



Leading a New Response to Sexual Violence

ANNUAL REPORT

2020

The Victim Rights Law Center's mission is to provide legal representation to victims of rape and sexual assault to help rebuild their lives; and to promote a national movement committed to seeking justice for every rape and sexual assault victim.



VICTIM RIGHTS LAW CENTER

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

We hope you and your families and colleagues are healthy and doing well! COVID-19 has certainly forced us all to pause and reflect. This has been such an intense year, it felt appropriate to look back and savor the victories while we re-center ourselves in preparation for the unpredictable year ahead.

Many organizations do wonderful work in their local communities. Others make their impact on the national landscape. What I refer to as our key to success is that we do both, and we do it well! We hope our annual report will give you a sense of our talented team and our compassionate efforts to help survivors during an especially challenging time when they have needed us the most.

Direct Services in Massachusetts and in Oregon

The VRLC's anchor has always been that we are the first nonprofit law center in the country solely focused on the legal needs of sexual assault survivors. Through our representation of individual survivors, we help them stay in their jobs, homes, schools, and sometimes even in the country. Our attorneys are experts in sexual violence as well as multiple areas of civil law. Together, they creatively weave a safety net to help survivors rebuild their lives following sexual violence.

National Training and Mentorship

Our attorneys leverage what they learn from representing survivors to train and mentor other lawyers, advocates, medical professionals, campus administrators, and other professionals to help survivors in their own communities. It is critical that we share our skills and strategies to improve the response to sexual violence nationwide.

Bold Moves

We have a strong, smart team that makes bold moves. The VRLC filed two lawsuits against Department of Secretary Betsy DeVos to fight the harmful Title IX regulations. It was unnerving to sue the federal government (and one of our primary funding sources); but, for survivors, it was the right thing to do. We also host the only National Sexual Violence Law Conference. We do it on a shoestring! In 2018 it was in Charleston, SC and in 2019 it was in New Orleans, LA. Our 2020 conference was canceled due to the pandemic, but we are hoping to host one in 2022 at the latest. The logistics of planning a conference are demanding, but we feel passionate about creating a space to gather those special lawyers who are all fighting to end sexual violence.

Join Us

Fundraising during the pandemic is nerve-wracking and uncertain. As always, we have confidence that our community will lift us up as we stand by survivors. Thank you for attending our virtual events and for continuing to invest in the work of the VRLC! Please follow the VRLC on social media (@VictimRightsLaw), sign up for our newsletter, host an event, and donate. Let's ensure the VRLC stays strong for survivors as we all weather this storm.

In gratitude,

Stacy Malone, Esq.
Executive Director

LEGAL HELP FOR SURVIVORS

Survivors of sexual assault often come to the VRLC seeking help with multiple legal issues. VRLC attorneys provide a wide range of expertise across several areas of law, so our clients can receive trauma-informed legal assistance for several different legal issues all in one place.

Massachusetts: As a result of the global pandemic, the VRLC’s offices physically closed in March of 2020. Attorneys immediately began to work remotely, continuing to represent survivors and providing them with information, legal advice, and representation in the areas of privacy, safety, housing, employment, education, immigration, and financial benefits. Our attorneys also represented clients telephonically and over Zoom in hearings where survivors were seeking protection orders. While calls to our intake line initially decreased during the beginning of the state shutdown, they quickly picked back up. VRLC staff attorneys and pro bono attorneys have been diligent about meeting the growing demand for legal assistance by survivors who are in jeopardy of losing their housing, jobs, immigration status, and whose privacy and safety may be compromised during the stress and unpredictability of the pandemic.

Oregon: Despite the many challenges of the pandemic and remote work, the VRLC’s office increased the number of survivors served by 16% and the number of matters with which we were able to provide assistance by 26%. Our top client needs were help with immigration matters; support and advocacy after reporting to law enforcement and throughout the criminal justice system; civil protection orders to keep themselves and their families safe; and help securing benefits and other forms of economic support. The Oregon direct services team continues to increase access to legal services for many of our region’s most marginalized and vulnerable survivors – many of whom would not have been able to secure the legal help they needed to get their lives back on track without assistance from the VRLC.

