

THE JUDITH L. LICHTMAN LEGACY FUND

AT THE NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR WOMEN & FAMILIES

ANNUAL REPORT

2025-2026

national partnership for women & families

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The Judith L. Lichtman Legacy Fund



For more than five decades, Judith L. Lichtman has played an indispensable role in shaping the history of the National Partnership for Women & Families and has been a guiding and influential force for civil rights. Her brilliance, legal acumen, and fierce dedication to advancing women's rights have improved the lives of millions. Through her ongoing efforts and the impact of the Judith L. Lichtman Legacy Fund, Judy continues to play a transformative role for women and families.

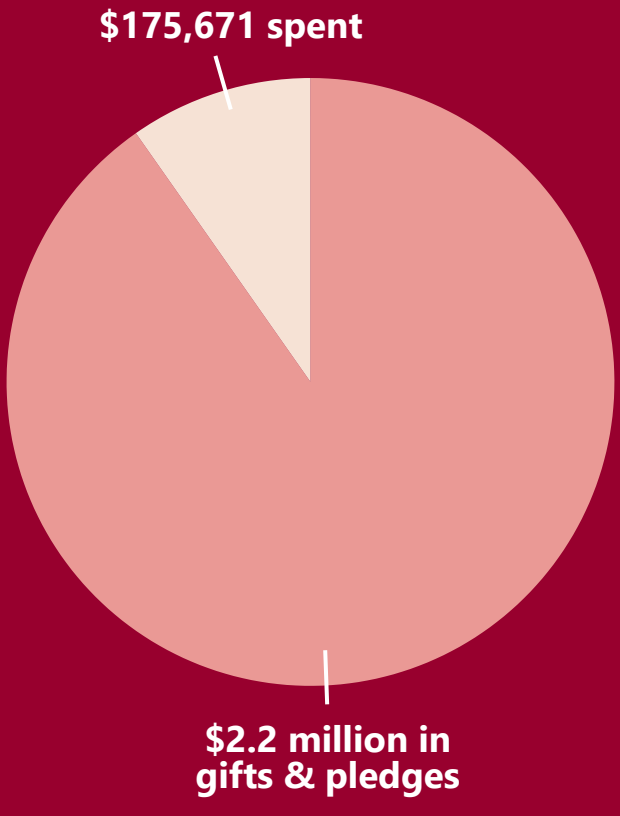
Established in 2024 as a permanent fund, the Judith L. Lichtman Legacy Fund honors Judy's 50 years of service by supporting transformative initiatives at the National Partnership that reflect her legacy and vision for the future. The fund has already supported two Lichtman Fellows, each a recent law graduate completing a 12-month legal policy fellowship at the National Partnership, and welcomed a third Lichtman Fellow in September.

With gratitude to all of its donors, we are pleased to share our 2026 report on the advancement and activities of the Judith L. Lichtman Legacy Fund.

Financial Summary

Since 2024, the National Partnership for Women & Families has received more than $2.2 million in donations and pledges in support of the Judith L. Lichtman Legacy Fund. As of August 31, 2026, the Fund holds $1,627,661 in received gifts and earned interest. We have spent $175,671 to support the first two Lichtman Fellows.

In addition to supporting the fellowship, the fund may also serve as a strategic reserve, providing financial flexibility for President Jocelyn Frye to respond to programmatic opportunities that could not have been anticipated during budgeting. This aspect of the Fund was designed to support either defensive or affirmative rapid response initiatives, aligned with Judy's values, when an opportunity or need presents itself. At this time, funds have not yet been used for these purposes.



The Judith L. Lichtman Fellowship



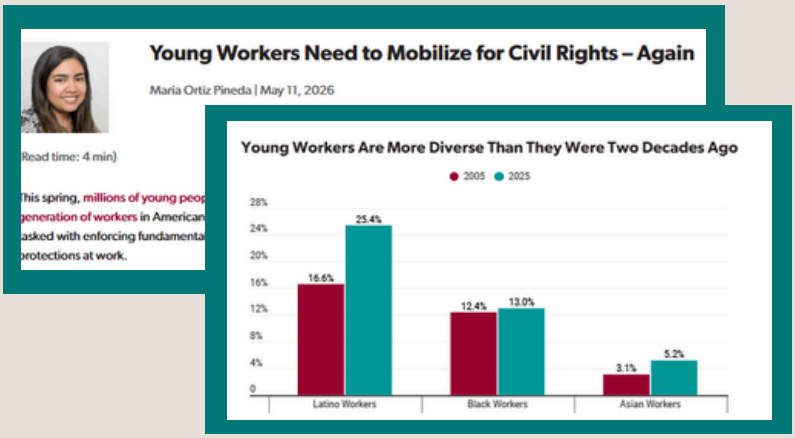
This one-year Fellowship reflects Judy's longstanding impact and her mentorship of countless young women – helping to launch them into fields such as law, policy, and social activism. Each year, the Lichtman Fellow serves as a policy counsel on the National Partnership's Economic Justice team, playing a critical role in the organization's work.

