

Part 2: Addressing Tax Issues in Family Law Cases with Survivors *Building Multilevel Strategies for Change*

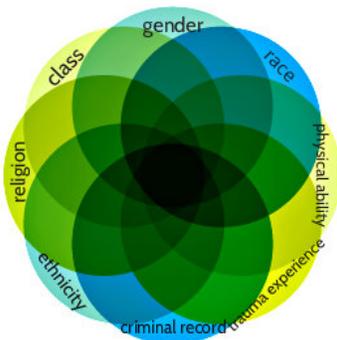
Wednesday, October 17th, 2018
2:00 – 3:30pm ET



CENTER FOR SURVIVOR AGENCY & JUSTICE

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CSAJ's Mission & Vision



■ **Mission:**

The Center for Survivor Agency and Justice promotes advocacy approaches that remove systemic barriers, enhance organizational responses, and improve professional practices to meet the self-defined needs of domestic and sexual violence survivors.

■ **Vision:**

The Center for Survivor Agency and Justice envisions a world where all people have equal access to physical safety, economic security, and human dignity.



Faculty Today

Rebecca Thompson, Project Director, Taxpayer Opportunity Network, Prosperity Now

Andrea Miller, Director of Economic Empowerment Programs, Kentucky Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Laura Russell, Citywide Director, DV/Family Law Unity, The Legal Aid Society

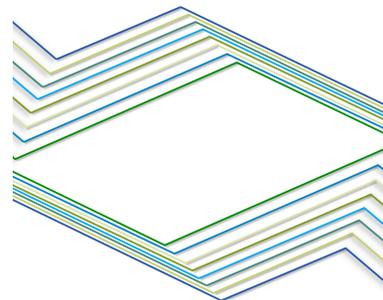
Jamie Andree, Indiana Legal Services, Inc., Low Income Taxpayers Clinic

Katie VonDeLinde, CSAJ Expert Advisor & Adjunct Faculty, Washington University Brown School of Social Work

Hosted By: Erika Sussman, Lisalyn Jacobs & Sara Wee, Center for Survivor Agency & Justice

To develop multilevel strategies for change, we'll:

- 1) Taxpayer Opportunity Network & Kentucky Coalition Against Domestic Violence (Tax Prep)
- 2) Breakout Groups (3)
- 3) Group Debrief





Taxpayer Opportunity Network

A project of Prosperity Now



Tax Issues in Family Law Cases With Survivors

Our members are here to help
October 17, 2018

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NOW | TAXPAYER OPPORTUNITY NETWORK

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Rebecca Thompson

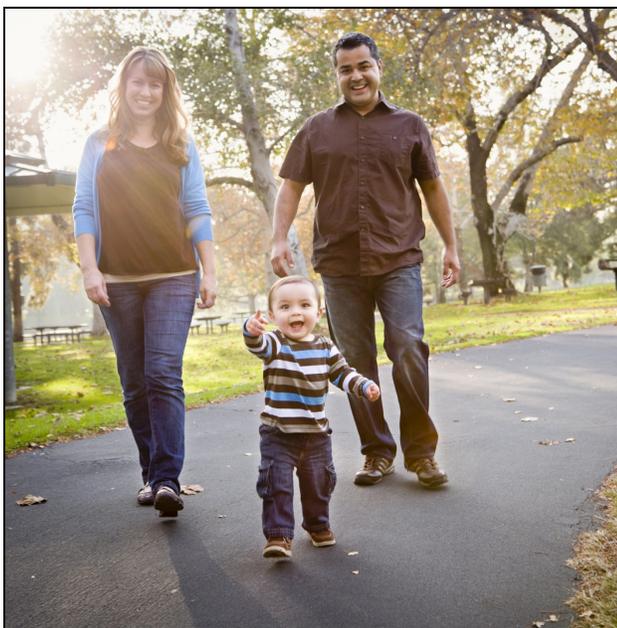
Project Director, Taxpayer Opportunity Network

rethompson@prosperitynow.org



TAXPAYER OPPORTUNITY NETWORK

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Who We Are

Prosperity Now's mission is to ensure everyone in our country has a clear path to financial stability, wealth and prosperity.



