

FEBRUARY 13-14, 2020

in children's  
BEST INTERESTS

SYMPOSIUM

ADVANCING A FUNDAMENTAL  
STANDARD FOR THE TREATMENT  
OF IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN & LATINO STUDIES  
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY WASHINGTON COLLEGE OF LAW  
AMERICAN IMMIGRATION LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

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**2020 Annual Latino Public Affairs Forum**

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Advancing a Fundamental Standard  
for the Treatment of Immigrant Children

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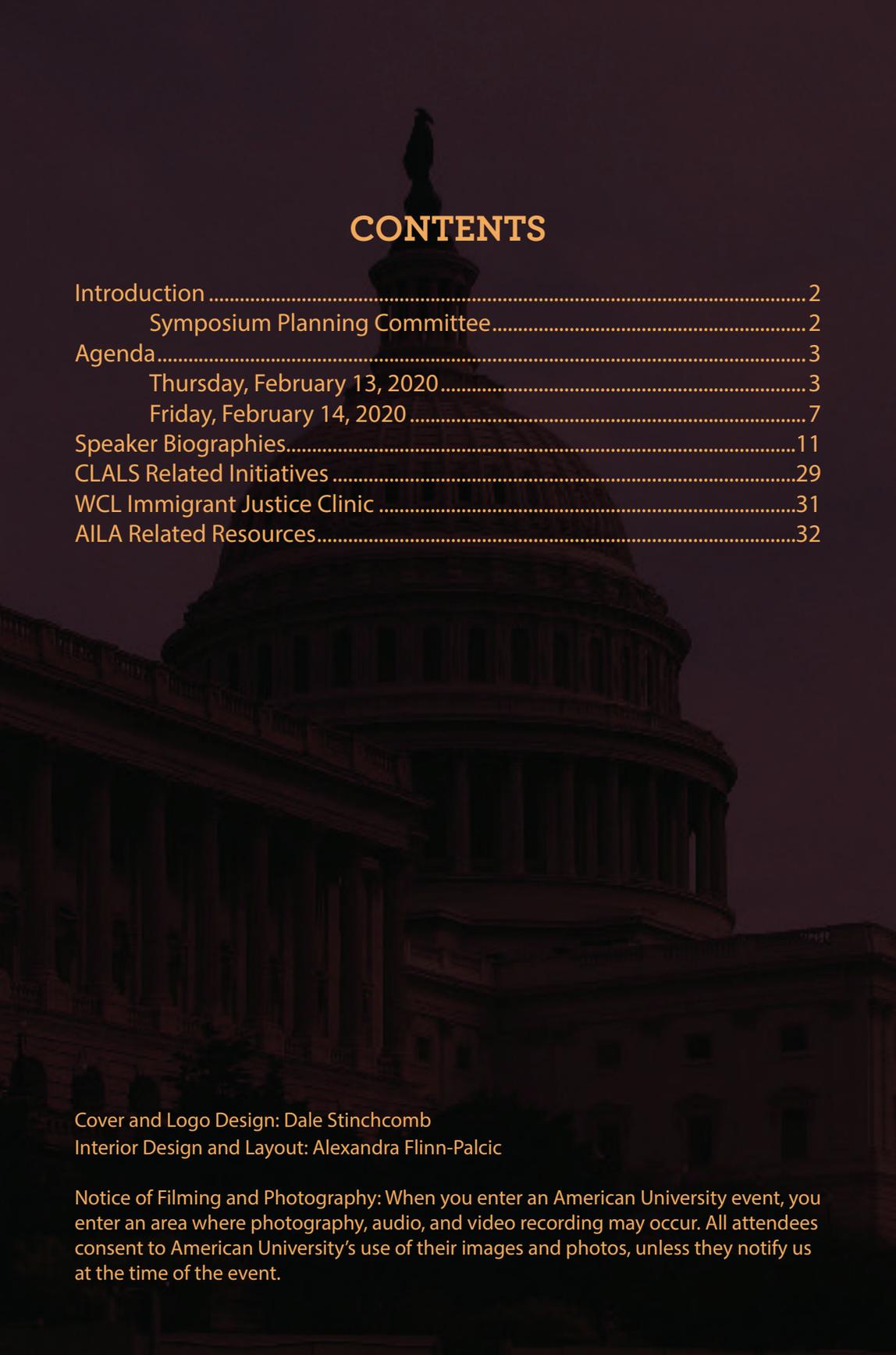
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# INTRODUCTION



