**NATIONAL NETWORK OF  
ABORTION FUNDS**

Dear friends,

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the National Network of Abortion Funds. In 1993, twenty years after *Roe v. Wade*, a group of revolutionary abortion funders laid down roots and knotted them together to form a foundation that grew to become the robust, creative, visionary network before you. In the pages of this newsletter, we reflect on how we've evolved over the last twenty-five years and preview how we'll grow during the next 25 and beyond.

There's no denying, the threats we face today are grave. Kennedy's retirement from the Supreme Court opened the door for the United States to make abortion a crime in nearly half the country. In times like these when it feels like every single social and political institution has converged to break us down and pull us apart, our network will double down on supporting abortion access and building power together. Abortion funds, especially those in the South and Midwest, have long existed in low access realities so we have deep wisdom and resilience to draw from as we approach this unprecedented political moment.

At our recent National Organizing Summit, more than 300 abortion fund members convened and despite the significant challenges, hopelessness did not register. Instead, we felt affirmed in our strength and our strategy. We wove connections with other movements — celebrating the release of one of our own We Testify abortion storytellers from an ICE detention and raising money for bail funds — because in a world where abortion is becoming criminalized our struggles and our liberation are linked.

With your backing, this network has built something beautiful: a flourishing, loving safety net that meets people's needs today and invests in the leadership, training, support, and infrastructure we need to build power and win the long game. 25 years in, we are bigger, stronger, and more strategic than ever in our commitment to making abortion access a reality. Armed with new tools, new vision, new momentum to organize, and a growing base of supporters — longstanding and recently joined — we are primed to carry forward the powerful model of community-driven care that is the bedrock of our work together.

The injustices we face today will continue to unfold decades into the future, so we fight not just for our own lives, but for those of generations to come. The legal right to abortion may come into question, but we will never, ever cede our moral and ethical right. Throughout history, the biggest gains have come from times when we collectively experienced the deepest struggle. And with you by our side, we've harnessed an incredible well of collective power. 25 years of building up to this moment. We were born for this.

Let's go.

In Solidarity,

Yamani Hernandez  
Executive Director



# ALEJANDRA PABLOS

WE TESTIFY STORYTELLER



Alejandra Pablos, a We Testify abortion storyteller and undocumented immigrant rights activist, was detained and arrested by ICE after participating in a peaceful protest. She spent 43 days in jail. Even during her detention, Alejandra continued to speak her truth about immigrant justice and its inevitable ties to reproductive justice and her calls to action have only gotten louder since her release.

“Our organizing has to call for the abolishment of ICE, as much as for the protection of Roe,” Pablos said. “We must continue to fight for a living wage and fight for those in cages. We must care about freeing us all.”

What is necessary in this political moment, Pablos feels, is the centering the voices and experiences of Black and Brown peoples. “Let’s be clear — Black and Brown people have been attacked by our government since the beginning of time,” Pablos said. “And even though fear is present, and we see the risk, we are forced and required to fight back. To survive. What is personal is political for every single one of us.” Moving forward, Pablos says that we must open up space for conversations and organizing with other generations.

“[NNAF is] Black-women led and has known all along that our lives are complex and that access to abortion, a living wage, access to health care, and the ability to raise families without violence are all part of what people need to thrive,” Pablos said. “I am honored to say I am a part of this chosen family.”

“It is important to learn from each other’s struggle, to see that we were born resilient and to visualize the future together.”

*We Testify is national storytelling and leadership development program that works to broaden the spectrum of abortion storytellers in the public sphere and to shift the way the media understands the context and complexity of accessing abortion care.*

Read the interview online: [wetestify.org/ale-pablos](https://wetestify.org/ale-pablos)

# YOUNG PEOPLE SHARE THEIR ABORTION STORIES

BY HOLLY BLAND

We Testify is partnering with Advocates for Youth to develop a new abortion storytelling and leadership program, Youth Testify, aimed at supporting young people to share their stories.