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We envision...

Millions of empowered low-to- moderate income taxpayers leverage the benefits derived from the tax code to increase their financial security

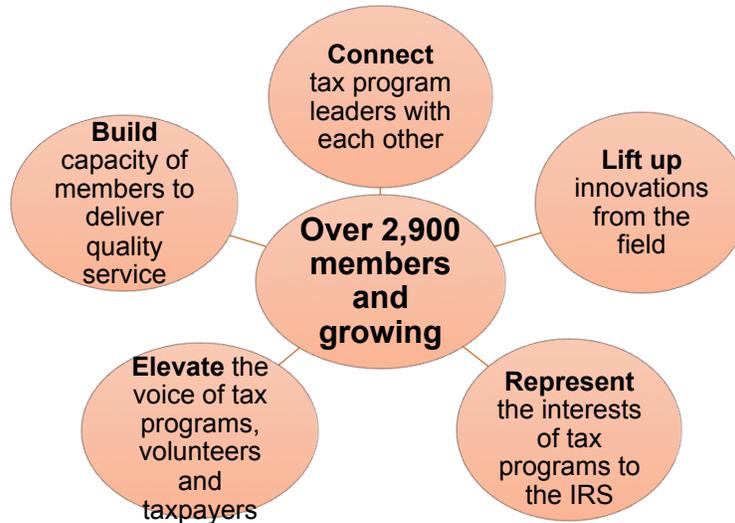
Our Mission...

To **connect, strengthen and inspire** community tax programs so that they can

...

- ✓ More effectively & efficiently **deliver critical tax assistance**
- ✓ Couple that assistance with other **financial capability services**
- ✓ **Advocate for fairer tax policy**

Our work...



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Our Members...

- Participate in learning and advocacy opportunities
- Learn about the latest developments in the field
- Access valuable resources for volunteers, program managers and site coordinators
- Get discounts to Taxpayer Opportunity Network convenings

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Our Leaders...

- Network Steering Committee
- Working Groups:
 - 27 Million (Creative Service Delivery)
 - Data Collection
 - Quality Assurance
 - Tax Time Financial Capability
 - Volunteer Management

Addressing Systemic Issues

- Federal:
 - Safety Net
 - VITA
 - Paid Preparer Minimum Competency Standards
 - EITC/ Rainy Day
 - Credit Access Inclusion
- State & Local Policy
- Join our Campaigns – sign up to receive alerts
- Advocacy at your fingertips

Opportunities to Engage

- Spread the Word
 - Grassroots Marketing
 - Tax Time Allies
- Transform
 - On-site tax prep for clients → all season, ad-hoc
- Help Wanted
 - Volunteers Needed
 - Volunteer Client Intake

Know before you Go

- Documents Required
- Filing Season doesn't end in April
- Messy is okay
 - Prior year
 - Amended returns
- The early bird gets the worm



Thank You!

 **TAXPAYER OPPORTUNITY NETWORK**

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Questions

- What are ways local programs can connect with tax preparation services?
- What are some examples of innovative partnership you see through the Taxpayer Opportunity Network community? (low, medium, high touch)
- What do domestic/sexual violence programs need to know about partnering with VITA sites?
- Are there important tax-related policies we should be looking at? How might they affect advocacy options?
 - I'm thinking about links to safety net programs, considerations for paid tax prep, connections between taxes and racial wealth gap...





