



IMMIGRANT  
JUSTICE  
CORPS



2017-2018 Annual Report



**Creating the next  
generation of immigration  
attorneys and advocates.**





# OUR IMPACT

## Message From Our Executive Director



Dear Friends of IJC,

Looking back on the past year, our focus was on growth and innovation. We are proud to have graduated 10 Community Fellows and 25 Justice Fellows in August 2018, 92% of whom have secured employment in the immigration field. Our Fellows served 13,976 clients and their families, including unaccompanied minors forcibly separated from their asylum-seeking parents and long-term immigrants with strong family and community ties in the United States facing deportation.

We grew our central staff, hiring key positions in program, development, and training for Fellows. We also continued to grow our geographic reach to seven states and twenty-two cities by adding Fellows in Arlington, Virginia, Baltimore, Maryland, Miami, Florida, and Elizabeth, New Jersey.

As we look ahead, our focus will be on sustainability and expansion. Our biggest priority is sustaining our proven unique model while maintaining the quality of our services and training as we continue to

expand. IJC is committed to expanding our service delivery models to geographies where there is a dearth of representation. As we grow the number of Fellows and geographies where we work, we are also committed to maintaining the high quality of our program.

Our ability to increase our impact would not be possible without our dedicated funders and supporters. Thank you for believing in our cause. It is because of you we have come so far, and because of you we have the

confidence to set our sights high. We are privileged to have you alongside us in this challenging but important work.

With profound gratitude,

Jojo Annobil  
Executive Director

## By the Numbers

IJC is forging a generation of committed immigration lawyers and advocates who are pioneering innovative legal strategies and making a difference for immigrant families. IJC's goal of ensuring that immigration status is not a barrier to social and economic opportunity has become only more urgent as the Federal government's immigration policies have grown harsher.

# 140

Number of lawyers and advocates IJC has trained since 2014.

# 44,000

Number of immigrants and their families IJC Fellows have served.

# 39

Number of legal services providers and community organizations that IJC partners with, allowing us to serve immigrants in areas of high need and substantially increased the capacity of our host organizations.

# 92%

The percentage of Justice Fellows who have graduated from the program and have secured employment in immigration or related fields, thereby solidifying resources on the ground and ensuring that capacity is sustained.

# 93%

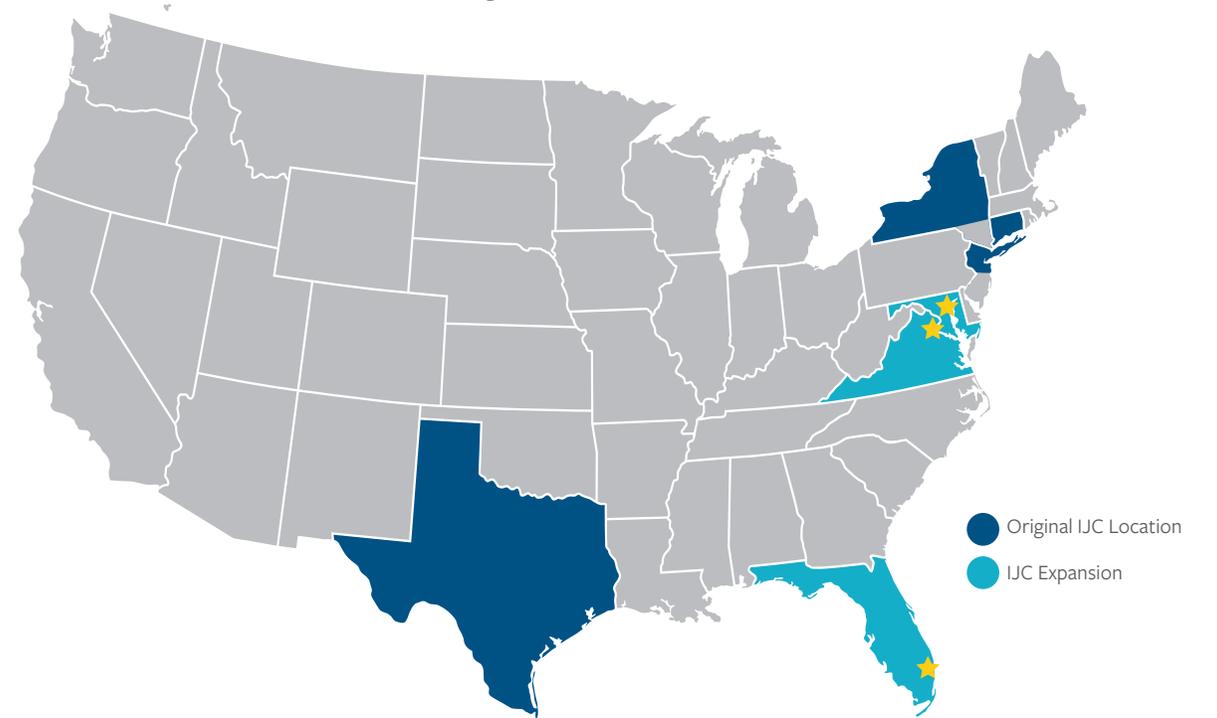
The success rate in cases completed and closed.

