

# ADVOCATES OF LAKE COUNTY

ANNUAL REPORT: 2023



# A LETTER FROM OUR DIRECTOR

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*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.*

Margaret Mead

Dear Friends,

Lake County has a sensational history marked by dramatic transformation, but Lake County residents have always traversed the change with resolute character and purpose. Lake County residents are, and have always been, resilient, thoughtful and responsive to their community. They put their hearts and minds together to offer meaningful support and assistance to the most vulnerable among them, and strive to create a safe, healthy and stable community.

In this spirit, a group of citizens channeled their energy and pooled their resources to establish the Advocates of Lake County (ALC) in the early eighties. Over time, their successors grew and improved the agency to provide better services, and more services, for survivors of intimate partner violence and sexual violence. Today, ALC offers comprehensive services for survivors in Lake County, and we are so proud to outline the impact of these services in the pages to follow.

Yet, for all ALC's success, there is still more to be done. Lake County is again experiencing rapid change, and, once again, the most vulnerable among us have been affected the most. In 2022, the ALC Board of Directors analyzed the needs of our community amid the backdrop of growing economic and social disparity and determined ALC must be part of the solution. Our mission statement was expanded to offer services to unhoused and housing insecure individuals in our community, and the staff set out to find funding for the cause. I am pleased to announce that in 2023, forty years after our agency was established, ALC secured funding to provide "Transformational Homelessness Response" Services from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs. Additional grants have followed, and our team is hard at work rolling out services for the unhoused and housing insecure among us.

With passionate resolve, Lake County has responded to their community once again. We thank you for trusting our Board and Staff to serve our community, and for providing support to ensure our success. Program development at ALC is very purposely a measured, deliberate and intentional process, so we anticipate a long and exciting road ahead. We look forward to sharing this journey with you in the coming years.

Best,



**JENNY ABBOTT**

Executive Director

# CRISIS RESPONSE

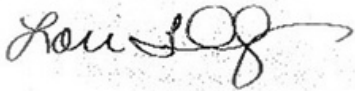
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ALC's Crisis Response to Lake County community members who have experienced violence is free, confidential, and voluntary.

At the forefront of ALC's services is our 24-hour crisis line. Our staff working the crisis line ensure our callers' safety and well-being by assisting each client with overcoming barriers and meeting their individual needs. The immediate service provides clients with essential needs; safety planning, in-person response for support, a safe place to stay, transportation, emergency financial assistance, legal assistance, and referrals to other community partners.

Our goal is to discuss safe options and to be supportive of their choices. Safety is our priority when assisting clients with a place to stay. This could be a stay in our temporary shelter or a short stay at a hotel far from danger. Transportation is another barrier our clients face. Living in a rural mountain town with minimal public transportation can be a safety issue. We assist with relocation and assistance navigating the rural public transportation options. Financial insecurity can limit options for our clients. Our services also include removing barriers by providing emergency financial support. Some examples of financial support are emergency assistance with rent or utilities and paying for qualifying legal services.

Our 24-hour crisis response is an essential part of our ability to help our community be safer from violence.



**LORI TULLY**

Advocacy Director



# HOUSING PROGRAM

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Our housing program uses the Housing First Approach to help survivors of violence maintain and sustain a stable and safe housing environment. Without access to housing, a survivor may be forced to stay or return to a violent situation.

However, through funding and networking with landlords and community partners, ALC provides support to clients and survivors to find long-term safe housing options. ALC can provide rental assistance, transitional housing, and other financial assistance such as rental application fees or advance payments on the first and last month's rent. Permanent housing is important for survivors to reclaim their lives and restore their safety and stability!



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Patty Galaviz'.