Kentucky Coalition Against
Domestic Violence

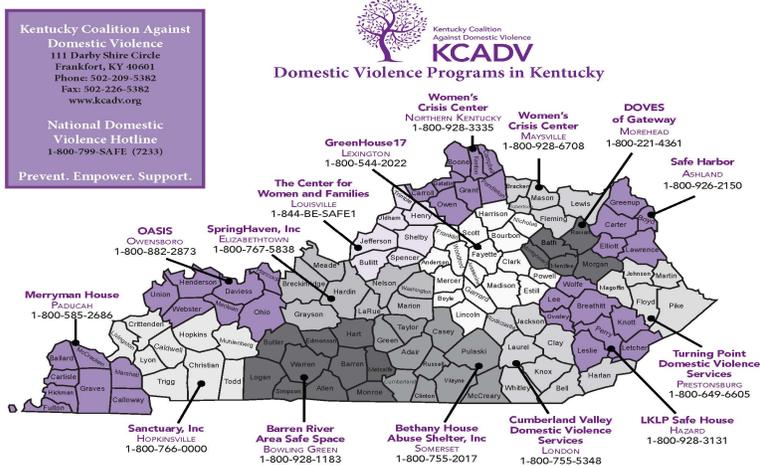
Free Tax Prep & Partnerships Across the State



**THE MISSION OF THE
KENTUCKY COALITION
AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
IS TO MOBILIZE AND SUPPORT
MEMBER PROGRAMS AND
ALLIES TO END INTIMATE
PARTNER VIOLENCE**



OUR STRUCTURE



KCADV STATS

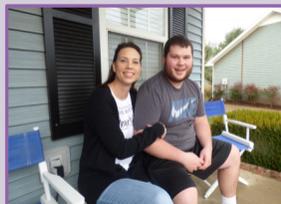
In FY2017, KCADV programs provided 4,803 survivors and their children with emergency shelter and transitional housing.

Programs provided nonresidential services to 21,856 survivors and their children.



WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

- Economic Indicators #1 reason victims stay
- Started **economic empowerment work** in 2004 – focus on **building assets** for low income individuals
- Most survivors lack access to mainstream financial products (credit, bank accounts, etc.,) and fall prey to predatory products (pay day loans, title loans, etc.)
- Our economic empowerment project **goal**: Bring survivors from short term safety to **long term security** by encouraging asset building



KCADV ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

- IDA Classic
- Free Tax Prep
- Car IDA
- Housing
- Microloans
- Purple Purse Emergency Fund
- Emergency Savings IDA

KCADV CHALLENGES

- Balancing our short term safety mission with our long term financial empowerment goals
- Coordinating Direct Service
- Serving Non DV
- Turnover
- Training
- Finding enough hours in the day
- Staying funded!

CONTACT INFORMATION

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KCADV, Director of Economic Empowerment programs
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Questions

- How did KCADV identify tax preparation as a need across the state?
- What does the work look like?
- What are critical partnerships for your tax prep work? How did you develop them? Any lessons learned?
 - VITA and LITCs
 - Coalition and member program
 - Coalition and Prosperity Now (and other advocacy orgs?)
 - How do they inform your work? (for our audience: how can local programs inform coalition efforts here)
- How does the VITA Project fit within the coalition's broader Economic Empowerment Program?
- How does this work inform your policy or legislative agenda/advocacy?



Q&A

Developing Multilevel Strategies for Change

Breakout Groups

- **In-Depth Q&A with Faculty**

- **Multilevel Strategies for Change**

- **Needs Assessment:** Deepen understanding about debt-related barriers facing survivors in your community context in order to fuel multilevel advocacy.
- **Partner Mapping:** Explore, identify, and understand who your current partners are and develop strategies to build partnerships to address debt-related issues facing survivors.
- **Strategic Action Planning:** 1) review past and draft new "action plans" to address systemic debt-related barriers facing survivors; 2) We'll also provide a tool to help participants examine current policies to better inform your advocacy and partnerships.



Process

■ Orientation & Introductions:

- Introductions
- Poll question, while everyone gets settled

■ Open Discussion:

- Questions for faculty? (tax/family law issues, partnerships, systems change)
- What have you or your organization done really well to identify or address survivors' tax and family law issues? What challenges do you face?
- Who do you currently partner with to address tax issues facing survivors? What other people, resources, or organization would be helpful?
- What are common systemic barriers you see survivors face related to TAX? What's needed to address these barriers?

■ Summarize Action Plan:

- Takeaways?
- Action steps?



Tech Check

Make sure you're dialed in and entered audio pin

Needs Assessment Room

- Self-Reflection
 - What is my organization's process for identifying and addressing survivors tax needs?
 - How often do I see tax issues show up with survivors I work with? What do they look like?

