

IMMIGRANT LEGAL ADVOCACY PROJECT



# ANNUAL REPORT 2018

### **OUR MISSION**

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



### SERVICES

#### **Direct Legal Services**

ILAP provides a continuum of direct services based on client needs and priorities, encompassing full representation for the most complex cases and consultations, brief interventions and forms assistance for other less complicated issues.

#### **Education & Outreach**

ILAP offers accurate, accessible and timely information on immigration law issues to immigrant communities and service providers across the state to maximize our reach and prevent complications that may negatively affect legal status.

#### **Systemic Advocacy**

ILAP collaborates with partner organizations and immigrant-led groups on systemic advocacy efforts at the local, state and federal levels to improve laws and policies that affect immigrants in Maine and prevent those that would negatively impact immigrant communities.

# LOOKING BACK AT 25 YEARS

### A MESSAGE FROM ILAP'S LEADERS

Dear Friends,

In 2018, we marked ILAP's 25th anniversary with several exciting milestones. In June, we opened a satellite office in Lewiston, an ILAP first, where we now provide our full range of immigration legal services. We also piloted a "Rural Maine Project" to expand access to justice in rural areas of the state, and deepened our systemic advocacy and public education efforts. Moreover, we continued to diversify our services and supports for individuals seeking asylum, especially in Portland and Lewiston.

Community support for ILAP's mission was critical to achieving these goals, as it has been since our founding as a *pro bono* project in 1993. Because ILAP is ineligible for most federal funding, we have always been supported by the generosity of private individuals and foundations. We have also partnered with countless organizations, community groups, coalitions and government entities to ensure that the legal rights of Maine's immigrant community are upheld, whether advocating for a single client or for the rights of many.

Last year, our immigration laws once again became more complex and enforcement became harsher, less humane and more difficult to navigate without an attorney. Despite this challenging climate, ILAP's staff of seventeen, supported by a corps of over 250 volunteers, provided direct legal services and educational outreach to nearly 3,000 people across the state. In this effort, our 178 pro bono attorneys donated 3,724 hours of their time, valued at \$937,242, representing 157 individuals in their asylum cases.





Leslie Silverstein, Esq., (top) Board President Sue Roche, Esq., ILAP's Executive Director since 2013

Over the last twenty-five years, ILAP has represented thousands of Mainers seeking protection from persecution, reunification with family members, and legal status as a first step in building new lives. Thank you for being part of the community that supports ILAP, and Maine's immigrant community, by providing financial support, volunteering your time, and responding to our calls of action to improve our laws and policies. We hope you'll join us for our next 25 years!

Warm regards,

Sue Roche, Esq.
Executive Director

Leslie Silverstein, Esq. Board President

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2018

1,139

individuals were served through consultations, brief interventions and forms assistance.

For the 3rd year in a row, ILAP achieved a

approval rate on full representation cases

that received a final

decision.

**2,951** Mainers received direct legal assistance from ILAP.

of full representation cases were handled by our 178-member *Pro* Bono Panel

immigrant community members and services providers attended 60 outreach events

**ILAP** clients originated from

counties in Maine and 99 countries around the world. ILAP staff and pro bono attorneys provided full legal representation to

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2018

#### **Lewiston Office**

Thanks to the generous support of our community, ILAP was thrilled to open its first satellite office in Lewiston in June 2018. Staffed by a full-time Staff Attorney, and several enthusiastic Bates College interpreters and interns, ILAP is now

"WE CAN NOW BETTER SERVE CLIENTS WHO, DUE TO LIMITED FUNDS OR WORK OR FAMILY SCHEDULES, MAY NOT BE ABLE TO GET TO PORTLAND TO ACCESS ILAP'S RESOURCES."

providing a full range of immigration legal services in the Lewiston-Auburn area.

"We can now better serve clients who, due to limited funds or work or family schedules, may not be able to get to Portland to access ILAP's resources."

says Staff Attorney, Alice Kopij, who is spearheading ILAP's efforts in Lewiston. "In the months since we've opened, we have quickly become a trusted resource in a community with many immigrants but no legal resources, and the demand for our services is only growing," added Kopij.

In 2018, approximately 80% of ILAP's capacity in Lewiston has been dedicated to assisting asylum seekers and countering the unauthorized practice of law related to asylum. In addition, ILAP recruited local *pro bono* attorneys, including several from law firm Berman & Simmons, and we were able to place several new asylum cases.

### **Rural Maine Project**

Maine is home to a variety of immigrant communities, distributed widely throughout the state. In 2018, ILAP piloted our Rural Maine Project to build closer relationships and offer services to immigrants and outreach to service providers living outside of the greater Portland and Lewiston areas. Through this pilot, ILAP deepened our partnerships with Maine Mobile Health Program, Mano en Mano and many other community-based organizations across Maine.

The Rural Maine Project hit the grounding running (or driving) in October 2018, with ILAP attorney Barbara Taylor logging hundreds of miles

and dozens of meetings by the end of the year. These first months brought ILAP to Augusta, Biddeford, Bangor, and Machias, followed closely in January by Presque Isle, Caribou, and Sanford.

Taylor reflects, "Local immigrant communities and service providers were universally welcoming of our presence, and extremely helpful in directing ILAP to their areas of greatest need in all locations. We are looking forward to a continued and growing presence throughout the state and to a schedule filled with outreach, consults, and gatherings with our immigrant residents and the people who serve them."

