

The logo for UnLocal, featuring the word "UnLocal" in a white, sans-serif font inside a yellow speech bubble shape. The background is a dark, high-angle photograph of a city at night, with several skyscrapers visible, including the Empire State Building on the right. The buildings are lit up, with many windows glowing, creating a grid-like pattern of light against the dark sky.

UnLocal

A Year of Resilience & Resolve

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

UnLocal is a community-centered nonprofit advancing immigrant justice through legal representation, education, and advocacy that build collective power and sustainable futures for New York's immigrants.

[READ MORE ABOUT UNLOCAL](#)



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A Year of Resilience & Resolve



As I reflect on 2025, I see a year that profoundly tested immigrant communities across New York City, and one that equally demonstrated extraordinary resilience. For many of UnLocal’s clients, the year was marked by uncertainty, anxiety, and repeated disruption. Shifting policies, procedural barriers, and increased enforcement created persistent instability. The attacks on immigrants were not isolated incidents; they were an ongoing, often weekly reality that shaped the lives of the communities we serve.

UnLocal did not retreat.

In a climate designed to discourage and exhaust, our staff remained steadfast, adaptive, and deeply committed. Our teams responded to constant change with determination and creativity, continuing to advocate for our clients while refusing to accept that fear and barriers should dictate outcomes. Throughout 2025, UnLocal’s legal programs supported thousands of individuals and families seeking safety, stability, and the ability to remain with their loved ones. Every case reflected not only legal complexity, but also remarkable human perseverance. Our legal teams continually adjusted strategies to provide effective representation, while our Education & Outreach program expanded Know Your Rights workshops to ensure community members had access to clear, empowering information.

At the same time, our Immigrant Wellness Team delivered essential, trauma-informed support to clients facing housing instability, financial stress, and the emotional toll of prolonged uncertainty. This holistic care remains central to our mission, recognizing that dignity and stability are inseparable from justice. Even amid significant challenges, our clients persisted, our staff stood firm, and UnLocal continued to meet the moment. Our commitment remains unwavering: we will continue to stand with immigrant New Yorkers, advocate fiercely, and refuse to back down.

Onward with strength and care,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tania Mattos".

Tania Mattos
Executive Director

Relentless legal defense for immigrant communities in New York City.

2025 Legal Team Highlights

960

immigrant
New Yorkers served

1,301

immigration cases
represented

In 2025, UnLocal's legal team stood alongside **960 immigrant New Yorkers** navigating an increasingly complex and hostile immigration system, representing them across **1,301 immigration cases** through a general practice docket and three specialized legal programs.

Our legal teams represented clients through complex removal proceedings, appeals, and applications for humanitarian relief, including asylum, protection under the Convention Against Torture, U visas for victims of crime, T visas for survivors of human trafficking, and Special Immigrant Juvenile Status for unaccompanied youth.



LEGAL PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Intake & Community Legal Access

UnLocal's intake team is an integral part of our Legal Services program, connecting community members to legal support through screenings, referrals, and legal clinics. In 2025, the team screened more than **1,000 individuals** seeking legal assistance.

Expanded screening capacity was made possible through:

- **Hiring an additional intake paralegal**
- **Collaboration with 7 volunteer attorneys** supporting intake
- **Monthly coordinated legal advice clinics** for community members
- **Expanded partnerships with local organizations** to strengthen referral pathways



UnLocal's Intake Team's Rapid Response. When a pro se client was detained, the intake team coordinated emergency housing for the client's children that same night through rapid collaboration with social service partners.

General Practice Highlights

After nearly a decade of legal advocacy, several long-pending asylum cases finally reached final hearings in 2025 — resulting in victories for multiple clients and families, including:

- **A Guinean family granted asylum** after an intake associate successfully advocated for their case to be heard when they arrived late to court.
- **An emotional asylum victory for a Honduran mother and daughter**, among UnLocal's earliest clients, who had waited more than a decade for their immigration hearing.
- **Asylum granted to a Nicaraguan client whose case was strongly contested by ICE attorneys in immigration court**, following persistent advocacy by UnLocal's legal team.
- **Asylum secured for a large family whose father had previously been deported**, allowing the family to remain together in the United States.

2025 Distribution of Cases

36.9%

General Practice
Representation

30.9%

Pro Se Plus Project

20.4%

Post-Order Defense

11.7%

Queer Immigrant
Justice Project

1000+

individuals seeking
legal assistance



Become a Legal Volunteer!

