



Moving Forward With Our Community

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



5,161
PEOPLE
SERVED

178
BRIEF LEGAL
& NAVIGATION
SERVICES

740
LEGAL ADVICE &
CONSULTATIONS

818
DIRECT
REPRESENTATION

1,451
PRO SE
ASSISTANCE

1,974
LEGAL
INFORMATION
AND REFERRAL

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**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

9

**COMMUNITY
PARTNER
ORGANIZATIONS
TRAINED**

1,358

**HOURS *PRO BONO*
ATTORNEYS
VOLUNTEERED**

166

VOLUNTEERS

158

**HOURS *PRO BONO*
MEDICAL
PROFESSIONALS
VOLUNTEERED**

**26 OUT OF 33
COUNTIES SERVED**

Bernalillo	McKinley
Catron	Otero
Chaves	Rio Arriba
Cibola	Roosevelt
Colfax	San Juan
Curry	San Miguel
Doña Ana	Sandoval
Eddy	Santa Fe
Guadalupe	Sierra
Lea	Socorro
Lincoln	Taos
Los Alamos	Torrance
Luna	Valencia



Our Detention & Asylum team members assist one of our clients while following COVID-19 social distancing regulations. Since the onset of the pandemic and due to COVID-19 safety restrictions, our team has pivoted to helping immigrants and asylum seekers remotely.

Dear Friends,

It's been a year of change, one that we could not have gotten through without your support. On top of the ever-shifting legal and policy landscape surrounding immigration, COVID-19 has continued to force us to reevaluate the way we carry out our mission and conduct our work. But with change comes opportunity. That's why we chose **Moving Forward with Our Community** as the theme for this year's report, reflecting the drive and determination put in by our team of staff, volunteers, and partners to ensure we continue to provide high-quality services and advocacy for community members in these difficult times.



One thing that hasn't changed: nearly two years into the pandemic, our immigrant community continues to be disproportionately affected, as COVID-19 has exacerbated countless systemic issues. Moreover, Trump-era policies continue to create a climate of fear.

We could not do what we do without you and your support.

Title 42, the COVID-19 "public health" order, has been used by our federal government to turn away asylum seekers at our border. The Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) have forced hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers to wait in Mexico during the adjudication of their cases. Efforts to wind down MPP have faced legal set-backs. A welcome federal court decision in December 2020, which allowed first-time DACA applicants to submit applications again, has been subject to retaliatory lawsuits that leave our clients in a state of constant limbo.

While the national climate is still highly volatile, we are proud that on a local level we have seen community members and government creating lasting change in New Mexico, addressing barriers to economic stability for immigrants to our state. For the second year in a row, we partnered with community-based organizations and community members to advocate for statutory change by supporting Senate Bill 219, sponsored by Senator Ortiz y Pino. It was passed and signed by the Governor. The new law removed statutory administrative and regulatory barriers to professional and occupational licenses for immigrants.

We remain hopeful despite the challenges and constant changes. The demand for nonprofit immigration legal services in New Mexico remains high, putting significant strain on our staff and their well-being during these challenging times. We experienced several staff transitions this year, saying goodbye to some (including our longtime friend, co-worker, and Executive Director Adriel Orozco), while welcoming to our team a new group of talented advocates. With our team's experience and your continued dedication, we will move forward together to serve low-income immigrant communities throughout New Mexico. Thank you for your commitment to NMILC.

¡La lucha sigue! The fight continues!

Adelante,

Jennifer Landau
Executive Director

Mónica Córdova
Board Chair

Advocating for Asylum Seekers & Fighting to End Immigrant Detention



A Humanitarian Crisis at The Border

The Biden Administration inherited a broken asylum system. Shortly after taking office, the new administration began the process of winding down the xenophobic Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) program, which forced hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers to wait in Mexico during the adjudication of their cases. Thousands of asylum seekers were paroled into the U.S. this year, overwhelming NMILC and other legal service providers across the country.

“Title 42,” another Trump-era policy, prevented tens of thousands of people from seeking asylum at the border. Although the Biden Administration has permitted limited exceptions to unaccompanied minors and families, thousands continue to be deprived of the right to seek humanitarian protection. Families allowed to pursue asylum in the U.S. are often placed in an expedited process, dramatically reducing their chance to obtain representation and meaningfully present their asylum claims.

To respond to the overwhelming need for legal support for asylum seekers in New Mexico, NMILC created workshops to assist and inform as many asylum seekers as possible, including those at the Cibola and Torrance County Detention Centers. Workshops inform asylum seekers about the immigration court process and help applicants prepare their asylum-related documents. We also continued screening for COVID-related vulnerabilities and provided *pro bono* referrals for release cases.

In 2021, our asylum team also supported hundreds of non-detained asylum seekers through our remote service infrastructure. We utilized innovative forms preparation and advocacy systems to guide newly arrived families through the early stages of the asylum process. As regulations governing the MPP and Title 42 policies changed, we adapted our programming to provide workshop participants with up-to-date information and advocacy.

ENDING IMMIGRANT DETENTION

As part of a national movement to end family separation and immigrant detention, NMILC joined forces with several organizations to form the People Over Private Prisons–New Mexico (POPP–NM) coalition. The coalition worked toward collectively moving our state legislators to end private prison contracting in New Mexico. POPP–NM partnered with the Detention Watch Network, a national nonprofit, to align our local campaign to the national strategy and conversation around ending private detention. Through legal expertise, strategic organizing, communication strategy, and advocacy, POPP–NM was successful in introducing House Bill 40 The Private Detention Facilities Moratorium Act, in the 2021 New Mexico legislative session. NMILC members served as legal experts for committee hearings and panel experts. Though HB40 did not pass, it generated crucial conversations and awareness among community members and policy makers.



