

THE IMMIGRANT ADVOCATE

TEACHING, INTERPRETING, AND CHANGING LAW SINCE 1979

WINTER

2018



MESSAGE FROM THE ILRC

By Eric Cohen | ILRC Executive Director



THE URGENCY for people nationwide to engage in the democratic process is profound. The ILRC depends on its supporters and others in the immigrant rights movement to help amplify the message that immigrants and their families should be able to stay together in this country and thrive. The difficult truth is that immigrant rights are still at risk of becoming a political gambit. The ILRC believes that defending the shared values we believe the U.S. stands for is our right and duty.

No matter who is in power, we must all continue to be vigilant about protecting the rights of immigrants and their families. As you know, the heavy lifting to defend immigrant rights is not over, and history shows us that it is never over. This administration has been able to build momentum and support against immigrants because of decades of eroded immigration policy protections left in the wake of previous administrations. We must hold our elected officials accountable for representing each of our voices. The echoes of our voices carry the hopes and dreams of the marginalized and silenced. Please, continue to speak up for immigrants and their families. Please, continue to demand fair and just immigration policies from all of our elected officials—regardless of their party affiliation.

The difficult truth is that immigrant rights are still at risk of becoming a political gambit. The ILRC believes that defending the shared values we believe the U.S. stands for is our right and duty.

Activism is an American value. The ILRC is proud of the word “activist.” Activists are responsible for the major human and civil rights milestones in our nation’s history. Our country has relied on activists to sound the alarms; be they airport protests after the first Muslim ban, nationwide marches for sensible gun legislation, or mass mobilizations after the cruel new policy of family separation. As you know, activism includes more than public rallies and marches. Activism relies on embodying our principles with integrity.

The ILRC is doing all it can to advance a just immigration agenda and advocate for humane immigrant rights. We continue to need you as our partner. Together, we have the power to begin rebuilding our country to rise above petty politics and live into our reputation as a representative democracy. 



PUBLIC CHARGE: THE THREAT AMERICA IS NOT TALKING ENOUGH ABOUT

By Sally Kinoshita & Amanda Baran | *ILRC Deputy Director & ILRC Consultant, respectively*



On a quiet Saturday afternoon in late September, the Trump administration unleashed another vicious attack on immigrants, revealing again the lengths it will go to further its xenophobic, anti-immigrant agenda. Since the advent of his administration, Trump has used the power of his office to denigrate immigrants and people of color—banning Muslims and refugees, indiscriminately rounding up and deporting those without status, and tearing apart families seeking safety. His latest policy proposal—the “public charge rule”—continues this cruelty and is nothing less than an attack on the poor, the sick, and the needy.

The proposed “public charge rule” seeks to bar immigrants if they have received Medicaid coverage, food stamps, or housing assistance. It would even consider their socioeconomic status and how well they understand English in making this determination. The ability of people to immigrate will also depend on factors beyond their control, like their age, health, and family size. This could prevent substantial numbers of immigrants from entering the United States to join family or from obtaining a green card.

This is not just an attack on immigrants; it is another attempt by the Trump administration to erase people of color in our country. By targeting the family-based immigration system with long wait lists of people from Mexico, India, China, and the Philippines, and by considering English language ability and number of children as negative determinative factors, this a clear attempt to prevent immigration from non-European countries.

This is not just an attack on immigrants; it is an assault on poor people and the programs that serve them. It is a part of an explicit redefinition of the notion of self-reliance, asserting that immigrants are valued only based on their ability to work and make money. By attempting this rule change, the administration is using a bureaucratic veil to hide their attempt to implement merit-based immigration and to promote tax breaks for the rich while taking away essential protections like health care and housing from those who need it most.

This is not just an attack on immigrants; it is an assault on the notion of what it means to be American. In order to become a U.S. citizen, you must first have a green card. Under this proposal, in order to get your green card, you must not be poor, or an English language learner, or have mental health issues. Unless you have money, you cannot have heart disease or cancer, have too many kids, be old, or be a child. Wealth has never been the center of our immigration system; rather, at its heart lies family unification and the notion that America has always been a beacon to the poor, huddled masses yearning to breathe free. This proposal diminishes this grand idea and seeks to make America accessible to those with means or available to the highest bidder.