Support UnLocal's work by joining our legal volunteer team. Email us at getinvolved@unlocal.org

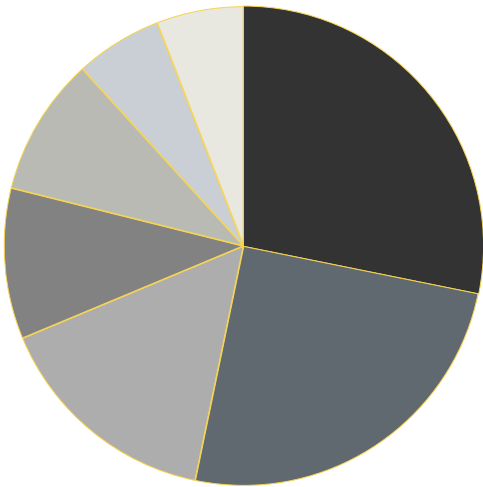


UnLocal Legal Staff

960

In 2025 UnLocal has provided legal support to 960 individuals, representing the diverse communities we serve.

TOP COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



Venezuela
23.5%

Honduras
20.9%

Mexico
12.9%

Colombia
8.5%

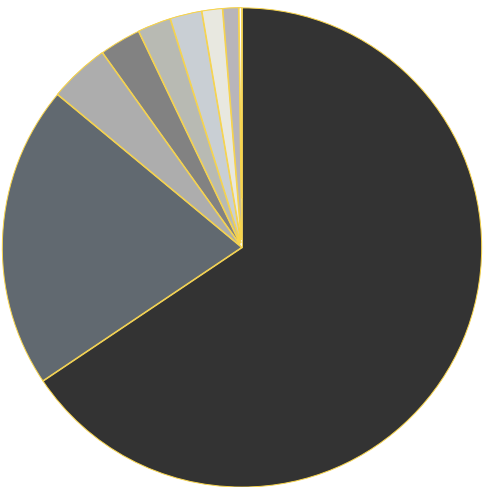
Guatemala
7.8%

El Salvador
4.9%

Jamaica
4.9%

The top countries of origin for many of our clients were Venezuela (24%) and Honduras (21%), followed by Mexico (13%). A smaller portion of our clients were from Colombia (9%), Guatemala (8%), El Savador (5%), and Jamaica (5%).

RACE AND ETHNICITY DISTRIBUTION



Latina/o/x
61%

Black
19%

Arab/MENA
3.8%

Asian/Pacific Islander
2.6%

Native/Indigenous
2.1%

Multiracial
2%

White
1.3%

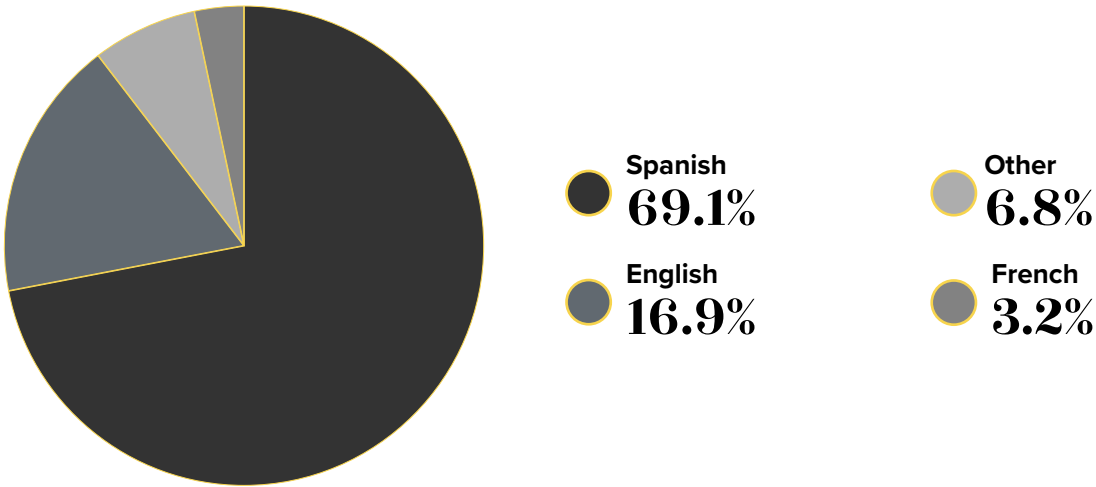
Other
1%

European
.2%

The majority of our clients identified as Latina/o/x (61%), followed by Black (19%). Other racial and ethnic groups each represented less than 8% of our total client base.