“This past legislative session, we and other advocates pushed to formally end all privately run detention facilities in New Mexico, including ICE detention centers. Subjecting people fleeing persecution to further harm and violence is an affront to our laws and values as a nation.”

—ARIFA RAZA
NMILC Detention & Asylum
Supervising Attorney



ADVOCATING FOR DETAINEES DURING COVID-19

In New Mexico, detained immigrant populations faced a lack of COVID-19 safety protocols, inconsistent vaccine information, and inadequate medical care in detention centers. At various points in 2020 and 2021, ICE detention centers in New Mexico had some of the highest COVID-19 case counts in the country. NMILC advocated for COVID-19 protective measures and vaccinations, and succeeded in obtaining release of high-risk immigrant detainees with underlying medical conditions. In May 2021, NMILC joined the ACLU–NM and Santa Fe Dreamers Project (SFDP) in a lawsuit related to the inhumane pepper-spraying of about 24 detained asylum seekers who were peacefully protesting the lack of COVID-19 safety measures, and inadequate medical care. NMILC continues to collaborate with the ACLU–NM and SFDP in ongoing litigation.

OUR IMPACT

NMILC provided legal information, guidance, and *pro se* services to:

252 individuals
at the Torrance County
Detention Facility

Over **25** individuals
at the Cibola County
Correctional Center

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



In the summer of 2021, Bria Yazic, a Northeastern Law School intern, volunteered to support NMILC’s asylum workshop and litigation services. Bria assisted with asylum workshop intakes, provided research assistance, and drafted motions in the pepper spray litigation.

“The NMILC team welcomed me immediately and gave me opportunities to learn important lawyering skills on the job. I really appreciated the opportunity to speak directly with clients. Moments of humor were so meaningful considering the serious and painful topics that compromise workshop intakes.”

Building Power & Representation Through Legal Services



Supporting Applicants with? Paths to Citizenship & DACA

2021 brought many administrative and policy changes to citizenship, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and residency programs. To best serve the community, NMILC offered remote citizenship, DACA, and residency renewal services, developing innovative systems to register and maintain virtual client files remotely.

Our team worked closely with *pro bono* attorneys and volunteers to overcome increased processing times caused by remote workshops. When NMILC received an influx of calls from first-time DACA applicants, our *pro bono* attorneys and volunteer teams established a remote workshop focused entirely on initial DACA applicants. NMILC served 207 initial DACA applicants between December 7, 2020 (when the Department of Homeland Security began accepting initial DACA applications) and July 16, 2021 (when a Federal judge prevented DHS from reviewing initial DACA applications).

Whether in-person or virtual, community partnership is essential. NMILC collaborated with El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos to build power in the immigrant community by connecting legal services with civic engagement and organizing efforts. Together we conducted two pilot projects where NMILC offered legal services to cohorts of legal permanent residents. El CENTRO oversaw the cohorts and led leadership development training on civic engagement, workers' rights, and immigrants' rights.

FABIOLA LANDEROS COMMUNITY ORGANIZER

“This collaboration has given our people the opportunity to undergo the naturalization process with the support of legal representatives and community advocates who are also fighting for community power and justice so they don’t have to feel like they need to go at it alone.”

—Fabiola Landeros, Community Organizer,
EL CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos.



OUR IMPACT

WORKSHOP APPLICANTS SERVED

128 in 2017
281 in 2018
941 in 2019
983 in 2020
1,170 in 2021

REMOTE WORKSHOPS

21 counties served

VOLUNTEERS ENGAGED

16 paralegals and
pro bono attorneys
trained for our DACA
renewal workshop

9 languages
represented by our
translators

240 documents
translated

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Alexandra Ogunsanya, a Public Ally volunteer with NMILC, provided crucial support for our remote Citizenship and DACA Program this year. She helped hundreds of applicants prepare their citizenship, residency, and DACA applications. Alexandra also participated in NMILC’s Pre-Law Pipeline Program before successfully matriculating to New York Law School on a full-tuition scholarship!

“I chose to volunteer with NMILC because I am passionate about working with and supporting the immigrant community here in New Mexico. Being able to have a direct positive effect on the lives of immigrants in New Mexico has been an amazing opportunity and experience for me.”

DID YOU KNOW: Applying for citizenship is an expensive process that discourages many low-income, eligible immigrants.

\$725 Cost to apply for citizenship

In addition to applications for full fee waivers, NMILC helps clients apply for a \$405 fee reduction.

We helped **74** individuals submit applications for fee waivers or fee reductions.



Fighting for Immigrant Children & Youth

Supporting SIJS Applicants Through Historic Backlogs

OUR IMPACT IN 2021

119 Immigrant Youth Represented with SIJS Cases

38 SIJS Predicate Orders Approved

38 SIJS Residency Applications Approved

95 DACA Renewal Applications Completed

40 Pro Bono Attorneys Worked SIJS and DACA Cases

Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) is a type of humanitarian immigration relief available to immigrant youth who have been abandoned, abused, or neglected. With the future of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA) in peril, SIJS remains a critical pathway to residency and citizenship for immigrant youth. SIJS backlogs disproportionately affect Central American immigrants, who cannot lawfully work in the United States pending the final disposition of their SIJS case.