**PATTY GALAVIZ**

Transitional Housing Coordinator

**"I'm so blessed. I've received nothing but POSITIVE, encouraging self motivation and self healing. I've met advocates that really help me. In ways, I thought I would never be safe again or go on with my life. My advocate made a difference in my life. No matter what I went through, she listens, never judges, and is very loving."**

**- ALC Client, 2023**

*Transitional Housing Coordinator Patty Galaviz shares resources at the 2023 Fair Housing Fair. ALC prioritizes Housing First in its programming and is involved in community coalition work around housing issues in Lake County.*



# LEGAL SERVICES

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ALC's Legal Services Program continues to provide support for individuals navigating the legal system. ALC can provide consultations with our contracted civil and immigration attorneys, representation for established civil legal matters, and payments towards certain filing fees and costs. Our goal is to provide a client-led and empathetic support system to survivors who benefit from civil legal services, identifying options and emotional support through the responsible parties' criminal matters. The legal system can feel intimidating. Having support with legal terminology, paperwork, safety planning and identifying available options can generate empowerment for each client's valuable and individual circumstances.

We would also like to acknowledge our community partners in these efforts. We appreciate the Lake County Sheriff's Office, 5th Judicial District Victims Services, Judge Catherine Cheroutes and Judge John Scott, Court Clerks, and District Attorney Heidi McCollum for your time and support this year.



**LINDSEY LIMOGES**

Legal Services Coordinator



**"The staff is phenomenal.  
They are always willing to  
help and they think of  
creative solutions."**

**- ALC Client, 2023**

# VIOLENCE PREVENTION & COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

ALC brings a holistic approach to community engagement, including violence prevention efforts, outreach and intervention, and county-wide education. Our Violence Prevention Team (VPT) has entered its fourth year of cooperation among more than 15 different governmental and non-governmental agencies. This past year, the VPT moved forward with our public health-focused efforts on violence prevention. We increased the number of partners participating in our efforts and furthered the positive impact for youth of all ages and genders, with the hope of disrupting the intergenerational cycle of violence in our county.

The VPT looks forward to continued opportunities for education, community involvement, and program expansion. ALC has also launched our Latinx Outreach Program, bringing on a well-known and respected community member to improve our relationship among Lake County's Latinx and Hispanic residents.

**ALEX CUTLER**

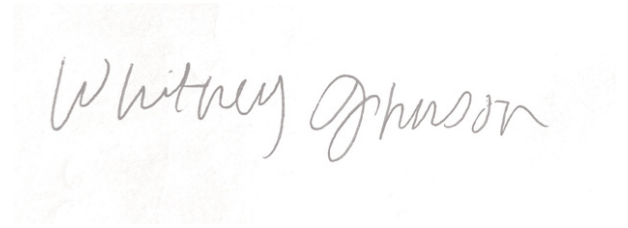
Community Programs Director



# COUNSELING

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Although ALC's counseling program is still early in its development, it's growing! Through the work of a master's level behavioral health intern and a local therapist, ALC has already provided crisis stabilization and long-term therapeutic support to various clients. As there is growing interest and involvement in the program, ALC has continued to facilitate a stipend-based internship program with support of community partners and has contracted with additional therapists to ensure timely access to services. As survivor-centered, empowerment-focused counseling services are fundamental to supporting stabilization and growth for survivors, ALC is looking forward to continuing to grow this program in the coming years.



**WHITNEY JOHNSON**

Clinical Development Coordinator

## HOMELESS SERVICES

In 2023, ALC spent a lot of time planning for our emerging homeless services in response to a growing need in our community. We continued our involvement with the Lake County Homelessness Subcommittee and studied best practices for providing services to individuals who are unhoused and housing insecure. We received funding from the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) to begin providing services and are actively seeking additional grants. We are excited to start rolling out these services in 2024 and are grateful to our community funders and partners who've made this possible.

Our homeless services will be called "the Bridge" and our existing survivor services will be known as "Stream of Hope." These two programs will both operate under ALC's umbrella, and existing services for survivors of violence will not be affected by the change.

In February 2024, we hired a Housing Director who will lead the development of this new program, after which we will bring on additional staff. Our services will include crisis response, coordinated entry, street outreach, rapid re-housing, and case management. Building a thoughtful, evidence-based program will be a long process, but we are looking forward to our next steps.