Under this proposal, in order to get your green card, you must not be poor, or an English language learner, or have mental health issues.

The hypocrisy of this proposed policy change is stunning. While Trump is actively trying to take away work permits from people, he is also punishing them for not having a job. While he rebukes women for having too many dependents, he works to prevent them from accessing reproductive services. For those who are struggling but trying, it's damned if you do, damned if you don't. Sadly, even though this proposal has not gone into effect, people are already forgoing benefits and withdrawing themselves and their children from programs for which they are eligible because they fear being denied immigration benefits sometime in the future.

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The ILRC has not sat idly by while Donald Trump and his sidekick, Stephen Miller, try to construct a country to serve wealthy white men like themselves. During the 60-day public comment period, we are leading with partners to ensure that resistance comes from the legal sector, by drafting model comments and from the immigrant community, as a result of our ethnic media outreach efforts. As the issue moves forward, we will continue to monitor it and build the capacity of the field to educate and serve immigrant clients with public charge concerns. 

TO FIGHT AGAINST THIS PROPOSED REGULATION BY SUBMITTING YOUR OWN UNIQUE PUBLIC COMMENT, VISIT [BIT.LY/SUBMITCOMMENT](https://bit.ly/submitcomment)



THE ILRC INTRODUCES ITS FIRST ANDY GROVE IMMIGRANTS' RIGHTS FELLOWSHIP

At the close of 2017, the ILRC was excited to introduce its inaugural Andy Grove Immigrants' Rights Fellowship. The fellowship is an opportunity to integrate an attorney role at the ILRC for a newly sworn-in attorney to meet some of the most urgent needs and challenges of a growing, diversifying immigration fight, especially under this administration. Named after the late Andrew S. Grove, Hungarian immigrant, engineer, and former CEO of the Intel Corporation, and established by his wife Eva Grove, a member of the ILRC Board of Directors, the fellowship is fueling the ILRC's work in new and ongoing arenas—ranging from combatting immigration enforcement to encouraging immigrant community engagement.

Krsna Avila, the attorney hired as the ILRC's first Andy Grove Immigrants' Rights Fellow, is fostering Mr. Grove's legacy by taking on the duties that have historically made a significant impact in preparing community advocates with the legal tools they will need to combat elevated enforcement practices and empower their constituents.

Krsna, a graduate of Cornell Law School, has always had a fervor for immigrant rights. Not only has he and his family had their own immigration hurdles to clear growing up, but his work after his undergraduate years at UC Davis focused largely on expanding resources for the undocumented. Before heading to law school, Krsna worked closely with the ILRC to establish a legal services program at Educators for Fair Consideration (now called Immigrants Rising), an organization that bridges immigrant issues with educational access. From there, he went on to work for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Washington D.C. and the ACLU of Northern California while completing his J.D. Now, in his capacity as an immigration attorney at the ILRC, his life's journey comes full circle.



Alison Kamhi, Supervising Attorney at the ILRC, is enthusiastic about Krsna's role— both in regard to the work he accomplished and in the goals the organization is now better-equipped to meet. "This fellowship has really allowed us to expand our reach into the community and build a more robust response to enforcement tactics," Alison shares. With the Andy Grove Fellowship, she adds, "the legal team has further galvanized vital systems" with Krsna's duties including expanding the ILRC's DACA and immigrant youth work, facilitating Spanish-speaking media communications work, and working with advocacy groups so they are informed on the depth and limitations of the law, emerging immigration laws and policies, and new legislative proposals.

As the two-year fellowship reaches its halfway point, the ILRC is eager to cover more ground than ever before and is excited to leave a lasting impact on the enforcement front.