For over a century, the best interests standard has served as the cornerstone of a robust legal architecture erected by every state in the U.S. to safeguard the well-being of children, regardless of their immigration status. A global consensus, embodied in the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), has also embraced the best interests standard as the fundamental framework to guide decision-making involving children. As a signatory to the CRC, which in 2019 marked its thirtieth anniversary as the most widely ratified treaty in recent history, the U.S. government has pledged not to act in a manner that undermines the best interests principle. And yet, despite these longstanding commitments, our country is witnessing a systematic assault on the rights of migrant children as the Trump administration works to roll back hard-fought progress in extending the best interests standard into immigration law and practice.

The purpose of this cross-disciplinary symposium is to generate impactful publicity around this erosion of fundamental protections and to equip practitioners, policymakers, and advocates to defend and reassert the primacy of the best interests standard in the treatment of children in the U.S. immigration system. The symposium will also leverage the multidisciplinary expertise of participants to offer more precise guidance for the implementation of the best interests standard in the immigration context, where children's unique circumstances often require attention to factors less common in other child welfare settings.

## **Planning Committee**

Dree Collopy	Benach Collopy LLP
Sheila Starkey Hahn	Law Offices of Sheila Starkey Hahn, PC
Eric Hershberg	Center for Latin American & Latino Studies, American University
Jayesh Rathod	American University Washington College of Law
Dennis Stinchcomb	Center for Latin American & Latino Studies, American University

# AGENDA

Thursday, February 13

**9:00am** Registration & Continental Breakfast

**9:30am** Opening Remarks

Jayesh Rathod, *Associate Dean, American University  
Washington College of Law*

Sheila Starkey Hahn, *Chair, ALLA Pro Bono  
Committee*

**9:45am** **In Search of Protection: International Legal Frameworks and Trends in the Displacement of Refugee and Migrant Children to the U.S.**

Devon Cone, *Refugees International*

Alice Farmer, *United Nations High Commissioner for  
Refugees (UNHCR)*

Amelia Frank-Vitale, *University of Michigan*

Lauren Heidbrink, *California State University, Long  
Beach*

Moderator: Eric Hershberg, *Center for Latin  
American & Latino Studies, American University*

Since the adoption of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989, practitioners and scholars have worked to develop clearer guidelines for how to implement the best interests standard in the migration context in a manner consistent with established youth development principles. These efforts to operationalize the best interests standard have also recognized the critical need for a more nuanced understanding among practitioners of how the social and cultural contexts surrounding children's migration inform the fact-driven assessment of their best interests.

Following an overview of international frameworks for the protection of migrant children and available guidance for how to apply the best interests principle in practice, this panel will turn to a discussion of the conditions

faced by children in the Northern Triangle countries of Central America—El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. With a focus on the sociocultural norms, household circumstances, economic realities, and dynamics of violence that shape the experiences of Central American youth, panelists will seek to contribute to efforts to inform and refine best interest assessments.

**11:00am**   **Opening Plenary**  
**State Weakness and Complicity: Economic and Political Barriers to Children’s Well-Being in Central America**

Ricardo Barrientos, *Central American Institute of Fiscal Studies (ICEFI)*

Several interrelated phenomena motivate children and families from the Northern Triangle of Central America to leave their countries of origin in order to seek refuge or a better life abroad. Drivers of migration include gang violence, repression of political dissent, corruption, extortion, and lack of access to employment, schooling, and health care. Underlying all of these factors is the failure of the Guatemalan, Honduran, and Salvadoran states to provide the minimal levels of protection necessary for people to live their lives peacefully and with some hope for their futures.