Massachusetts

- 857 individuals called the MA intake line.
- 647 survivors were assisted with 1,244 separate legal matters.
- 38% of clients identified as Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color.
- 24% identified as immigrants.
- 18% had limited English proficiency.
- 6% were experiencing homelessness.
- 21% disclosed a disability.
- 12% identified as LGBTQ.

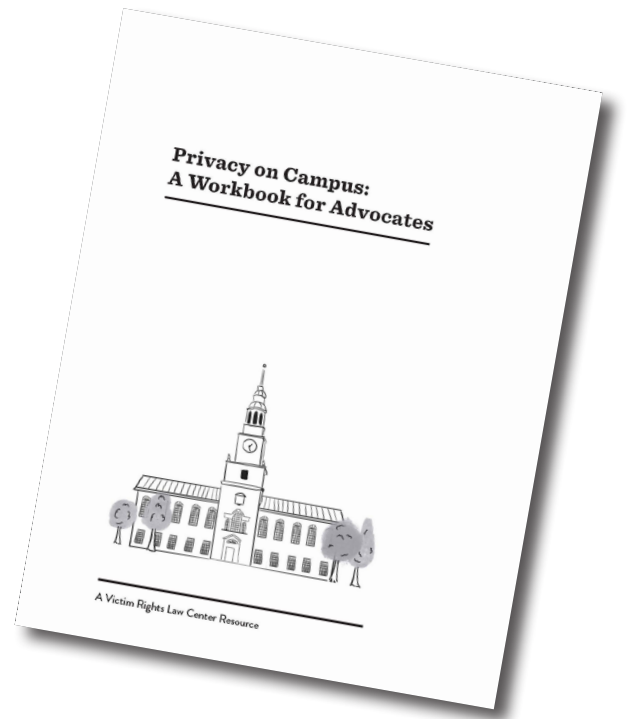
Oregon

- 455 individuals called the OR intake line.
- 395 survivors were assisted with 719 separate legal matters.
- 73% of clients identified as Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color.
- 62% identified as immigrants.
- 32% had limited English proficiency.
- 9% were experiencing homelessness.
- 19% disclosed a disability.
- 18% identified as LGBTQ.

PRIVACY TRAINING AND RESOURCES

The VRLC’s national Privacy Rights Project training and technical assistance teams provided training and technical assistance (mentorship and support) to thousands of lawyers, community-based advocates, and other victim service providers to help them protect the confidentiality of survivors of sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, and stalking. We facilitated such webinars as “Privacy, Confidentiality, Privilege, and VAWA-Funded Providers: A Webinar for State and Tribal Leaders, Prosecutors, Advocates, Lawyers, and Health Care Providers;” “Protecting the Confidentiality of Survivors with Cognitive and Intellectual Disability” (with the Vera Institute); “Confidentiality and Coronavirus Contact Tracing;” and “Protecting Survivor Privacy While Working Remotely.” One of the resources we completed was our “Privacy on Campus: A Workbook for Advocates.”

Our privacy team’s work pivoted during the pandemic. As a result, we created the “Protecting Survivor Privacy When Working from Home” tips and “Confidentiality and Coronavirus Contact Tracing” FAQs, subsequently published in the national Sexual Assault Report.



