dobbs* decision that overturned *Roe v. Wade* was handed down and with North Dakota's abortion ban looming, the clinic relocated across the river to Moorhead, MN. The clinic provides both in-clinic and medication abortion options for patients from North Dakota and South Dakota and northwestern Minnesota, as well as a range of birth control options.

"As an abortion provider forced to relocate from our home state with an abortion trigger ban about to go into effect, Red River Women's Clinic understands firsthand how fragile our right to an abortion is. And even if abortion remains a right under the law, without access and affordability, it is meaningless. Our patients and all those seeking abortion in Minnesota deserve so much more, which is why we are excited to join UnRestrict Minnesota and work to pass an agenda that protects and expands access to critical abortion care and reproductive health services."

- Tammi Kromenaker
Director of Red River Women's Clinic

YWCA MINNEAPOLIS

YWCA Minneapolis is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization committed to being a leader, resource, and advocate for public policy priorities based on its mission: eliminating racism, empowering women and girls, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.

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Minnesota is leading the way toward reproductive freedom for all.

UNRESTRICTED AND UNSTOPPABLE

VICTORY PARTY

The UnRestrict Minnesota community, Minnesota's only multi-racial reproductive freedom coalition, came together for a big, fun party to celebrate our victories for abortion access on June 8!



UNRESTRICT MINNESOTA

GENDER JUSTICE

ANNUAL REPORT AND
FALL 2023 NEWSLETTER



JOYFUL RESISTANCE:
A Season of Wins

Hello Friends,



MEGAN PETERSON, Executive Director
(she/her/hers)

“
Thanks to your support we have accomplished incredible things here in Minnesota in 2023.
”

The United States was given the designation of a backsliding democracy in the fall of 2021, shortly after the Supreme Court allowed Texas’ SB8—a law banning abortion in the state—to go into effect, even though it clearly violated *Roe v. Wade*, which was still the law of the land. While countries around the world have been decriminalizing and expanding access to abortion care, with the subsequent overturning of *Roe* in 2022, the United States joins just three other countries—El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Poland—in moving to criminalize abortion.

Throughout history, de-democratization movements have materialized alongside opposition to gender equity. It’s no coincidence that, as the United States experiences a democratic backslide, the right is advancing its assault on democracy through legislative, legal, and media attacks on women and LGBTQ+ people.

As Jennifer Weiss-Wolf, former fellow at the Brennan Center for Justice, so elegantly wrote, “The tenets of reproductive health, rights, and justice—and those of a healthy democracy—are not only inextricably interconnected, but essential to our nation’s promise. The country’s status as a backsliding democracy says as much about the symptom as it does the disease. And our simultaneous failure to curb democratic dysfunctions like partisan gerrymandering and voter suppression inevitably go hand in hand with our failure to ensure women and girls have an equal chance to engage in and contribute to civic life—or to live freely at all.”

Your support of Gender Justice’s work to boldly dismantle barriers to gender equity through public education, advocacy, and the law is a crucial line of defense against the assault on our democracy.

Though there’s still a lot of work to do, together we accomplished incredible things here in Minnesota in 2023, from changing policies for transgender inmates, severing state funding for crisis pregnancy centers, passing the Trans Refuge Bill, and repealing Minnesota’s unconstitutional and harmful abortion restrictions. This progress would not have been possible without you and everyone in the Gender Justice community. THANK YOU.

Having spent decades as a reproductive health, rights, and freedom advocate, I see clearly that the attack on trans people is following the exact same playbook—and being run by the same people—that’s been

used in the 50-year assault on abortion rights. I don’t want to spend the next 50 years in an intractable battle for trans rights as well; the time to thwart the rising white Christian nationalist movement is now.

Thanks to our incredible community of partners, donors, and advocates, Gender Justice has been fighting for reproductive freedom and trans inclusion—especially trans girls’ inclusion in sports—for years. We’ve long seen winning on these issues as central to reversing the backslide towards fascism. And we refuse to cede any ground or give up on women and LGBTQ+ people in states that others have written off. As state legislatures around the country churn out harmful policies to deny full personhood and bodily autonomy to women and LGBTQ+ people, action on the state level by proactive, courageous leaders becomes even more important. That’s why Gender Justice is energetically continuing our expansion into North Dakota, and next year, South Dakota, bringing our proven model of fighting attacks on gender equity—and winning—on the state court level, using state laws and constitutional protections.

While many movement leaders are now beginning to focus on state courts, Gender Justice is able to use your gifts to deliver change in Minnesota because we have been laser-focused on our state court strategy since 2017. We knew after the 2016 election that the federal landscape would change dramatically, and we responded with state action that was multifaceted, intersectional, and brave. I am proud we’ve reached for the highest levers to achieve the progress you will read about in this report, and I hope you are too. We are so grateful for everyone in our community who has contributed to this work by attending events, sharing your stories, donating, talking to your friends and family, contacting your elected officials, and everything else.

YOU make progress possible. With so many states rolling back rights—and the Supreme Court unlikely to change for decades—we cannot stop. And with your continued support, we won’t.

Why I Give Monthly to Gender Justice

I am a suburban dad who just wants the best for all people in our community. Reproductive justice has long been a key issue for me, which was why I was initially attracted to Gender Justice’s work. I saw them working to safeguard access to abortion and other reproductive health care through litigation where no one else was. Gender Justice has been on the forefront of a variety of battles in our region for reproductive justice, gender equality, and the ability of transgender adults and children to safely be their authentic selves.

Gender Justice’s advocacy for trans rights is personal to me as a parent of a trans kid. In the last few years, attacks on trans health and freedom have intensified,

so Gender Justice has become even more essential. I see my donations to Gender Justice as one way for me to be an ally to my trans and gender diverse family members, friends, and neighbors.

I am the executive director of a direct service nonprofit organization. In that role, I know firsthand how impactful it is to have supporters make a monthly financial commitment to the mission. I have been a donor to Gender Justice for years, but decided in 2021 to invest more fully as a monthly sustainer.

I am confident that my support is making a meaningful difference in the lives of people today and tomorrow.

Derek Burrows Reise
(he/him)

A Historic Win for Transgender Rights in Sports

In March 2023, in a long-awaited decision in Gender Justice's lawsuit on behalf of transgender athlete JayCee Cooper against USA Powerlifting (USAPL), the court handed down a favorable summary judgment ruling, finding that USA Powerlifting discriminated against Cooper in violation of the Minnesota Human Rights Act when it denied her entry to participate in powerlifting competitions because she is a trans woman. This decision is a groundbreaking victory for trans inclusion in sports nationwide, and for the growth and success of women's sports overall. USAPL appealed the district court's decision finding them liable for discrimination and preventing USAPL from operating in MN. The case is now at the Minnesota Court of Appeals. Your support helps Gender Justice continue litigation on this case to protect transgender rights in sports.

A CONVERSATION

with client JayCee Cooper, Gender Justice Communications Director Erin Hart, Legal Director Jess Braverman, and Special Projects Advisor Erin Maye Quade

Note: This conversation is adapted from an interview for The Gender Justice Brief podcast. It has been edited for clarity and length.