**11:20am**   **Morning Break**

**11:35am**   **Flores and Beyond: Applying Basic Child Welfare Principles in Immigration Detention**

Holly Cooper, *UC Davis School of Law*

Mark Greenberg, *Migration Policy Institute*

Katharina Obser, *Women’s Refugee Commission*

Kristen Torres, *First Focus on Children*

Moderator: Anita Sinha, *International Human Rights Law Clinic, American University Washington College of Law*

In one of the rare explicit references to the best interests standard in the U.S. immigration context, the

1997 Flores Settlement Agreement (FSA) set specific standards for detention facilities, limited the detention time for unaccompanied children, and required that the government promptly place these minors in the “least restrictive setting that is in the best interests of the child.” In 2016, advocates successfully sued the Obama administration to expand the FSA’s protections to all immigrant children, including those migrating in family units.

These hard-won protections and other child-sensitive policies now face an uncertain future. Panelists will discuss the Trump administration’s decision to reverse course on the use of community-based alternatives to detention—most notably the Family Case Management Program (FCMP); the implications of the administration’s proposed changes to the FSA and other policy shifts for both unaccompanied children and families; the unfolding litigation to preserve the FSA; and the deleterious, far-reaching effects of detention on children’s health and well-being.

**12:50pm Lunch & Keynote Address**  
U.S. Representative Pramila Jayapal (WA-07)

**2:00pm An Assault on Asylum: Evolving Standards, Migrant Protection Protocols, and “Safe” Third Countries**

Dree Collopy, *Benach Collopy LLP*

Linda Evarts, *International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)*

Stephen Manning, *Innovation Law Lab*

Jayesh Rathod, *Immigrant Justice Clinic, American University Washington College of Law*

Moderator: Dennis Stinchcomb, *Center for Latin American & Latino Studies, American University*

Since 2017, the Trump administration has deployed a multi-strategy approach to severely limit persecuted children and families’ ability to seek refuge in the U.S. These efforts have included foreclosing opportunities

for at-risk children to apply for refugee status in their countries of origin, introducing new bars to asylum, overturning established legal precedent, metering the number of asylum seekers allowed entry to the U.S., returning asylum applicants to Mexico to await court appearances, and forcing applicants to first seek protection in other countries. Panelists will discuss the implications of this dismantling of the U.S. asylum system, the legal battles to enjoin the administration's actions, and the capacity of asylum systems in the region to provide for the humanitarian and protection needs of children and families compelled to seek refuge elsewhere.

**3:15pm Afternoon Break**

**3:30pm Addressing Procedural Deficits in the Adjudication of Child Protection Claims in Immigration Court and Before USCIS**

Lenni Benson, *New York Law School*

Tianna Gibbs, *UDC David A. Clarke School of Law*

Jennifer Nagda, *Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights*

Michele Statz, *University of Minnesota Medical School*

Moderator: Cori Alonso-Yoder, *Immigrant Justice Clinic, American University Washington College of Law*

Beginning in the mid-2000s, collaboration between U.S. government representatives and experts from non-governmental organizations made meaningful progress in incorporating the best interests of the child principle into adjudicative processes for children seeking immigration relief. This collaboration was premised on the mutual understanding that federal agencies stood to benefit from states' deep experience in developing and implementing child-appropriate measures to promote children's welfare. Under the current administration, these efforts have come to an abrupt halt, and many child-sensitive practices are being stripped from agency guidelines. In the shadow of these reversals, panelists will offer an overview of best interests determinations under state law; discuss what

lessons immigration judges and other administrative adjudicators might garner from both the successes and shortcomings of the best interests standard's application in family law and other contexts; and highlight other process barriers that limit children's access to relevant special visa categories.

