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## BUILDING A RESUME AND A LIFE

### Client Story – Andrey Morales Fernandez

**Nearly two years ago, 18-year-old Andrey Morales Fernandez walked across the stage and received his high school diploma, which simultaneously triggered a newfound sense of isolation.**

Most high school seniors recognize their graduation day as a significant milestone, worthy of celebration. Recent graduates are eager to begin new lives as college students or transition into working full-time. Although Andrey had a promising academic transcript, his achievement was coupled with uncertainty and frustration. The talented and driven teenager was also an undocumented Mexican immigrant, who had come to the United States as a young child with his family to start a new life, free from violence. Due to his lack of status, Andrey was unable to pursue his dream of higher education, nor was he able to find employment.

Andrey lived in California with his family for three years before moving to Maine. As Latino immigrants, he felt like he and his family “stuck out like a sore thumb,” which left Andrey feeling embarrassed and confused. Despite feeling out of place, Andrey knew that he wanted to push himself. He stepped outside of his comfort zone and challenged himself in the classroom. Andrey enrolled in rigorous courses and learned to ask difficult questions. He found a tight-knit group of friends he could trust and turned to the school guidance counselor for support. Andrey was academically prepared for college, but his lack of status proved to complicate his sights on higher education. Most colleges can’t provide financial aid to undocumented students and he knew

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**Help Build the Giving Tower**

ILAP is proud to participate in the Giving Tower, a one-day global effort of support for charitable organizations, December 1. This is Giving Tuesday, which follows Black Friday and Cyber Monday, and is as easy to be a part of as clicking a link.

“Like” ILAP on Facebook or follow us on Twitter to get details starting late November, then just click through and you can watch the Giving Tower climb to the sky with charitable donations that benefit ILAP and other great community organizations doing important work every day. Become a fundraiser or just give yourself. Stay tuned for details. Thanks!



**SUE ROCHE Executive Director**

**As the humanitarian crisis in Europe develops, we are reminded once again of the incredible strength, courage, and perseverance of migrants facing dangerous journeys to safety.**

It is hard for most of us to imagine traveling thousands of miles with the hope of finding a safe place for your family, but no certainty that you will be received

there or that that you will survive the trip.

This human spirit is also reflected in the journey of migrants who arrive in the United States, and in Maine, whether fleeing gang violence or poverty in Honduras, or human rights abuses in Rwanda. They are met by some with fear and rejection. But their courage inspires compassion and action in others. It moves citizens in Croatia to aid families fleeing war torn regions in the Middle East. It draws

volunteers to the U.S. border to help women and children seeking safety from violence in Central America. It inspires local citizens in Maine to reach out and help their new neighbors, recognizing the difficult journey they endured to arrive here, and the value they bring to our communities.

At ILAP, we are inspired by our clients, whose journeys to safety ended in Maine. We are committed to doing our part in helping them get the legal status they need so that Maine can be their new home.



Susan Roche  
Executive Director

**ILAP Services**

“Intake” for new clients or former clients with new matters, takes place every Friday by appointment. Appointments for Friday Intake can be made any weekday by calling the ILAP office at 207-780-1593 or by coming to the office between 9 and 5. Friday Intake appointments can also be done in person or by phone. Everyone must first have an Intake appointment before consulting with an ILAP attorney or getting help in our Forms Clinic.

■ ILAP offers extended **attorney consultations** on immigration legal issues each month in Portland and Lewiston, for those who have gone through Intake. For those who cannot travel to either city, we offer consultations by telephone or Skype. ILAP also offers emergency consultations for clients referred by other service providers and for those with pressing issues of safety.

■ ILAP’s **Forms Clinic** helps people to understand, fill out, document, file, and follow the progress of their immigration applications. The Clinic also assists applicants who must progress through additional complicated steps on their way to a final decision.