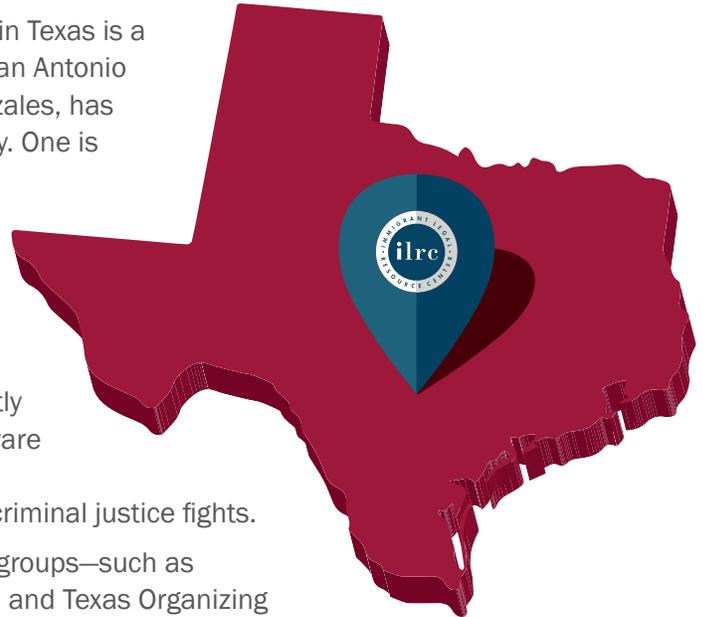
IN FOCUS: BIG THINGS HAPPENING IN TEXAS

By Carolina Canizales | ILRC Texas Campaigns Strategist



Texas is the epicenter of callous and discriminatory immigration enforcement, from the passing of the anti-sanctuary law SB4, which has influenced at least two other states to pass similar bills, to starting the national lawsuit that prompted the end of DACA. Texas is ground zero for Trump's aggressive deportation and anti-immigrant agenda; today, the state has the most family and children detention centers in the nation, the most 287(g) agreements that deputize sheriffs to do the immigration service's job of finding and detaining immigrants, and the most deportations of any state in the United States.

Recognizing that a win by and for the immigrant community in Texas is a win for the rest of our nation, the ILRC opened an office in San Antonio last January. Our Texas Campaigns Strategist, Carolina Canizales, has three clear objectives for Texas and its immigrant community. One is to build capacity of existing local groups and coalitions to pass local policies that mitigate the impact of SB4 and weaken the collusion between local and federal enforcement agencies. Two is to deepen the integration of groups working with communities of color across the state to fight back anti-immigration criminalization bills. Three is to tell the truth about Texas through stories of directly impacted people. Although the affected communities are aware of the crisis they face, the majority of Texas residents do not understand the role this state plays in the immigration and criminal justice fights.



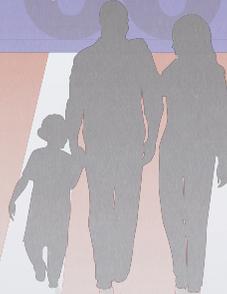
In just ten months, the ILRC Texas team helped local Austin groups—such as Grassroots Leadership, Workers Defense, United We Dream, and Texas Organizing Project—pass the Freedom Cities policies, and is currently supporting SA Stands, the local San Antonio coalition, pass a cite-and-release policy, which will stop the arrests of individuals for low-level offenses, thus sending fewer people into the incarceration and deportation pipeline.

The ILRC is also actively working with multiple Houston coalitions, the North Texas Immigrant Coalition, Mano Amiga in San Marcos, Texas, and supports other smaller groups in Tyler, Waco, and Forth Worth, Texas. The ILRC Texas office will continue to work so that every immigrant in Texas is equally served, protected, and can live free of fear. 



2 Pictured: SA Stands with our ILRC Texas Campaigns Strategist, Carolina Canizales

3 Pictured: Carolina Canizales speaking at a hearing discussing cite-and-release policies advocated for by SA Stands



WORKING AT THE ILRC is both rewarding and empowering. As the child of immigrant parents and growing up in a primarily Latino neighborhood in Los Angeles, I have always been aware of the struggles of immigrants and their families. I remember thinking that I would grow up to become an immigration attorney, so that not one more immigrant would be taken advantage of by disreputable legal representation. Instead, my life's path led me to a 22-year career in fundraising. However, because I am a part of the ILRC team, I feel that I am fulfilling the spirit of my youthful intent to serve the immigrant community. I am grateful that my work can support such a powerful cause and that I get to work with you—the ILRC's donors and allies. It is because of your unwavering commitment to the immigrant rights movement that the ILRC has grown its presence across the country and works every day to ensure that immigrants and their families can stay together in this country and thrive.