**4:45pm** Closing Remarks

## Friday, February 14

**9:00am** Registration & Continental Breakfast

**9:30am** Plenary

**The Plight of Migrant Mothers: Restoring Protections for Victims of Gender-Based Violence**

Karen Musalo, *Center for Gender & Refugee Studies (CGRS), UC Hastings College of the Law*

The Trump administration has turned back the clock on the rights of women fleeing domestic violence, sex trafficking, and other gender-based human rights violations. In an unusual procedural move, the Attorney General in 2018 upended precedent established by the Justice Department's Board of Immigration Appeals that had affirmed that domestic violence survivors are deserving of protection under U.S. asylum law. That decision, known as *Matter of A-B-*, and similar cases have been used to bar domestic violence survivors and other victims from seeking asylum even as levels of gender-based violence have reached endemic proportions in Central America.

**9:55am** Family Separation and the Challenges of Reunification: Zero Tolerance, Its Aftermath, and Ongoing Separation Practices

Ashley Feasley, *U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)*

Michelle Mendez, *Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC)*

Michael Mintz, *Children's National Hospital*  
Christie Turner-Herbas, *Kids in Need of Defense*  
(KIND)

Moderator: Lindsay Harris, *UDC David A. Clarke*  
*School of Law*

In April 2018, the Trump administration instituted its "zero tolerance" policy in an attempt to deter the arrival of Central American migrant families and to block asylum claims the administration contended were often fraudulent. The decision to prosecute all adults who crossed the border illegally resulted in the forced separation of nearly 2,800 children from their parents before widespread condemnation prompted the Trump administration to issue an executive order halting the practice in June 2018. In recent litigation, the U.S. government disclosed that another 1,500 children had been separated prior to the official announcement of the zero tolerance policy. Yet while public outcry has quieted, separations at the U.S.-Mexico border continue.

Panelists will discuss reunification efforts, the class action lawsuit seeking damages for separated families, ongoing litigation to end current separation practices, and the impact of separations on children's well-being.

**11:10am Morning Break**

**11:25am Pro Bono Impact: Practitioner Perspectives**

Tim Huether, *Jones Day*

Ruchi Jain, *Kirkland & Ellis LLP*

Andrea Mangones, *Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)*

Laura Nally, *CAIR Coalition*

Rachel Kaplan Reicher, *Skadden, Arps, Slate,*  
*Meagher & Flom LLP*

Moderator: Sheila Starkey Hahn, *Law Offices of*  
*Sheila Starkey Hahn, PC*

Pro bono legal assistance continues to play a critical role in promoting access to justice and equal treatment under the law for immigrant children. This panel features

the perspectives of practitioners at the front lines of a broad range of pro bono work, including direct representation of children in immigration proceedings, community-based legal education, and litigation aimed at eliminating procedural barriers to immigration relief. The discussion will also cover Central American children's non-immigration legal needs, the challenges faced by pro bono attorneys, and how interested law students and attorneys can get involved in pro bono efforts.

- 12:30pm** **Lunch Plenary**  
**Overcoming Barriers: Reflections from an Asylee, Attorney, and Advocate**  
Liana Montecinos, *Benach Collopy LLP*
- 1:15pm** **Children's Best Interests in the Context of Family and Community Integration**  
Angela Gonzalez, *Youth Advocate*  
Andrew Lorenzen-Strait, *Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSSNCA)*  
Susana Martinez, *Latin American Youth Center (LAYC)*  
Cristina Novoa, *Center for American Progress*  
Alan Shapiro, *Terra Firma*  
Moderator: Ernesto Castañeda, *Department of Sociology, American University*

If released from detention, the majority of immigrant children—whether unaccompanied or in families—do not receive post-release services and, as a consequence, are at heightened risk of psychological distress, adverse health outcomes, academic disengagement, and maltreatment. In the absence of federal engagement following their release, local jurisdictions and community-based organizations have been forced to improvise how best to provide basic services for this newcomer population. Yet, varying levels of capacity and response across diverse community contexts are contributing to disparities in children's integration experiences.

