



2023-2024 Cohort Bios

SURVIVOR LEADERSHIP COHORT



They are...

Our 2nd cohort, 2023-2024

From every part of the country

Brilliant, diverse, creative group of POWERFUL individuals



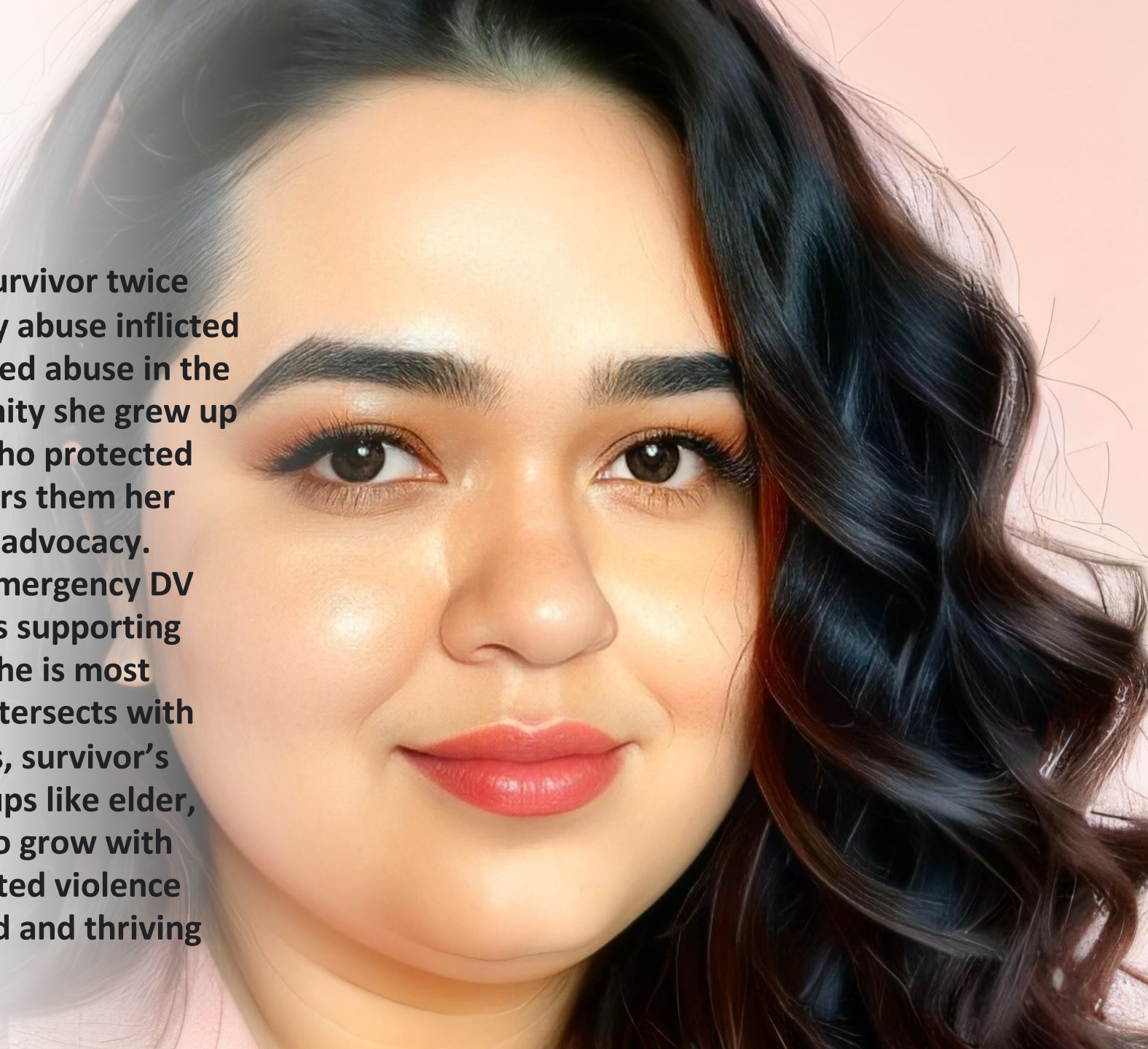
Consuelo Brown (she/her/hers)

My name is Consuelo Brown, and I am a resilient multicultural woman in her 40s. I have endured the torment of domestic violence but emerged as a beacon of hope. I transformed my pain into purpose, becoming a tireless advocate for the mental health of fellow survivors. With unwavering determination, I advocate for conventional and holistic individual therapy and support groups, offering solace and guidance to women trapped in similar situations. My empathetic heart and unyielding spirit empower survivors to reclaim their lives. My journey from victim to advocate showcases the strength within us all, inspiring countless women to break free from the shadows of abuse and find the healing they deserve.