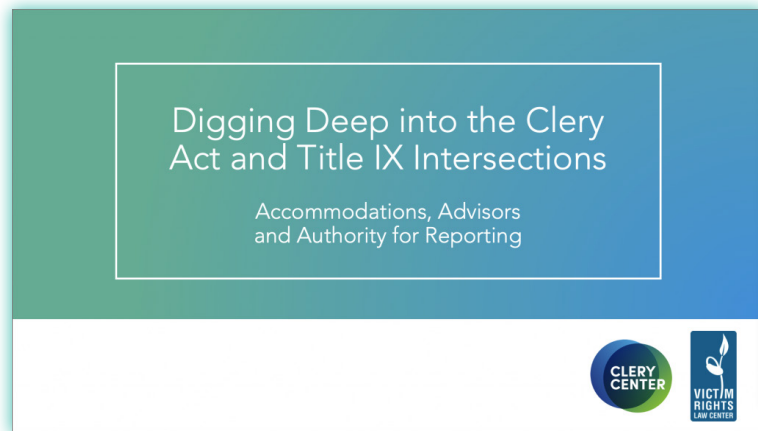
SEXUAL ASSAULT JUSTICE EDUCATION

The Sexual Assault Justice Education Project’s training and technical assistance team provided 545 consultations, responses to individual information requests, and referrals to Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) grantees and others working on behalf of sexual assault survivors. We also delivered 12 online trainings attended by 982 victim service providers, including a webinar on the use of electronic evidence in sexual assault cases presented by 2016 Shining Star Awardee (pro bono attorney of the year) Kent Sinclair, Esq.; and another on defamation suits in the #MeToo era presented by VRLC Board of Directors Co-Chair (and 2008 Shining Star Awardee) Krista Green Pratt, Esq. Finally, we hosted a Share & Learn Conversation Series featuring interviews with expert guests on a variety of topics. Attorney Ryan Sullivan answered questions about bankruptcy and other forms of relief for sexual assault survivors; civil trial lawyer and ethics expert Erin Higgins (2009 Shining Star Awardee) addressed ethical considerations for OVW-funded legal services providers; and Leslye Orloff, Director of the National Immigrant Women’s Advocacy Project, discussed how COVID-19 and pandemic-specific benefits have impacted immigrant survivors of sexual assault.

K-12 AND HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

New, harmful Title IX Regulations were released on May 6, 2020 and went into effect on August 14, 2020. This happened as the country was reeling from the imposition of lockdowns and facing a global pandemic that disrupted education, exacerbated volatile home circumstances, and interrupted ongoing campus disciplinary processes. Amid this volatility, the education team continued to zealously represent student survivors in a variety of contexts. In K-12, we navigated the Department of Education and Secondary Education's Problem Resolution System, kept pace with the changing requirements for the delivery of special education programs and services, and ensured our students were supported and had access to appropriate services as youth mental health declined. We helped students obtain Individualized Education Programs, secured restraining orders for student survivors, and represented students navigating their schools' Title IX and disciplinary processes.

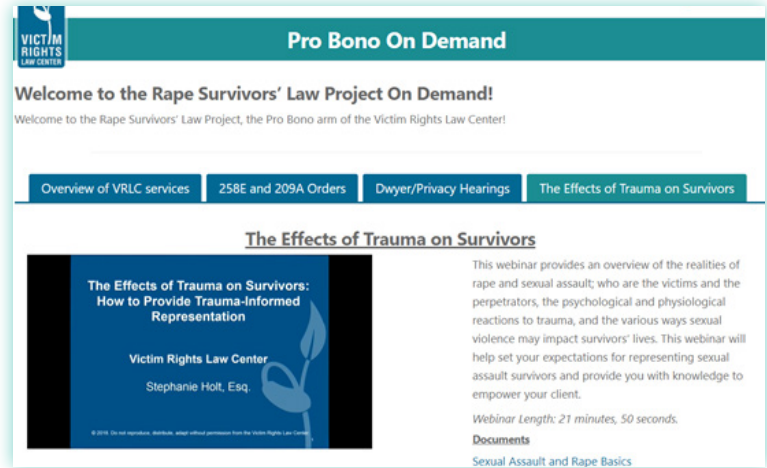
In higher education, we fought for students to access information virtually, represented student survivors through complaint processes involving retaliatory countercomplaints, and advocated for fair processes to be implemented across the board. Thanks to the generosity of the McGillicuddy Charitable Trust, we developed the Victim Rights Law Center's Tool for Incorporating Trauma-Informed Practices into the Final Title IX Rule Legal Framework for institutions to utilize in thinking through policy provisions with respect to the new regulatory framework. This tool encouraged institutions to use their discretion to build trauma-informed practices into their policy and procedures in response to complaints of sexual assault. We also recorded a series of mini-webinars on some of the changes under Title IX and its overlap with the Clery Act requirements for practitioners and institutions to better understand the legal landscape.



On June 10, 2020, the VRLC along with three organizational co-plaintiffs filed a lawsuit against then-Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos and the Department of Education, challenging the new regulations and fighting to ensure survivors can safely access their education. That lawsuit is still pending. We continue to fight every day for our student survivor-clients.