- Discussion Questions
 - First, what do survivors you work with say they need related to Tax?
 - What challenges do you face in identifying and understanding tax issues in family law?
 - What have you or your organization done really well to identify or address survivors' tax and family law issues?
 - What would you like to have happen when a survivor has a tax-related issues? What currently happens?
 - What partnerships would be helpful?
 - What policies would be helpful?
 - Any case scenarios to explore?

- Doing the Work
 - What has been really helpful for you, as a lawyer,/advocate/other in identifying and addressing survivors tax issues in family law? (ah-ha moments? Successes? Lessons learned?)
 - Within your organization what has been most important to you in understanding and addressing tax in family law for survivors?
 - How do you work with tax attorneys within your organization? If there are none, where could you build relationships?



Partnership Building

- Self-Reflection:
 - How would you describe the partnerships you have to address survivors' tax needs?

- Discussion Questions:
 - Who do you partner with to address tax issues facing survivors? How would you characterize the partnership?
 - In what ways do you currently engage or work with them?
 - What has worked well in the past? What hasn't?
 - What other partners feel important to engage in addressing survivors tax issues?
 - How could you go about enlisting them?

- Doing the Work:
 - What can you learn from the tax advocacy field? What's their perspective?
 - What's a common goal you think you could develop work upon?
 - What lessons have you learned form other partnerships you have? How might they apply to developing new or enhancing current partnerships with tax advocates?



Strategic Action Planning

- Self Reflection: To what extent do you or your organization do the following to address tax-related issues?
 - Regularly identify and shares needs (e.g. emerging issues)
 - Data collection, analysis, research, or evaluation
 - Coalition building, outreach, and community engagement
 - Participate in policy or legislative advocacy
 - Participate in task forces, community organizing, or other efforts for systems change
 - Policy analysis
 - Regularly develop strategies / strategic planning for systems/policy change
 - Utilize messaging & communications

- Discussion Questions:
 - What are common systemic barriers you see survivors face related to TAX in your community?
 - What's needed to address or fix this [pick example]?
 - What other tax-related systems or policy changes feel like ripe opportunities?
 - What partners do we need to enlist in this work?
 - What other resources do we need?

- Doing the Work:
 - What tax-related systems or policy changes (discussed or other) feel like ripe opportunities?
 - What efforts would you like to see happen?



Group Debrief

Share-Back

What were key takeaways from your breakout? (and key examples or stories to share back)

What are some next steps for the group?

What do folks need to accomplish this?

Questions for other breakouts/the larger group?



Worksheets: Needs Assessment

CENTER for SURVIVOR AGENCY & JUSTICE Consumer Right Training Toolkit Needs Assessment Worksheet

Articulating the problem/need.

The issue of focus is: Coerced Debt

*Think you may not need to go through the "should be" chart below. Thinking about survivor holistic needs, in order to identify an issue of focus.

Think about WHAT SHOULD BE:	Information you have who you got this information (consider survivor needs, experiences, what has worked well, what has not, etc.)	Where or from who you got this information	Information you need to further analyze the issue	How will you get the information you need
What do survivors say they need to address DEBT?	1.	2.	3.	4.

Based on the above, write an aspirational statement about what should be when a survivor faces DEBT.

Now, think about the CURRENT RESPONSE.

What's the current response to issue X?	What's the general process by which advocates or others within your agency respond to DEBT?	In what ways do partners or other organizations work to address DEBT?	How do you see systems respond to DEBT (e.g. justice systems, government agencies)?	Are there key local, state, federal policies that come into play for DEBT?
6.	7.	8.	9.	

*If it's difficult to answer for any one level or you're not sure, where can you go for more information? What questions do you need to ask?

- What do you know?
- What should be (the ideal)?
- What's currently happening?
- What are gaps?
- Opportunity Mapping! (goals) What could be happening from individual to org to policy level?

Worksheets: Partnership Building

CENTER FOR SURVIVOR AGENCY & JUSTICE Partnership Building Mapping Worksheet

Brainstorming Partners & Allies: Primer

Below are a few stakeholder groups to help you brainstorm a list of current and potential partners to engage in the systems advocacy efforts you have identified.