This panel will focus on the integration challenges faced

by resettled immigrant children both at home and in their communities. Panelists will also discuss the impact of the Trump administration's interior immigration policies, including increased enforcement, the targeting of so-called "sanctuary" communities, and efforts to dissuade and penalize immigrants for accessing available benefits. Throughout the discussion, panelists will reflect on how child welfare standards can inform best practices for addressing the legal, education, health, and social service needs of child migrants.

**2:30pm** Closing Remarks

# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

## **Cori Alonso-Yoder**

Ana Corina “Cori” Alonso-Yoder is the Practitioner-in-Residence with the Immigrant Justice Clinic at American University Washington College of Law. She is licensed to practice law in Maryland and in Washington, DC. Prior to joining the faculty, she was the supervising attorney at Whitman-Walker Health, the country’s longest serving medical-legal partnership. In her public interest legal practice, Professor Alonso-Yoder has worked on a variety of equal justice issues, with a special emphasis on advocacy for LGBT and HIV-positive immigrants. Early in her legal career, Professor Alonso-Yoder represented low-income immigrants at Ayuda, where she established an innovative project to meet the civil legal needs of *notario* fraud victims. In her work to promote immigrants’ rights, she has collaborated on transnational labor policy and worker outreach in central Mexico, provided legal orientation and advice and counsel to inmates in U.S. immigration detention facilities, and served as an assistant to the chair of the United Nations Committee Against Torture in Geneva. Professor Alonso-Yoder’s commentary on immigrants’ rights has been featured by ABC News, *The Atlantic*, and *Washington Monthly* magazine, among others.

## **Ricardo Barrientos**

José Ricardo Barrientos Quezada currently works as Senior Economist at the Central American Institute of Fiscal Studies (ICEFI, in Spanish) and is an expert on fiscal policy topics. From 2009-2010, he served as Vice Minister of Public Finance of Guatemala, and during the period 1994-2005, he served as director and technical advisor at the Fiscal Analysis Unit at the Ministry of Public Finance of Guatemala. As an independent consultant, he has researched and evaluated a wide range of fiscal and other public policies, and has published works on tax policy and tax evasion in Guatemala. Mr. Barrientos also served as an independent consultant for the most recent Fiscal Pact Commission in Guatemala, and was in charge of the indirect taxation study and proposal (2007). He completed doctoral studies in Mathematics at the University of Barcelona, Spain (2005-2006) and holds an International Tax Certificate from Harvard University (2000). He completed an undergraduate degree in Mathematics at the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala.

## **Lenni Benson**

Professor Lenni B. Benson has been teaching and writing in the field of immigration law since 1994. She is the Distinguished Professor of Immigration and Human Rights Law at New York Law School. She founded the Safe Passage Project which recruits, trains and mentors attorneys to assist unaccompanied youth who are facing deportation. Safe Passage Project began as a law

school pro bono project/clinic and is now a non-profit with a staff of over 40 professionals housed at New York Law that partners with the law school clinic. Safe Passage Project is currently assisting over 1,000 unaccompanied minors in New York. More than 500 pro bono attorneys are working with the Project. Professor Benson has won national awards for her pro bono leadership and excellence in immigration teaching. She has served as a member of several national task forces on the needs of migrant youth, and has been a speaker for the federal government at national trainings. She also served as one of the founding steering committee members of the American Immigration Representation Project formed in 2017 to expand pro bono representation of detained immigrants that is part of the national project ([www.immigrationjustice.us](http://www.immigrationjustice.us)). In 2012 she completed, with Russell Wheeler, a study of the immigration courts for the federal government's Administrative Conference of the United States. She served as the chair of the Immigration and Nationality Law Committee of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York from 2012 to the end of 2014. Professor Benson is an emeritus trustee of the American Immigration Law Foundation (now the American Immigration Council), is a fellow of the American Bar Foundation and served on the board of the Center for Human and Constitutional Rights. Her co-authored book *Immigration and Nationality Law: Problems and Strategies* was published by LexisNexis in 2013; a new edition was issued in December 2019 by Carolina Academic Press.