“It’s time we invest in the spectrum of identities of people who have abortions, including age, so that we take care of the future of our movement wholeheartedly, with programming, organizing, storytelling, and training,” said Renee Bracey Sherman, Senior Public Affairs Manager at NNAF, and Julia Reticker-Flynn of Advocates for Youth.

Young people need to have a voice in conversations surrounding bodies, reproductive health, and abortion access because young people, as much as any of us, are capable of making the decisions they feel are best for them. Youth Testify organizers shared, “Young people have always been at the forefront of change. Historically, young people have been the ones to envision and create a freer and more compassionate future that you want to live in with your friends and families.”

Bracey Sherman added:

**“IT IS CRUCIAL THAT YOUNG PEOPLE ARE SUPPORTED IN THEIR ABILITY TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST THE DANGERS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT LAWS, AND THE IMPACT THE RESTRICTIONS HAVE ON YOUNG PEOPLE’S ABILITY TO ACCESS AN ABORTION, PARTICULARLY WHEN COMBINED WITH OTHER FINANCIAL AND LOGISTICAL BARRIERS TO ABORTION.”**

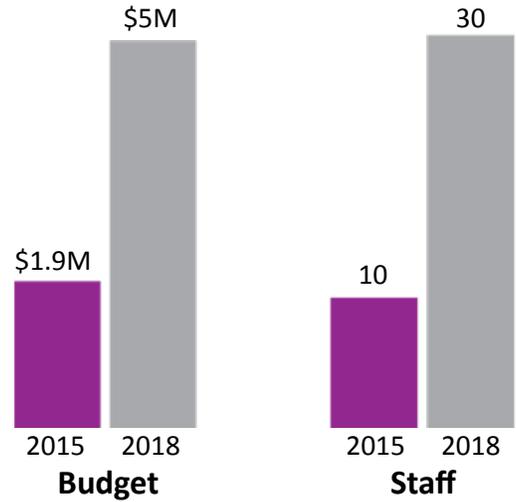
Read more: [wetestify.org/youth-testify](https://wetestify.org/youth-testify)



# NNAF TURNS 25 YEARS OLD!

## LOOK BACK AT 25 YEARS OF FUNDING ABORTION

- 1993** The National Network of Abortion Funds is founded by 22 abortion funds from 14 states.
- 1997** NNAF publishes the first edition of “Legal But Out of Reach,” a collection of stories from people who had been helped by abortion funds.
- 2000** With over 200 ally groups, NNAF launches a grassroots effort to shine a light on the harm created by the Hyde Amendment and punitive welfare reform.
- 2005** NNAF releases “Abortion Funding: A Matter of Justice,” a groundbreaking policy report sharing frontline data of member funds to deepen public understanding of economic obstacles to abortion.
- 2009** The national abortion fund is renamed the “George Tiller Memorial Abortion Fund,” following the murder of abortion provider, Dr. Tiller.
- 2010** The National Abortion Access Bowl-a-Thon, a network-wide fundraising event, launches and raises \$179,659.
- 2010** NNAF and the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health become the founding co-chairs of the Coalition for Abortion Access and Reproductive Equity and begin to implement a 15-year plan to repeal the Hyde Amendment with ally groups, which became the campaign and coalition, All\* Above All.
- 2013** NNAF completes the first major national poll on attitudes and messaging about Medicaid coverage of abortion.
- 2016** We Testify, a program dedicated to broadening the spectrum of abortion storytellers in the public sphere is launched.
- 2016** Following years of advocacy by abortion funds and movement partners, repealing the Hyde Amendment moves from a “third rail” issue to the mainstream and is included as a priority in the campaign platforms of top presidential candidates.
- 2016** NNAF joins thousands of advocates to rally for the Supreme Court’s Whole Women’s Health ruling that Texas cannot place restrictions on the delivery of abortion services that create an undue burden.
- 2016** NNAF launches an internal fund to help patients access abortion in Mississippi and Alabama and a program dedicated to supporting the collaboration of abortion funds in the South.
- 2017** NNAF holds an emergency convening after the election with abortion funds across the network, followed by four regional convenings to deepen connections and strengthen pathways of support.
- 2017** NNAF expands membership to include individuals, creating a new entry point into the network.
- 2017** Bowl-a-Thon raises over \$2 million from thousands of donors with an average donation of \$50.
- 2018** NNAF hosts the largest ever National Organizing Summit with over 300 abortion fund members and individual members in attendance.