JayCee: Back in 2018 I was training for the Minnesota State Championships and, for both the bench press and the open state championships, I was denied the ability to compete with USA Powerlifting. Over a series of conversations it became very clear that USA Powerlifting wasn't going to move on this, and so I decided to start speaking out about it. Thankfully, someone reached out from Congresswoman Ilhan Omar's office, sent me to Gender Justice staff who got me all set up, and the rest is history. We just clicked the entire time; we were on the same page as far as ideals and where things were at in the larger legal climate and standing up for trans rights, particularly in sports.

Erin Hart: You had applied to participate in the competition, and USA Powerlifting basically said no?

JayCee: Yeah. They said that transgender people simply could not compete in the women's division. They claimed that we had an unfounded advantage,

without providing any research or documentation to support that claim. And they stood by it. I tried working with them; we went through so many different processes to allow them to do the right thing, and they just held onto this discriminatory viewpoint that trans women couldn't compete. So that's what led us to the decision that we got this week.

Erin Hart: And Jess, could you bring us back to the law? How did we get this win?

Jess: Minnesota has an anti-discrimination law, the Minnesota Human Rights Act. It prohibits discrimination in lots of different settings like public accommodations, employment, and education. It's a pretty broad statute, and because of it, we were the first state in the country to expressly protect transgender people from discrimination.

The transgender rights cases we bring are so wild because it's 2023 and someone is basically being



JayCee Cooper

like, yes, I'm discriminating against you because you're transgender. And so the frustration for me is like, why does JayCee have to hire lawyers to file a lawsuit when we have a law that says you can't discriminate against transgender people. Like this should never have had to be a lawsuit.

JayCee: I wouldn't wish this kind of discrimination and this kind of experience on any other trans person ever. It was a very difficult experience and though I hold it well, it was very, very hurtful and it caused a lot of harm. It's not easy to train to be an athlete while facing extreme amounts of stress; it affects recovery and all these different things. So I'm glad that Gender Justice was there walking with me hand in hand because y'all understood how big it is for a client to come forth and be a plaintiff in an impact case like this. Kudos to y'all. And I'm just very, very thankful that we've gotten to this point.

“The ruling will ensure transgender women can compete in powerlifting, and sends a clear message that banning trans women from women's sport is unlawful discrimination in our state.”

- Cheryl Reeve, Head Coach of the Minnesota Lynx, in a *Star Tribune* opinion article after the ruling

Erin Hart: I feel like a lot of us are still absorbing the win and the decision. Erin, before being Gender Justice's special projects advisor you were advocacy director. And I wanted to ask you, in your role as advocacy director when Gender Justice announced this case, what did the case rollout look like to you?

Erin Maye Quade: A lot of working with some of our amazing national partners like Athlete Ally, and there were so many athletes, cisgender and transgender, who came out in support of JayCee. So making sure we had folks just talking about how much they support her and support trans inclusion in sports more broadly—that was certainly part of it.

You know, we had actually just finished up an op-ed congratulating JayCee, but also kicked off what we call the FAQ (frequently asked questions page). It's one of the most visited pages on our website.

Crafting things like that is so important—how do we get people factual information to counter the harmful misinformation that's been perpetuated in the media about trans people, and then educate people? Not just frequently asked questions, but also information like the fact that trans inclusion in sports has been the norm in Minnesota for a really long time.

We've had trans inclusion in high school sports for a decade. The International Olympic Committee is trans-inclusive, NCAA is inclusive. The question of whether trans people should be able to compete in sports that align with their gender identity had been asked and answered a long time ago. But they were presenting it as if it was this new question with new things that we needed to do, when it was already asked, answered, and settled.

We also saw state legislatures really take up this attack on the trans community, particularly trans kids, right around the time that our case got rolling. And so what was important for the Cooper case and our public education and our public support rallying also turned out to be really important for not just our state legislature, but for state legislatures across the country, to fight back against these attacks on trans kids. It was a timely case that didn't exist in a vacuum.

Erin Hart: And so what do actual policies now look like? Jess and Erin, you have said that Minnesota is a very inclusive place to play sports. Would you say that also mirrors international sports and competitions?

Jess: The Minnesota High School League is trans-inclusive and we lead the country in girls' participation in sports, and I think that's really important to keep in mind.

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When people say like, oh my God, trans inclusion—what if there’s trans inclusion in women’s sports and then women’s sports will cease to exist? No, there is and has been trans inclusion in women’s sports and women’s sports has thrived with trans inclusion. Trans inclusion is not the threat. The Minnesota High School League is trans-inclusive and with girls sports, while there are certainly problems, they’re not problems that stem from trans inclusion. The *Star Tribune* reported that Minnesota has led the country in girls’ participation in sports every year since 2011.

Erin Hart: Jess, can you tell us about the actual ruling in JayCee’s case?

Jess: Yeah. It was an almost 50-page ruling. So basically the question was, does USAPL ban trans women from women’s competitions? And the answer is yes. In other words, if the only thing they know is that a woman is trans, then she will be banned from the women’s competition. And the court ruled that that’s illegal; USAPL discriminated against JayCee when they banned her from women’s competitions because she’s transgender, which violated the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

One other thing I should say is that the ruling is not unique to powerlifting. What that ruling says is you cannot bar trans women from women’s sports in this state. And so that’s important. This is not like a powerlifting-specific ruling.



JayCee with Gender Justice Executive Director Megan Peterson

JayCee: Period.

Erin Maye Quade: Yeah, exactly, period. I think that’s the hugeness of this case is that we win for our client and we win for everyone else.

Erin Hart: JayCee, how has this week been for you? Like, have you been hearing from a lot of other athletes?

“ The ruling is not unique to powerlifting. What that ruling says is you cannot bar trans women from women’s sports in this state. ”

– Jess Braverman, Legal Director

JayCee: Oh my gosh, there’s been such an outpouring of support. There’s a lot of very excited people that have been following this case for many years. So I’ve definitely felt supported in that respect and it’s a lot of excitement, really. There were a lot of people that were getting into the sport of powerlifting because of how empowering it is. I know that’s kind of punny, but then I saw that this happened to me and watched the public debate unfold. It’s a win for all of them as much as it is a win for me, and it’s a win for a lot of the people who are speaking out and pushing back on this kind of discrimination within the strength sport world. So, yeah, it’s been kind of a whirlwind. I wasn’t expecting the summary judgment to come out when it did. So it kind of caught me off guard.

Jess: You got a text from me, is how you found out.

JayCee: Yeah. I got a text from Jess.

Jess: An expletive-laden text of excitement.

JayCee: Right. And then it was just a whirlwind from there. So there’s definitely a lot of relief and I’m eager to move the rest of the pieces of this case forward.

Landmark Settlements

Ruling Protects Transgender Rights in Government Custody

“ I relied on my faith, and I never gave up hope. I can truly say that I am a strong, proud, transgender woman, and my name is Christina Lusk. ”

Christina Lusk is a transgender woman and is recognized as female by the state of Minnesota. Nonetheless, since being incarcerated in 2018, she has been consistently misgendered by the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC), was housed in an all-male facility where she faced ongoing harassment, and was denied the gender-affirming health care she had been receiving prior to her incarceration. DOC staff refused to acknowledge her as Christina, her legal name.

Christina’s experiences weren’t only harmful to her, they violated the Minnesota Human Rights Act, as well as the Minnesota Constitution’s guarantee every person in every corner of the state is entitled to equal protection under the law, bodily autonomy, and freedom from cruel or unusual punishment.