As we get started, please reach out to Executive Director Jenny Abbott ([jenny@advocatesoflakecounty.org](mailto:jenny@advocatesoflakecounty.org) or 719-293-5786) with any questions about our offerings and programming status, and look out for upcoming ALC communications regarding the launch.

**EMMA GADESKI**

Program Sustainability Manager



# OUR STAFF

**JENNY ABBOTT**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**LORI TULLY**  
ADVOCACY DIRECTOR

**ALEX CUTLER**  
COMMUNITY PROGRAMS DIRECTOR

**DAWNA SCHNEITER**  
FINANCE DIRECTOR

**LINDSEY LIMOGES**  
LEGAL SERVICES COORDINATOR

**EMMA GADESKI**  
PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER

**PATTY GALAVIZ**  
TRANSITIONAL HOUSING COORDINATOR

**LORI PATTON**  
RESIDENTIAL COORDINATOR

**KRISTEN KING**  
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

**WHITNEY JOHNSON**  
CLINICAL DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

**CRISTINA REVELES**  
LATINX OUTREACH SPECIALIST

**JESSIE SACK**  
IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY COORDINATOR

**KYLIE WHITAKER**  
CIVIL LEGAL ATTORNEY COORDINATOR

**MEAGAN GONZALEZ**  
HR CONSULTANT



Some ALC staff at a "Pajama Glam" Potluck: From back left is Jenny Abbott, Emma Gadeski, Lori Tully, Dawna Schneiter, and Alex Cutler. In front from left is Lori Patton, Lindsey Limoges, Patty Galaviz and Kristen King.





Left: Some ALC staff attend the 35th Annual Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance (COVA) Conference in Keystone back in October. From left is Jenny Abbott, Amanda Fitzpatrick, Patty Galaviz, Lori Tully, Lindsey Limoges, and Emma Gadeski. In front is Alex Cutler.

Right: ALC staff smile for a photo before a wellness rafting retreat through Browns Canyon in August. From top left is Amanda Fitzpatrick, Alex Cutler, Jenny Abbott, Kevin Geller, Lori Tully, Emma Gadeski, and Dawna Schneider. In front from left is Lindsey Limoges and Meagan Gonzalez.



## OUR BOARD

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**BREANNA SANDOVAL**  
FAMILY THERAPIST

**KEELEY CROWLEY**  
CRIME VICTIM SERVICES

**JENNIFER YOUNG**  
FULL CIRCLE OF LAKE COUNTY



# STAFF SPOTLIGHT: ALEX CUTLER

Alex Cutler is ALC's Community Programs Director and leads the agency's violence prevention and community outreach projects.

Before joining ALC, Alex was a Community Health Specialist with Spotlight on Africa - Uganda Foundation, a nonprofit in Eastern Uganda focused on improving the standard of living in the area through healthcare, education, and skill-building initiatives. In 2020, Alex joined ALC after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic required mandatory evacuations, forcing them to return to the states.

With a dual master's in public health and applied anthropology, Alex brought valuable community engagement experience to ALC and hit the ground running. They've built and sustained partnerships with victim services and public health organizations across the county and region, and developed our multijurisdictional Violence Prevention Team into the highly successful, collaborative group it is today.



Alex stays busy hosting Violence Prevention Team meetings, planning educational events with community partners, and developing outreach campaigns for anti-violence awareness months. If you attend any sort of non-profit sponsored event in Lake County, you'll probably see them ready to share resources. In 2023, Alex helped organize Lake County's very first, and overwhelmingly successful, PRIDE and led the efforts to ensure participant safety and security.

Through all their endeavors, Alex remains passionate about bringing a more trauma-informed, survivor-centered approach to victim services in Lake County.

"I want my professional career to be one that is driven by, and motivated for, service," Alex commented. "Assisting people who are experiencing what may well be the lowest point of their lives brings a rare kind of fulfillment. You can be a catalyst for transformation and a source of renewed agency. There's really nothing like it."