Engaging with our funders is the best aspect of the job. Part of our fundraising success depends on building relationships with our supporters—to thank you, better understand what motivates you to invest in our work, and learn what about our messaging resonates with you. It helps me understand how the ILRC can build awareness of its work for others who can serve as advocates and potential supporters. I've been reaching out to donors across the country to introduce myself and to share how your support has impacted our work. We have thousands of current and past donors, so I may not have gotten to you yet, but there's no need to wait. Feel free to send me an email at chousel@ilrc.org to set up a time to meet and talk.

The ILRC's 40th anniversary is in 2019, and I look forward to sharing more donor engagement opportunities, like our Immigration Issues Explored conference call series where donors hear directly from ILRC experts about timely and urgent topics in the field of immigrant rights. I hope our work inspires you to make a new or additional donation to the ILRC today. We can celebrate as **partners**, now and throughout 2019, how far the ILRC and the immigrant rights movement have come.

Thank you so much for your continued support,


Cynthia Tirado House
Director of Leadership Giving

FIELD OFFICE RUNDOWN

CALIFORNIA'S CENTRAL VALLEY



The Central Valley team is composed of a Staff Attorney and Outreach Coordinator based in the region, as well as two law fellows who spend a significant amount of time each week in the region. This expanded team has extended the depth and reach of the ILRC in this underserved area of California by:

- 1** Empowering the immigrant community and those who serve them through educational presentations, trainings, and media appearances on a variety of topics, including Know Your Rights in case of an encounter with ICE agents, access to health care and other public benefits, and changes in current immigration policy, such as DACA.
- 2** Coordinating initiatives to ensure access to quality legal services—such as supporting DACA recipients through the Delivering on the Dream initiative and promoting naturalization efforts through the New Americans Campaign—with a focus on lending legal expertise in rural areas that lack legal service providers and have a high incidence of immigration provider fraud.
- 3** Partnering with educational institutions, such as the Fresno Unified School District and Modesto Junior College, to disseminate accurate and up-to-date information about immigration policy and link students and their families to quality legal services.
- 4** Supporting local immigrant communities to engage with decision makers on important issues through three local parent committees in Merced and Fresno counties as well as supporting the efforts of advocates in Stockton to push back against ICE collaboration with local law enforcement.
- 5** Strengthening protections for immigrant survivors of domestic violence through the facilitation of multi-sector Working Groups in San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Fresno counties to increase collaboration among service providers and reduce barriers to critical services.

WASHINGTON, D.C.



The ILRC's DC team is growing and able to boost its impact further. The ILRC now has two full-time staff in DC and a part-time consultant. Together, our DC team has years of relevant experience, ranging from Legislative Director for a Congressman who engaged deeply on immigration policy to leading coalitions and strategies that incorporate policy, organizing, and communications to a former DHS government official. The ILRC has been able to deepen its presence and impact in DC and ensure that the organization's priorities are heard in our nation's capitol by:

- 1** Pushing back on the Trump Administration's use of derogatory terms to refer to family immigration—such as “chain migration.” Following a petition that the DC team partnered on with Color of Change, which garnered the support of almost 30,000 individuals, the Associated Press Style Manual was changed to advise reporters to avoid the use of the term chain migration.
- 2** Building coalitions and power to fight for humane immigration policies that reject the criminalization of immigrant communities and communities of color.
- 3** Coordinating partners to develop strategy to fight denaturalization, which strips Americans of their citizenship, and developing resources for policy makers and practitioners.
- 4** Helping educate immigration attorneys and community-based organizations about proposed changes to the public charge rule, which guides the determination if an immigrant applying for admission to the United States or for a green card is likely to become dependent on the government. Working closely with a national coalition to ensure our partners and allies can engage in the process of influencing the proposed rule through comments on the federal regulation.
- 5** Educating law and policy makers about complex legislative proposals involving the intersection of criminal and immigration law and tracking executive branch actions that further erode due process protections for immigrant communities.
- 6** Developing mechanisms to respond to current events in immigration policy and cultivating relationships that result in media reporting influenced by our perspectives and expertise.