This year, NMILC pushed for U.S. Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS) to issue Employment Authorization Documents (EAD) to immigrant children and youth. NMILC Supervising Attorney Monica Newcomer Miller filed several EAD applications relying on *Godines v. DHS*, which allows youth who receive SIJS to obtain work authorization.

Building Pro Bono Networks to Support Immigrant Children & Youth

Pro bono attorneys are an integral part of NMILC’s SIJS program. New Mexico pro bono attorneys obtain time-sensitive predicate orders, necessary to begin SIJS proceedings. This year NMILC conducted remote outreach and training of pro bono attorneys and successfully held two free remote CLEs. NMILC also formalized a partnership with the Modrall Sperling law firm, training their attorneys and staff on SIJS and DACA.



Expanding SIJS Partnerships in Rural New Mexico

Jessica Inez Martinez joined NMILC this September as a Corrine Wolfe Transformative Advocacy Fellow, a Fellowship through the University of New Mexico School of Law funded by the Kellogg

Foundation. Jessica is working to build partnerships with service providers throughout rural New Mexico and train *pro bono* attorneys to represent SIJS eligible children.

“As a daughter of an immigrant, this fellowship comes full circle. Understanding my mother’s sacrifices inspired me to go to law school and fueled my passion to serve my community. This fellowship project will increase the well-being of immigrant children by developing a referral process in rural areas and through direct legal representation.”

COLLABORATING TO SUPPORT IMMIGRANT YOUTH

NMILC works with government agencies, legal service providers, the University of New Mexico School of Law, and private law firms to provide accessible, free legal services to immigrant youth applying for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status in New Mexico.

2021 PARTNERS

Individual *Pro Bono* Attorneys

Modrall Spering Law Firm

New Mexico Children, Youth & Families Department

Law Offices of the Public Defender’s

Pegasus Legal Aid

Santa Fe Dreamers Project

University of New Mexico School of Law

SIJS “ARTIVISM” OUTREACH



This spring we held NMILC’s inaugural art contest for students across New Mexico. Students were asked to submit artistic designs inspired by the theme “Our Community, Our Power.” The contest built connections with schools and students across the state. Over 70 students registered and 21 submitted designs.

Del Norte High School student Jeanie Vo’s design was this year’s contest winner. Her art was used to make T-shirts and tote bags to promote NMILC.

CLIENT HIGHLIGHT

PAYING IT FORWARD

Evelyn Perez (right) and Quiana Salazar-King, NMILC’s Community Engagement Director (left) at a community event informing the community about NMILC.

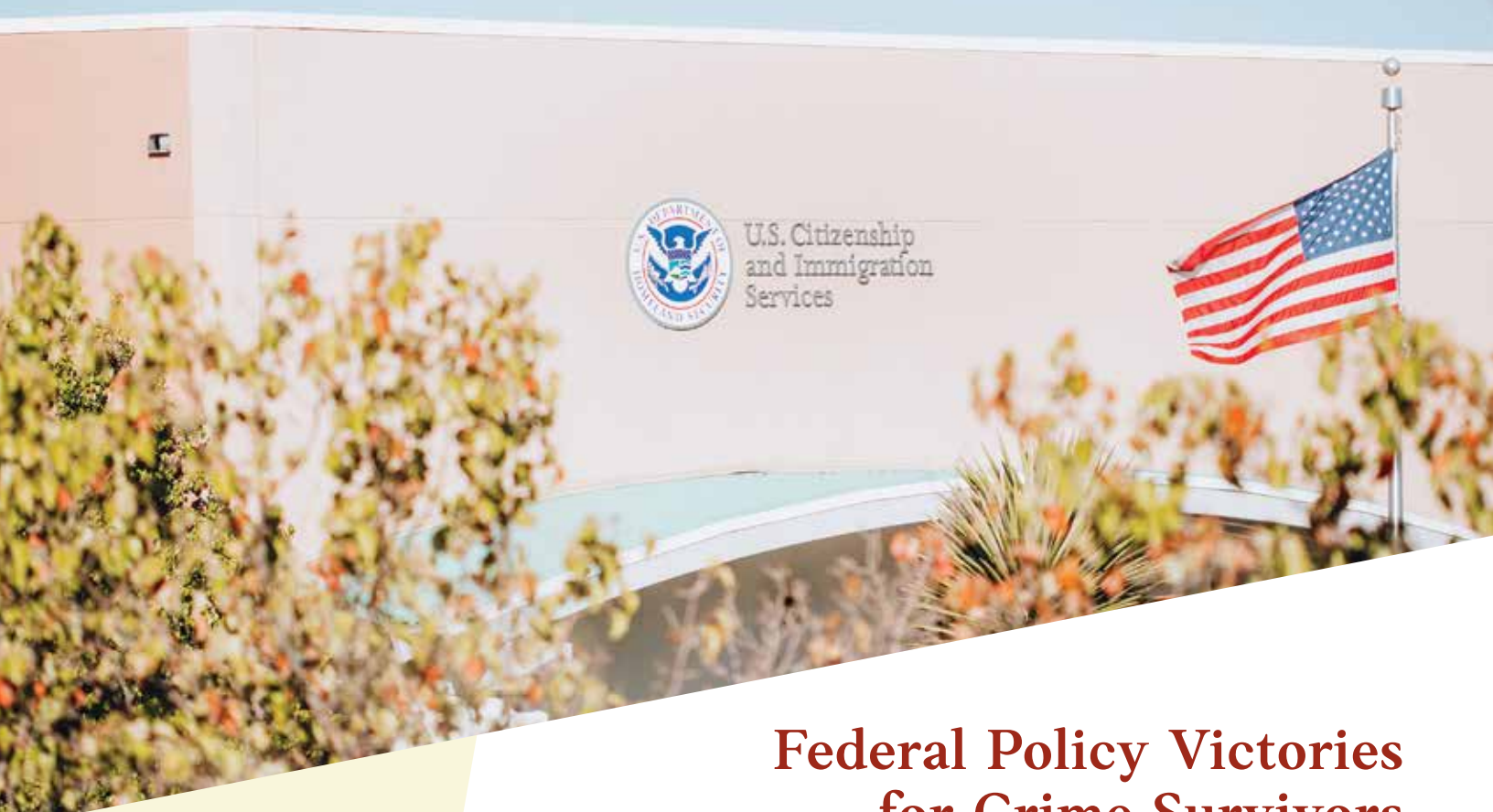
Evelyn Perez interned with NMILC last summer through the City of Albuquerque’s Junior Mentorship Program. Evelyn assisted U-Visa cases by updating client information.