UNDER NEW LEADERSHIP AND WITH A NEW THEORY OF CHANGE, NNAF HAS GROWN IN SIZE, VISIBILITY AND IMPACT. TODAY, NNAF IS THE ONLY BLACK WOMAN-LED NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOCUSED EXCLUSIVELY ON ABORTION ACCESS AND THE INTERSECTING OPPRESSIONS CALLERS FACE.

**WE ARE ABORTION FUNDS. FOR THE NEXT 25 YEARS AND BEYOND...**

*We will adapt to the needs of our communities. We will show the world what compassionate care really is. We will move money and shift wealth. We will reject bad bills, fake clinics, and anti-abortion politicians. We will fund abortion. We will build power. We will LOVE our way to power. We will embody the just and liberated world we long for. We will do this together because we are the ones we have been waiting for.*

Read timeline: [abortionfunds.org/timeline](https://abortionfunds.org/timeline)

# LET'S TALK ABOUT MEDICATION ABORTION

ABORTION CARE HAS COME A LONG WAY IN THE LAST 40 YEARS. TODAY, MEDICATION ABORTION IS A SAFE AND EFFECTIVE OPTION FOR ENDING A PREGNANCY BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF A CLINIC SETTING. WHETHER IT'S A PREFERENCE OR A NECESSITY, EVERYONE SHOULD BE ABLE TO MANAGE THEIR ABORTION WITH DIGNITY AND AUTONOMY.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Medication abortion has been around since the 1980s and works through the first ten weeks of pregnancy.
- It's a safe and effective treatment that consists of taking two types of pills.
- In the states with the least restrictions, the pills are provided or prescribed at the clinic by a medical practitioner. They can be taken at home or at any preferred location.
- In the most restrictive states, the first set of pills must be taken in a clinic under the supervision of a doctor. The second set of pills can be taken at home the next day.
- Despite the overwhelming evidence and data proving medication abortion's safety and reliability, politicians have imposed dozens of medically unnecessary regulations that serve to hinder access, including telemedicine bans, mandatory counseling, and waiting periods.
- Medication abortion costs anywhere from \$300 to \$800 and up.
- This method is widely used in many countries around the world and is often accessible over-the-counter without a doctor's prescription.
- Since over 90% of counties in the United States do not have an abortion provider, medication abortion can help people access the care they need in their own communities without being forced to travel long distances and incur additional costs like hotel rooms, flights, and bus tickets.
- Medication abortion accounts for more than 30% of abortions in the United States, with rates increasing.
- Medication is just one of several ways to have an abortion. We believe that everyone should have access to the abortion method of their choice, whether that's at home or in a clinic. We will continue to work for the expansion of abortion access in all areas so that people have the options they need to make the decisions best for them.

WE HOPE YOU JOIN US IN  
BUSTING MYTHS ONLINE!  
#ABORTIONOUTLOUD

# WHAT THE NETWORK IS DOING

We're making sure that abortion funds and the people who call them have the information and resources they need to understand and access medication abortion, while also working to shift culture and policy to protect the practice of self-managed abortion from legal risk.

## POLICY

Increasing access to medication abortion is one of NNAF's core policy issues. This fall, we're launching our first abortion fund policy training program, bringing together a cohort of 6-8 funds to shape policy at the state and federal level with a goal of increasing access to medication abortion, including taking on bans on telemedicine for accessing abortion and laws that criminalize using abortion pills.