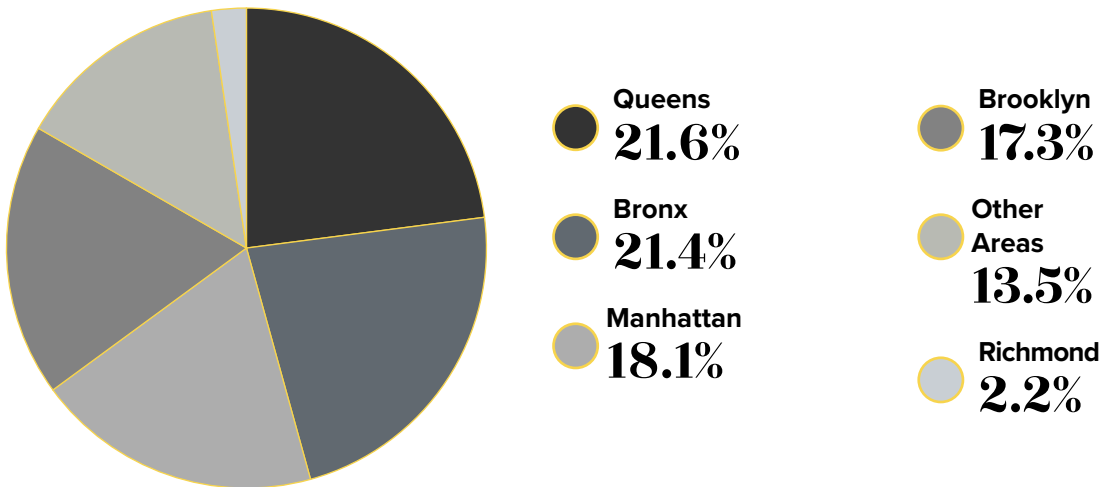
LEGAL PROGRAMS & SERVICES

LANGUAGE PREFERENCES



Spanish was the predominant language (69%), followed by English (17%) and French (3%). Other languages collectively represented 7% of our client base, including Wolof, Arabic, Russian, and Creole.

NYC METROPOLITAN AREA RESIDENCE



Our clients primarily resided in Queens (22%), the Bronx (21%), Manhattan (18%), and Brooklyn (18%). The remaining 21% were distributed across other areas including the Hudson Valley region and Long Island. Approximately –% of individuals were unhoused.

Fighting removal orders and protecting families from detention.

POST-ORDER DEFENSE (POD)

UnLocal’s Post-Order Defense team represents immigrants who have received removal orders and are at immediate risk of deportation. The team works to reopen cases, file appeals, and pursue emergency legal interventions that allow individuals and families to remain in the United States while their cases are reconsidered.

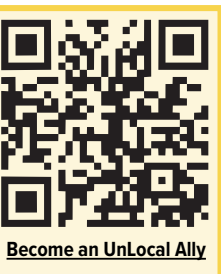
Client Advocates. Through complex legal filings—including **motions to reopen, notices of appeal, and appellate briefs**—the team challenges removal orders and advocates for clients during critical moments such as **ICE check-ins and enforcement actions**, when the risk of detention is highest.

Urgent Legal Interventions. Rising courthouse arrests and increased community enforcement shifted much of the team’s work toward **urgent legal interventions and emergency advocacy**. To respond effectively, the team continued collaborating with partners in the **Rapid Response Legal Collaborative**, including NYLAG and Make the Road New York, sharing information and coordinating legal strategies in response to evolving enforcement patterns.

Looking Ahead. We expect to expand **habeas corpus practice**, allowing detained individuals to challenge unlawful detention in federal court.



Family Detention Prevented. After a workplace accident left a father with a **triple amputation**, a family of four faced renewed deportation risk. UnLocal filed an **emergency motion to reopen** citing new country conditions and disability protections. Through persistent advocacy at ICE check-ins, the team **prevented the family’s detention** while their case continued.



Join our growing family!

Become an UnLocal Ally with a recurring monthly gift!

2025
POD Team
Impact

266 195
active cases closed

29 (15%)
cases resulted in
positive outcomes

2.6%
resulted in denials

59%
provided critical
legal guidance*

22.6%
resolved**

* Supporting informed decision-making and helping clients avoid notario fraud)

** Were resolved through referrals or case closure following determination of ineligibility or termination of immigration court case (EOIR proceedings).

Legal defense and community support for LGBTQIA+ immigrants seeking safety and dignity.