Stakeholder Unique Perspective & Brainstorm List

Group: Survivors
WHO MIGHT THEY BE? Think about various identity groups, communities, and in which programs/services you interact with survivors.
WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT? Only survivors can explain the rich complexities of their life realities and experiences of violence, as well with navigating various services and safety systems.
Brainstorm List (be specific): What do you value or believe about them? What do you think they value or believe about you? What perspective do they bring / what do they offer?

Group: Advocates, attorneys, and other practitioners
WHO MIGHT THEY BE? Advocates, attorneys, social workers, community therapists, educators, peer-education, community engagement, or those who work directly with survivors or their communities, think about those from within your organization, in other organizations, and across movements, e.g. immigrant rights, racial justice.
WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT? Stakeholders who work tangibly and directly with survivors are critical for identifying trends, or common issues they see and hear from multiple survivors. They also have an understanding of what works and what doesn't in terms of remedying particular problems.
Brainstorm List (be specific): What do you value or believe about them? What do you think they value or believe about you? What perspective do they bring / what do they offer?

Group: Program directors /executives
WHO MIGHT THEY BE? Program managers/directors, legal directors, executive directors, or other executive roles. Think about both within your organization, in other organizations, and across movements, e.g. immigrant rights, racial justice.
WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT? These stakeholders often bring expertise in how systems, programs, policies, and laws function and impact your organization. They also have decision-making power within their organizations and influencing power across.
Brainstorm List (be specific): What do you value or believe about them? What do you think they value or believe about you? What perspective do they bring / what do they offer?

Group: Community members
WHO MIGHT THEY BE? Important or long-standing community members, civic leaders, religious/spiritual leaders, volunteers, etc.
WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT? Community stakeholders bring diverse perspectives on how an issue may be experienced (the same or differently) by different groups. They understand where resources and community assets lie and can be important champions in getting the community engaged in efforts.
Brainstorm List (be specific): What do you value or believe about them? What do you think they value or believe about you? What perspective do they bring / what do they offer?

- Who are your partners?
- What's their perspective on the issue?
- How do you work with them to address the issue? How would you like to?
- Partner Mapping! (strategies) What's work and what can be done to enlist partners?



Worksheets: Strategic Planning/ Systems Thinking

CENTER FOR SURVIVOR AGENCY & JUSTICE Consumer Right Training Toolkit Strategic Action Planning Worksheet

Action & Evaluation Planner

Use this chart as a tool to turn goals into action or to reflect on past work as you continue planning ahead. It can be used for long or short-term planning. The prompts are meant to help your brainstorming. Note: You do not have to fill in left to right... for example, you may have a clear sense of a strategy for one objective and a measure of success for another. From there, you can then ensure activities match your intended goals.

DV Consumer Law Working Group
Goal: reduce number of judgments/awards against survivors for months after lease improperly terminated.
Method: amend NY's early lease termination law for domestic violence survivors

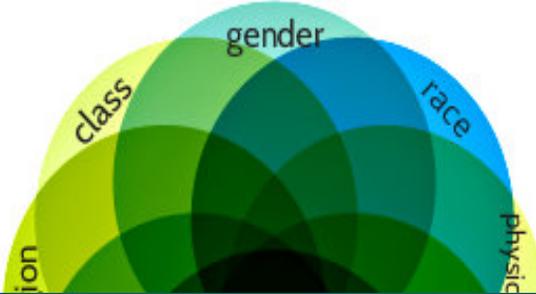
Objectives	Measures of Success	Tasks/ Activities	Strategies	Timeline	Resources	Lead Person
Identify what are the specific measurable action objectives, then steps that will contribute to reaching the goal. Note: they will be behavioral (how things will be done) not just what you will do.	How many times will the impact on survivors have been reduced as a measure of success when on average 10% of the community members and their families have been impacted and/or terminated leases?	Research how do other states structure their laws. How does NY structure current provisions for other jurisdictions?	How do other states structure their laws. How does NY structure current provisions for other jurisdictions?	When?	Who?	When and what will they contribute?