# THE IMMIGRATION LANDSCAPE

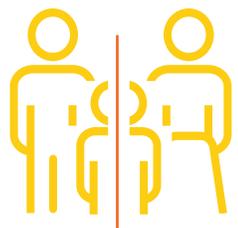
# EXPANDING ACCESS

By placing Fellows where the need for immigration lawyers is extraordinary and availability limited, IJC has expanded access to counsel and improved the quality of representation.

Started in New York City, the program has expanded in New York to the Lower Hudson Valley, Westchester, Albany and Buffalo, to Elizabeth and Newark in New Jersey, New Haven in Connecticut, and Karnes City in Texas. **In September 2018, IJC will begin placing fellows in Miami, Florida; Baltimore, Maryland; and Arlington, Virginia to further expand access to counsel for detained immigrants.**



There are currently more than 764,000 court cases that are backlogged in immigration courts nationwide.



Families continue to be separated at unprecedented rates at the southern border.

The Trump Administration's immigration policies and agenda have had staggering implications for IJC and the work that we do. Though our mission and program remain the same, the policy environment in which our Fellows are practicing has become increasingly hostile.

Since January 2017, the federal government has continued to enforce immigration policies like those that separate immigrant parents and children at the southwest border or reduce asylum protections for victims of domestic violence, much to the detriment of IJC Fellows and their clients.

In addition to the challenges created by aggressive enforcement tactics, bureaucratic backlog presents a significant obstacle. There are currently more than 764,000 court cases that are backlogged in immigration courts nationwide. Another challenge has been an increase in USCIS's requests for evidence. The Department of Homeland Security has begun to issue Requests for Evidence in virtually

all Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) cases, requiring lawyers to make additional Family Court appearances to revise the underlying custody or guardianship order.

Moreover, the "broken" immigration system continues to deteriorate. Over the past year, there have been extraordinary challenges in practicing in immigration court. Cases are scheduled, rescheduled, and removed from the calendar entirely, often with little notice or no notice at all.

These environmental challenges require IJC Fellows to devote an increasing amount of time toward tasks that are not direct legal services, such as client screenings and "Know Your Rights" clinics. The hostility and volatility of the current immigration environment also contribute to growing fear and anxiety within immigrant communities. This reality creates an additional burden for Fellows as they consult with their frightened and vulnerable clients.



The 2017 Fellows will be joining the immigration bar at a moment and time of immense crisis in immigration and their work will make a tremendous difference between an immigrant remaining in the United States with family and deportation.

— Jojo Annobil, the Executive Director

The number of host organizations partnering with IJC is 39 not-for-profit and community-based organizations at the beginning of IJC's fourth year, up from 18 at our inauguration in 2014.

# JUSTICE FELLOWSHIP

Each year, IJC awards 25 Justice Fellowships to promising recent law graduates who have demonstrated a commitment to working with low income immigrants. After weeks of legal training, each Justice Fellow is placed in one of dozens of host organizations, where they earn a salary while representing clients. They take on some of the toughest cases in immigration law, typically including removal defense cases and complex affirmative applications.