Juliette G. Ford

(she/her/ella)

Juliette is a disabled, queer Latina and a survivor twice over. She survived, with her mother, every abuse inflicted by the man in their home, and later survived abuse in the form of teen dating violence. The community she grew up in was full of strong immigrant mothers who protected their children and each other. She considers them her primary inspiration and the model of true advocacy. Juliette has worked on crisis hotlines, in emergency DV shelters, in education, and in legal services supporting victims of domestic and sexual violence. She is most passionate about the ways in which IPV intersects with pregnancy, minority or immigrant cultures, survivor's economics, youth, and under-studied groups like elder, disabled, or LGBTQIA+ folks. Her hope is to grow with others to understand the nuances of inflicted violence and abuse in order to create a less isolated and thriving community of survivors and advocates.



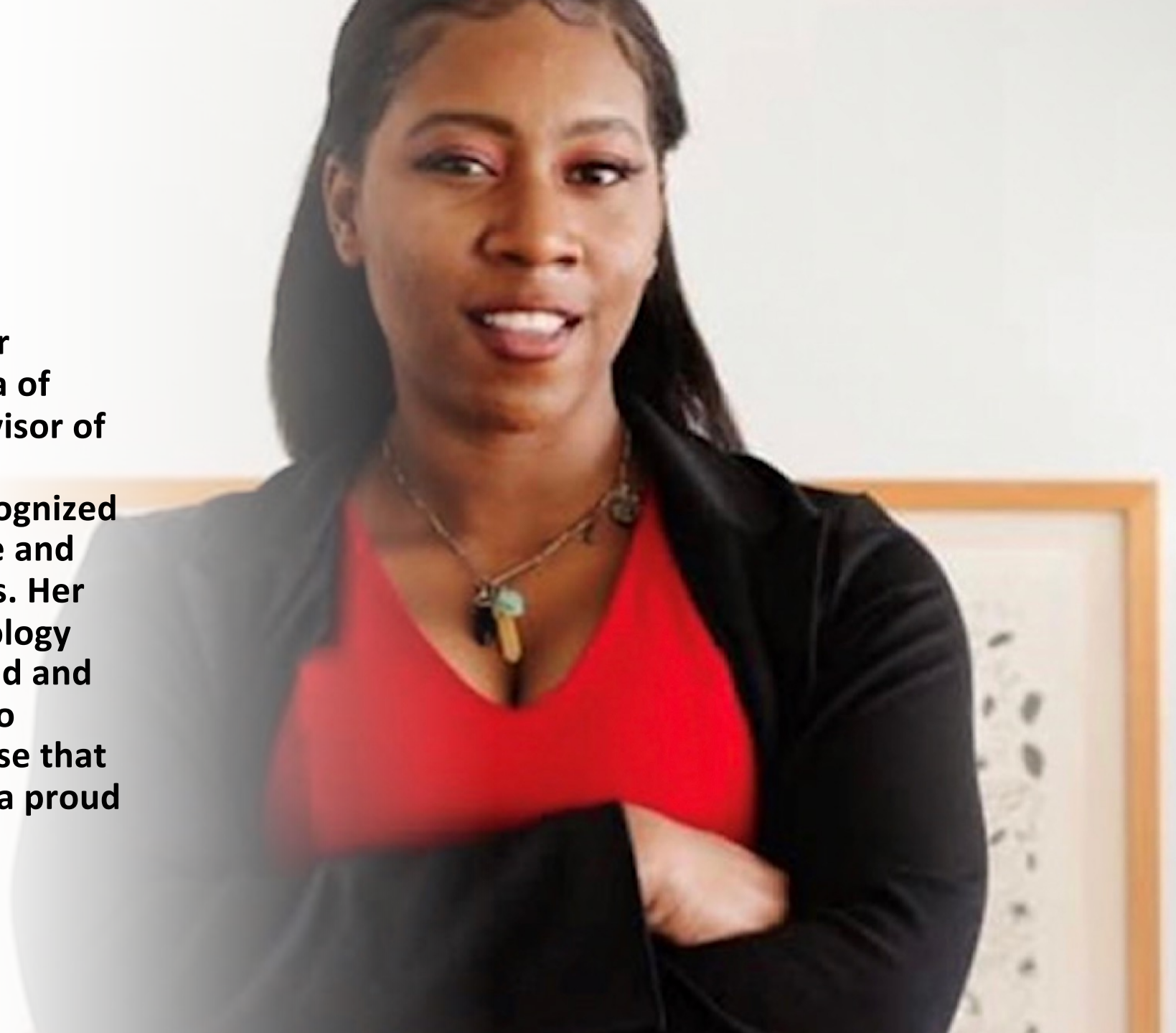


July Vang (she/her)

July Vang Xiong (she/her) is a second-generation Hmong American whose lived experience has led her to walk an insurgent life as an intersectional social changemaker. She has led transformative workshops and facilitated critical community dialogue to advance gender-racial equity, collective consciousness, and healing; and spearheaded internationally-scaled strategic initiatives to drive impactful systems change. Xiong is a survivor, advocate, and community educator on inter-intracultural domestic violence; and dedicates her life to eradicating oppressive systems and toxic narratives and practices that perpetuate violence and inequity in historically marginalized and vulnerable communities. She personally enjoys experimental cooking, engaging in lively conversations with people from all walks of life, and exploring new cities and hikes with her partner.