### **Advocacy and Outreach**

With the addition of a new Advocacy & Outreach Attorney in December 2017, ILAP was able to expand our advocacy and outreach efforts throughout the year. In the spring, ILAP testified in support of a bill establishing the crimes of criminal forced labor and aggravated criminal forced labor, which was ultimately passed into law. The addition of labor trafficking to Maine's criminal code will lower the hurdles faced by immigrant survivors of labor trafficking seeking safety in our state.

"ILAP'S INCREASED CAPACITY TO CONDUCT SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH COULD NOT HAVE COME AT A MORE URGENT TIME."

In the fall, after the administration published its proposed "public charge"

rule changes, ILAP gave 25 presentations to the immigrant community, agency providers, the general public, and Congressional delegation staff. This was in addition to 35 other outreach events in 2018 that ranged from "Immigration 101" presentations for the general public to "Know Your Rights" presentations for immigrant groups.

"ILAP's increased capacity to conduct systemic advocacy and outreach could not have come at a more urgent time," stated Julia Brown. "ILAP was able to quickly respond to the administration's constant attacks on the immigrant community as well as make a real impact through policy."

### **Asylum Program**

Throughout the year, ILAP continued to diversify services for individuals seeking asylum in Maine. Staff conducted outreach to recruit new *Pro Bono* Panel members, began taking asylum cases in our new Lewiston office, and committed substantial resources to increasing the supports for those applying for asylum on their own.

After the administration's punitive "Zero Tolerance" policy led to the forced separation and detention of thousands of immigrant families in June 2018, Asylum Program Director Jennifer Bailey also spent a week with the Pro Bono Asylum Representation Project (PROBAR) in Harlingen, Texas to inform ILAP's work in Maine.

"We visited detainees at a 1,200 person adult detention center in

Port Isabel, and toured a shelter for unaccompanied minors. The people I met shared harrowing stories of political

# "IT WAS NOT THE DUE PROCESS THAT I BELIEVE OUR CONSTITUTION INTENDS."

violence, domestic violence and gang persecution," Jennifer stated. "I also attended a mass prosecution of 72 men and women at the federal district court who were found guilty of unlawful entry. Everyone stood at once and mumbled their pleas simultaneously into headphones. It was disturbing to watch. It was not the due process that I believe our Constitution intends."

# WHO WE ARE

### STAFF

Jennifer Bailey, Esq., Asylum Program Director Melissa Brennan, Esq., Staff Attorney Julia Brown, Esq., Advocacy & Outreach Attorney Kate Chesney, Esq., Staff Attorney Sarah Corsico, Legal Program Assistant Treva deMaynadier, Immigration Forms Paralegal Alice Kopij, Esq., Lewiston Staff Attorney Philip Mantis, Esq., Legal Director Danny Muller, Operations Coordinator Susan Roche, Esq., Executive Director Rachel Schwarz, Legal Support Associate Laura Simocko, Development Director Christina Starr, Intake Supervisor/DOJ Accredited Representative Vanessa Stasse, Lewiston Interpreter/Legal Program Associate Barbara Taylor, Esq., Rural Maine Project Attorney Nadine Twagirayezu, Asylum Program Paralegal

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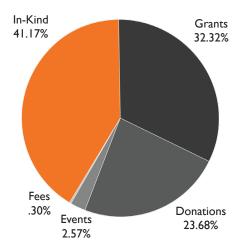
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### REVENUE AND EXPENSE REPORT

For transparency and accountability to our donors and supporters, ILAP undergoes annual external audits. The following information is from audited financial statements from January 1, 2018–December 31, 2018:

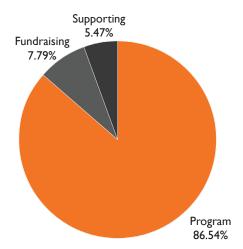
#### Revenue

Foundation Grants	\$735,817
Donations	\$539,248
Events	\$58,629
Fees & Other Revenue	\$6,774
In Kind Contributions*	\$937,242
Total Revenue	\$2,276,42



### **Expenses**

Program*	\$1,802,709
Fundraising Services	\$166,179
Supporting Services	\$114,111
Total Expenses	\$2,082,999
Change in Assets	\$193,427



<sup>\*</sup>In-kind Contributions and Program expenses include the value of donated pro bono attorney time

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### **HOW YOU CAN HELP**

### **Support ILAP with a donation**

You can give by (1) visiting my.ilapmaine.org/donate anytime or (2) sending a check to ILAP. P.O. Box 17917. Portland ME 04112.

### Learn about our planned giving options

ILAP accepts gifts of stock, other investment vehicles, bequests and a range of planned gifts. Contact Development Director Laura Simocko at (207) 699-4407/ lsimocko@ilapmaine.org if you are interested in supporting ILAP with a planned gift.

### **Spread the word!**

ILAP supporters can share our immigration updates with their networks. Sign up for our monthly "Golden Door" e-newsletter at <a href="signup.ilapmaine.org">signup.ilapmaine.org</a> or join us on Facebook and Twitter (@ILAPmaine) to get our action alerts, legal briefings and news updates.

### Legal or language skills? Volunteer.

ILAP is always looking for lawyers to join our *Pro Bono* Panel. Contact Asylum Program Director Jennifer Bailey at jbailey@ilapmaine.org to learn more. We are also in need of volunteers who are fluent in English and a second language like French, Portuguese or Spanish. Fill out a volunteer application at ilapmaine.org.