Justice Fellows	Total FY2018
Justice Fellows	51
Third-year Justice Fellows	7 Justice Fellows extended their Fellowship for a third year
Spanish speakers	56
Fellows speaking 3 or more languages	28
Languages spoken	Spanish, French, Arabic, Portuguese, Serbian, Amharic, Tetun, Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Russian, Hindi, Galician, Italian, Mandarin, Cantonese

## JUSTICE FELLOW SPOTLIGHT



**Katie Kavanagh**, second-year Justice Fellow with The Legal Aid Society, won a difficult bond hearing for her client J., a 59-year-old, disabled man from Jamaica and a lawful permanent resident for over 25 years. J. was in removal proceedings and subject to mandatory detention because of several marijuana arrests (self-medication for depression, for which he now receives proper mental health treatment) and one attempted

controlled substance sale conviction in 1995. J. was arrested by immigration officials at his home and did not get free legal counsel because the New York Immigrant Family Unity Project (NYIFUP) was not accepting new cases on his first court appearance in immigration court. Katie was assigned J.'s case because of a pending Housing Court case where J. was represented by Legal Aid.

Katie immediately requested a Lora bond hearing for J.—a hearing for detainees incarcerated for over 6 months—after determining that he had a weak protection under the Convention Against Torture (CAT) claim. Katie collected documents and prepared affidavits from family members demonstrating that J. was not a flight risk or a danger to his community. After a contentious hearing, the immigration judge granted

bond. J. was released from detention on December 22nd allowing him to spend the holidays with his family, including a two-year old daughter, a long-term U.S. Citizen partner, and numerous lawfully resident and U.S. citizen family members, including his elderly mother.

While detained, Katie helped J. secure pro bono counsel, former IJC Fellow Katherine Park Kim, to help overturn J.'s 1995 conviction deemed an aggravated felony offense under immigration law and makes him ineligible to apply for cancellation of removal. J.'s immigration case is pending on the non-detained docket, and his Housing Court case, is scheduled for trial soon, where he stands to win tens of thousands of dollars in damages from his slumlord landlord.



## MEET THE JUSTICE FELLOWS

Name	University	Host Organization	Incoming Class
Ben Haldeman	University of Connecticut School of Law	New Haven Legal Assistance	*
Cassie Estassi	Georgetown University Law Center	Human Rights First	*
Claudine-Annick Murphy	Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law	Immigrant Justice Corps	*
Danelly Bello	Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law	Brooklyn Defender Services	*
Dianna Michelle Martinez	Boston University School of Law	Central American Legal Assistance (CALA)	*
Elizabeth Fulton	Berkeley Law School	Unlocal	*
Erika Arce-Romero	Georgetown University Law Center	KIND	*
Frances Hartmann	New York University School of Law	Bronx Defenders	*
Halinka Zolcikova	University of Wyoming College of Law	Prisoners Legal Services	*
Hanne Sandison	Harvard Law School	American Friends Service Committee	*
Héctor Ruiz	University of California Hastings College of Law	Immigration Equality	*
Imogene Mankin	University of California Berkeley School of Law	Bronx Defenders	*
Jazmin Chavez	American University Washington College of Law	Safe Passage Project	*
Jennifer Katzman	CUNY School of Law	Safe Passage Project	*
Jonathan Campozano	Pace Law School	Empire Justice Center	*
Katherine Beck	American University Washington College of Law	Brooklyn Defender Services	*
Kerry Battenfeld	University at Buffalo School of Law	Erie Volunteer Lawyers Project	*
Laura Wooley	Fordham University School of Law	Atlas: DIY	*
Marisol Silva	University of Florida Levin College of Law	Safe Horizon	*
Maybeline Saharig	Seton Hall Law School	NYLAG	*
Natali Soto	Boston College Law School	Sanctuary for Families	*
Rachel Searle	New York Law School	City Bar Justice Center	*
Ricky He	CUNY School of Law	Legal Services of NY	*
Ryan Clough	George Mason, Antonin Scalia Law School	RAICES	*
Sarah Burpee	Brooklyn Law School	Catholic Charities Community Services	*
Sonya Chung	New York University Law School	MinKwon Center for Community Action	*

For the complete list of 2018 Justice Fellows, please refer to page 19.

# COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP

Immigrant Justice Corps offers 10 Community Fellowships every year to recent college graduates with the linguistic fluency, passion, and cultural competency to work with diverse immigrant communities. Like Justice Fellows, they receive immigration law training. After placement in community-based organizations across the New York area, they conduct outreach, explore potential clients' eligibility for immigration relief, and help clients with benefits applications. They refer complex cases to Justice Fellows. All the Community Fellows are Department of Justice accredited representatives that allows them to represent clients before USCIS. Embedded within immigrant communities, they serve as first responders to our program.

## COMMUNITY FELLOW SPOTLIGHT

Asylum cases can often take years to be resolved. For our Fellows, this means closely collaborating with their IJC co-Fellows to ensure that knowledge is preserved when cases are passed on and that the client is supported throughout all stages of the process.

Kareem sought asylum in the United States after arriving from his home country of Yemen on a diplomatic visa. He applied for asylum on the basis of the persecution he faced from the Houthi militant groups who gained significant power in Yemen following the outbreak of civil war in March 2015. In Yemen, Kareem had developed a strong reputation as a liberal pro-democracy activist and Houthi militants began targeting him for his political activities. In an attempt to silence him, they kidnapped and tortured him, threatening to do the same to his family if he did not denounce his politics.

He first met with Susanna Booth, a Class of 2016 Community Fellow at Arab American Association of New York (AAANY), in the spring of 2016 for an intake. After speaking with Kareem about his desire to apply for asylum, Susanna referred him to the former Justice Fellow at AAANY, Christina Elhaddad.

Christina filed his asylum application in the summer of 2016. In August of 2017, Susanna helped to file an expedite request for his application, as the lives of Kareem's family, who had escaped to India, became increasingly and perilously tied to his asylum application. Believing that it is dishonorable for Kareem's ex-wife to remain alone in India, members of her family began threatening to forcibly repatriate her and her children to Yemen, which had become even more dangerous. Additionally, his children's status in India was about to expire soon, without a guarantee of renewal, leaving

them no choice but to return to Yemen. Fortunately, the expedite request was approved, and Kareem had his first asylum interview in October 2017.

However, despite sending numerous case inquiries to the lead management at the asylum office, creating a USCIS Ombudsman's case, soliciting help from two U.S. congressional representatives, and submitting multiple expedite requests to USCIS, Kareem received no information about the status of his case for an entire year. After Susanna graduated from the IJC the case was passed on to AAANY's new Community Fellow, Jonathon Burne. Jonathon is preparing to submit yet another request to expedite, detailing the severity of the humanitarian situation that the USCIS delays continue to exacerbate. Through teamwork and perseverance we will continue to fight for Kareem until he gets the protection and justice he deserves.

Community Fellows	Total FY2018
Community Fellows	19
Third-year Community Fellows	1 Community Fellows extended their Fellowship for a third year
Spanish speakers	15
Fellows speaking 3 or more languages	11
Languages spoken	Spanish, Arabic, French, German, Soninke/Serahule, Haitian Creole, Mandarin, Cantonese, Japanese, Portuguese, Korean, Swahili, Norwegian



## MEET THE COMMUNITY FELLOWS

Name	University	Host Organization	Incoming Class
Alexis Buz	University of California San Diego	New York Public Library	*
Christian Wooddell	University of Rochester	Chinese Planning Council	*
Cinthia Class	John Jay College of Criminal Justice	Neighborhood Defender Service	*
Dulce Mora Flores	Smith College	Part of the Solution (POTS)	*
Iris Hsu	Northwestern University	Queens Public Library	*
Isaura Amezcua	Georgetown University	Project Hospitality	*
Jonathon Burne	Williams College	Arab American Association of New York	*
Katia Cardoza	The University of Texas at Austin	Unlocal	*
Kayla Lemus	Scripps College	Brooklyn Public Library	*
Kit Lee	Pomona College	MinKwon Center for Community Action	*
Arturo Urena	John Jay College of Criminal Justice	Part of the Solution (POTS)	
Cassie Chee	Furman University	CARECEN	
Geovanni Gutierrez Vivar	Hunter College	Public Health Solutions	
Karen Normil	Brown University	Brooklyn Public Library	
Kujegi Camara	Princeton University	Sauti Yetu	
Sandra Guzman	University of California Berkeley	Legal Services of NY	
Sergio Rodriguez Camarena	Pomona College	Project Hospitality	
Shuping Deng	Franklin & Marshall College	Chinese Planning Council	
Susanna Booth	Duke University	Arab American Association	
Danyeli Rodriguez	John Jay College of Criminal Justice	Queens Public Library	

# ALUMNI REPORT



34 graduates from the Immigrant Justice Corps in 2018

We graduated 24 Justice Fellows and 10 community Fellows in August 2018. Of the 24 graduation Fellows, all have secured permanent employment in the immigration field in New York City, Austin, Texas and San Francisco, California. All seven third-year Justice Fellows have secured permanent employment in the immigration field in New York City and Houston, Texas.