- What is our policy landscape? How does that impact advocacy?
- What are our goals to address the issue?
- What are steps to get there?
- Who's needed? What's needed? By when is it needed?
- If we do these things can we expect to achieve our ultimate goal? How will we know (measurable indicators)?



Next Steps? Final Questions?

What will you do? What do you need?



THANK YOU!

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Spotlights on Innovative Consumer Justice Initiatives

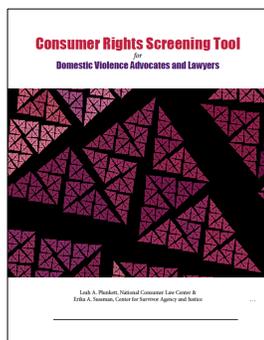


- **Purpose:** Spotlights are a Peer Exchange opportunity to share best-practices in consumer and economic advocacy with the field.
- Interested? **Complete this form** <https://goo.gl/forms/jDpmAIQKDZqpoG3t2>
 - We'll follow-up!



Full Assessment & Strategic Partnership

Assessment Tools



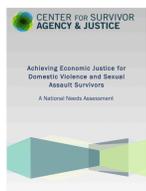
[Download](#)

Advocacy Tools

- [Training](#)
- [Resources](#)
 - Federal Taxes
 - Coerced Debt
 - Eviction & Foreclosure
 - Credit Reporting & Repair
 - Banking & financial services
 - Consumer and Criminal Record Barriers
 - Employment & Housing Access
 - ...and more



Resources



[CSAJ's National Needs Assessment Report](#)



[Economic Ripple Effect of DV: Building Partnerships for Economic Change](#)
DV Report Article



[CSAJ's Pilot Site Report](#)



[CSAJ's Assessment Tool for Attorneys & Advocates](#)

- [CSAJ's Resource Library](#)
- Past [webinars](#) on consumer issues



CSAJ's Guidebook

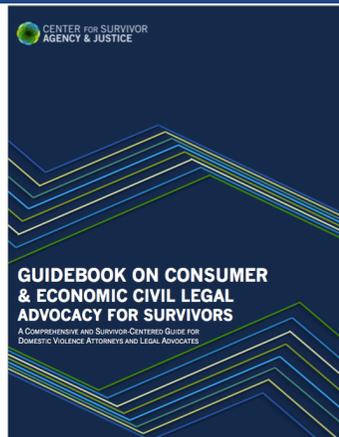
Guidebook on Consumer & Economic Civil Legal Advocacy for Survivors

A comprehensive and survivor-centered guide for domestic violence advocates and attorneys

Chapters Include:

- Credit reporting and repair
- Debt collections and defense
- Bankruptcy and foreclosure
- Federal tax advocacy
- Economic relief in civil protection orders
- Economic issues in family law
- Barriers in civil court
- Rights and protections: housing and employment

<https://csaj.org/Guidebook>



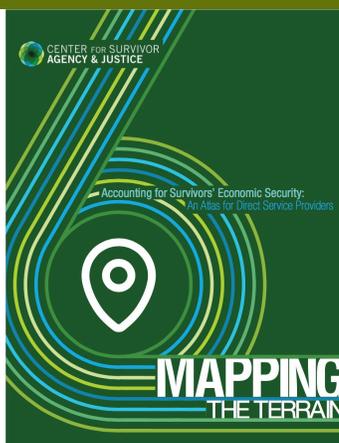
Accounting for Economic Security

An Atlas for Direct Service Providers

Mapping the Terrain

1. Economic hardship and poverty constrain survivors' options for safety
2. The economic impact of violence ripples throughout survivors' lives
3. Systemic barriers impede survivors' access to economic stability
4. Social inequality restricts survivors' options for economic security and safety

[Download](#)



Listening Sessions & Report

Purpose is to dialogue-back with Listening Session conversations in order to aid self-reflection, challenge dominant narratives, support improved data collection and analysis, and to begin, continue, or advance conversations and work toward racial equity for domestic and sexual violence survivors and for all of us.

[DOWNLOAD](#)