In 2022, Gender Justice and co-counsel Robins Kaplan LLP filed a lawsuit on Christina’s behalf, outlining her painful experience of being discriminated against, misgendered, and harassed since being in DOC custody.

Christina spoke up, she fought back, and she won. As part of a new settlement announced in June of

2023, Christina was transferred to a women’s facility and provided with gender-affirming health care and counseling.

The DOC agreed to pay a settlement of \$495,000 and make urgently needed changes to its policies regarding the basic rights, health and safety of transgender people in its custody. Among these changes, the DOC will abide by the World Professional Association for Transgender Health’s (WPATH) standards of care, contract with a WPATH certified health care provider, ensure its staff are trained on providing appropriate care for transgender people, and honor the name changes of incarcerated transgender people.

“Thanks to Christina Lusk’s willingness to speak out, transgender people in custody will now have expanded access to the housing and health care they need, and the legal protections they deserve,” said Gender Justice Legal Director Jess Braverman.

This win is especially meaningful in a year where we have seen an onslaught of bills and policies targeting trans people.

Menards Agrees to Settlement with Former Transgender Employees

Gender Justice announced a landmark settlement resulting from two Gender Justice clients and former Menards employees filing complaints with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) after being prohibited from wearing pins displaying their pronouns next to their name tags. The NLRB found that this violated the employees’ right to organize to improve their working conditions under the National Labor Relations Act.

As a result, Menards has agreed to change its company policy and allow employees to display their pronouns on their store-issued name badges. The settlement applies to all of Menards’ 42,000 employees in 15 states and is a massive victory for trans, non-binary and gender fluid workers everywhere!

These landmark victories were possible thanks to the many individuals and institutions who have donated to Gender Justice. With your continued support, Gender Justice will always work to ensure that all people have a meaningful right to bodily autonomy, safety, and health, wherever they may be.

Celebrating a Historic Legislative Session

When Minnesotans elected the most progressive legislative majority in our state's history last year, Gender Justice vowed to take full advantage of the opportunity—advancing perhaps the most ambitious agenda for women and LGBTQ+ people in Minnesota history.

Thanks to people like you who have rallied, donated, contacted your elected officials, and so much more, we have thoroughly fulfilled that vow.

As we look back on the 2023 legislative session, we could not be more proud to share what our community accomplished with your steadfast support and in partnership with our champions in the legislature and our coalition partners throughout the state.

GENDER EQUITY

Paid Family and Medical Leave

Institutes a statewide paid leave program that will keep Minnesotans healthy and advance economic security for families statewide.

Modifications to the Women's Economic Security Act

Strengthens gender equity in the workforce in Minnesota—including improving workplace protections for ALL pregnant and nursing employees.

Creation of Office for Missing and Murdered Black Women

Creates an office dedicated exclusively to combating rates of violence against Black women and girls.

Menstrual Equity Bill

Ensures students have access to the essential menstrual products they need and reduces financial barriers by providing free menstrual products in public schools.

TRANS AND LGBTQ+ RIGHTS

Trans Refuge Bill

Protects families seeking gender-affirming care in Minnesota from legal action and adverse child custody determinations by states that ban such care, and protects health care providers from out-of-state litigation or being forced to participate in anti-trans child custody proceedings.

Conversion "Therapy" Ban

Bans the destructive practice of anti-LGBTQ+ conversion "therapy" on children and vulnerable adults, prohibits it from being offered under Medical Assistance coverage, and outlaws the misrepresentation of treatments involved in conversion "therapy".

“

We at Gender Justice are so proud to call Minnesota home,

especially on a day like today, when our elected officials take a powerful stand to protect the health, rights and safety of our communities.”

- Executive Director Megan Peterson after Gov. Walz signed bills to ban conversion "therapy" and protect patients and providers traveling to Minnesota for abortion care and gender affirming care.



REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM

The Protect Reproductive Options (PRO) Act

Enshrines in Minnesota law every person's right to make and act on the full spectrum of decisions available to them regarding their pregnancies and their reproductive health care, without government interference.

The Reproductive Freedom Defense Act

Protects everyone who seeks, provides, or helps someone get abortion care in Minnesota from legal action and criminal prosecution by anti-abortion activists and politicians from out of state.

Anti-Abortion Law Repeals

(enacted as part of Health and Human Services and Judiciary Omnibus Bills)

Eliminates from Minnesota law a lengthy list of significant barriers to abortion access that had remained on the books despite state court decisions ruling many of them unconstitutional—including a requirement that doctors deliver state-mandated anti-abortion propaganda, a mandatory 24-hour

waiting period for patients seeking abortion care, and a measure that outlawed abortions performed by advanced-practice registered nurses and other trained, licensed, qualified providers, and many more.

Improving Coverage for Abortion Care

(passed as part of the Health and Human Services Omnibus Bill)

Eases financial barriers to abortion care by increasing the Medical Assistance reimbursement rate for providers offering family planning services and abortion care by 20 percent—the first such increase in more than a decade. Also repeals the ban on abortion coverage in the state's MinnesotaCare program.

Ending Taxpayer Funding of Anti-Abortion Crisis Pregnancy Centers

(passed as part of the Health and Human Services Omnibus Bill)

Ended a state program that previously funneled \$3 million in taxpayer money annually to so-called "crisis pregnancy centers" that use misinformation and coercive practices to actively discourage people from seeking abortion care.

We could not have done this without our amazing community of supporters, partners, and advocates who made this possible! Thank YOU for everything you do to support our mission to dramatically advance and fiercely defend gender equity for all.

We are so grateful for your participation in and contributions to this work—and we look forward to reporting still greater progress as we build on this momentum in the 2024 legislative session and beyond.

Winning Minnesota's First

Pro-Reproductive Freedom Trifecta

Last summer, supporters like yourself helped Gender Justice launch **Gender Justice Action (GJA)**, a 501(c)4 political nonprofit organization, and UnRestrict Minnesota Action, a program focused on responding to our country's national abortion crisis by electing pro-reproductive freedom champions, spearheading real legislative action, and paving the way for Minnesota to lead on abortion access.

In the fall of 2022, our first election cycle, we put your contributions to work by deploying electoral strategies to elect pro-reproductive freedom champions in nine state races, including the Attorney General's race. Thanks to our organizers, canvassers, donors, and supporters, we won all but two districts of our targeted races!

Together, we had tremendous success due to the following strategy:

INVESTING IN SWING DISTRICTS

Our trailblazing organizing team had meaningful conversations on the phone and at the door with thousands of voters in key swing districts where victories were decided by razor-thin margins. Your support helped to register hundreds of new voters and turn out a record number of Minnesotans to vote!

TARGETING KEY CONSTITUENCIES

We prioritized BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities, voters aged 18-29, renters, and Minnesotans who don't always show up on election day. Many of the

people we contacted weren't planning to vote, but after talking with us about the stakes in this election and who was running in their district, they showed up, including:

- In Vadnais Heights, a 20-year-old voter who hadn't previously heard about the candidates in his district but was excited to vote after talking with an UnRestrict Minnesota Action canvasser.
- In Anoka, a 93-year-old renter who said he couldn't wait to vote for pro-reproductive freedom candidates after talking with our team.
- In White Bear Lake, a 56-year-old man who took pictures of the pro-reproductive freedom candidates so he knew who to vote for in legislative races.