Kia Dupclay (she/her)

Kia Dupclay is an advocate for change. She sits on a plethora of boards and is now the Supervisor of Programming and Housing Navigation. She has been recognized by the California State Senate and received a plethora of awards. Her mission is to integrate technology into how services are provided and take innovative approaches to ending IPV and caring for those that have experienced IPV. She is a proud mom and emphasizes the importance of self-care.





Kiesha Nicole Preston (she/her)

Kiesha is a prominent housing and DV advocate. In 2020 she authored the Virginia Domestic Violence Victims Protection Act. Her transformative work has led to congressional briefings on women's safety and established her as a sought-after consultant and speaker. Kiesha's unwavering commitment to justice has earned her prestigious awards, including the 2023 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drum Major for Justice and the 2022 NAACP Impactors of Excellence awards. She's also been recognized among Roanoke, VA's Top 40 Under 40 for 2023. Kiesha serves on the governing body of the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance and co-chairs the Finability Survivor Advisory Committee. Kiesha shares her insights, speaking at national conferences and universities, while her consulting work extends to nonprofits and federal agencies. Kiesha Preston remains dedicated to combating domestic violence and leaving a lasting impact in her advocacy.



Lisbet Perez (she/her/ella)

Since 2011, Lisbet's professional and volunteer work has focused on ending domestic abuse and sexual assault in underserved communities, especially immigrant and refugee communities. As a young immigrant mother, she experienced domestic abuse and navigated the often frightening, confusing, and liberating journey to regain her independence and free herself and her children from her abuser. Lisbet currently works at *One Safe Place*, the North County Family Justice Center in San Diego County, and serves as the Welcome Ambassador Supervisor and leads the center's VOICES Community. She is passionate about building safe communities and assists AFHI by leading the Survivors Retreat for Latina survivors at the Alliance's Retreat Center in Allenspark, Colorado. She is a recognized leader in the Latino community, starting the first Spanish-speaking VOICES network, Proyecto Esperanza, in 2016. In addition, she also volunteers her time to facilitate *Peer Support Groups* in Spanish. As a survivor, she hopes her experience will bring awareness and start deeper conversations about domestic abuse in the immigrant and refugee communities. In her personal time, she loves going on road trips, hiking with her children, spending time with family and friends.

LTomay Varlack-Butler (saymyname/blm)

Ltomay Varlack-Butler is a daughter, sister, mother, grandmother, wife, survivor scholar and truth teller. Her pronouns are for advocacy purposes because she stands in solidarity with Black Lives Matter, especially Black women and transgender women often overlooked. Her superpower is self-reflection. She is a first-generation PhD candidate at USD, restorative equity educator, executive coach, and social worker. Her focus is on inclusive practices, reducing stress, and achieving sustainable growth. Transforming trauma, empowering survivors, and cultivating communities are her life's calling. By dismantling harmful systems within oneself she aims to heal humanity one person at a time. As a global citizen, she worked with NGOs, advocating against violence against women and youth, and spoke at a roundtable on women's rights in Haiti. She facilitated restorative practices for adolescents impacted by HIV in Romania and collaborated with educators on inclusive pedagogy and practices in South Africa.



Mateo Perez Lara (they/them/theirs)

Mateo Lara is a nonbinary, queer, Latine poet/artist/activist from Bakersfield, California. They received their M.F.A. in Poetry at Randolph College. They have a chapbook, *Glitter Gods*, published with Thirty West Publishing House. They have been published in *EOAGH*, *Empty Mirror*, and elsewhere. They teach as a BT in Bakersfield.





Samantha Jo-Dato (she/they)

Samantha Jo-Dato is living, and working in the the framework that is rooted in love and balance. Ms. Jo-Dato continues to be invested in leveraging access and resources that will create and cultivate results for all oppressed people and close the access gaps to knowledge, freedom and truth. This messy work Samantha has herself had to put down and pick back up time and time again. Samantha hopes to model the affirmation let love lead the way; no matter how dark it has been.

Shelby Bergeson (she/her)

Shelby has worked as the Client Services Supervisor at Missouri Shores Domestic Center in Pierre, South Dakota. Prior to working with victims of intimate partner violence, family violence, sexual assault and human trafficking, Shelby worked in early childhood education and there found her passion for policy by serving on the Young Professional Advisory Council for the National Association for the Education of Young Children. After her career switch, she has focused largely on prevention and awareness by working collaboratively with a six-county area into develop a Youth Advisory Council with the goal to bring education awareness and peer advocacy to high school students in the rural areas. She has recently begun sharing her story in local settings in hopes that she will be able to help others who have experienced domestic violence or sexual assault. In her free time, Shelby enjoys watching movies and football, spending time on the river kayaking or swimming and watching her three daughters in their various extracurriculars.