■ ILAP assists asylum seekers to find lawyers through its **Asylum Pro Bono Panel**. ILAP also collaborates with the **Justice for Our Neighbors** program and the **University of Maine School of Law** to offer regular classes for asylum seekers who have no lawyer and are filing their own asylum applications.

■ ILAP offers **education and outreach programs**, by request, to organizations and service providers on a range of immigration topics. We take part in training programs for legal, medical, law enforcement, or other personnel who work with immigrant communities. We also participate in advocacy to improve laws and policies that affect Maine’s immigrants.



**Thank you to Coffee By Design** for its generous donation to ILAP as part of a “community coffee” campaign. CBD donated \$1 of each pound of delicious Burundi Kayanza Bourbon coffee sold, to both ILAP and the International Women’s Coffee Alliance Burundi chapter. We are pleased to recognize CBD, which celebrated its 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary this summer, as a long time ILAP supporter!



Photo by Sarah Beard Buckley.

**Kate Chesney, Esq. spoke with community members about ILAP’s services during Coffee By Design’s 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary celebration.**



**CeleSoirée • 2016**

We are already looking forward to CeleSoirée 2016, Portland’s “most fun” fundraiser! Check our website and Facebook page for CS16 news in the coming months.

**In the meantime, we are pleased to share a beautiful video from this year’s CeleSoirée.**

Browse to our home page [www.ilapmaine.org] to revisit the fabulous performances from the Circus Conservatory of America and Les Voix des Anges. If you weren’t able to make it to this year’s event, discover what you missed! Thank you to Todd J. Burgess Photography for the video.

### **Building a Life**

Continued from Cover

that he would be unable to afford his education without assistance. After graduation, he spent six months working odd jobs to support his family. His inability to work a steady, full-time job meant that he was unable to save separate funds for his future education.

Andrey’s quest to escape what he describes as “living in limbo” eventually led him to ILAP. In December of 2013, he met with an ILAP attorney who told him about DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), which is a program that allows certain undocumented immigrants who entered the country as children to receive renewable, temporary work permits and temporary protection from deportation. His attorney explained that the application process would be tedious, but Andrey knew that he wanted to move forward.

Over the next few months, Andrey worked tirelessly, with the support of ILAP staff, to gather the appropriate evidence for his case. Nearly one year after coming to ILAP, Andrey’s application was accepted. He received his work permit in January 2015. As soon as he received his Social

Security card, he began to apply for jobs. Employers were impressed by his dedicated and enthusiastic demeanor – he received job offers from four local businesses almost at once! Andrey now works for an electrical engineering business in Winslow. He is eager to build his resume and hopes find a way to attend college to study electrical engineering in the future.

Andrey has said would like to thank ILAP, especially Jennifer and Sean, for the support he received over the past year. Without DACA, he wouldn’t have been able to find a stable job and provide for his family. Andrey has high hopes for his future and plans to pursue his interests to the best of his ability.

“It’s hard to believe that it’s only been seven months [since I received my work permit]. If I told people what I’ve been through...I’m not sure if they would believe me. My mother taught me to face each day with a smile and to greet everyone with an open mind. I didn’t grow up with the best of everything, but I am comfortable, blessed, and motivated. I face each day with gratitude and I believe that your day is what you make it.” ■



## Annual Millbridge Outreach for Migrant Workers

Barbara Taylor, Esq., ILAP's Senior Staff Attorney, and ILAP paralegals Sean Douglas and Christina Starr, visited migrant blueberry rakers during the annual outreach trip to Millbridge, ME.

Every year, Downeast Maine has an influx of seasonal workers, most of whom travel to the Millbridge-Cherryfield area from Canada, Central America, and Mexico. ILAP collaborates with Mano en Mano and Maine Migrant Health to help the workers understand their legal rights, as well as inform them of new immigration laws and any changes to existing laws.

The migrant workers live in camps spread over a wide area, so Mano en Mano provided ILAP with a venue that allowed Barbara, Sean, and Christina to set up home base in a central location with heavy foot traffic. Both Sean and Christina speak Spanish, which is often a necessity, as many of the blueberry rakers only speak Spanish. While the outreach trip aims to educate migrant workers, the clinic was open to year-round Millbridge residents as well.