COMPELLING MESSAGING

We didn't shy away from bold messaging and hard conversations. Your support made it possible for us to talk with voters about abortion and reproductive justice, and it worked. Our field canvass director told us that our messaging led to the most meaningful conversations she's ever had with voters, and those conversations tipped the election in our favor.

It is thanks to people like you that we've been able to advance and truly change the trajectory of abortion politics in Minnesota for the next generation. Together, we're showing up for abortion access like never before and sending a strong message that our right to bodily autonomy belongs to us—not to politicians.

Abortion Stories

When I was about 22 years old, I became pregnant. I knew I wasn't ready to be a parent, so I decided I would get an abortion. I don't remember much of the process, but I know I was able to find a clinic with relative ease. I remember being so afraid of the whole process, just due to how demonized it had become within society. My hope is that any person seeking an abortion can have access to this life saving health care, just like I did. I want to help remove the stigma and shame connected to abortion and fight to keep access for all. – Alycia

At age 16 I became a parent, after being shamed by fundamentalist anti-choice activists, going through the judicial bypass since I wasn't old enough to make the decision myself, a mandatory waiting period, and trying to raise enough money to pay for the procedure myself, which was impossible in the short time frame for me working a part-time low wage job. I never want any other young person in this country to experience the stress of trying to obtain a medical procedure, or be forced to carry a pregnancy, birth a child, raise a child in poverty, and experience the soul crushing guilt that I feel every day in not being able to provide the life for my child that they deserve. – Natalie

In 2018, I needed an abortion to save my life. I had an ectopic pregnancy which was non-viable and life threatening. In the time between diagnosis and surgery I was instructed to not be alone in case my fallopian tube ruptured and I began to bleed out. Abortion access is so important because in that short time I did not need to make a plea to the state or the courts in order to get permission for this abortion. I was able to make a decision with my doctor and get the immediate care I needed. – Megan

I am in a long-term, healthy relationship with my partner of 12 years. I had an abortion during the pandemic after our birth control failed. It was a lonely experience, not because I questioned my decision, but because the culture we live in and my family of origin is hostile to abortion care. I advocate for abortion because I want to live in a world where all parents are willing parents and where all people have an ability to control their own future/destiny. – Marisa

Why Do You Support Reproductive Freedom?

The overturning of *Roe* is a once-in-a-lifetime tragedy, and we mourn with countless others across the country for what we have lost.

We aren't going to let politicians, neighbors, leaders—anyone—forget that people are needlessly suffering, and over half of our country has lost the right to make decisions about their bodies and their futures.

One way to do that is by speaking up and sharing our stories.

Why do you support reproductive freedom? What does the future of abortion access look like to you?

[Read the stories of hundreds of others who are raising their voices today and add your story.](#)



UNRESTRICT MINNESOTA

Leads Monumental Advances in Abortion Access



Gender Justice is proud to be the organizational and financial home of UnRestrict Minnesota, a powerful multi-racial coalition and reproductive freedom campaign supported by thousands of people like yourself whose organizing and tenacious advocacy have forever changed the landscape of abortion access in Minnesota.

Showing Love for Our Champions at the Capitol

In February, hundreds of UnRestrict Minnesota supporters sent notes of appreciation to our reproductive freedom champions at the legislature. On Valentine's Day, UnRestrict Minnesota coalition members delivered valentines to our reproductive freedom champions in the legislature and the governor's office!



UnRestrict Minnesota coalition members deliver valentines to Senator Erin Murphy, Rep. Leigh Finke, and Senator Lindsey Port.

Hundreds Show Up to Lobby for Abortion Access During Winter's Biggest Storm

During last winter's biggest snowstorm, hundreds of Minnesotans showed up for a powerful Reproductive Freedom Lobby Day and sent a message loud and clear to state legislators: we are the majority, and it's time to protect and expand reproductive freedom in Minnesota!

Legislators heeded the call, and as Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan said at Lobby Day, "We are going to continue to be an island of decency and humanity, and a north star for the rest of this country!"



Star Tribune Editorial Board: "Repeal Minnesota's Barriers to Abortion Care"

"Making reproductive health a legislative priority this year is appropriate. Minnesota is home to world-class medical centers, and its laws should reflect that. And patients who live or travel here deserve care that is guided by compassion, science and individual choice." - Star Tribune Editorial Board on March 7

Legal Community Weighs In on Abortion Access

In April, Gender Justice organized 136 members of the legal community to send a letter to the Minnesota House of Representatives and Minnesota Senate in support of removing Minnesota's abortion restrictions.

UnRestrict Minnesota Sends a Message Loud and Clear Across the State: We Are the Pro-Reproductive Freedom Majority!

Last spring, your donations helped UnRestrict Minnesota take over the billboards surrounding the Capitol and place this full page ad in the *Star Tribune*!



Conversations About Abortion: On the Ground in St. Cloud, Minneapolis, and the Cottage Grove Area

This spring, UnRestrict Minnesota canvassers knocked on doors and made phone calls to voters in St. Cloud, Minneapolis, and the Cottage Grove area to educate the community about reproductive freedom and encourage their lawmakers to expand abortion access. There was so much demand for our bright, sunny UnRestrict Minnesota lawn signs that we ran out and had to print more!



Minnesota Women's Press Honors UnRestrict Minnesota with the
2022 Changemaker Award



WATCH THIS SPECIAL VIDEO that tells the story of UnRestrict Minnesota's accomplishments that you've made possible.



MEDICATION ABORTION ACCESS IN JEOPARDY

Anti-abortion organizations, activists and politicians have been working through the courts to block access to mifepristone, a medication with a 23-year track record as a safe, effective, Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved option now used in more than half of abortions in the United States, as part of their broader goal of banning abortion nationwide. In April, with the stroke of a pen, a single Trump-appointed district court judge in Texas, who is known for his extremist views, jeopardized the ability of people across the country—including here in Minnesota—to access mifepristone.

Thankfully, just a few days later the Supreme Court pressed pause on the lower courts' dangerous overreach. That means that, as of the writing of this newsletter, mifepristone remains available for now. But the fact remains that we should never have gotten here in the first place.

This case is ongoing, and Gender Justice is closely tracking its progress through the legal system. We will continue to provide analysis on how it could impact the future of health care in Minnesota and across the country.

For the latest updates on this case, please visit genderjustice.us/mifepristone

Barriers to Abortion Care Remain

Minnesota is on the front lines in the fight for abortion access today. In over half of the country, pregnant people are being denied life-saving health care and forced into parenthood. The number of abortions in Minnesota increased 20% from 2021 to 2022, the year that *Roe* fell. Much of that increase is from people traveling from other states, as far away as Texas and Florida, for abortion care.

In Minnesota, the right to abortion is protected, and we have made huge progress expanding access to abortion care over the past year thanks to our incredible community of supporters and advocates, including you.

But unfortunately, many people still face numerous barriers to accessing abortion in Minnesota, especially because of the influx in people traveling here for care.

FINANCIAL BARRIERS

For those already struggling financially, the cost of abortion care can be prohibitive, and it isn't always covered by insurance.

Thanks to your ongoing support, Gender Justice and UnRestrict Minnesota are continuing to work to ensure equitable and affordable access to abortion care by expanding insurance coverage and augmenting it with financial assistance.