TEXAS



The main goal of the ILRC's work in Texas is to help existing coalitions and local groups pass local policies that will increase the protections for immigrants and refugees, despite laws like SB4—which, in its original form as passed, sought to punish cities, counties, and universities that prohibited local law enforcement officers from asking about a person's immigration status or enforcing immigration laws. This includes holding someone for ICE in violation of their constitutional rights. In total, the ILRC's Texas team works with more than eight local coalitions that host more than 150 local organizations combined. Since the creation of the organization's Texas presence, the ILRC has fueled local efforts by:

- 1** Helping the San Antonio coalition SA Stands pass a comprehensive immigration policy in their largest school district that clearly states school police officers will not ask for immigration status in any situation, will not arrest parents without a driver's license, and will have a protocol to follow in case ICE ever shows up at a campus and intends on conducting an operation. Similarly, the team is helping the North Texas Immigrant Coalition in Dallas pass a similar policy at the Dallas Independent School District.
- 2** Writing the policy language for the #FreedomPolicies that recently passed a resolution unanimously 11-0 in the City of Austin. These policies are reducing the arrest-to-deportation pipeline and incorporating more requirements for police officers to uphold people's rights, regardless of status. In collaboration with major Texas groups United We Dream, Texas Organizing Project, Grassroots Leadership, and Workers Defense Project, the ILRC is helping San Antonio, Houston, and Dallas pass similar policies at the city level. In San Antonio, the collaboration is building momentum to put these policies up for vote shortly.
- 3** Holding many one-on-one coaching sessions with local organizers, advocates, and local group leaders on meeting with their elected officials and law enforcement leaders and asking for better policies; especially in light of the 5th Circuit Court decision upholding most parts of SB4. The ILRC has helped the cities of Tyler, Fort Worth, San Marcos, Rio Grande Valley, and El Paso, as well as the other major cities mentioned above.



Christine Ambegia | Executive Assistant & MOU Coordinator

Christine joined the ILRC in October 2018 as Executive Assistant/MOU Coordinator. From 2016-2018, Christine was a Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) teacher and trainer with the Peace Corps in Costa Rica, where she worked with elementary schools, the University of Costa Rica, and the Ministry of Public Education. She also spearheaded initiatives for creating spaces and training sessions that focused on intercultural competence, diversity, and inclusion within her Peace Corps post. Prior to her service, she worked with Sedgwick and Berkshire Hathaway Homestate Companies as a workers' compensation claims examiner. Christine holds a BA in Rhetoric with a concentration in Public Discourse from UC Berkeley.



Abraham Bedoy | Legal Outreach Coordinator

Abraham joined the ILRC in August 2018 as the organization's legal outreach coordinator. Based in California's Central Valley, Abraham provides legal outreach to immigrant communities. Prior to joining the ILRC as an official staff member, Abraham worked in conjunction with the ILRC and other nonprofit organizations to empower immigrants through community work and education. His projects focus on various immigration topics including DACA, Know Your Rights, naturalization, and U visas. Abraham spearheads many pro-immigrant organizational efforts alongside other nonprofit organizations, higher education institutions, state agencies, religious groups, and more. Abraham earned his BA in Political Science with an emphasis in American Government from UC Davis.



Terry Godfrey | Director of Finance & Administration

Terry joined the ILRC as Director of Finance and Administration in August 2018. She spent 20 years in finance, human resources, and venture capital with Xerox, Intel, and the Stanford Graduate School of Business, where she worked as the Business School's Director of Finance. Terry was a consultant to the ILRC from the inception of the New Americans Campaign in 2011 until joining the ILRC full-time this year. Terry's passions include family time, travel, skiing, hiking, collecting books about and written contemporaneously with the women's suffrage movement, and community service. Her service to the community includes elected office (Palo Alto School Board 2014-2018), serving on UC Irvine's Undergraduate Success Leadership Advisory Board, and Palo Alto's Project Safety Net Executive Advisory Board. Terry holds a BS in Math from UC Irvine and an MBA from UCLA.



