

# NATIONAL IMMIGRANT JUSTICE CENTER

A HEARTLAND ALLIANCE PROGRAM

PRO BONO PROGRAM REPORT  
JULY 2022 – JUNE 2023





# ADVANCING JUSTICE FOR ALL: NIJC'S PRO BONO PROGRAM

The National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC) is dedicated to ensuring human rights protections and access to justice for all immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. Based in Chicago and with five offices across the country, NIJC provides direct legal services to and advocates for all immigrants through policy reform, impact litigation, and public education. Since its founding more than three decades ago and with the support of thousands of pro bono attorneys, NIJC has been unique in blending individual client advocacy with broad-based systemic change.

Pro bono representation can save lives. Without an attorney, people may be separated from their families or sent to dangerous situations. NIJC pro bono attorneys defend the legal rights of immigrants regardless of background and transform the immigration system to one that affords equal opportunity for all.

## **NIJC'S PRO BONO MODELS**

NIJC experts support attorneys through the pro bono experience.

- When providing full representation on pro bono matters, NIJC supports pro bono counsel as they prepare the case with the client, provide necessary interpreter services, and represent the client before federal agencies and courts.
- Due to increasing demands for immigration legal services, NIJC has launched a limited number of pro se initiatives that respond to the needs of specific communities. Pro se workshops provide legal guidance in a one-day clinic setting. Pro bono partners provide legal and interpretation support.





# MAKING A DIFFERENCE: PRO BONO IMPACT

## MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS:

- 2280+ cases supported by pro bono attorneys
- 66,500+ pro bono hours donated, a 32% increase in hours reported in FY2022
- Pro bono clients come from 87 countries

## TOP 15 CLIENT COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

60% of our clients are from Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. The top 15 countries of origin show the diversity of our clients.



## NIJC's PRO BONO PARTNERSHIPS

NIJC collaborates with a network of pro bono partners across the country to advance access to counsel and a more just immigration system.



## PRO BONO CLINIC PARTICIPATION:

Pro Bono Clinics	No. of clinics	No. of clients served
AFGHAN RESPONSE	12	151
DACA RENEWAL	11	192
POST ASYLEE / REFUGEE BENEFITS	9	148
CITIZENSHIP	3	21
TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS (TPS)	2	13
SPECIAL IMMIGRANT JUVENILE STATUS (SIJS)	1	5
T VISA	1	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>390</b>

## NIJC AND OUR PRO BONO NETWORK WIN CASES!

The combination of generous pro bono work and NIJC's immigration expertise results in immigrants obtaining protection and justice in our legal system.

## CASE TYPES

Types of Case      % Approved

ASYLUM	87.9%
DACA RENEWAL	100%
SIJS	100%
NATURALIZATION	96.7%
U VISA	95%
T VISA	100%





# IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

## *Federal Impact Litigation*

### Challenging illegal profits from detention



In *Xirum v. ICE*, Sidley & Austin LLP partnered with NIJC in a first of its kind class action arguing that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) contractor, Clay County, is illegally profiting from the detention of noncitizens at the county's jail. Plaintiffs also argue that ICE has failed to enforce a congressional mandate that required ICE to terminate its contract at the jail due to repeated violations of federal detention standards. The case involves many unique applications of federal administrative law that has benefited immensely from the Sidley team's creativity and diligence.

### Securing second chances at protection through remands



Numerous pro bono teams have secured remands for clients from the U.S. Courts of Appeals and the Supreme Court, which have resulted in their clients having a second chance to seek protection from deportation.



# Policy, Advocacy and Public Education



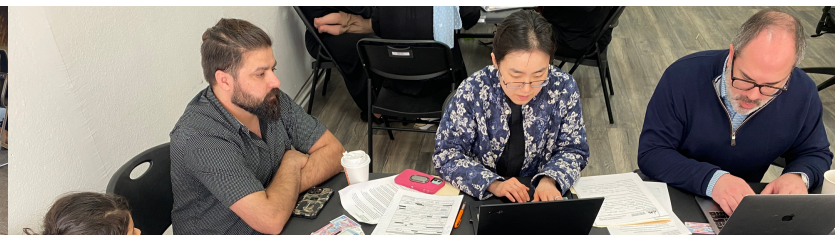
## CHANCE TO COME HOME

TEN STORIES... ..TEN FAMILIES **1 GOAL**

**BRING THEIR LOVED ONES HOME.**

Pro bono attorneys partnered with NIJC in its Chance to Come Home Campaign, which NIJC launched in 2023 to end unjust deportations and reunite those who were unjustly deported with their families and communities. Pro bono attorneys are representing individuals who are part of the campaign in their efforts to return home by filing requests with the administration for humanitarian parole.

## Client and volunteer testimonials



Thank you for everything you do. **It means the world to people like me** to know that others care and want to help."

- **NIJC pro bono client**

As someone who has been having DACA since the beginning with **NIJC**, it has been the best working alongside every pro bono. **Every two years I go with NIJC** and the renewal is easy and professional. **I am sincerely thankful** for how great they are and help us." - **NIJC DACA client**

Working with **NIJC** and its clients has been an incredible personal and professional experience for me. **Our clients inspire me with their perseverance and hopefulness.** I appreciate the opportunity to assist them as they pursue new pathways in their lives." - **Ashleigh Ricardo, Winston & Strawn LLP and NIJC pro bono attorney**

**It feels good being able to help** even in a tiny bit. Thank you all for helping all those who are in need for it." - **NIJC language volunteer**



# DEPTH AND SCOPE OF NIJC'S PRO BONO NETWORK

We are proud of our deep and diverse pro bono network.