Outside of work, Alex enjoys staying active, singing, and playing video games. They are an avid writer with "way too many active projects", sporting a repertoire of short stories, novels, poetry, and screenplays — whatever sparks their interest enough to get a story started. They recently finished writing a Wonder Woman graphic novel and are currently developing an action/adventure novel set in Eastern Europe. Alex enjoys traveling and hopes to one day visit all the places they've written about.

**To connect with Alex or learn more about ALC's Violence Prevention Team, email [alex@advocatesoflakecounty.org](mailto:alex@advocatesoflakecounty.org)**

**IN 2023 ...**

**289**

*survivors of violence received  
services.*

**655**

*instances of crisis intervention  
provided by staff.*

**61**

*survivors received free safe  
shelter.*

**1127**

*nights of safe shelter provided.*

**16**

*households received rental  
assistance.*

**14**

*survivors received free legal  
representation.*

# CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

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In 2023, ALC worked with Cassidy\* who is a survivor of domestic violence and human trafficking. Before connecting with ALC, Cassidy spent years bouncing around different states to ensure her safety. Cassidy was experiencing homelessness and moving in and out of transitional housing situations. She needed a safe, long-term place to live and lasting stability.

Cassidy repeatedly got close to securing a job and housing but did not end up seeing these efforts realized. She felt depleted and like she had failed but did not want to quit. She began calling domestic violence agencies around the state and came across ALC. The agency's presence in the remote mountains gave her hope, and she felt it could provide an opportunity to reset and find long-term stability.

ALC helped Cassidy secure transportation to Leadville and provided her with safe, emergency housing. After years of being unhoused and fearing for her safety, Cassidy said having a kitchen to cook in and a good night's rest meant the world to her. As she settled in, Cassidy appreciated that staff were supportive without being overbearing, and allowed her to make her own decisions. She was able to focus on her own self-care and well-being for the first time in years.

Staying with ALC helped Cassidy meet her immediate needs so she could plan for more long-term ones. She was extremely proactive in finding a job she loves, and ALC was able to serve as a reference. Thanks to her initiative and hard work ethic, Cassidy knew she could make the most of opportunities for advancement and was promoted soon after being hired.

Cassidy's drive expanded to her housing search efforts. She saved up her own funds and combined this with financial assistance with ALC. She was move-in ready for her own place, but still needed to find the ideal match. With a lot of persistence, Cassidy found what she was looking for.

She scheduled an appointment to view the space and asked her ALC advocate to join her. Whenever she went to meet someone, she always wanted someone from ALC with her. Asking for help was new to her, but Cassidy found confidence in the fact that others knew about the agency and felt comfortable referring to us as a support system. "It helps to have someone vouch for you," she said.

Today, Cassidy is not only maintaining her housing and employment, but genuinely enjoying life and taking time for herself. She said she has experienced so much growth by developing improved coping mechanisms and learning to use her voice and set boundaries. "It's been quite the journey," she said. "I'm exhausted, but I can catch my breath."

Cassidy's long-term goals are to spend quality time with her family and eventually build a tiny home.

\*Name has been changed to protect client's privacy

# THANK YOU TO OUR 2023 DONORS!

5th Judicial District Attorney's Office

Ace Hardware

Adam Gerard

Alfred's Giving

Alice Pugh and Kenneth Vierczhalek

Andrew and Tracy Purdy

Andy and Leslie Pechta

Ann Parker

Anschutz Family Foundation

Arapahoe Basin Ski Area

Aspen Traders

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Avery Williamson

Big R Stores - Leadville

Blue Earth Yoga & Salon

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Cecilia Sandoval

Chaffee County Community Foundation

Cheryl Johnson

Christy Sports

City on a Hill

Clark Schiring

Claudia King

CO Domestic Violence Programs

CO Office of Violence Prevention

Colleen Schweigert

Colorado Association of Realtors Foundation

Colorado Bar Association

Colorado Grand

Colorado Mountain College

Community Threads

Lake County Government

Dana Greene

Danielle Solomon

Delaware Hotel

Delta Kappa Gamma

Department of Local Affairs (DOLA)

Division 7, Inc.