This year, four Justice Fellows will remain in the Fellowship for an optional third year.

Three Community Fellows have been accepted to Columbia Law School, American University Washington Law School and CUNY Law School. A fourth Community Fellow gained admission to Fordham Law School but has decided to take a year off before returning to school. Several other CF's have secured legal or policy positions related to immigration law. Many intend to pursue careers in law and attend law school in the future.



## IJC at Roosevelt House

In October 2017, IJC Fellows were hosted by the Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute where they discussed a variety of immigration topics, including the ramifications of anti-immigrant rhetoric and the status of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. During the panel, Community and Justice Fellows shared their experiences working with adults with children and unaccompanied minors, as well as filing affirmative applications for documented and undocumented clients.



## New York City Half Marathon

For the first year ever, Immigrant Justice Corps partnered with New York Road Runners as an Official Charity Partner of the United Airlines NYC Half Marathon. Nine IJC representatives ran in the race raising more than \$16,000 for IJC. The runners included IJC Fellows Caitlin Miner-Le Grand, Anna Byers, Shanti Tharayil, Natali Soto, Luis Rodriguez, Leah Glowacki, Rachel Searle, Sarah Burpee and IJC supporter Adam DuFord.



## Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg

In April, IJC was fortunate enough to participate in a conversation with Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg at the New York Historical Society. The rich and inspiring event was also referred to in *The New York Times*.



# OUR 2017 HOST ORGANIZATIONS

# OUR STAFF & BOARD MEMBERS

 American Friends Service Committee	 華人策劃協會	 MINKWON CENTER For Community Action	 NDS HARLEM	 Sanctuary for Families
 Arab American Association of New York	 Empire Justice Center Making the law work for all New Yorkers	 NYLAG NEW YORK LEGAL ASSISTANCE GROUP	 SAFE PASSAGE PROJECT	 Sauti Yetu CENTER FOR AFRICAN WOMEN
 The Bronx Defenders Redefining public defense.	 BS	 Bklyn Public Library	 LAA NEW HAVEN LEGAL ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATION, INC.	 THE DOOR
 CARECEN	 VOLUNTEER LAWYER PROJECT	 New York Public Library	 IMMIGRATION EQUALITY	 UNLOCAL
 Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New York Providing Help. Creating Hope.	 PLSNY PRISONERS' LEGAL SERVICES of New York	 POTS Part of the Solution Feeding Our Neighbors. Inspiring Our Community.	 THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY MAKING THE CASE FOR HUMANITY	 URBAN JUSTICE CENTER
 CATHOLIC MIGRATION SERVICES	 KIND KIDS IN NEED OF DEFENSE	 Legal Services NYC	 Project Hospitality	 RAICES Rohrig and Associates Center for Education and Legal Services
 CENTRAL AMERICAN LEGAL ASSISTANCE We support the legal assistance of communities.	 Queens Library	 Lutheran Social Services of New York	 safehorizon	 WORKER JUSTICE CENTER of NEW YORK
 Public Health Solutions	 CITY BAR JUSTICE CENTER	 ATLAS-DIY	 human rights first	

## Our Staff:

**Jojo Annobil,**  
Executive Director

**Victoria Neilson,**  
Legal Director

**Emily Bormann,**  
Operations Specialist

**Samuel Palmer-Simon,**  
Supervising Attorney

**Harold Solis,**  
Supervising Attorney

**Leyda Taveras,**  
Administrative Coordinator

## Our Board Members:

**Sarah Burr,**  
Assistant Chief Immigration Judge (Ret.)

**Alina Das,**  
Associate Professor of Clinical Law and Supervising Attorney,  
New York University School of Law

**Robert A. Katzmann,**  
Chief Judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit

**Stephanie Khurana,**  
Managing Director, Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation

**Steve Kuhn,**  
Co-Founder and President, ASK Charitable Foundation

**Robert Morgenthau,**  
Of Counsel, Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz

**Robie Spector,**  
Director, Robie & Scott Spector Charitable Fund

**William Zabel,**  
(Chair) Founding Partner, Schulte, Roth & Zabel

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**Thank you  
for your support!**

