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UMOS & LOTUS LEGAL CLINIC RECEIVE \$800,000 FEDERAL GRANT

The 36-month grant from the Legal Assistant for Victims program administered by the Office on Violence Against Women begins in January 2019.

UMOS and LOTUS Legal Clinic have received an \$800,000 grant to provide enhanced legal services for victims of sexual assault and trafficking in the Eastern District of Wisconsin. This new award, underway in December 2018, will provide civil legal assistance to victims.

Wisconsin consistently ranks among the top ten states in the nation concerning human trafficking. Victims of both sex and labor trafficking experience high rates of sexual assault due to their vulnerability, and these individuals suffer extreme secondary trauma from within the legal system; victims frequently report this secondary trauma is as harmful to them as their incidents of assault have been.

Funding from this award will allow the partners to:

- increase victims' awareness of and access to comprehensive legal services;
- increase protection of victims' rights through representation;
- provide trauma-informed, victim-centered, culturally relevant advocacy and services to victims;
- enhance collaboration and cooperation among service providers, law enforcement, and prosecutors;
- increase victims' access to legal and advocacy supports;
- create brochures, pamphlets, and legal and advocacy resource guides for project partners; and

LOTUS Legal Clinic

General Inquiries? contact Yolanda Toral Zeider, Executive Assistant
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- develop trainings and best practices for legal services to victims in sexual assault cases involving trafficked persons.

Working in partnership with Milwaukee Police Department Sensitive Crimes Division, Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office, Appleton Police Department, Outagamie County District Attorney's Office, Racine Police Department, and Racine County District Attorney's Office, UMOS will help identify and provide support and advocacy services to victims and LOTUS will provide highly specialized legal services for these individuals.

"Victims of human trafficking should be provided with the highest levels of supportive and legal services to transition from victims to survivors," states Lupe Martinez, President and Chief Executive Officer, UMOS. *"We are excited about the opportunity to provide both through our partnership with LOTUS Legal Clinic."*

Said Kent Lovern, Chief Deputy District Attorney for Milwaukee County, *"This collaboration between UMOS, LOTUS and public safety professionals in Eastern Wisconsin will provide critical legal and advocacy services to some of the most vulnerable people in our midst. Our partnership through this grant will bring necessary resources to victims of sexual assault and trafficking and make our communities safer."*

The Legal Assistance for Victims Grant (LAV) Program is authorized by 34 U.S.C. § 20121. The program is designed to increase the availability of civil and criminal legal assistance programs for adult and youth victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking who are seeking relief in legal matters relating to or arising out of that abuse or violence, at minimal or no cost to the victims. Eligible applicants are private nonprofit entities, Indian tribal governments and tribal organizations, and publicly funded organizations not acting in a governmental capacity, such as law schools. OVW funds projects that provide legal services for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking through direct representation and/or cooperation between victim service providers and legal assistance providers.

For more information, or to refer a potential client for these services, please contact: Mariana Rodriguez at UMOS, mariana.rodriguez@umos.org at 414-389-6500; or Rachel Monaco Wilcox at LOTUS, Rachel@LotusLegalClinic.org, or call 414-885-1469.

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