“I want to give back to the community that gave me everything I needed to continue my studies and to stop living in fear.”

—Evelyn Perez

Moving Forward with Immigrant Survivors



Federal Policy Victories for Crime Survivors

OUR IMPACT IN 2021

NMILC supported survivors pursuing Violence Against Women Act petitions, U, or T Visas with:

306
consultations

34
brief services

356
direct representation

The Trump Administration instituted unprecedented administrative and policy barriers for survivors of crime, causing them to fear submitting crime visa applications. Survivors of violent crime and domestic crime were routinely detained and removed from the U.S. despite having a pending application for immigration relief. Under the Biden Administration, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) released new prosecutorial discretion guidance for ICE attorneys, permitting them to close cases for survivors of crime—an incredible shift from the previous position that ICE would pursue every case to completion.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) also implemented a procedure for fast-tracking relief for survivors of crime who have cooperated with authorities in reporting and prosecuting crime. USCIS can now review a pending U Visa petition and make a quick, bona fide determination that the applicant qualifies. This determination provides protection from removal and ensures legal work authorization. NMILC clients who applied in 2016 are finally getting these bona fide determinations.



Emma Race, NMILC's Survivor Advancement Program Supervisor, takes a client call from her home office. Since the onset of COVID-19, our Survivor Advancement Team supports survivors through remote services.

EMPOWERING SURVIVORS THROUGH HOLISTIC SERVICES DURING COVID-19

In 2021, NMILC's Survivor Advancement Program provided clients with holistic services via trauma-informed legal assistance and representation, and supported them in navigating community and government resources. More than 70% of clients directly represented by one of our attorneys are survivors of a violent crime or human trafficking.

Partner organizations identify and refer survivors to NMILC for legal services and help support clients in gathering critical documentation for their legal cases. These partners have deep community networks all around the state, which build trust with immigrant families and survivors of crimes. NMILC trains providers so that they understand the specific legal needs of immigrants, while the providers ensure NMILC is up to date on the best trauma-informed and community-centered practices. These partnerships also ensure immigrant community members can take full advantage of New Mexico's wealth of community resources, without undue bureaucratic hurdles or fear of complications regarding their immigration status.

For many of our clients, financial constraints limit access to medical services needed for their legal cases. Every month, NMILC partners with UNM Physicians for Human Rights and the One Hope Centro de Vida Health Center to perform *pro bono* medical, gynecological, and psychological evaluations survivors need for case evidence. **Through this partnership, NMILC provided *pro bono* medical evaluations for eight survivors in 2021.**

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Kari Converse is a longtime court-certified volunteer interpreter with NMILC who translates legal documents and interprets for clients during the

medical evaluations and screenings required for their cases. She also volunteers at our monthly clinic for immigrant survivors hosted in partnership with UNM Physicians for Human Rights at the One Hope Centro de Vida Health Clinic. This year, Kari helped make a long-shot VAWA win possible for one of our survivor clients by interpreting for them during a psychological evaluation needed for case evidence at their immigration court hearing.

"I have been deeply grateful for the opportunities NMILC has offered me to help. Now, I have a new way to help, by interpreting for medical exams. NMILC is a tremendous force for good in our community and world, and I am grateful for the opportunities to contribute."

NMILC is recruiting certified interpreters in any language. If interested in volunteering, go to nmilc.org/volunteer, or email Delaney Swink, NMILC Volunteer Coordinator, at dswink@nmilc.org.

NMILC provided Pathways Navigation to 114 individuals

OPENING PATHWAYS TO HOLISTIC SERVICES

NMILC just completed its first year as part of the Pathways to a Healthy Bernalillo County program. The initiative focuses on empowering clients to advocate for themselves by supporting them in navigating and accessing local services. Pathways partners include Centro Savila, United Voices for Newcomer Rights, Encuentro, and ACCESS.



Surviving Trafficking: A Client Story

Josefina (pseudonym) survived human trafficking more than 15 years ago. With NMILC's help, she obtained her T Visa this year. T Visas are a form of humanitarian relief available to survivors of labor or sex trafficking. A final decision can take anywhere from 19 to 40 months to be rendered. Under the previous administration, T Visa petitions were systematically denied when the victimization occurred more than five years prior to the application being filed, despite the law not having a time limit.