PRO BONO PARTNERSHIPS

The pandemic changed our clients' needs and changed how courts handled cases. Despite having to adjust our pro bono model to be responsive to the pandemic restrictions, pro bono attorneys were resilient and provided nearly 600 hours of pro bono work in Massachusetts and over 400 hours in Oregon in 2020. Our generous and dedicated pro bono lawyers assisted in representing clients, undertook legal research, and provided training and mentoring to VRLC staff in a variety of practice areas. Additionally, 30 new pro bono attorneys were trained, and we were able to launch our Pro Bono On Demand web-based portal for attorneys to access VRLC trainings online at their convenience.



Pro Bono On Demand

Welcome to the Rape Survivors' Law Project On Demand!

Welcome to the Rape Survivors' Law Project, the Pro Bono arm of the Victim Rights Law Center!

Overview of VRLC services | 258E and 209A Orders | Dwyer/Privacy Hearings | **The Effects of Trauma on Survivors**

The Effects of Trauma on Survivors

This webinar provides an overview of the realities of rape and sexual assault; who are the victims and the perpetrators, the psychological and physiological reactions to trauma, and the various ways sexual violence may impact survivors' lives. This webinar will help set your expectations for representing sexual assault survivors and provide you with knowledge to empower your client.

Webinar Length: 21 minutes, 50 seconds.

Documents
Sexual Assault and Rape Basics

THANK YOU TO OUR PRO BONO ATTORNEYS

Rebecca Cambreleng; Crispin Marton Cambreleng

Cappelli Law

Conn Kavanaugh Rosenthal Peisch & Ford, LLP

Foley Hoag LLP

Goodwin Procter LLP

Harriman Law

Perry A. Kantor; Graves & Swanson, LLC

Knuuttila Law LLC

Law office of Sam Lambroza

Manatt, Phelps & Phillips LLP

McCarter & English, LLP

McDermott Will & Emery

Miller, Nash, Graham & Dunn

Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C.

Morgan Lewis

Anaiah E. Palmer; Parker, Butte & Lane, P.C

Shenoa Payne, Attorney at Law

Proskauer LLP

Seyfarth Shaw LLP

Sinclair Law LLC

Charles B. Steele, J.D.

Ashley Vaughn; Dumas & Vaughn, LLC

WilmerHale

Wolf Greenfield

SHINING STAR GALA: OCTOBER 3, 2019

The VRLC's 2019 Shining Star Gala honored Deb Katz, Esq. and Lisa Banks, Esq., co-counsel for Dr. Christine Blasey Ford in the Justice Brett Kavanaugh U.S. Supreme Court Nomination Congressional hearings.

We also paid tribute to the law firm Goulston & Storrs with our **Champion Award** and Kristin Knuuttila, Esq. of Knuuttila Law with our **Shining Star Award** for her outstanding pro bono services for survivors on behalf of the VRLC.

Thank you to our generous supporters with a special thanks to our **Shining Star Sponsor** Goodwin Procter.

Thank you to our **Rock Star Sponsors**, Michele and Howard Kessler; Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP; Georgia Murray and Mark Maloney; Karen O'Malley and Michael Feldman; Brenda and Rick Sharton; and Al Tringali and Stacy Malone; and our **Shooting Star Sponsors**, Biogen; Casner & Edwards; Rebecca and Allan Chasen; Deloitte; Susan Estrich; Foley Hoag; Honey Dew Foundation; Robert Insolia; Deb and Steve Marcus; Morgan Lewis; Chris Price; Andrea Robinson and Jonathan Talamo; Seyfarth Shaw; Tito's Handmade Vodka; and WilmerHale.