ANTI-ABORTION CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTERS

When Gender Justice organizer Jay Belsito walked into a crisis pregnancy center in St. Paul as a teenager 16 years ago, they were hoping for a free pregnancy test. After being coerced into watching anti-abortion propaganda and undergoing a fake ultrasound, they left traumatized.



Jay Belsito,
Gender Justice
Organizer

As an organizer with Gender Justice, Jay now works to address the harms caused by Minnesota's crisis pregnancy centers, which have become a key component of the anti-abortion movement's infrastructure in our state.

Anti-abortion crisis pregnancy centers ("CPCs") target pregnant people to prevent them from obtaining abortion services using any means necessary, including delay tactics, disinformation, and deception. They outnumber abortion clinics 11 to 1 in Minnesota.

UnRestrict Minnesota is using gifts from people like you to address the harms caused by anti-abortion centers and expand funding for real pregnancy support services that provide medically accurate, unbiased information and support, free of preconditions and harassment.

With 14 states having banned or criminalized abortion, Jay's work is a critical part of supporting people from across the Midwest—and even across the nation—who have been looking to Minnesota for leadership and care alike since *Roe* was overturned.

With your support, we will keep fighting until every person can access the reproductive health care they seek. Our work ahead is making access real for everyone by improving affordability and removing barriers to abortion care.

THE INAUGURAL GENDER JUSTICE BRUNCH



On October 15, Gender Justice is hosting a brunch conversation with Melissa Murray, legal analyst for MSNBC and co-host of the popular Supreme Court podcast Strict Scrutiny. Melissa is one of the nation's leading experts on women's rights, reproductive rights and justice, and the U.S. Supreme Court.

October 15, 2023

IN PERSON AT GLASS HOUSE IN MINNEAPOLIS:

11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

VIRTUAL LIVESTREAM VIA ZOOM:

12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

For those in the legal community, CLE (continuing legal education) credit is available.

Learn more:

[GENDERJUSTICE.US/BRUNCH](https://genderjustice.us/brunch)



Test Your Knowledge!



Gender Justice and UnRestrict Minnesota have led successful efforts to transform the abortion landscape in Minnesota over the past few years.

How well do you understand Minnesota's new abortion laws? **Take UnRestrict Minnesota's new quiz to find out!**



U.S. Supreme Court

Allows Discrimination Against LGBTQ+ Individuals



In June, LGBTQ+ rights suffered a massive setback at the hands of a rogue U.S. Supreme Court intent on imposing a conservative-driven chokehold on society.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *303 Creative v. Elenis* that the First Amendment allows businesses open to the public that use "creativity" or "expression" to turn some people away simply because of who they are.

This radical and reckless ruling contradicts decades of settled case law and flouts core American principles about treating everyone fairly.

As Justice Sonia Sotomayor noted in her dissent, this is "the first time in its history" that the court has granted "a business open to the public a constitutional right to refuse to serve members of a protected class."

Let's not forget, this case is based on a lie and was engineered to create a false controversy. The plaintiff "website designer" never actually designed a website

or received an inquiry from a real potential customer. This is a manufactured case with the sole intent of making a massive change in the law to undermine our country's anti-discrimination laws and values.

Make no mistake, we will continue to bring lawsuits on behalf of LGBTQ+ people who face discrimination in the Upper Midwest.

Even in the face of an extremist Supreme Court, Gender Justice has proven that, with your support, we can continue to make progress toward gender equity through creative strategies and by utilizing state law.

Also in June, the Supreme Court struck down Harvard and UNC's affirmative action programs, overturning nearly 50 years of precedent. As Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson writes in her dissent, "Deeming race irrelevant in law does not make it so in life...No one benefits from ignorance."

Biden Administration Visits Gender Justice

Xavier Becerra, the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services, visited Minnesota and asked Gender Justice to host a roundtable discussion on reproductive health care on January 19, 2023.

Leading up to the 50th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* and occurring while the Protect Reproductive Options (PRO) Act was making its way through the Minnesota Legislature, Secretary Becerra's visit emphasized the importance of protecting reproductive freedom and expanding access to health care at a state level, one of Gender Justice's biggest priorities.

Secretary Becerra congratulated Gender Justice on our role in positioning Minnesota as a national leader for reproductive freedom, and we discussed the work ahead, including expanding access to medication

abortion, combating anti-abortion crisis pregnancy centers, and repealing the Hyde Amendment. We asked him to encourage President Biden to be more direct in his language and say the word "abortion" rather than using euphemisms and shared how grateful we are to work in partnership with the White House to advance gender equity!



A Victory Against Sexual Assault

A Becker County District Court jury found in favor of Gender Justice client Margaret “Molly” Campbell in March, agreeing that her former employer Honor The Earth not only failed to take “prompt and appropriate corrective action” against sexual harassment and abuse within the organization, but also retaliated against her for reporting the harassment and abuse.

The 2019 complaint filed by Gender Justice describes ongoing sexual harassment and inappropriate behavior toward Campbell by then-coworker Michael Dahl, as

well as community concerns brought to Campbell’s attention regarding Dahl’s inappropriate behavior towards minors. Campbell made repeated efforts to bring the harassment and community concerns to Honor the Earth’s leadership, but the organization not only disregarded her, but also retaliated against her for bringing the issues to their attention. Campbell brought a complaint against Honor the Earth for sexual harassment and retaliation, and on every count the jury sided with Campbell, awarding a total of \$750,000 in damages.

Anderson v. Thrifty White Update:

Alliance Defending Freedom Joins Lawsuit on Behalf of Pharmacist



Andrea Anderson

In August of 2022, an Aitkin County jury found that a Minnesota pharmacy did not discriminate when they refused to fill an emergency contraception prescription for our client, Andrea Anderson.

In the months following this verdict, your gifts have made it possible for our legal team to work hard to appeal the decision to the Minnesota Court of Appeals to ensure Minnesota patients can safely access the health care they need.

And just a few weeks ago, the pharmacist who refused to fill the prescription added a new co-counsel to their case: the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF). ADF is also the legal team behind the lawsuit against the FDA’s approval of mifepristone and other anti-abortion and anti-LGBTQ+ cases.

Breaking Down Complex Issues

Gender Justice provides expert legal and policy analysis and breaks down complex issues for every audience. Our analysis comes from a deep understanding of how the law works, how it is enforced, and the impact it has on people’s real lives. Too often, the justice system is used as a tool for oppression. We have a deep understanding of the ways shifting norms around gender influence emerging law and policy, as well as a commitment to racial justice and undermining white supremacy, including pursuing intersectional legal and advocacy strategies.

Interested in learning more? Check out our briefings on topics like medication abortion, the Supreme Court, and discrimination against LGBTQ+ people on our YouTube channel, @Gender_Justice.



Gender Justice Expands Work in North Dakota

Gender Justice joined a lawsuit to block an extreme new abortion ban in North Dakota.

“Extreme anti-abortion politicians in the North Dakota Legislature want to totally ban abortion across the state at all costs and will throw out our own state’s constitution to do so,” said Christina Sambor, North Dakota State Director at Gender Justice.

In June, thanks to support from people like you, Gender Justice joined The Center for Reproductive Rights and Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP to file an amended complaint in *Red River Women’s Clinic v. Drew H. Wrigley* to keep abortion legal in North Dakota, arguing that new legislation passed in 2023 is unconstitutional.