## CULTURE CHANGE

You may have seen our Facebook ads illustrating what it could look like to manage your own abortion at home. With these ads and by highlighting the stories of people who have had medication abortion in recent articles in *Teen Vogue*, *Bustle*, and more, we're shifting the narrative towards a vision for safely managing your abortion.



## SUPPORTING CALLERS

Abortion funds will be essential resources for people looking for abortion pills, especially if brick and mortar clinics continue to become more scarce. We're lucky to have the opportunity to learn alongside some of our international member funds who are already doing this work, like Fondo MARIA. Fondo MARIA supports callers from all over Mexico, including those who aren't able to travel to Mexico City for a surgical procedure. Another group, Women Help Women, is made up of international activists and trained counselors who use an "e-service" to ensure people have access to medication abortion globally. Both members funds have comprehensive online guides that are accessible from our website. Together with these member funds and with guidance from other experts in medicine, law, and policy, we're supporting abortion funds in providing the best assistance to callers and making sure that no one is arrested or criminalized for ending their own pregnancy or helping someone get the care they need.



## MEET SARA SPRIGGS



*Sara Spriggs is a long time abortion funder who recently became an individual member and attended this year's Summit in Chicago.*

### **Who are you in the world?**

I am a daughter, a sister, a partner, and a friend. I am a multi-racial woman of the Korean diaspora. I am a restaurant worker, a writer, and a reproductive justice advocate.

### **Tell us about your experience at the Summit**

I felt an electric, palpable sensation that this Summit was of real historical importance. The highlight for me was the banquet. Seeing We Testify storyteller Ale Pablos speak about being detained by ICE. Hearing from Mariame Kaba, one of my personal heroes. Honoring the Chicago Bond Fund and Southerners on New Ground. Our work on abortion access, immigration, prison abolition, fair wages, and more is so connected, and being together and celebrating each other felt so good.

### **Why is NNAF well positioned to take on the challenges of the next 25 years?**

Our commitment to collaboration, love, joy, pleasure, and supporting each other is what makes us sustainable and resilient. When we make it possible for all of us — parents, people with disabilities, black & indigenous people of color, young people, elders — to be truly supported to lead from our full uniqueness, then we collectively have access to more genius and better solutions.

Read online: [abortionfunds.org/sara-2018](https://abortionfunds.org/sara-2018)

## INTERVIEW WITH MARLENE GERBER FRIED

*Yamani Hernandez talked with Marlene Gerber Fried, the founding president and first pro bono executive director of the National Network of Abortion Funds:*

### **What inspired the creation of the NNAF 25 years ago?**

At that time, the mainstream pro-choice movement was focused on defending the legal right to abortion. Repealing Hyde and abortion access more generally were not in the forefront of their agenda. Those of us who founded NNAF came with a different perspective. The Hyde Amendment created an enormous gap between having the legal right to abortion and being able to get one.

We were drawn to working in abortion funds as a matter of justice. Even though we knew that private money cannot substitute for government funding, we were committed to doing everything we could to fund abortions. At the same time, we understood that long term policy change was required. Bringing the funds into a single organization would let us strengthen and amplify the work, and create a force within the pro-choice movement prioritizing access and repealing Hyde.

### **Why is NNAF well positioned to take on the challenges of the next 25 years?**

**“NNAF HAS REMAINED TRUE TO ITS INITIAL COMMITMENT TO CHANGE POLICY AND TO SUPPORT DIRECT ACTION THAT CHANGES LIVES TODAY.”**

*Marlene is collaborating with Loretta Ross on a new book about abortion advocacy through a reproductive justice lens. Find out more about their book and the founding of NNAF by reading the full interview at [abortionfunds.org/marlene-25-years](https://abortionfunds.org/marlene-25-years)*



# GET TO KNOW EMERGING ABORTION FUND, INDIGENOUS WOMEN RISING

**Indigenous Women Rising (IWR) is an emerging abortion fund based in New Mexico, addressing the needs of native families in their state.**