Josefina came to the United States in the early 2000s to escape gender-based violence in her home country. Upon crossing the border, she was apprehended by Border Patrol and released after a few days. Immigration officials left her at a bus stop without money, extra clothing, or directions. After a day or two, a woman befriended Josefina and promised to help her get clothes and food. Josefina was happy to see a friendly person who also spoke her language.

The woman, however, took her back to a house where she was held captive and brutally subjected to sex trafficking. After some time, the woman abandoned her in the countryside. Josefina was found by a couple of very kind people who helped her reunite with her family. She later met her spouse and established a family. They lived happily for years until she and her spouse were detained during a surprise ICE raid. Josefina was released to take care of her minor child, but her spouse was held in ICE custody during his removal proceedings.

Josefina came to NMILC for legal assistance for her spouse and herself. Two NMILC attorneys represented Josefina in her petition for a T Visa before the immigration court. While her T Visa application was pending, Josefina and her family underwent difficult times. Her spouse remained detained until he was deported to his home country, where he ultimately passed away from health complications that were left untreated while in ICE custody. Josefina's T Visa was approved after 20 months, giving her legal status and a work permit to help make ends meet for her children. The T Visa approval also provided a basis to terminate her removal proceedings.



Advocating Against the “Blank-Space” Policy

In April 2021, NMILC turned to the media to inform our community about the increase in U Visa rejections resulting from a 2019 Trump-era policy known as the “Blank-Space Rejection” policy, which was used to reject more than 60,000 U Visa and asylum applications.

Due to a lawsuit filed by immigration advocates, USCIS revoked the policy in December 2020, and in July 2021 agreed to issue new receipt notices reflecting the original filing date for cases rejected under the policy. In addition to getting the word out, NMILC ensured that our clients’ applications avoided this unnecessary rebuttal and advocated for applicants whose applications had been rejected under “Blank-Space”.

Empowering Immigrants to Access Resources During Covid-19

Almost two years into the global pandemic, low-income immigrant communities continue to see disproportionate effects of COVID-19, making financial stability a nearly impossible challenge. At the federal level, immigrants were excluded from federal stimulus programs, leaving them to navigate complicated, sometimes overwhelming, alternate resource systems. Strong community advocacy helped to push New Mexico’s state legislature and local governments to fund financial assistance programs for people excluded from federal COVID-19 relief packages, including our immigrant community. Because of the fear many immigrants experience in accessing government support, NMILC partnered with the City of Albuquerque and City of Santa Fe to ensure that community members were provided with accurate information and could access local resources.

NMILC’s staff also collaborated with the New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty (NMCLP) to create a resource guide that lists specific programs available to immigrants depending on their immigration status. NMILC and NMCLP successfully advocated for removing administrative barriers in the Emergency Rental Assistance Program application processes that kept eligible immigrants from applying.

All together, in 2021, NMILC helped 139 immigrant families who were experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19 to navigate community resources and access over \$31,700 for housing stability and immigration application related fees, with the support of the City of Albuquerque, the City of Santa and Catholic Charities.

COLLABORATING TO SUPPORT SURVIVORS

This year NMILC partnered statewide with victim service providers, healthcare providers, law enforcement, and other local and national governmental agencies to respond to survivors’ COVID-19 related challenges and needs.

GOVERNMENT

NM Crime Victims Reparation Commission

City of Albuquerque

City of Santa Fe

VICTIM SERVICE PROVIDERS

ARISE

Casa Fortaleza

Casa Kids of Chavez County

Center of Protective Environment

Enlace Comunitario

New Mexico Asian Family Center

Phoenix House

SAFE House

Solace Crisis Treatment Center

Southern NM Child Advocacy Center

HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

University of New Mexico Hospital

One Hope Clinic

CHANGING THE BORDER NARRATIVE

Moving forward with our community also means reshaping the xenophobic and racist border narrative that has spread rampantly throughout our nation in the last few years.

This year, NMILC was named a grantee of the Reclaiming the Border Narrative Project, an initiative funded by the Ford Foundation in partnership with Borealis Philanthropy, the Center for Cultural Power, the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, and the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures. The Project is a community archiving initiative aimed at changing the U.S.-Mexico border narrative through authentic storytelling by directly affected communities in a variety of formats. Highlighted below are stories of our staff, volunteers, clients, and allies that have participated in the Border Narrative Project.



John Dinh Hoang

Citizenship/DACA Intern

John Dinh Hoang is the son of Vietnamese immigrants. He attributes his perseverance and resilience to his parents and their immigration journey. His experience as a queer child of immigrants motivated him to intern with NMILC's Citizenship/DACA program in 2021. John believes that it's important for immigrants to believe in their power and capabilities to persevere.

"Sharing my story and lived experience is a starting point for people to connect with my humanity."



Ilse Grijalva

Community Partner
Media Specialist

Ilse Grijalva is the Communications Media Specialist for NMILC’s community partner, Encuentro. Originally from Chihuahua, Mexico, Ilse was 14 years old when she migrated with her family to New Mexico. She attributes her strong work ethic and passion for learning and growing to her parents. Ilse leads Tu Voz Digital, Encuentro’s community journalism initiative.

“Community journalism is a great opportunity to get important stories out through the same people that are directly affected.”