Due to the time and resources involved in immigration matters, NIJC's pro bono project leans into medium and large law firms. Corporate in-house teams along with law schools, solo practitioners, and others also provide invaluable support to our clients.

## A Diverse Pro Bono Network: Pro Bono Partners by Organization Type

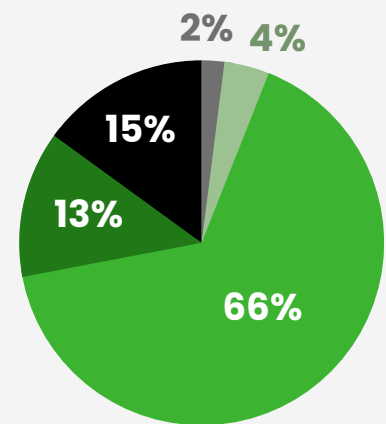
**Corporation**

**Law Firm**

**Law School**

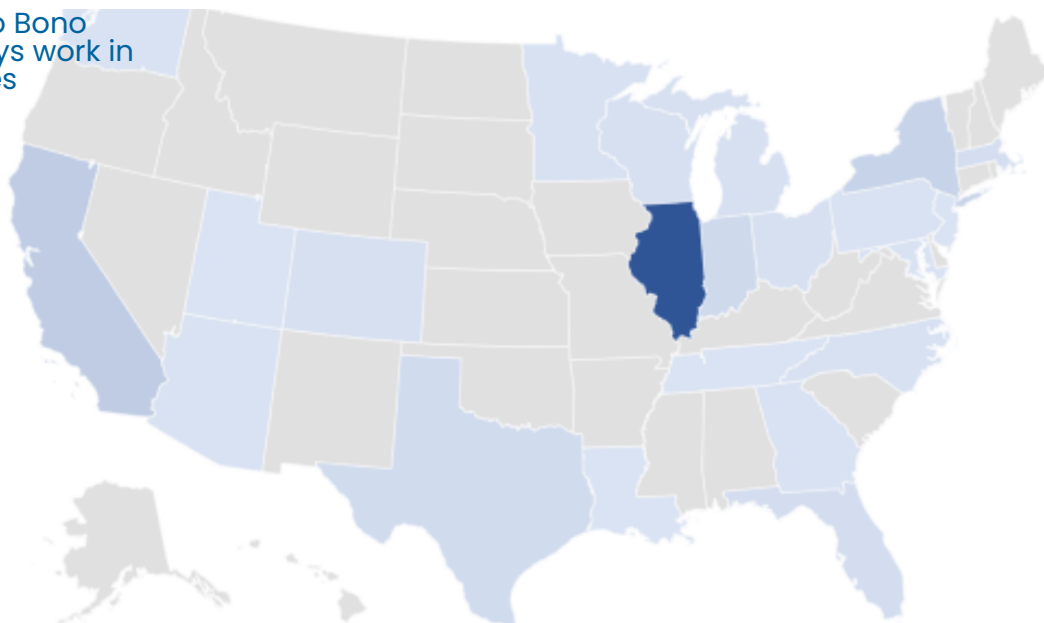
**Legal Aid**

**Solo / Small Firm**



While the majority of our direct legal services are in the Midwest, creative staffing efforts, as well as policy and litigation matters, engage attorneys across the nation.

NIJC Pro Bono  
Attorneys work in  
23 states



# ENGAGING OUR NETWORK, FOSTERING ADVOCATES

We are a community of advocates working to ensure access to justice for immigrants, asylum seekers, and refugees. NIJC provides opportunities for our pro bono network to engage in a variety of immigration matters.



NIJC's pro bono program provides significant opportunity for professional development and training in numerous areas of immigration law. Our staff share their expertise in immigration law and **client counseling** so pro bono attorneys can expand the reach of our mission.

**42 trainings and events for pro bono attorneys, providing a total of 47.5 free CLE hours.**

General Engagement:

- Legal trainings on multiple types of immigration matters including: asylum, U Visa, VAWA, SIJS, adjustment of status, family petitions, naturalization, DACA renewals, counter-trafficking, temporary protected status and others
- Annual Pro Bono Celebration; recognizing Rookie of the Year and Professional Pro Bono Staff Excellence Award
- Human Rights Awards Luncheon; recognizing 12 Rising Stars from our pro bono network and the Human Rights Practitioner awardee
- Lunch-and-learn presentations that engage summer associates, first year associates and other attorneys
- Pro Bono Leadership Committees to support proactive dialogue with pro bono counsel and leaders
- Trainings on language access support



# WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

## 1) CONNECT WITH CLIENTS



View NIJC's case list to connect with clients who need pro bono representation.

## 2) USE OUR RESOURCES

### For Attorneys

Resources for attorneys representing immigrants and asylum seekers.  
Curated for NIJC's network of pro bono attorneys.

See NIJC's extensive pro bono resources available on our online resource library.

## 3) JOIN OUR COMMUNITY



Become a part of NIJC's pro bono community and invite a colleague to join.

For general information about NIJC Pro Bono Programs please contact Ellen Miller, Pro Bono Manager, at 312.660.1415 or [emiller@heartlandalliance.org](mailto:emiller@heartlandalliance.org).

Learn more about NIJC and join our pro bono community at:  
<https://immigrantjustice.org>.

# NATIONAL IMMIGRANT JUSTICE CENTER

A HEARTLAND ALLIANCE PROGRAM

**STAND WITH NIJC TO  
ADVANCE IMMIGRANT RIGHTS.**



**SCAN THE QR CODE  
TO GET INVOLVED.**

**IMMIGRANTJUSTICE.ORG**

Questions? Contact us at:  
[immigrantjustice@heartlandalliance.org](mailto:immigrantjustice@heartlandalliance.org)