For more information on migrant workers in Maine, visit <http://bit.ly/migrantmaine>.



A celebratory atmosphere filled the air as Portland welcomed its newest U.S. citizens.

## Citizenship Day

Nearly one hundred immigrants from 39 countries around the world became U.S. Citizens during a ceremony held at the University of Southern Maine in Portland September 17th. The ceremony coincided with the 228th anniversary of the Constitution of the United States. U.S. District Judge Jon D. Levy presided over the ceremony and emphasized that, "immigrants and their children play an important part in every aspect of American life." ILAP staff members were present while 90 individuals took the oath of citizenship.



## ILAP's 2014 Annual Report

Type the link below into your browser to view ILAP's 2014 Annual Report, which is now available online as a PDF. This year, the Annual Report includes a special piece featuring Tabin Tangila mesu Kamba, who shared his personal journey as an asylum seeker—and now—a new Mainer.

[www.ilapmaine.org/501c3\\_information.html](http://www.ilapmaine.org/501c3_information.html)

## The History of Immigration

On Thursday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, over 60 ILAP supporters attended our fall event at the Maine Jewish Museum, featuring special remarks from Harold Pachios of Preti Flaherty. Guests enjoyed his informative presentation on the history of immigration in the United States. The event also coincided with the special exhibit "**Welcoming the Stranger**" by local artist Jo Israelson. Jo set up a custom weave for the event so our guests could interact with the installation. *We would like to thank the Maine Jewish Museum and Rabbi Gary Berenson for graciously hosting this event!*

# BIENVENUE!

Willkommen, Welcome!



**Deirdre Kerins**, originally from Omaha, NE, came to ILAP in August 2015 on a year-long placement with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. She recently graduated from Saint Louis University with a B.A. in History and Communications.

Throughout high school and college, Deirdre spent much of her free time volunteering in her community, which was both enriching and humbling. Deirdre is currently a volunteer in training at the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland. Welcome to the ILAP team, Deirdre!



### Reduce Reuse Recycle

Please pass along your copy of The Immigrant Beacon after you've enjoyed it, and remember to recycle. ILAP cares.

# BANKWANA!

Farewell and Well Wishes!

**Maggie Fleming** was our fourth Jesuit Corps Volunteer at ILAP. Members of the JVC spend one year living modestly and growing spiritually, while serving marginalized members of their community. Maggie lived in a house with four other individuals, each of whom worked with social justice organizations in the Greater Portland area. Thank you for your sincere dedication to ILAP's work, Maggie!

**Maddie Cole**, a 2015 McKeen Community Fellow, spent her summer working in ILAP's *pro se* forms clinic. In this role, she assisted clients in applying for permanent resident status and petitioning to bring family members to the U.S. We wish Maddie all the best as she returns to Bowdoin this fall for her senior year.



ILAP staff members attended the Community Matters in Maine Summer Celebration at Bowdoin College to support Maddie (pictured center), as she gave her final presentation.

**Carlos Medina** spent his summer with ILAP as a MAPIL fellow through the University of Southern Maine School of Law. He helped clients complete their applications for work permits and provided support to attorneys handling full representation cases. He returned to USM this fall to continue his studies.

## ILAP Email Delivers

Ever wonder why nonprofits send more email than hard copy mail? **Here's why:**

- \$ Email uses fewer donor dollars for staff time, printing and mailing.
- 👤 Email enables one person to complete the entire communication.
- 🌱 Email is environmentally friendly, with a small carbon footprint.

Please consider updating your current email address by emailing Olivia Orr at [Oorr@ilapmaine.org](mailto:Oorr@ilapmaine.org). ILAP does not share or sell our lists to anyone!  
*Thank you- it means the world to us!*

## ■ Humanitarian Migrant Crisis in Europe Leads U.S. to Accept More Refugees

Hundreds of thousands of migrants have entered Europe this year, escaping war and violence in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia. Most are refugees from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.