QUEER IMMIGRANT JUSTICE PROJECT (QIJP)

In 2025, the Queer Immigrant Justice Project handled **153 cases** for **96 LGBTQIA+ immigrants** seeking asylum and other forms of humanitarian relief.

Hightened Risks. LGBTQIA+ immigrants faced heightened risks throughout the immigration system, particularly in detention. Transgender detainees were unable to access hormone therapy, and many LGBTQIA+ detainees lacked access to essential medications such as HIV treatment and other critical healthcare. For clients who already experienced persecution because of their identity, the threat of detention and deportation compounded existing trauma and placed them at further risk.

Community-Centered Response. In response to compounded legal, health, and social challenges LGBTQIA+ immigrants faced in 2025, QIJP combined legal services with collaboration across UnLocal's social services and Education & Outreach teams to strengthen wellness, leadership, and community connection.

In 2025, initiatives included:

- Professional portraits with the **Ali Forney Center**, supporting confidence and professional development
- A photography workshop led by **Rey Resendez**, exploring identity and migration through visual storytelling
- **Pride Month outreach and tabling** at the Queens Pride Parade
- A leadership cohort supporting **pro se and asylum-seeking LGBTQIA+ clients** as peer guides for others navigating the system
- Stocking the UnLocal community closet with gender-affirming clothing and care kits

2025 QIJP Team Highlights

153 / 96
cases LGBTQIA+
immigrants

38.6%
of cases involved
LGBTQIA+ asylum seekers

10%
of UnLocal legal clients
identify as LGBTQIA+



UnLocal staff and volunteers tabling at Queens Pride

Fighting removal orders and protecting families from detention.

PRO SE PLUS PROJECT (PSPP)

Many immigrants in removal proceedings appear **pro se**, meaning they represent themselves in immigration court without an attorney. PSPP provides critical support to these individuals through **legal clinics, document preparation assistance, and workshops that help them understand court procedures and prepare filings.**

UnLocal is part of a seven-organization collaborative expanding pro se legal support across New York City to address the high and growing demand for representation, which far outpaces the number of immigration attorneys available. Partners include Central American Legal Assistance (CALA), Catholic Migration Services, New York Legal Aid Group (NYLAG), African Communities Together, MASA, and Venezuelan and Immigrants Aid (VIA).

Rapid Policy Shifts. In 2025, immigrant communities faced rapid policy shifts that made navigating the immigration system even more difficult, including:

- Termination of **TPS protections**
- **Courthouse arrests**
- New **asylum filing fees**
- **Pretermission policies** allowing cases to be dismissed without full hearings

Adapting Quickly. The PSPP team responded by helping community members adapt quickly to changing policies, understand new legal requirements, and meet critical filing deadlines including:

- Coordinating **two short-notice filing windows for Venezuelan TPS applications**
- Referring newly detained individuals for **habeas representation through rapid response networks**
- Raising funds to help clients cover **new mandatory immigration filing fees**

2025
PSPP Team
Impact

525
individuals
served

143
on-site legal
consultations

7
legal clinics
hosted



V for Victory Pizza!
A former PSPP client returned to the office with pizza after winning his asylum case as a **gay man from Indonesia** — a moment of celebration for both the client and the PSPP + Queer Immigrant Justice Project team who supported him along the way.

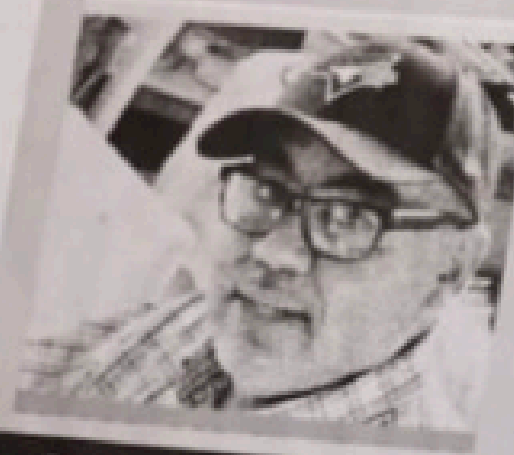


**DIGNITY
NOT
DETENTION**

**END IMMIGRATION DETENTION
IN NEW YORK**

ABDUCTED BY ICE

**DISAPPEARED
IN NEW YORK**



OMAR RAMOS JIMENEZ

HOW MANY MORE WILL IT TAKE?

#DignityNotDetention

ABDUCTED BY ICE.