Rachael Lorenzo started Indigenous Women Rising in 2014 as a campaign designed to bring attention to the fact that indigenous people who rely on Indian Health Services for healthcare were being denied access to Plan B, a form of emergency contraception. Since then, IWR has expanded the scope of its work and recently started an abortion fund. According to Lorenzo, “There’s no fund in the country that’s dedicated to helping native women... There are native people who need abortions and access is really hard to come by. For rural people it’s the cost of travel and childcare and taking time off work, and all of these things that people have to take into consideration when getting an abortion.” IWR also helps people navigate the Indian Health Service (IHS) hospitals in the state of New Mexico by letting callers know which have or do referrals for abortion care. IHS hospitals are federally funded and restricted by the Hyde Amendment from providing abortions.

So far IWR has provided funding for 15 people, many of whom also needed help with gas and food. In addition to their work around funding and access, they are committed to reproductive justice and work on a wide range of issues including breastfeeding and sex education. “In our communities we have grandparents raising grandchildren, which is a very unique phenomenon for native communities, so our sex education curriculum is also inclusive of grandparents and any caretaker who might have trouble talking with the young person in their life about sex,” said Lorenzo. “Reproductive justice isn’t just about access to abortion, it’s about being able to parent the children that people already have and the way that makes sense for them economically, socially, politically, culturally.”

## CHICAGO ABORTION FUND, FOUNDING NETWORK MEMBER AND 33-YEAR-OLD ORGANIZATION

**Chicago Abortion Fund (CAF) was one of the founding members of NNAF.** For 33 years, CAF has been a steadfast champion in the fight for abortion access throughout the Midwest. The fund is currently in a place of transformation, says Shailushi Baxi Ritchie, interim executive director. “We are taking the core of what we’re doing now, being really strategic about what we have, [and growing it] into something bigger—that is going to both stay true to what we’ve been doing around abortion access, and funding people who need support, but also helping to engage neighboring states and regional funds, building the power that we have in the Midwest and seeking ways to really engage people beyond city borders.”

In this political moment, Ritchie feels that, “it calls for us to look beyond our traditional partners, borders, and definitions of what those things look like, and to expand our vision to really build a big tent to embrace new movement as a part of our goal advancing freedom, justice, and autonomy for everybody.” She also said that it’s just as important to know our limits and to engage in self-care. “We need to take the baton when the people behind us are tired, and we need to take it as far as we can and hand it over when we are tired — and focus on what we can do.”

Facing the challenges that the next 25 years will bring, Ritchie sees NNAF as a leading strategic partner because of the organization’s position nationally and federally, and its connections with other national organizations. “That’s what funds need,” said Ritchie. “We need someone that is advocating for us with all the other power players.” Finally, Ritchie says, NNAF is uniquely positioned right now and might be one of the only national organizations with the ability to broker real change, thanks to the network’s ability to connect funds regionally and ensure that all people seeking services have a safe, affordable, and supportive experience. “NNAF has been critical in helping us engage with our regional funds and building a regional strategy.”

Read both interviews online: [abortionfunds.org/funds-25](https://abortionfunds.org/funds-25)



NATIONAL NETWORK OF  
**ABORTION FUNDS**

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## ABORTION STORIES ARE GAINING STEAM!

The Ignatz Awards recognize outstanding achievement in comics and cartooning. *Comics for Choice*, a book of abortion stories featuring several written by We Testify storytellers and one written by our own Executive Director, Yamani Hernandez, has been nominated for Outstanding Anthology or Collection. Proceeds from book sales and the pay-what-you-want digital download support abortion funds. Purchase your copy of *Comics for Choice* and read all the amazing comics at [shop.abortionfunds.org](http://shop.abortionfunds.org). Show your love of abortion funds out loud every day and support NNAF by shopping for t-shirts, pins, and more!

Visit: [shop.abortionfunds.org](http://shop.abortionfunds.org)



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