Just six weeks prior to the new ban being signed into law, the North Dakota Supreme Court recognized

that the North Dakota State Constitution protects the right to obtain an abortion in life-saving and health-preserving cases.

But extremists in the North Dakota Legislature were undeterred, passing a new law that bans abortion care with narrow exceptions.

The new law’s exceptions for when healthcare practitioners can provide abortion care are not only exceedingly limited, but are vague and create legal uncertainty that have a chilling effect on health care access across the state.

We’re grateful for supporters like yourself who have made it possible for Gender Justice to join this important case to restore reproductive freedom for all North Dakotans.

“The clients we work with are brave, taking situations where they’re mistreated and might be powerless, and despite all the obstacles to being a plaintiff, how hard it is, how vulnerable you have to make yourself, they still do it.”

- LEGAL DIRECTOR JESS BRAVERMAN IN “BREAKING THE ICE,” A PROFILE BY MINNESOTA LAWYER

Scan here to view the full Minnesota Lawyer profile



Jess Braverman, Gender Justice Legal Director, was also recently recognized as a 2022 Minnesota Lynx Inspiring Woman and 2022 Minnesota Lawyer Diversity & Inclusion honoree

Recognition

MINNESOTA LAWYER ATTORNEYS OF THE YEAR

Gender Justice Attorneys Jess Braverman and Christy Hall were honored as 2022 attorneys of the year by *Minnesota Lawyer* magazine. They were recognized for their accomplishment in Gender Justice’s transformative victory for abortion rights in *Doe v. Minnesota*, alongside our co-counsel The Lawyering Project and plaintiffs Our Justice and First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis.

Thanks to the tremendous work of this team, a state district court ruled several Minnesota abortion restrictions unconstitutional and permanently blocked their enforcement just a couple weeks after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. This was the culmination of three and a half years of hard work by Gender Justice and our partners,



Jess Braverman and Christy Hall



Jess Braverman, Christy Hall, and Amanda Allan, receiving the Minnesota Lawyer Award for *Doe v. MN*

made possible by supporters like yourself, to successfully challenge laws designed to increase costs, shame patients, and intimidate providers. The court held that the Minnesota Constitution protects not just a fundamental right to choose abortion, but also a fundamental right to access abortion care.

Gender Justice was also recently honored with the following awards:

- 2023 TWIN CITIES PRIDE LGBTQ+ ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR
- 2023 MINNESOTA WOMEN LAWYERS COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD

Congratulations to Senior Staff Attorney Christy Hall for Ten Years at Gender Justice

Everyone who has the opportunity to work with Christy knows that she is, simply, a powerhouse. As any of Christy’s colleagues or clients would attest, no obstacle is too big for Christy to tackle. The mastermind behind many of Gender Justice’s transformational legal victories, Christy has ferociously represented clients in countless cases that most attorneys wouldn’t dare to touch—and in most cases she has won. She is most proud of her groundbreaking work on transgender rights under the Affordable Care Act and the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

Christy is known for her creative legal mind, exceptional tenacity, and bold approach. In just twelve years as a practicing attorney, she has had a measurable impact on our state’s civil rights laws, crafting and litigating multiple transformational, precedent-setting cases to advance gender equity. She has changed Minnesota law—and the lives of Minnesotans—for the better.

Christy was named a Power 30 employment lawyer by *Minnesota Lawyer* magazine in 2021 and 2022. Both years, she was the only nonprofit lawyer to make the list. She was also named a North Star Pro Bono Attorney by the Minnesota State Bar Association in 2021 and 2022.



Christy Hall,
Senior Staff Attorney

Congratulations to Erin Maye Quade on Her First Term as a Minnesota State Senator



Erin Maye Quade,
Special Projects Advisor

In 2023, Gender Justice Special Projects Advisor Erin Maye Quade served her first term as a Minnesota State Senator after her election in the fall of 2022. Erin is a creative, passionate, and tireless leader for reproductive freedom and gender equity. As one of the first Black women and the first Black lesbian elected to the state Senate, she has made history and led the way for increasing much-needed representation in our state legislature.

Previously, Erin led crucial work building coalitions and advocating at the Capitol in her role as Advocacy Director for Gender Justice. Since taking public office, her role has changed: her title is now Special Projects Advisor, and her portfolio has shifted to public education and relationship building with allied partners in other states.

Congratulations, Erin!

Stepping Up

to Meet the Moment

Our country is facing the most significant attacks on bodily autonomy, abortion access, and transgender rights—including the rights of transgender children—ever. Gender Justice’s expertise on reproductive freedom issues, trans and LGBTQ rights, and freedom from gender-based violence places us at the center of multiple issues in the national spotlight right now, and the scope of our work and requests for our expertise, leadership, and involvement are increasing exponentially.

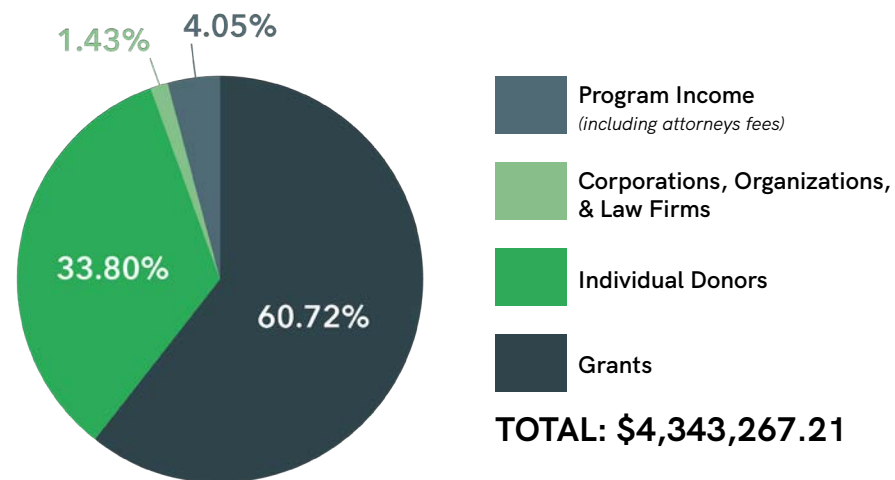
equity issues across the country, particularly in the Upper Midwest. We have been able to persevere and bravely take on new fights thanks to our diverse community of supporters and partners who have come with us every step of the way, including you.

In the past few years, Gender Justice’s budget and staffing have tripled, adding our first-ever Deputy Director, UnRestrict Minnesota Campaign Director, North Dakota Director, Political Director, organizing team, and critical operations staff in addition to doubling the size of our legal team.