**DISAPPEARED
IN NEW YORK**



DIGNITY FOR ALL

**NY
DIGNITY
NOT DETENTION**

10 / A YEAR OF RESILIENCE & RESOLVE

New York Dignity Not Detention Bill Rally, Albany, NY by Tania Mattos

Albany, New York

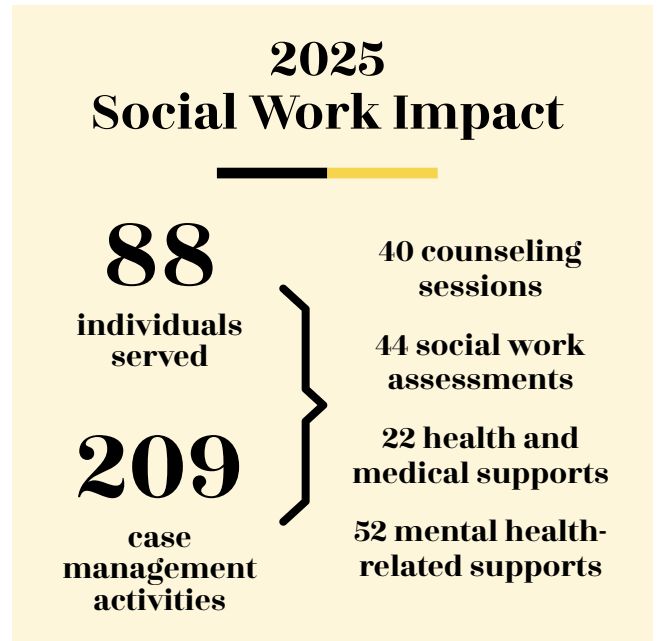
Trauma-informed support for immigrants facing uncertainty.

In 2025, UnLocal’s Immigrant Wellness Team (IWT) provided holistic, trauma-informed social services for immigrants facing the emotional and material toll of the immigration system. Working closely with UnLocal’s legal teams, the program offered counseling, crisis intervention, case management, and resource navigation to support clients experiencing housing instability, food insecurity, limited healthcare access, and prolonged legal uncertainty.

Addressing Urgent Needs. Many IWT clients experienced **layered trauma** resulting from displacement, detention, and the constant fear of deportation. Working closely with UnLocal’s legal teams — particularly the Post-Order Defense team supporting clients facing detention or removal — the IWT provided trauma-informed counseling, crisis support, and post-detention stabilization services to help individuals and families rebuild stability while navigating uncertain futures.

Key Partnerships. Partnerships with charitable organizations also enabled the team to **provide emergency financial assistance**, helping cover essential expenses such as housing, utilities, and other basic needs when other resources were unavailable.

Growing Demand. Demand for trauma-informed counseling and advocacy continued to exceed available capacity, reflecting both the growing need for support and the limited access immigrant communities often face when seeking mental health and social services while navigating the legal system. In response, the IWT **expanded its capacity in 2025** by welcoming a **dedicated full-time social worker** supporting the Post Order Defense team and a **full-time social work intern**.



These additions strengthened coordination between social services and legal teams while allowing the program to expand flexible, community-based support strategies for clients facing increased risks of detention and enforcement actions.



Support Group Launch. In 2025, the IWT launched its first support group initiative offering **facilitated support group series for queer empowerment, domestic violence survivors**, and the community at large through **trauma-informed yoga**. These programs created safe spaces for healing, connection, and resilience.

Equipping immigrant communities with knowledge, preparation, and collective resilience.

UnLocal’s Education & Outreach (E+O) Program provides critical legal education, community engagement, and resource navigation for immigrant communities across New York City. Through workshops, school partnerships, and community programming, the team helps immigrants understand their rights, prepare for interactions with enforcement authorities, and access resources that support safety and stability.

In 2025, the E+O team nearly doubled its staff in response to growing community demand for reliable legal information during a period of heightened uncertainty. Know Your Rights presentations quickly became the program’s most requested service, as immigrant families sought guidance on emergency preparedness

Community Education & Youth Engagement.

A central component of E+O’s work is supporting young immigrants and undocumented students as they pursue educational and career opportunities. Through the New York State DREAM Act Assistance Program, UnLocal provided outreach and direct support to students, families, and educators seeking information about eligibility for state financial aid programs including the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) and the Excelsior Scholarship.