Sophia Corwell

NMILC Translation Volunteer

Sophia Corwell is a manager at Sandia National Laboratories. She was raised by her grandparents in El Salvador and migrated to the U.S. in the 80s. Sophia is also a translation volunteer with NMILC. Sophia says she volunteers to help give a voice to immigrants in search of legal assistance.

“I chose to tell my story because I want to inspire others. I want to let others know that nothing is out of reach. I want them to know that they are not alone because they can always count on their community for help.”



Jennifer Garcia

National Immigrant Youth
Rights Organizer

Jennifer “Jenni” Garcia is an organizer with United We Dream, a national immigrant youth rights organization. She leads their UndocuHealth department, which focuses on providing undocumented youth with mental health and self-care and resources. Jenni migrated with her family at the age of 7 to New Mexico from Chihuahua, Mexico. Early on, she experienced a harsh reality many undocumented immigrants face: inaccessible healthcare. Her brother was forced to self-deport after he was diagnosed with a mental health condition and was unable to find support in the U.S. These experiences fuel Jenni’s work to build a national bank of mental-health professionals that undocumented immigrants can access.

“I think it’s important that our stories are told and that our testimonies can be kept for generations to come as part of building generational knowledge and education.”





Partnering with *Pro Bonos* & Volunteers

Renee Wolters has been a volunteer with NMILC for over seven years. Her efforts have expanded our citizenship services as well as our SIJS capacity.

Legal and medical *pro bono* court-certified interpreters, attorneys, and volunteers generously give their expertise and time to increase NMILC's capacity to serve the immigrant community. Under COVID-19, our *pro bono* professionals and volunteers pivoted services to remote models to ensure that we continue to provide essential legal and medical services. In 2021, 166 *pro bono* professionals and volunteers assisted immigrant community members who were unable to afford legal services.

- › *Pro bono* attorneys provide direct representation and advocacy for immigrants, including predicate orders in SIJS cases, legal advice on citizenship matters, and legal support on policy initiatives.
- › Medical *pro bono* professionals perform critical psychological and physical evaluations, provide crucial affidavits and documentation, and important expert witness testimony.
- › Court-certified interpreters volunteer with NMILC to interpret for NMILC clients, translate documents, and serve as a bridge between clients and other service providers.
- › Administrative volunteers assist staff with data, filing, and administrative projects, which helps NMILC utilize staff resources to more effectively serve clients.

NMILC is grateful and honored to work with such an exceptional team of *pro bono* professionals and volunteers who give their time and expertise to help our low-income immigrant community in New Mexico.



Dr. Hope Ferdowsian, M.D.
Pro Bono Physician
Survivor Advancement Team

“Our new reality offers many opportunities to rethink our relationships with each other and to answer the call to help others in ways that are meaningful and impactful. Those efforts often start with listening and learning, as we regularly have the opportunity to do together through the One Hope Asylum Medicine Clinic.”



Jazmin Irazoqui-Ruiz, Esq.
Pro Bono Attorney
Economic Justice Team

“Pro bono attorneys increase access for populations that do not have the financial means to hire an attorney. When we volunteer for community organizations the community trusts, we increase capacity for an organization that already has a strong relationship with community members.”



Dr. Wannu Zhou
Pro Bono Psychologist
Survivor Advancement Team

“My work with NMILC involves providing psychological evaluations to support immigration cases. These evaluations often pose a significant financial barrier, on top of healthcare and legal systems that are challenging to navigate. I feel strongly that immigrants belong in our communities and make them stronger. By providing these services, I hope to facilitate their pathway to citizenship.”



Dominic Martinez, Esq.
Pro Bono Attorney
DACA & SIJS Team

“I chose to volunteer my time to work on pro bono matters with NMILC because I wanted to lend support to our immigrant community. Working with NMILC made me realize that even lawyers without subject-matter expertise can be immensely impactful, and they can provide valuable legal services that might otherwise be cost-prohibitive.”



Jenifer Getz
Pro Bono Development Consultant

“Over the last four years, the immigration policies in our country have become barbaric and inhumane. I wanted to see asylum seekers and DACA applicants treated with the appropriate respect and dignity they deserve. I knew I had to do something to support the good work that was being done by grassroots organizations like NMILC.”



Ruth Warner
Pro Bono Interpreter
Survivor Advancement Team

“The immigrant community faces enormous challenges in the United States because of unjust policies and systemic racism. This has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has deepened the gaps of inequity domestically and around the world. I am happy to support the work of NMILC as a volunteer interpreter as a concrete way of lending a hand.”



Bridget Mullins, Esq.
Pro Bono Attorney
SIJS Team

“As a pro bono attorney with NMILC, I am honored to be one part of that community, providing legal expertise during difficult periods in people’s lives. Legal support within a community of care can truly improve a family’s outlook, and that’s why I’m so grateful to work with the people of NMILC. As a family law lawyer, I look forward to meeting more special immigrant juvenile clients and their families.”



