

## ERIKA SUSSMAN

**Advisory Council**, National Women's Shelter Network, Inc.

**Founder and Executive Director**, Center for Survivor Agency & Justice

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Washington, DC



**CENTER FOR SURVIVOR  
AGENCY & JUSTICE**

Erika Sussman is the Founder and Executive Director of the Center for Survivor Agency and Justice, a US-based national organization that advances economic equity for survivors of gender based violence. CSAJ promotes advocacy approaches that remove systemic barriers, enhance organizational responses, and improve professional practices to meet survivors' self-defined needs.

During her tenure, CSAJ has launched the Consumer Rights for Domestic and Sexual Assault Survivors Initiative, the Safe Economic Security Atlas Project, the Race and Economic Equity of Survivors Project, the Access to Justice for Survivors Project, and most recently, the Mapping and Advancing Equity for Survivors Project.

She leads CSAJ's Coerced Debt Working Group and engages in systems change and policy initiatives at the state and national levels to advance economic equity for marginalized survivors.

She spearheaded local, state, and national economic justice policy and has advanced system change for survivors, including city policy plans to preserve and develop housing, landmark Coerced Debt legislation in Texas, and she currently leads CSAJ's Mapping and Advancing Equity work - a project that will develop the National Policy Platform for Survivor Economic Equity.

She believes reflection and growth are critical to human-centered policy initiatives and strives to center equity in policy making. Erika promotes and values the role of power-sharing models and racial and economic equity and has a growing passion for working with organizations, to reflect, evaluate, and create a healthy organizational culture.

She volunteers with Awaaz San Antonio - a local domestic violence (DV) organization serving the South Asian community where she supports capacity building and organizational infrastructure.

Prior to her work with CSAJ, Ms. Sussman served as the Senior Attorney of the Legal Assistance Providers' Technical Outreach Project, a national project of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence, which offered technical assistance to civil attorneys and advocates funded by the Office on Violence Against Women.

For several years, Ms. Sussman served as an adjunct professor at Cornell Law School, where she taught a seminar course on Law and Violence Against Women. She also taught law students and litigated in Georgetown University Law Center, Domestic Violence Clinic.

As a litigation associate at Swidler Berlin Sherreff Friedman, LLP, she provided pro bono representation to domestic violence survivors and co-counseled, with the ACLU, a class action lawsuit against the State of Maryland for the practice of racial profiling by law enforcement. Immediately following law school, she served as a Law Clerk to Justice Gregory Hobbs of the Colorado Supreme Court.

Ms. Sussman earned her JD from Cornell Law School and her LLM in Advocacy from Georgetown University Law Center. She has published numerous articles and chapters and served as faculty for various academic and practitioner workshops related to violence against women, with a particular emphasis on survivor-centered advocacy and economic justice.