The Dreamer Center. The Dreamer Center (including programming formerly known as Community & Connection Series) – provides

2025 Know Your Rights

35 } 1784+
educational } individuals
presentations } reached

immigration legal education
presentations and workshops

community-building, career and education guidance, resume support, and referrals to training and vocational opportunities for undocumented youth, immigrant community members, and LGBTQIA+ individuals.

Partnerships Across the City. In 2025, the Education & Outreach team worked with 50+ community partners, expanding UnLocal’s reach across neighborhoods and institutions. A notable collaboration was established with the New York City Department of Education’s Adult Education Program, connecting us with more immigrant New Yorkers seeking reliable information and support.

These partnerships helped ensure accurate legal information reached communities quickly during a year marked by rapid policy changes.



A SALUTE to Community Preparedness. During an open house, UnLocal’s Executive Director led a SALUTE safety training and whistle distribution for community members. Participants practiced how to safely observe and report ICE enforcement activity while protecting themselves and their neighbors.

The training resonated strongly with attendees — several participants later returned requesting whistles for family members, reflecting a growing commitment to community preparedness.

A Moment of Connection. The E+O team’s work often extends beyond formal programming. In one instance, a community member arrived seeking assistance and was quickly connected to UnLocal’s social services team. Staff helped him access clothing from the Community Closet, restore his phone service, and create a resume.

Within hours, he began receiving calls about job opportunities — a reminder that access to information, resources, and supportive community networks can quickly restore stability and opportunity.



Community Closet during UnLocal’s Resource Fair; E+O staff organizing clothing donations; Tania, E+O staff, and community partners

2025 E+O Program Highlights

50+

community partner
organizations engaged

16 community
events



462+

in-person participants
VOICES, Fall Fest,
Immigrant Wellness Fair,
and Nuestros Libros

29

Community & Connection
+NYS Dream Act Events



552

young adult immigrants
provided student support
resources, mentoring, and
skills development

EDUCATION & OUTREACH



UnLocal Legal and E+O staff showcasing Abolish ICE rally signs and unpacking winter coat drive donations for the Community Closet by Pamela Benitez



Tabling at a Queens Community Resource Fair



School Presentation KYR by Jorge Paz



Staff and participants at UnLocal's 2025 Resource Fair by Pamela Benitez



UnLocal KYR Workshop by Pamela Benitez



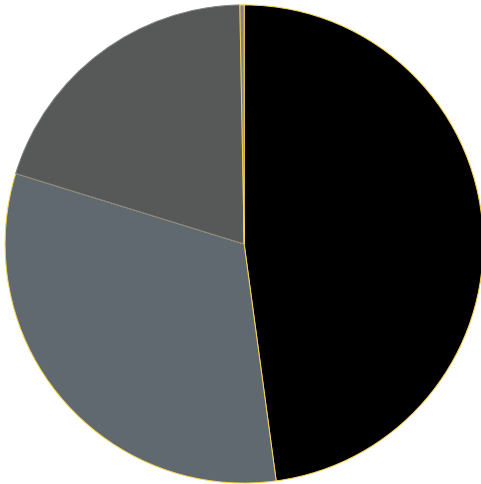
UnLocal Community Pantry with E+O and Operations staff by Pamela Benitez

FINANCIALS

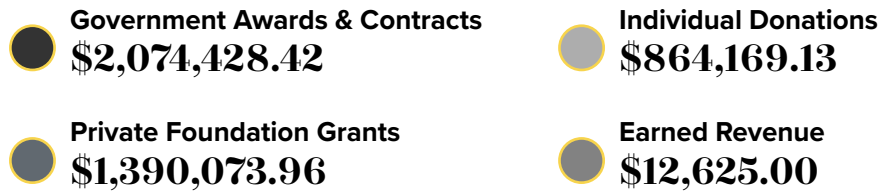
2025 INCOME AND EXPENDITURES

In 2025, UnLocal managed a total operating budget of \$3,597,313 and generated \$4,341,296 in revenue. These figures are based on internal financial records and may be subject to change upon finalization of our audited financial statements and IRS Form 990. Additionally, certain year end accounting estimates are still being finalized at the time of this reporting.