# MEET THE JUSTICE FELLOWS



Name	University	Host Organization	Incoming Class
Ben Haldeman	University of Connecticut School of Law	New Haven Legal Assistance	*
Cassie Estassi	Georgetown University Law Center	Human Rights First	*
Claudine-Annick Murphy	Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law	Immigrant Justice Corps	*
Danelly Bello	Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law	Brooklyn Defender Services	*
Dianna Michelle Martinez	Boston University School of Law	Central American Legal Assistance (CALA)	*
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Erika Arce-Romero	Georgetown University Law Center	KIND	*
Frances Hartmann	New York University School of Law	Bronx Defenders	*
Halinka Zolcikova	University of Wyoming College of Law	Prisoners Legal Services	*
Hanne Sandison	Harvard Law School	American Friends Service Committee	*
Héctor Ruiz	University of California Hastings College of Law	Immigration Equality	*
Imogene Mankin	University of California Berkeley School of Law	Bronx Defenders	*
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Marisol Silva	University of Florida Levin College of Law	Safe Horizon	*
Maybeline Saharig	Seton Hall Law School	NYLAG	*
Natali Soto	Boston College Law School	Sanctuary for Families	*
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Ricky He	CUNY School of Law	Legal Services of NY	*
Ryan Clough	George Mason, Antonin Scalia Law School	RAICES	*
Sarah Burpee	Brooklyn Law School	Catholic Charities Community Services	*
Sonya Chung	New York University Law School	Minkwon Center for Community Action	*
Alexander Holtzman	Ohio State University, Moritz College of Law	Safe Passage Project	
Amandeep Singh-Kahlon	New York University School of Law	Catholic Migration Services	
Amelia Marriz	New York University School of Law	Brooklyn Defender Services	
Angelica Juarbe	Columbia Law School	Atlas: DIY	
Anna Byers	Harvard Law School	Sauti Yetu	
Carols Valenzuela	New York Law School	Safe Passage Project	
Cecilia Lopez	American University Washington College of Law	Catholic Charities Community Services	
Cristina Manzano	Boston College Law School	The Door	
Elizabeth Gibson	Georgetown University Law Center	NYLAG	
Erika Vera	Columbia Law School	The Door	
Frances Davila	New York University School of Law	Bronx Defenders	
Guadalupe Aguirre	University of California Berkeley School of Law	Empire Justice Center	
Jill Rudge	Brooklyn Law School	Sanctuary for Families	
Jonathan Hurley	Yale Law School	Bronx Defenders	
Kathryn Kimball	American University Washington College of Law	Legal Services of NY	
Katie Kavanagh	New York University School of Law	Legal Aid Society	
Leah Glowacki	The University of Texas at Austin	CARECEN	
Lindsay Mullett	Harvard Law School	Lutheran Social Services	
Luis Rosario Rodriguez	Pace University School of Law	Catholic Charities Community Services	
Matthew Johnson	James E. Roger College of Law at the University of Arizona	Immigration Equality	
Natalie Maust	Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law	Legal Aid Society	
Noelle Yasso	University of Pennsylvania School of Law	Catholic Migration Services	
Razeen Zanman	Fordham University School of Law	Legal Services of NY	
Setenay Akdag	Brooklyn Law School	Lutheran Social Services	
Shanti Tharayil	University of Michigan Law School	Urban Justice Center	
Katie Madison	Yale Law School	Immigrant Justice Corps	
Paola Uriarte	Brooklyn Law School	Central American Legal Assistance	
John Travis	Boston University School of Law	Catholic Charities Community Services	
Kennji Kizuka	Berkeley Law School	Human Rights First	
Gilda Holguin	Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law	Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)	
Kristen Cates	Georgetown University Law Center	RAICES	
Victor Cueva	Cardozo Law School	Kingston Worker Justice Center	



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