**European countries are struggling to reach agreement on how to handle the crisis.** While Germany announced plans to accept more refugees, other countries including Hungary refused to allow migrants across their borders. This humanitarian crisis threatens not only the refugees whose lives are in danger, but also the fundamental structure of the European Union's open border policies.

**The humanitarian crisis has led U.S. officials to consider increasing the number of refugees that we will admit.** In September, Secretary of State John Kerry announced that in 2016, the U.S. will increase the number of refugees admitted from 70,000 to 100,000 and the number of Syrian refugees will be increased by 10,000. Advocates are calling on the administration to further increase the number of overall refugees, and Syrian refugees, that the United States will accept due to the magnitude of the crisis.

**Unlike asylum seekers, who cannot apply for protection until they have entered the U.S., refugees are processed from abroad and arrive in the U.S. with refugee status.** Although refugees and asylum seekers must meet the same requirements to prove that they need protection, they are processed differently. Several federal agencies work in collaboration to determine which refugees will be resettled in the U.S. and what cities they will be placed in. Designated refugee resettlement affiliates in each state accept refugees and provide services and case management funded by the federal government.

Maine's refugee resettlement agency is Catholic Charities of Maine. **This past year, approximately 440 refugees were resettled in Maine.** Most of the refugees were from Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Afghanistan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. At this point, resettlement officials are expecting that Maine will receive refugees from the same countries next year. No Syrian refugees are scheduled for resettlement in Maine at this point, although that is subject to change. ■

## ■ After Legal Twists and Turns, Asylum Seekers and other Immigrants Retain General Assistance Eligibility

Asylum seekers and other immigrants will retain general assistance benefits under Public Law 324. The path to this success was complicated.

**ILAP joined partners on the Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition and other advocates this year to fight numerous attempts to eliminate these safety net benefits.** ILAP staff testified before legislative committees and the Portland and Lewiston City Councils, met with legislators, provided written legal guidance for legislators, and wrote op-eds. ILAP staff were also quoted numerous times in the media, helping to dispel myths and misunderstandings about the immigration laws and procedures.

The new law was initially proposed to eliminate general assistance benefits for asylum seekers, and was later amended to include language that would retain benefits for those who are lawfully present and those who are pursuing a lawful process to apply for immigration relief, which would include asylum seekers. The Governor had promised to veto the bill, but he failed to do so within the time required by law.

While the status of the veto was still uncertain, the Portland and Lewiston City Councils voted to provide municipal assistance for some individuals losing benefits, for a period of one year. Following those votes, the Maine Supreme Judicial Court held that Public Law 324 was valid.

**The new law went into effect on October 15<sup>th</sup>.** Asylum seekers and other qualifying immigrants in Maine are now eligible for state funded general assistance benefits. ■

## PRO BONO PANEL UPDATE

### Pro Bono Panel trainings:

■ A training covering the representation of asylum seekers before the Boston Immigration Court was held on May 29th at Pierce Atwood. Immigration Judge Paul Gagnon and Court Administrator Robert Halpin joined us for this training as they have for prior trainings. Judge Gagnon and Mr. Halpin always provide invaluable information and we are certainly grateful for their generosity. Thank you to **Pierce Atwood** for graciously hosting the event.

■ In an effort to find more panel members from the mid-coast area of the state, ILAP held an asylum training in Waldoboro on July 23rd at Markham & Read. The training was certainly well attended. Thank you to Jennifer Atkinson, a *pro bono* panel member who practices immigration law in Friendship, ME, for her work in organizing the event. ILAP would also like to extend a big thank you to **Markham & Read** for being such welcoming hosts.

■ **A training covering the representation of asylum seekers before the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is scheduled for November 5th at Verrill Dana.** This training is open to any Maine attorney interested in joining our *pro bono* panel.