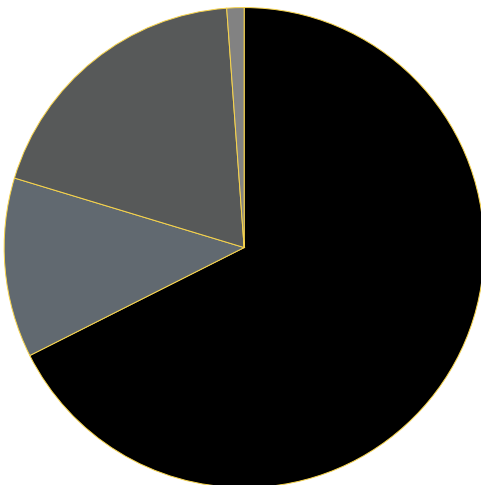
REVENUE SOURCES



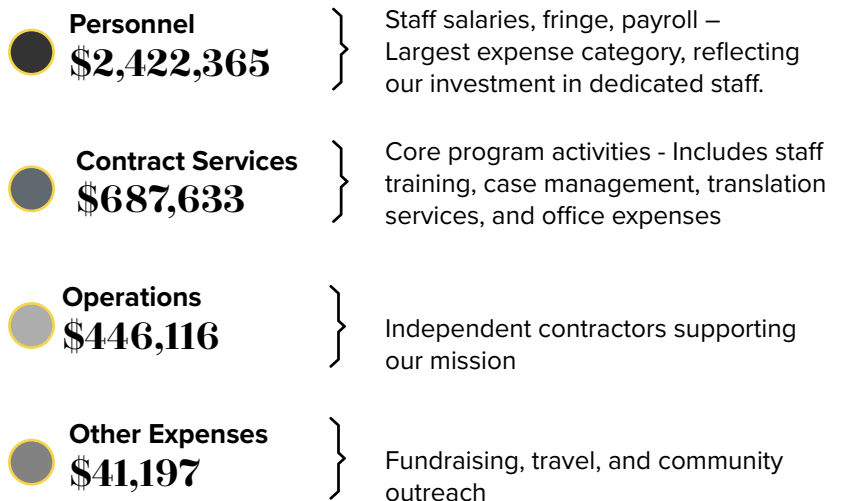
Total Revenue
\$4,341,296



OPERATING EXPENSES



Total Expenses
\$3,597,313



Community members and supporters played a vital role in advancing UnLocal's mission in 2025.

\$159,500+
fundraising for 2025

Through events and grassroots fundraising campaigns, individual supporters helped raise more than **\$159,500** to sustain legal representation, education, and advocacy for immigrant New Yorkers.

Building Community & Amplifying Impact

Our community came together throughout the year to celebrate immigrant stories and strengthen support for immigrant rights — from the Voices of Real New Yorkers (VOICES) event to the dedication of our NYC Marathon team.

Together, these efforts raised awareness, mobilized supporters, and generated critical funding that allows UnLocal to continue standing alongside immigrant communities.



Stay up to date!

Join UnLocal's newsletter!



COLLECTIVE IMPACT

VOICES OF REAL NEW YORKERS (VOICES)

UnLocal's 2nd annual Voices of Real New Yorkers event highlighted the diverse experiences and voices that shape New York City. In 2025, the event brought together community members, supporters, and immigrant artists to share stories through photography and visual storytelling.

A centerpiece of the event was a **photography exhibition featuring five immigrant artists.** Their work was developed through a four-week workshop organized by UnLocal's Education &

Outreach team and led by photographer **Rey Resendez.** Participants used photography to explore their identities and experiences living in New York City.

The exhibition culminated at the VOICES event, where artists saw their work displayed in a gallery space and celebrated alongside supporters and community members. Several participants also received inquiries for commissioned photography work following the exhibition.

TCS NEW YORK CITY MARATHON

Running for immigrant justice.

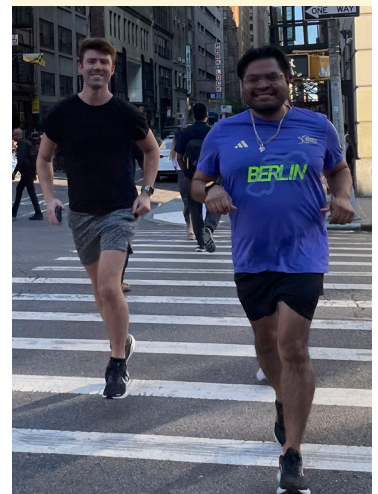
Each year, volunteers run the TCS New York City Marathon for UnLocal, raising vital support. In 2025, six runners funded legal services, education, and advocacy for immigrant New Yorkers.

Our Runners raised \$18,710!!

Each runner crossing the finish line in custom UnLocal jerseys was a powerful reminder of the community that stands behind our mission.