2019 Shining Star Gala at The Paramount Center in Boston, MA



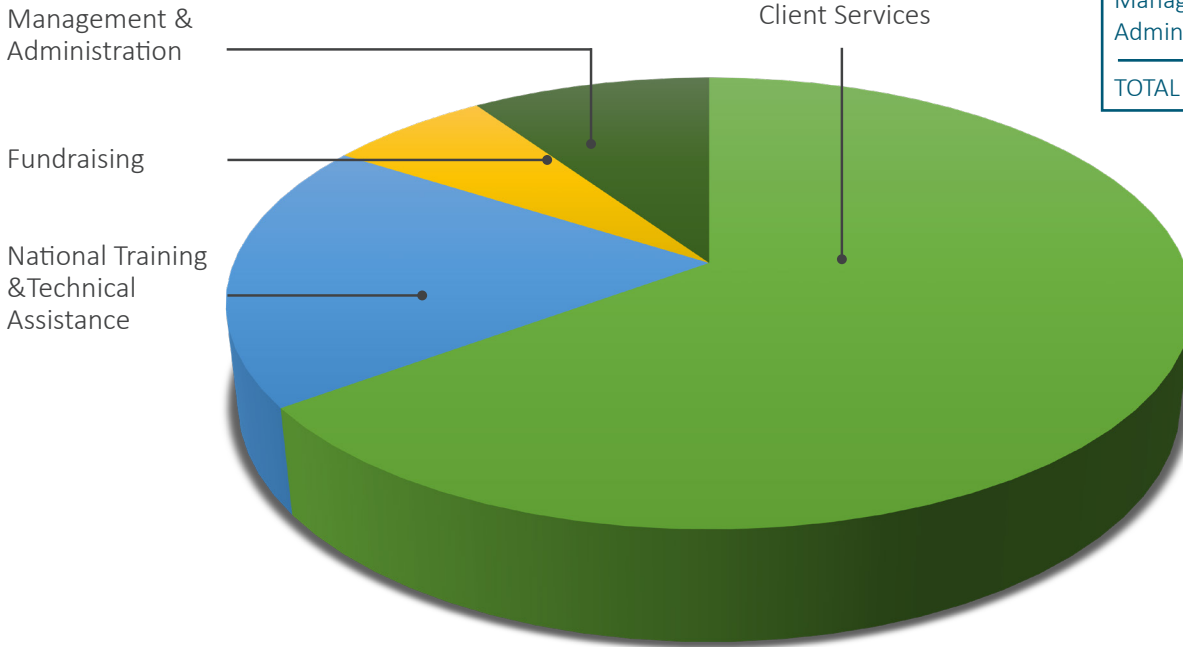
Kristin Knuuttila, 2019 Shining Star Awardee



Executive Director Stacy Malone with 2019 Leadership Awardees Debra Katz, Esq. and Lisa Banks, Esq.