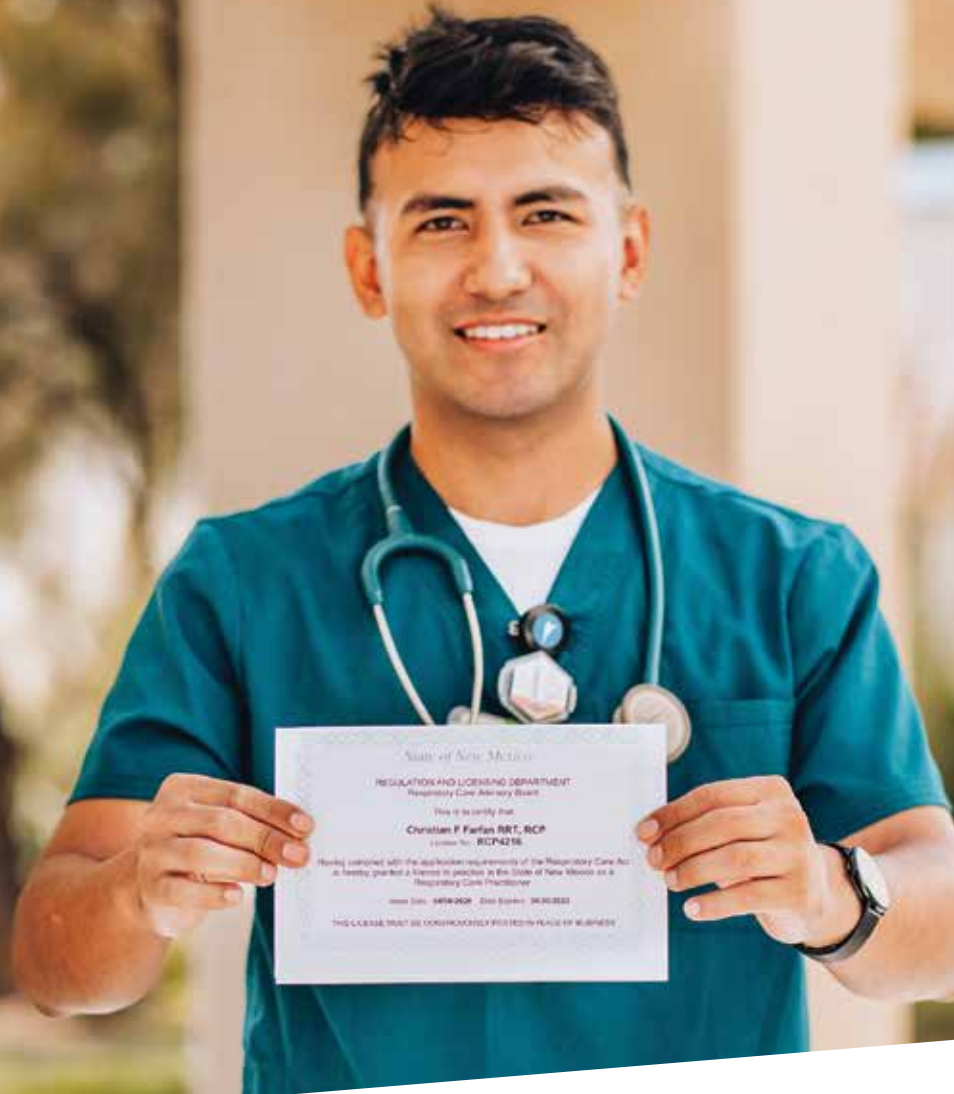
Peter Katel
Pro Bono Interpreter
Survivor Advancement Team

“Interpreters play a vital role in allowing refugees and other immigrants to communicate fully with government officials, often on life-and-death matters.”

GET INVOLVED

Interested in using your skills and expertise to support NMILC’s mission?
Visit nmilc.org/volunteer and fill out a volunteer or pro bono inquiry form!

Advocating for Economic Justice



Advancing Professional and Occupational Licenses for All

While the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted immigrant families, it has also highlighted the experience of workers whose voices have not previously been heard. Many immigrant workers, including DACA recipients, have historically been denied professional and occupational licenses by state law or licensing body regulations in fields including medicine, nursing, physical therapy, dentistry, and law. These barriers have excluded qualified immigrants from practicing in the fields for which they have been trained, limiting the number of licensed health care professionals in the state, as well as relegating many immigrants to lower paying jobs.

In March 2021, during its first all-virtual legislative session, New Mexico made history once again, furthering the work to remove professional and occupational licensing barriers for immigrants in New Mexico with the passage of Senate Bill 219, sponsored by Sen. Gerald Ortiz y Pino. The bill expanded professional and occupational licensing for immigrants in a variety of fields. NMILC staff and *pro bono* partners provided legal research, analysis, and expert testimony on the legal necessity for the expansion.

Senate Bill 219 built on the work of Senate Bill 137, also sponsored by Sen. Ortiz y Pino (as well as Rep. Javier Martinez, Sen. Daniel Ivey-Soto, and Rep. Andrea Romero), which passed in 2020. As a result of the passage of these bills, New Mexican immigrants will have more access

**“All careers
are important,
and we all
deserve the
same equality.”**

Respiratory Therapist Helps COVID-19 Patients After Licensing Barriers for Immigrants Removed

Christian Farfan is an NMILC ally and member of our community partner organization, the New Mexico Dream Team. He began his career as a respiratory therapist on the COVID-19 frontline in Farmington, New Mexico. He was born in Mexico City and migrated with his family to Georgia when he was 15 years old. After graduating high school, Christian moved to New Mexico to pursue a license in respiratory therapy.

Christian obtained his degree in 2018 from Central New Mexico Community College, but was unable to practice because he lacked the Social Security Number needed for licensing. He was only able to practice after SB 137 passed in the 2020 New Mexico legislative session. Right away, he used his newly acquired license to help New Mexico in the fight against COVID-19.