During 2024-2025, we welcomed inaugural Fellow Delesiya Davis, a graduate of Howard University School of Law. Her work included educating the public on the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, analyzing the impacts of the 2025 SCOTUS term, and authoring a blog post for Black Women's Equal Pay Day, bringing attention to persistent inequities in the workplace. Through her work, Delesiya helped establish a meaningful and enduring legacy for future Lichtman Fellows.

Maria Ortiz Pineda was the 2025-2026 Lichtman Fellow at the National Partnership, where she supported the Economic Justice team in advancing workplace equity and protections for women and families. She earned her J.D. from American University Washington College of Law in 2025 as a Public Interest/Public Service Scholar. She gained experience in labor and civil rights law, including through fellowships with the Communications Workers of America and a union-side law firm, as well as the Elliott S. Milstein Civil Advocacy Clinic.

She played a key role in the team's response to the dismantling of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), supporting congressional oversight efforts, drafting comment letters, and contributing to the Anti-Discrimination and Equal Employment in Federal Contracting policy brief. Maria also tracked the 2025–2026 Supreme Court term, drafting internal case explainers and co-authoring the organization's term wrap-up blog. In addition to these efforts, she authored public-facing pieces on landmark civil rights orders and the need for young workers to mobilize.

Maria also built the foundational legislative research to defend the EEO-1 demographic data collection against elimination and advanced the team's state-level paid leave campaigns by maintaining legislative trackers and analyzing federal preemption regarding airline workers.





A Personal Reflection from Maria on Her Transformative Fellowship Experience

This was a hard year for workers' rights, and I spent it at an organization that kept working anyway. Agencies were gutted, and the Supreme Court handed down decisions that rolled back rights people have relied on for decades. Through it all, the Economic Justice team kept doing careful, honest work. This year confirmed that I want to spend my career on the workers' side.

Of all my contributions, I am most proud of the work the team did on the OFCCP. It would have been easy to treat the weakened agency as a closed chapter. Instead, we worked on every front: documenting what was lost, pushing back on the rollback of protections for workers with disabilities, and publishing a roadmap for rebuilding the agency. I am proud to have been part of work that will be useful long after my fellowship ends.

The biggest lesson I took away is that research is advocacy. I came in thinking of them as separate steps: first you do the research, then you make the argument. This year taught me they're the same thing. Sitting with decades-old sources and being honest about what they say is exactly what builds trust with a Hill staffer, a coalition partner, or a colleague. In August, I started a public interest litigation fellowship at a union-side labor and employment firm in D.C. I will be representing workers directly, building on everything I learned this year.

Fellowships like this one are one of the few ways a new lawyer can spend a full year on public interest work, and your support is what makes that possible. Because of it, I spent this year helping respond to attacks on the laws that protect women at work, and I am leaving with skills I will apply for the rest of my legal career.

– Maria Ortiz Pineda



2026-2027 Lichtman Fellow

Michaela Kretzner

Michaela Kretzner earned her J.D. from American University in 2024, where she served as the Publications Editor of the American University *Journal of Gender, Social Policy & the Law*. Michaela has a Master of Public Policy degree and a B.A. in Public Policy with a minor in Economics. Before law school, she gained extensive experience at the California State Auditor, developing legislative recommendations on topics such as California's implementation of the Affordable Care Act. While earning her J.D., Michaela served as a Legal Extern with Victor M. Glasberg & Associates and held roles as a Strategy & Policy Intern and later as a Reproductive Rights & Health Intern with the National Women's Law Center. Michaela joins the Partnership after serving as a Judicial Law Clerk for the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the Civil II Division.

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Thank You!

Throughout her lifetime, Judy Lichtman has been a tireless voice for women's rights, championing policy changes that have significantly expanded reproductive health and economic equity. Her brilliance, legal acumen, and fierce dedication to advancing civil rights have improved the lives of millions. Through her ongoing efforts and the impact of the Judith L. Lichtman Legacy Fund, Judy continues to play a transformative role for women.



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