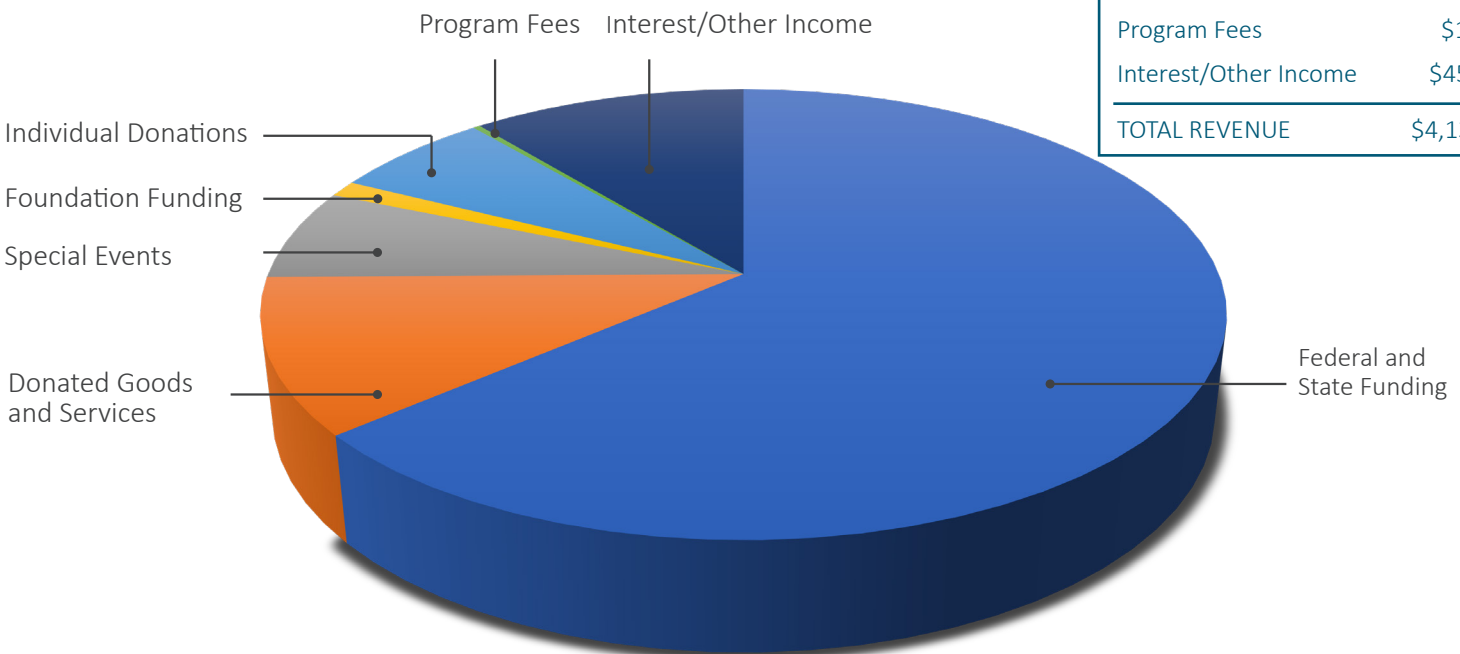
VRLC FINANCIALS

FY20 Expenses



Client Services	\$2,569,217
National Training & Technical Assistance	\$759,421
Fundraising	\$254,897
Management & Administration	\$375,887
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,959,422

FY20 Revenue



Federal and State Funding	\$2,631,003
Donated Goods & Services	\$460,060
Special Events	\$269,748
Foundation Funding	\$48,000
Individual Donations	\$261,743
Program Fees	\$11,668
Interest/Other Income	\$450,591
TOTAL REVENUE	\$4,132,813

VRLC FINANCIALS

FY20 Funding

\$10,000 and above	\$5,000 - \$9,999	\$2,000 - \$4,999
Anonymous	Anonymous II	Cane Systems, LLC
Marybeth Burke and Sam Lambroza	Biogen	Birgitta Dickerson and James Crowley
Katz, Marshall & Banks, LLP	Rebecca and Allan Chasen	Fifth Generation Inc. (Tito's Vodka)
Michele and Howard Kessler	The William H. Donner Foundation	Anne Flink
Life Comes From It Fund	Feldman	Goulston & Storrs
The Miriam Fund	Foley Hoag LLP	Jocelyn Keider
Georgia Murray and Mark Maloney	Harriman Law	Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C.
Brenda and Rick Sharton	Kristin Knuuttila	Karen O'Malley and Michael Feldman
Al Tringali and Stacy Malone	Deborah and Steven Marcus	Oregon Jewish Community Youth Foundation
	Andrea Robinson and Jonathan Talamo	Carel Ristuccia
	Seyfarth Shaw LLP	Janice and Kevin Roden
		Salesforce
		Sandra Dee Shugart
		David Tobias and Elizabeth Micheels
		Tow Foundation
		Cindy Vreeland and David Jones
		Whole Foods Market Community Giving Program
		Maegan and PJ Wilkinson

FY20 Funding

\$1,000 - \$1,999	
Susan H. Alexander and James Gammill	William and Marla Kannel
Michelle Anderson	Megan Kelleher and David Abramowitz
Ankura Consulting Group	Jim and Carolyn McGarry
Arent Fox	Dana M. McSherry
Spectra Asala	Anthony D. Miranda
Nancy Bender	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Center for Violence Prevention and Recovery	Microsoft Philanthropies Employee Giving Program
Doreen Binder	Claire Newton and Edward Maloney
Birch Hill Investment Advisors LLC	John Nguyen
Tracy Brown	O'Connor Professional Group
Robert and Emily Carroll	Raj and Lori Pathak
Floyd Advisory LLC	Krista Green Pratt and Josh Pratt
FTI Consulting	Christopher and Margaret Price
Erin K. Higgins and Doug Rosner	Estie Rappaport and Neil Aresty
Anita Hill	John Santosuosso
Carol and Dennis Kanin	Ilene Seidman
	Susan Vickers and Clint Fondo



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