“It was very tough to see people go through a disease like COVID-19. It made me see life in a different way. Just trying to make a difference in the life of my patients going through COVID-19 was what kept me going.”

This year, Christian joined NMILC and our community partners in advocating the passage of SB 219. Today, he helps patients suffering from COVID-19 while continuing his advocacy for the removal of licensing barriers in New Mexico.

to high paying jobs and our state will have fewer shortages in key industries, such as healthcare.

NMILC will continue to educate immigrant community members about these changes and monitor implementation and compliance to ensure that immigrants can practice in the fields in which they are trained. As part of that effort, this year, NMILC has already contacted more than 13 licensing boards to ensure that they updated their policies and trained staff members from WESST, a business incubator, on the impact of SB 137 and SB 219 on immigrant businesses.



Former NMILC Executive Director Adriel Orozco provides expert testimony virtually in favor of SB 219 alongside former NMILC attorney Diana Torres.

COLLABORATIVE ADVOCACY IN ACTION

The passing of SB 219 and SB 137 into law was a result of collaborative advocacy efforts from NM-based community organizing, legal, and policy organizations. This year we continued to partner with:

New Mexico Dream Team

Center for Civic Policy

New Mexico Voices for Children



Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham signed SB 137 into law in March 2020.

NMILC RECEIVES JCC HUMANITARIAN AWARD



This year, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Albuquerque (JCC) named NMILC as a 2021 Humanitarian Award honoree. Executive Director and Co-Founder of NMILC, Jenny Landau, accepted the award, which celebrates people across New Mexico dedicating their life's work to helping others. Jenny's father was born in a displaced persons camp after World War II and her grandparents lost all known family to Auschwitz and survived in exile while detained at work camps in Siberia. We thank the JCC for the recognition and the staff, volunteers, and partners who have played a part in serving our low-income community.

WAYS TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

We welcome the opportunity to talk to groups large and small about the issues impacting asylum seekers in our community. Last December, St. Andrew's Church invited us to speak to their congregation about our work and services. To show solidarity with immigrant children detained on the U.S.-Mexico border, the congregation built a unique nativity scene with a message. The display consisted of a cage with children's dolls inside, which they displayed at the front of the church. This was a unique way to bring attention and awareness to a serious humanitarian issue that is a reality to so many in our immigrant and asylum-seeking community.



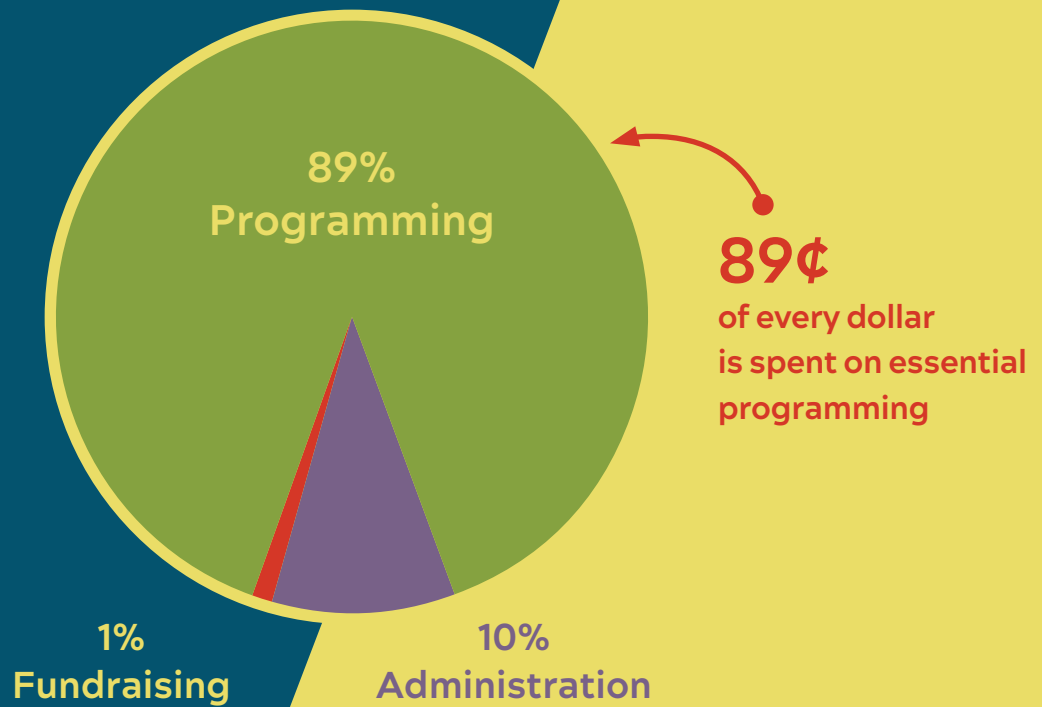
Give to NMILC this holiday season at nmilc.org/donate, and let us know if you would like us to share our work with your community group or congregation!

FISCAL YEAR 2021

REVENUE SOURCES

\$1,594,209	Private Foundations
\$954,347	Government
\$162,321	Individuals
\$127,204	Donated Professional Services
\$1,105	Miscellaneous Income

\$2,721,059 TOTAL REVENUE



EXPENSES

\$2,153,191	Program Services
\$239,331	Administration
\$37,741	Fundraising

\$2,430,263 TOTAL EXPENSES

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