### Pro Bono Panel Successes:

Congratulations to *Pro Bono* Panel member **Stacey D. Neumann, Esq. of Murray Plumb & Murray**, whose client was recently granted asylum by the Boston Asylum Office. Stacey's client, a citizen of Burundi, can now remain in the U.S. without fear of being returned to Burundi where he will be subject to persecution. Thank you, Stacey, for all of your hard work!



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Like us for the latest news, events, and immigration policy developments.  
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[www.ILAPmaine.org](http://www.ILAPmaine.org)

### Our Mission:

The **Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project** helps low-income immigrants improve their legal status and works for more just and humane laws and policies affecting immigrants.



## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

**Anna Lopez-Tous**

Intake Volunteer



**Anna Lopez-Tous** has served ILAP in various capacities as a dedicated volunteer of nearly six years. She originally heard about ILAP through a friend, and has since spent time helping out in our office whenever she can. This past summer, Anna filled in as a front desk volunteer in addition to screening potential clients during ILAP's Friday Intake.

### Anna Lopez-Tous

Anna was born and raised in Puerto Rico, but attended college in New York. While living in New York, she often visited Monhegan Island, but her eventual move to Portland in 1992 proved to be a vastly different experience. Over the years, she saw the once-homogenous Portland transform into a more diverse city with a blossoming immigrant population. Anna became a Spanish teacher and volunteered at Waynflete and King Middle School, but also knew that she wanted to help ease the difficult transition that many new immigrants face after arriving in Maine.

After learning more about ILAP's work, Anna decided to serve as a translator. She soon found herself spending four or five days per week visiting undocumented immigrants in the Cumberland County jail, many of whom desperately needed to communicate with their families. Many detainees did not have the means to contact their loved ones, so Anna served as an intermediary to ensure that both parties were informed of the situation at hand.

After retiring from teaching two years ago, Anna transitioned into primarily serving as an Intake volunteer. She records basic information from each potential client and then communicates with a lawyer about the reason for the visit. As an experienced volunteer, Anna will often anticipate the lawyer's needs and gather relevant documents or make photocopies, which can streamline the process. She is also currently working with Christina, ILAP's Clinic Paralegal, to learn how to complete the forms for green cards or permanent residency. She continues to offer her translation skills whenever they are needed.

Anna enjoys working with ILAP because although she is not an immigrant, she understands how difficult it can be to leave behind a familiar culture and begin life in an unfamiliar place. She is happy that she is able to work directly with clients and help them through a small part of their transition.



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## HOW WE FUND ILAP

**ILAP is grateful for the many donors who helped us reach two important matching opportunities last year at this time.** Both of them, from the **Clowes Fund** and the **Cotsirilos Family Foundation**, informed funding for this year as well. By meeting the Clowes Fund matching grant of \$15,000 last fall, ILAP was able to show the funder our community support, which led to confidence in them giving ILAP a two year grant starting in 2015. The Cotsirilos Family Foundation made a commitment of a matching gift of \$20,000 per year for 2014-2016. After meeting it last year through donor contributions, we are pleased to thank two funders who helped us meet the total amount this year, the William J. J. Gordon Family Foundation and the Sam L. Cohen Foundation. These opportunities have ripples for our organization, as you can see, and we are fortunate to have generous donors at every level who make this kind of fundraising possible. Thank you to everyone who gave!

**Speaking of matches, do you know if your employer matches gifts to charitable organizations like ILAP?**

Here is a list of some companies in Maine that do. If you recognize your employer on this list, ask your HR contact for information on how ILAP can access matching funds. *Thanks!*

- **New Balance**
- **Nellie Mae**
- **UnumProvident**
- **J. Walter Thompson Company**
- **KeyBank**
- **Anthem**

Our annual appeal for 2015 will be coming your way soon. Thank you for being a partner in ILAP's work of helping low income immigrants improve their legal status, creating a better life for everyone in Maine.