DOJ Office of Violence Against Women

Donna Childress

Elevation Goods

Freeport-McMoRan

First Mountain Bank

First Presbyterian Church

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Helping Hands of Lake County

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Jack Saunders

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Jane Lingwood

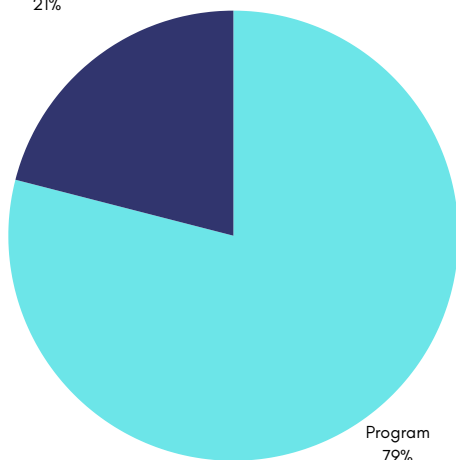
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King Chiropractic  
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Susan Pinkowitz  
Tabor Opera House Preservation Foundation  
Tattoo Shop in Leadville  
The Majestic  
Twin Lakes SUP & Cycle  
Two Dog Travel  
Vail Racquet Club Mountain Resort  
Valhaven Inc.  
Whitney Johnson  
Wild Bill's Restaurant  
William Smith and N. Susan Hammerton  
Zero Day Coffee



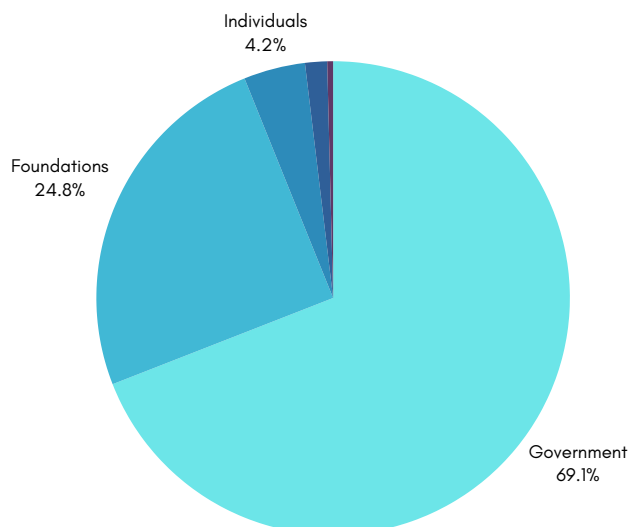
# 2023 FINANCES\*

Administration & Operations  
21%



**Expenses:**  
**\$920,681**

Government Foundations Individuals  
Fundraiser Other



**Revenue:**  
**\$794,692**

For a variety of reasons, ALC did not receive all anticipated income in 2023. This reduced income, combined with unanticipated facility costs, caused a deficit in ALC's 2023 fiscal year. However, ALC maintains a healthy unrestricted fund balance and the additional costs were covered by this fund. We are so grateful to the donors who help us maintain our unrestricted fund; this fund allows us to continue services without interruption if and when we have unanticipated needs and experience income loss. Thank you, donors!!

\*These numbers are based on internal records and have not yet been audited

With the help of the Advocates of Lake County, survivors of violence like Cassidy are not alone and always have a safe place to turn. Many of our neighbors in Lake County experience violence, sexual assault, and harassment. You too can help survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault – if you are able, please consider supporting the Advocates by:

- Volunteering your time to survivors ([advocatesoflakecounty.org/volunteer](https://advocatesoflakecounty.org/volunteer))
- Sending a donation to P.O. Box 325, Leadville CO 80461 or donating online at [advocatesoflakecounty.org/donate](https://advocatesoflakecounty.org/donate)
- Following us on Instagram and Facebook (@advocatesoflakecounty) or emailing [emma@advocatesoflakecounty.org](mailto:emma@advocatesoflakecounty.org) to receive our e-newsletter to learn what we're up to year-round!