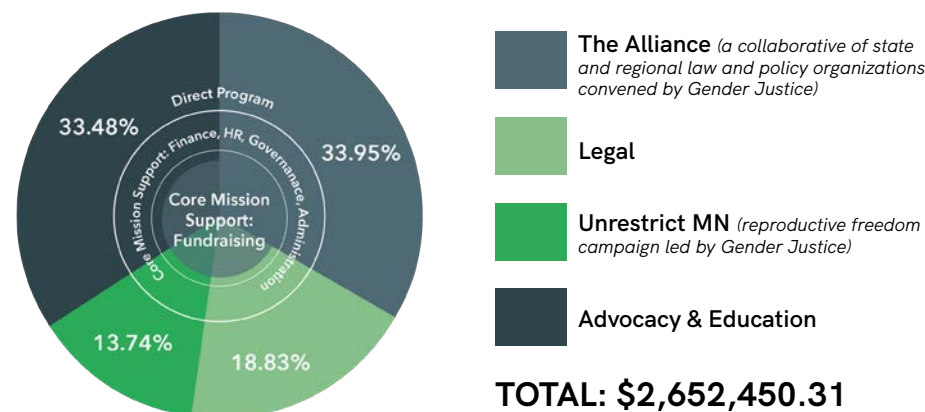
Increasingly, Gender Justice is being asked to provide expert commentary and legal analysis on gender

FY22 Gender Justice Revenue - 501(c)3

Revenue includes gifts that were pledged in FY22 for work in future years.



FY22 Gender Justice Expenses - 501(c)3



For more information about Gender Justice’s financials, we encourage you to visit our GuideStar profile at <https://www.guidestar.org/profile/80-0603630>.

Gender Justice Puts Transformational \$750,000 Gift to Use

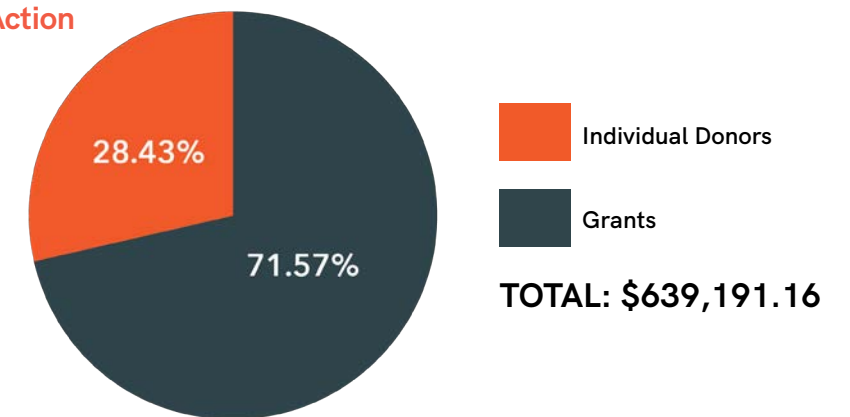
Gender Justice received a transformational gift of \$750,000 from an anonymous fund of the Minneapolis Foundation in November! This is the largest gift from an individual in Gender Justice’s history.

“With attacks on our fundamental rights seeming to increase by the day, this gift could not have come at a more important time. We are incredibly grateful for this donor’s generosity and vote of confidence in our track record and leadership,” said Gender Justice Executive Director Megan Peterson.

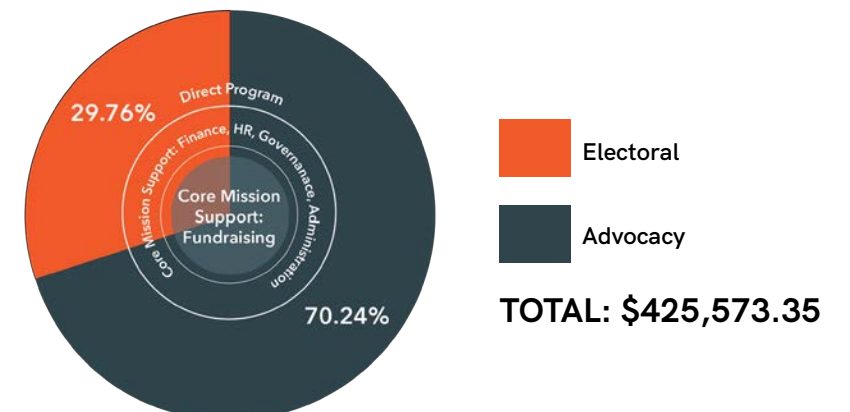
This transformative gift has helped Gender Justice take our fight for justice and equity to the next level. Building and sustaining a world free of gender barriers requires community organization, education, and changing the ways we talk and think about gender. With this donation, we are taking on new and bigger challenges as we work to build a world where everyone can thrive regardless of their gender, gender expression, or sexual orientation. Step by step, we’re creating that world by dismantling legal, structural, and cultural barriers that contribute to gender inequity.

FY23 Gender Justice Action Revenue - 501(c)4

Revenue includes gifts that were pledged in FY23 for work in future years.



FY23 Gender Justice Action Expenses - 501(c)4



How You Can Make the Biggest Possible Impact For Gender Equity

Even with Gender Justice's rapid growth and expanded funding, the scope of our work and requests for our expertise, leadership, and involvement have grown exponentially faster. Gender Justice's organizational model positions us as an innovator of local, state, and regional strategy and infrastructure; a coalition builder both within and between states and state-level organizations; and a leader in the post-*Dobbs* landscape.

By giving to Gender Justice, you'll contribute to winning historic victories on issues like abortion access and trans rights, setting groundbreaking legal precedents, and cultivating transformative movements. You can easily make a gift online at genderjustice.us/donate or by sending a check made out to Gender Justice to 663 University Avenue W, Suite 200, Saint Paul, MN 55104.

If you want to make the biggest possible impact for gender equity, check out these options!

Give Monthly

Joining Gender Justice's monthly giving program makes the biggest possible impact by helping to sustain our work for gender equity. Being able to rely on your monthly gifts allows Gender Justice to persevere and bravely take on new fights and big challenges. Giving monthly through your bank account is even better because it avoids credit card fees. On top of being the most effective way to give, giving monthly is also the simplest. Gender Justice processes your gift automatically each month, so you don't have to think about it. You can change or

cancel your monthly gift anytime through our self-service portal or by contacting us at development@genderjustice.us.

Sign Up
to Give
Monthly!



Leave A Gift In Your Will

You can leave a legacy that advances gender equity by including Gender Justice in your will. If you already have a will, you can add a charitable gift by reaching out to your attorney or financial planner and sharing this sentence: *"I bequeath \$_____ or _____% of my estate to Gender Justice, 663 University Avenue W, Suite 200, Saint Paul, MN 55104. The federal tax ID# for Gender Justice is 80-0603630."*

Ask Your Employer To Match Your Gift

Many people can double their impact for gender equity by asking their employer to match their gift to Gender Justice! You can get started doubling your gift by simply asking your employer if they have a matching program for charitable donations. They might ask you for the following information about Gender Justice: Gender Justice is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with the EIN (tax-id) number 80-0603630.

Give Stock To Gender Justice

You can make a big difference in the fight for gender equity with a gift of stock. Ask your financial planner or contact Gender Justice Development Director Michelle Hesterberg (michelle.hesterberg@genderjustice.us or 651-400-7563) for more information on giving stock to Gender Justice.

Make A Gift Through Your Donor Advised Fund

Giving through your donor advised fund is easy and impactful. You can find Gender Justice through our federal tax ID# 80-0603630.

Get Tax Benefits By Giving Through Your IRA

If you are managing required minimum distributions from an IRA, you can often receive tax benefits by making a charitable gift (called a Qualified Charitable Distribution) directly from your IRA. Reach out to your financial planner for more information, and let them know that Gender Justice is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with the EIN (tax-id) number 80-0603630.

