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# ▶▶ AWESOME FOUNDATION MIAMI

Fueling Miami's awesomeness, \$1,000 at a time.  
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## Calling all AWESOME ideas focused on hurricane recovery

*Supporting our city after the storm*



The impact of Irma both revealed our vulnerabilities and highlighted our strengths; it left us reeling, tired, concerned.

In support of Miami's recovery, we at [Awesome Foundation - Miami](#) are earmarking our next \$1,000 grant for ideas that address our community's resilience. Whether literal (intervention around sea level rise) or more figurative (orchestrated acts of kindness toward seniors affected by the hurricane), we welcome your grassroots ideas to help our city move forward.

We firmly believe that the intersection of empathy and ingenuity can be a fruitful one, and have seen past Awesome Foundation projects add tangible value in moments of crisis or disaster (see an excellent example on Grassroots Mapping [here](#)). Small can

be powerful, and we look forward to seeing what projects Miamians come up with.

\*\*\*Please submit your projects by October 15 and write [IRMA] in the title of your idea.\*\*\* Find us at [www.awesomefoundation.org](http://www.awesomefoundation.org)

As a reminder, we do not award grants for personal use or the operation of existing projects. For a refresher of our mission or guidelines, see our website.

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## Trustee Spotlight:

*Erika Pagano & LWOW*



Miami is famous for its arts, beaches, and culture, but did you know that it's also home to a global, multidisciplinary collaboratory that generates positive, lasting change at the intersection of law, technology, and business? It's called LawWithoutWalls (LWOW), and it was founded in 2011 at the University of Miami. I participated in LWOW as a second-year law student and have remained with the organization since, helping it grow from a community of 50 people across 6 schools to a network of 1500 lawyers, entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, academics, and law and business students from more than 30 schools around the world. LWOW transforms how law and business professionals collaborate. Our mission is threefold: train future lawyers, retrain current lawyers, and create innovations that solve problems at the intersection of law, business, and technology. Two of our students' innovations are, at present, making a big difference, and I think they're both pretty awesome. Read on to learn more about Ithaca and ParDone.

Ithaca was born as a response to the European refugee crisis. It is a non-profit tech platform that helps refugees obtain legal assistance by 1) connecting them with pro

bono lawyers based on availability, expertise, and need; and 2) providing a case management system and virtual space for initial consultation. Ithaca's goal is to dramatically increase the number of legal advisors available to refugees upon landing in Europe to prevent individuals dropping out of the asylum application process and reduce reliance on human traffickers. The platform simultaneously enables lawyers who have a desire to utilize their legal skills for public good, but who are unable to do so because of a lack of time and resources.

The Ithaca team exemplifies the multicultural, multidisciplinary nature of LawWithoutWalls, collaborating across five time zones, three continents, and a multitude of experiences. The students, Joshua Ajamu (Bucerius Law School; Hamburg, Germany), James Dong (University of Sydney; Sydney, Australia), and Joe May (University College London; London, UK), worked alongside a team of professionals to bring Ithaca to life, including Justin North (Janders Dean), Moray McLaren (Redstone Consultants), Zack Knechtel (United Nations Development Program and LWOW alum) and Liz Rieser-Murphy (Legal Aid Society New York, Miami Law graduate, and LWOW alum).

In August, Ithaca was selected by Magic Circle firm Allen & Overy to join the initial cohort of startups housed in and supported by Fuse, the firm's new London-based legal tech incubator. The Ithaca team have also been named finalists for the HiilL innovating Justice Awards and the European Youth Awards. I'm so proud of this team for the success they've had in garnering support for a highly innovative project and very noble mission.

LWOW truly instills lasting inspiration and actionable know-how. ParDone is the product of an LWOW alum who put his sharpened skills and commitment to integrity and social justice to work. Geevith Rubakumar returned to Canada after attending university in the UK and noticed that many marginalized and underserved Canadians could not secure employment because their criminal record, while eligible for expungement, had not been cleared due to the time, cost, and complicated process of doing so. In response, Geevith created ParDone, an online portal that 1) enables an automated check on pardon eligibility; and 2) facilitates an affordable, easy to understand application for the pardon process. Geevith won the Ontario Access to Justice Challenge in 2016, winning CAD \$25,000 in seed funding from the Ontario government and incubation services from Ryerson University's Legal Innovation Zone. ParDone is currently in the beta testing phase. I'm proud of Geevith for recognizing a problem within his community and garnering the support of both local

governments and institutions in making a difference.

ParDone and Ithaca are just two small examples of ideas for good brought to life. Undoubtedly, their success wouldn't be possible without the support of others. I'm grateful to be a part of the Awesome Foundation's Miami Chapter, and am humbled each month by the role we play in our local community by making similarly creative, compassionate, and, well, awesome projects a reality.

## Don't forget to check out the AWESOME projects we have awarded so far in 2017!



**Thank you to CIC Miami for giving AFM a new home!**



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