UnLocal
Voices
OF REAL NEW YORKERS



Laura Martinez "La Tesorito", Advocate of the Year Awardee Ligia Gualpa and Worker's Justice Project, Photographer Ray Resendez, DJ 8SNXX, Volunteer of the Year Awardee Mayra Fernandez, Taylor Gonzalez and Julian Hernandez (Havana Club), Davishmar

UnLocal Marathon team members Jake Newton and Adrian España

THANK YOU

2025 tested the strength and resolve of the immigrant communities.

WE ARE DEEPLY GRATEFUL TO EVERYONE WHO STOOD WITH US IN THIS WORK

To our donors and allies, thank you for your continued trust and partnership.

To our Board, staff, and volunteers, thank you for your tireless dedication to advancing, defending, and protecting the vision of a just and inclusive immigration system grounded in human dignity.

JUSTICE ALLY (\$50,000+)

Ford Foundation
Hispanic Federation
Immigrant Justice Corps
J.M. Kaplan Fund
Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs
The New York City Council
New York Community Trust
New York State Interest on Lawyer Account Fund
The New York State Office of New Americans
Pinkerton Foundation
Public Welfare Foundation
The Research Foundation of the City University of New York
Robin Hood Foundation

IMPACT ALLY (\$25,000-\$49,999)

Brian A. McCarthy Foundation
The Calamus Foundation
Joyce & Irving Goldman Family Foundation
New York City Department of Cultural Affairs

UNITY ALLY (\$5,000-\$24,000)

Appleman Foundation
Havens Relief Fund
Lower Manhattan Cultural Council

HOPE ALLY (\$1,000-\$4,999)

The New York Bar Foundation

SUPPORTING ALLY (\$500-\$999)

Havana Club
Understudy

*Small acts
big impact.*

INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY ALLIES
Thank you for believing in us!

UnLocal advances immigrant justice in New York through legal services, education, and advocacy.

OUR MISSION

UnLocal aims to address the fundamental injustices and structural inequities that disproportionately impact immigrant communities. We are a community-centered non-profit organization that provides direct immigration legal representation, community education, outreach, and advocacy for New York's immigrants. UnLocal is dedicated to creating sustainable structures that build collective power and allow us to flourish.

Our team. A dedicated group of attorneys and advocates supports individuals at every stage of the immigration process, from initial legal guidance to complex litigation, ensuring that those navigating the system have access to trusted, high-quality representation.

Our partners. In response to the ongoing humanitarian crisis, UnLocal works alongside partners to support immigrants in New York City through legal services, educational workshops, and attorney-led clinics. At a time when access to full legal representation remains limited, this support is critical.

Our work. UnLocal centers on families, youth, communities of color, and LGBTQ+ individuals, providing counsel, pro se support, and full representation across immigration and intersecting legal matters.

Learn more at [UnLocal.org](https://unlocal.org)

What We Do

Legal Services

Direct representation and legal support for immigrant communities

- Advice and Counsel
- Asylum Defense
- Post Deportation Order Defense
- Temporary Protected Status (TPS)
- T Visas & U Visas
- DACA Renewal
- Advance Parole

Program Initiatives

Targeted programs expanding access to legal services and humanitarian support

- Pro Se Plus Project (PSPP)
- Queer Immigrant Justice Project (QIJP)
- Rapid Response Legal Collaborative
- Immigrant Wellness Team (social services case management + resource navigation & referrals)

Education & Outreach

Empowering communities with knowledge, tools, and resources

- Know Your Rights workshops and legal education
- School and community-based outreach
- Free Community Closet and resource distribution
- Workforce development

BECOME AN UNLOCAL ALLY

**Join our growing community
of UnLocal Allies by making
a recurring monthly gift.**



**Become an UnLocal Ally and help protect the
rights, dignity, and future of immigrant communities.**



Your sustained support will make a direct impact:

- **\$500** helps one person renew their DACA status
- **\$250** supports the cost of an asylum application
- **\$100** funds a free legal consultation
- **\$50** provides language interpretation services
- **\$25** helps supply essential care packages for clients facing housing insecurity
- **\$10** supports transportation so clients can access our services

Together, we are building a stronger and more welcoming New York.



CREDITS

Front cover photo by [Zeeshaan Shabbir](#)

Inside front cover photo by [Miguel Rivera](#)

Page 2 photo by [Alexaza Bache](#)

Page 6 photo by [Cottonbro Studio](#)

Page 10 photo by Tania Mattos

Page 14 photos by Pamela Benitez and Jorge Paz

Inside back cover photo by [Adi_Du](#)

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