Support Political Advocacy Through Gender Justice Action

Gender Justice Action is the political arm of Gender Justice and works to advance gender equity through meaningful political action. In 2022, donors to Gender Justice Action helped elect Minnesota's first ever pro-reproductive freedom state legislature. By

giving to Gender Justice Action, you can help elect gender equity champions and help pass proactive policies to protect LGBTQ+ rights and expand access to abortion and contraception. Gender Justice Action is a 501(c)4 political organization. Contributions may be used for political purposes and are not tax deductible. The federal tax ID# for Gender Justice Action is 87-3607605.

Give to Gender
Justice Action!



We'd love to hear from you!

Our staff welcomes the opportunity to speak with you and learn more about your planned or legacy giving goals. Please contact:

Michelle Hesterberg
Development Director
(651) 400-7563
michelle.hesterberg@genderjustice.us

You can also reach the Development Team at development@genderjustice.us.

Your generosity allows us to hold people and institutions accountable—and ensure human, civil, and constitutional rights for us all. Thank you!

Supporter Survey

Your input is important to us. Could you fill out a brief survey to help strengthen our work for gender equity?

genderjustice.us/survey



Fresh Faces

Welcoming New Staff

BRITTANY STEWART, Senior Staff Attorney

Brittany earned her JD at UC Law San Francisco, before returning home to Oklahoma City to begin her legal career. In 2010, she was the first out transgender Oklahoman to run for political office. Brittany helped advance equality for LGBTQ+ Oklahomans in legal cases ranging from free speech to employment discrimination. She was a key member of the legal team in *Tudor v. Southeastern Oklahoma State University*, the first sex discrimination case with a transgender plaintiff to be tried by a jury in federal court.

CAMERON KRUGER, Institutional Giving Manager

Cam has a long history in the nonprofit sector, most recently serving as President/CEO of the Duluth Children's Museum where he navigated the museum through an extensive capital campaign and established the museum's first permanent location in its 90-year history. He previously served as Chief Information Officer for the Duluth Area Family YMCA and was Board Chair of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits.

CHRISTINA SAMBOR, North Dakota State Director

Prior to joining Gender Justice, Christina owned and operated her own law firm, focusing on family law, employment law, civil rights, and legislative advocacy. Through her lobbying and work with nonprofits, Christina led efforts to strengthen laws that protect vulnerable North Dakotans, secured millions of dollars in funding to support direct service programs, and most recently led the fight against the wave of anti-trans legislation introduced in the 2023 North Dakota legislative session.

HEIDI NYBROTEN, Senior Manager of Operations

Heidi joined Gender Justice in December 2022 and, as Senior Manager of Operations, works to support the infrastructure of the organization. They bring operations, finance, and many years of legal assistant experience from nonprofits as well as public defense firms. Heidi studied Law, Diversity, and Justice as well as Spanish at Western Washington University.

JAY BELSITO, Organizer

Jay has been a community organizer for over a decade. They are a proud Northsider, youth mentor, educator, graduate student pursuing a Master of Clinical Social Work degree, and parent of two cute kids, one pup, and backyard chickens.

MONICA MEYER, Political Director

Monica has been leading organizing, activism, fundraising, and policy advocacy on behalf of issues of equity and justice since 1992. Monica's most recent job was working for LGBTQ+ liberation as the Executive Director of OutFront Minnesota. During Monica's twenty years at OutFront Minnesota, she helped secure some key victories advancing LGBTQ+ equity, including helping to form and lead Minnesotans United for All Families, the campaign to defeat a constitutional amendment prohibiting same-sex couples from the right to marry and secure marriage equality through the Minnesota Legislature.

PAOLA LÓPEZ-CORTÉS, Legal and Executive Assistant

Paola was born and raised in Mexico City until the age of ten when she and her family moved to Grand Rapids, MN. Paola has experience with Family and Criminal law and previously served as the Vice Chair for the Grand Rapids Human Rights Commission. In 2019, she was featured in the documentary "Colored Lines" where she shared her personal experience regarding racism and lack of diversity in northern Minnesota.

REIKA YOKOOKA LUCENTE, Development Coordinator

Reika brings years of experience in nonprofit database management, grassroots fundraising, and event planning. In her previous roles, she contributed her skills to advance housing equity, racial justice, and grassroots movements at Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative and Headwaters Foundation for Justice. As a first-generation immigrant, she calls both Minnesota and Saitama, Japan her home.

SARA JANE BALDWIN, Senior Staff Attorney

Sara Jane was previously an at-large board member of the Minnesota Association of Black Lawyers (MABL) and a member of the Sixth Judicial District's Equal Justice Committee (EJC). She is currently a member of the Minnesota Judges' Criminal Benchbook Committee and Co-Author of the Benchbook's chapter on Driving While Impaired. Prior to becoming an attorney, Sara Jane worked in the Broadway entertainment industry as a company and general manager where she managed national tours.

STACEY BURNS, Information Specialist

Stacey has been active in Minnesota's reproductive health, rights, and justice movements for many years. Prior to joining us as Information Specialist, she has held several roles with the organization, including as digital organizer and communications manager on the UnRestrict Minnesota campaign.



STAFF

MEGAN PETERSON, Executive Director (she/her/hers)
 TANA HARGEST, Deputy Director (she/her/hers)
 ERIN MAYE QUADE, Special Projects Advisor (she/her/hers)
 MONICA MEYER, Political Director (she/her/hers or they/them/theirs)
 JESS BRAVERMAN, Legal Director
 CHRISTY HALL, Senior Staff Attorney (she/her/hers)
 BRITTANY STEWART, Senior Staff Attorney (she/her/hers)
 SARA JANE BALDWIN, Senior Staff Attorney (she/her/hers)
 GRACE MOORE, Saeks Public Interest Legal Fellow (she/her/hers)
 PAOLA LÓPEZ-CORTÉS, Legal and Executive Assistant (she/her/hers)
 MICHELLE HESTERBERG, Development Director (she/her/hers)
 CAMERON KRUGER, Institutional Giving Manager (he/him/his)
 REIKA YOKOOKA LUCENTE, Development Coordinator (she/her/hers)
 ERIN HART, Communications Director (she/her/hers)
 STACEY BURNS, Information Specialist (she/her/hers)
 ABENA ABRAHAM, UnRestrict Minnesota Campaign Director (she/her/hers)
 GRACE REARDON, Advocacy and Engagement Coordinator (she/her/hers)
 HEIDI NYBROTEN, Senior Manager of Operations (they/them/theirs or she/her/hers)
 JAY BELSITO, Organizer (they/them/theirs)

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Special thanks to writers and designers Amy Shebeck and Colleen Russell for their work on this newsletter and annual report.

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GENDER JUSTICE

ADVANCING GENDER EQUITY THROUGH THE LAW

We've moved!

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THE GENDER JUSTICE BRIEF



The Gender Justice Brief podcast features the latest legal analysis, legislative developments, and more about the issues that matter most. During this critical time for gender equity and reproductive rights, the Gender Justice Brief has the insights and analysis you need.

Subscribe today on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or wherever you get your podcasts!



You can advance gender equity. Give today.

DONATE AT
genderjustice.us/donate/



Will you help fight for gender equity by making a gift to Gender Justice today?

Your donation will help us confront growing threats to gender equity and bodily autonomy, including attacks on abortion, contraception, trans students' rights, and gender-affirming care.