Donna Golub | Training Coordinator

Donna joined the ILRC in June 2018 and is responsible for overseeing grant-related seminars, webinars, and other training events. Prior to the ILRC, Donna was a consultant and led Salesforce CRM design, implementation, and training for nonprofit clients, where she took great pride in helping organizations that serve the homeless and underprivileged populations. She has also managed training and events for both nonprofit and for-profit organizations. She is passionate about the environment and social justice causes, and enjoys hiking, backpacking, cooking, reading, and spending time with her two daughters, husband, friends, and her dog. Donna earned her BA in International Affairs from George Washington University and holds a black belt in Shorin-Ryu Shidokan.



Kat Kimmons | Senior Manager of IT

Kat joined the ILRC in July 2018 as the ILRC's Senior Manager of IT. She has over 18 years of IT experience throughout both the private and nonprofit sectors in the Bay Area. Kat is adept in solving business needs via technology and implementing enterprise-wide solutions. One of Kat's proudest IT achievements was developing an IT internship program to teach tech skills to a few dozen situationally homeless adults in the Bay Area. Her interns went on to work at Google, Salesforce, Stanford, and other reputable organizations. In her off time, Kat is an aspiring DJ and avid thrift store shopper.

JOINING THE ILRC FAMILY



Amber McChesney-Young | Front Office Coordinator

Amber joined the staff of the ILRC in July 2018 as Front Office Coordinator. She provides administrative support to our staff and assists visitors inquiring about our resources. Prior to joining the ILRC, Amber worked at a range of nonprofit organizations, including the Houston Interfaith Worker Justice Center, Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County, the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, and the Oakland Catholic Worker. She has a BA in Media Studies from the University of San Francisco and an MA in International Peace Studies from the University of Notre Dame. She is passionate about immigrant and refugee rights and has spent time in El Salvador and Colombia. In her free time, she likes to sing, read mystery novels, and spend time with her family.



Bridgit Meads | Publications Sales Associate

Bridgit joined the ILRC as the Publication Sales Associate in May 2018. Prior to joining the ILRC, she worked at several nonprofits including the Commonwealth Club of California, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and the University of San Francisco. She also worked as a newswriter and producer for several news stations on the West Coast for more than a decade and is a graduate of the University of Oregon where she studied journalism and political science. She is originally from San Diego, but spent many years in the Pacific Northwest, and now loves living in the Bay Area.



AnneRose Menachery | Policy Attorney

AnneRose joined the ILRC in July 2018 as a Policy Attorney in the Washington, D.C. office, where she focuses on advancing federal immigration policy. Prior to joining the ILRC, she served as Legislative Director and Counsel for U.S. Congressman Luis V. Gutiérrez, leading the Congressman's work in the House Judiciary Committee and in immigration policy. She has worked with and advocated for immigrant communities for over a decade, through positions at a community-based organization and NGOs in Washington, D.C. AnneRose earned her law degree from The Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law, and her undergraduate degree in Spanish from Wake Forest University.



Maisha Nelson | Director of Human Resources

Maisha joined the ILRC as the Director of Human Resources in September 2018. Before coming to the ILRC, Maisha spent 12 years in New York City, starting off on Wall Street and leading an HR department for a brokerage firm. She then spent the next 10 years in healthcare leadership roles for the Mount Sinai Hospital, working in areas that specialized in hematology/oncology, liver diseases, and, most recently, cardiology. Maisha is a Bay Area native and a proud Anteater hailing from UC Irvine. She regularly volunteers with organizations working with the formerly incarcerated in addition to working with animals. In her free time, she enjoys eating out, reading, staying active, and traveling around the world.

The ILRC would like to thank **Ginny Wright**, the ILRC's Director of Finance and Operations for six years, a happy and pleasant retirement. In her years with the organization, Ginny brought invaluable financial and administrative experience that helped the ILRC bolster its financial future, scale to accommodate staff and program growth, and lay the groundwork for a stronger road ahead. Please join us in wishing Ginny all the best in her next and newest life chapter.



2017 PROGRAM PARTNERS

The ILRC remains grateful to its institutional funders for their enduring support. Without their generosity and commitment to immigrants' rights, we would not be able to pursue our mission to work with and educate immigrants, community organizations, and the legal sector to continue to build a democratic society that values diversity and the rights of all people. Specifically, we would like to thank the following organizations:



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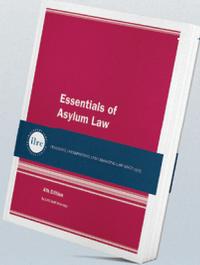
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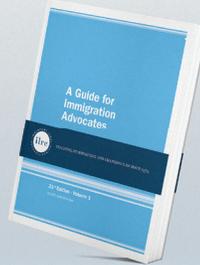
UPDATED PUBLICATIONS

In 1984, the ILRC published its first manual. Since then, the ILRC has been providing essential practical guides for legal practitioners. All publications are produced by the ILRC's expert immigration attorneys. Revenue from the ILRC publications helps support critical programs in the community.

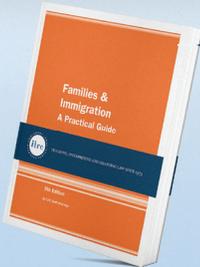
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OVER
6,000
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trainings, and group application workshops

Led by the Immigrant Legal Resource Center, the New Americans Campaign is a diverse nonpartisan national network of respected immigration organizations, legal services providers, faith-based organizations, immigrant rights groups, foundations, and community leaders. The Campaign transforms the way aspiring citizens navigate the path to becoming new Americans. It is committed to connecting lawful permanent residents to trusted legal assistance and critical information that simplifies the naturalization process.



WWW.NEWAMERICANSCAMPAIGN.ORG

ILRC Staff

Eric Cohen, Executive Director
Sally Kinoshita, Deputy Director
Bill Ong Hing, Founder & General Counsel
Donald Ungar, Of Counsel
Christine Ambegia, Executive Assistant & MOU Coordinator
Krsna Avila, Andy Grove Immigrants' Rights Fellow
Abraham Bedoy, Legal Outreach Coordinator
Kathy Brady, Senior Staff Attorney
Ariel Brown, Law Fellow
Rose Cahn, Criminal and Immigration Justice Attorney
Caro Canizales Ramirez, Texas Campaigns Strategist
Allison Davenport, Staff Attorney
Sara Feldman, Project Director, Ready California
Magaly Garcia, Administrative Assistant
Philip Garcia, Office Manager
Veronica Garcia, San Joaquin Valley Law Fellow
Terry Godfrey, Director of Finance & Administration
Donna Golub, Training Coordinator
Lena Graber, Staff Attorney
Manny Guisa, Development Coordinator
Sameera Hafiz, Senior Policy Strategist
Sharon Hing, Legal Program Collaboration Manager
Jonathan Huang, IT Manager
Alison Kamhi, Supervising Attorney
Hillary Kim, Controller
Kat Kimmons, Sr. Manager of Technology
Sarah Letson, Best Practices Manager, New Americans Campaign
Helen Leung, Training Coordinator
Nicole Marquez, Law Fellow
Amber McChesney-Young, Front Office Coordinator
Marie McIntosh, Senior Communications Manager
Bridgit Meads, Publication Sales Associate
AnneRose Menachery, Policy Attorney
Linda Mogannam, Marketing Manager
Ana Montes, Finance Coordinator
Maisha Nelson, Director of Human Resources
Arju Nishimura, Grants & Program Coordinator
Deirdre O'Shea, Foundations Relations Manager
Rachel Prandini, Staff Attorney
Nora Privitera, Staff Attorney
Em Puhl, San Joaquin Valley Law Fellow
Erin Quinn, Senior Staff Attorney
Rebecca Rangel, New Americans Campaign Program Manager
Melissa Rodgers, Director of Programs
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