### **Ernesto Castañeda**

Ernesto Castañeda is Assistant Professor at American University in Washington, DC. His research theorizes the parallel processes of immigrant integration and exclusion in global and border cities in the United States and Europe, with special emphasis on Latin America and North Africa as places of origin and cultural referents for immigrants. He is the author of *A Place to Call Home: Immigrant Belonging and Exclusion in New York, Paris, and Barcelona* (Stanford University Press 2018); *Building Walls: The Exclusion of Latin People in the U.S.* (Lexington Books 2019), and with Charles Tilly and Lesley Wood, *Social Movements 1768–2018* (Routledge 2020). He is the editor of *Immigration and Categorical Inequality: Migration to the City and the Birth of Race and Ethnicity* (Routledge 2018); and co-editor with Cathy L. Schneider of *Collective Violence, Contentious Politics, and Social Change: A Charles Tilly Reader* (Routledge 2017). He has written for *The Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Hill*, and *CityLab*. Please see [www.ernestocastaneda.com](http://www.ernestocastaneda.com) for further information.

### **Dree Collopy**

Dree K. Collopy is a managing partner of Benach Collopy LLP in Washington, DC. A recognized expert on U.S. asylum law and policy, Ms. Collopy serves as chair of the American Immigration Lawyers Association's (AILA) National Asylum

and Refugee Committee. She is the author of *AILA's Asylum Primer*, a practical guide to U.S. asylum law and procedure that is widely recognized as the "go to" manual for advocates representing asylum seekers in the United States. Ms. Collopy frequently lectures and publishes on cutting edge asylum and other immigration issues and is deeply committed to the pro bono representation of indigent clients and securing their access to counsel. She mentors pro bono attorneys, develops case materials and strategies for the representation of detained women and children refugees, and serves on working groups developing nationwide policy advocacy and litigation strategies on behalf of refugees and asylum seekers. Ms. Collopy also is a member of the adjunct faculty at American University Washington College of Law, where she teaches Asylum and Refugee Law. She has been recognized for her contributions to the field of immigration law and for her work in advancing and defending the cause of refugees, receiving the AILA President's Commendation Award in both 2013 and 2016 and the Joseph Minsky Award in 2014, one of AILA's highest honors. She earned her J.D. and Certificate in Law and Public Policy from The Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law and her B.A. from Grinnell College.

### **Devon Cone**

Devon Cone is the the Senior Advocate for Women and Girls at Refugees International where she focuses on sexual and gender-based violence, trafficking, and child protection. She has written reports on trafficking of Venezuelan women and girls, displacement in southern Africa, gender-based violence in South Sudan, and will soon be publishing a report on gender-based violence and unaccompanied children in Greece. Prior to joining Refugees International, Devon was the director of protection programs at HIAS where she was responsible for providing technical expertise to HIAS' protection-related programming globally. Previous to HIAS, Devon worked for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Lebanon, Uganda, Egypt, and Kenya, and for a variety of NGOs providing services to refugees. As part of her work, Devon has developed curriculum and led trainings on refugee protection for government officials, NGO staff, and UN agencies. At the request of the U.S. State Department, in 2015, Devon conducted an independent evaluation of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) which is responsible for choosing, vetting, and resettling refugees into the United States. Devon holds a Master's degree from Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy and a Bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University. She also holds a certificate in Forced Migration from Oxford University, a certificate in International Migration Law from the International Institute of Humanitarian Law, and a certificate in Humanitarian Studies from Harvard University. Devon's writing has been published in *Foreign Policy*, the *Forced Migration Review*, *The Hill*, and the *Huffington Post*.

## **Holly Cooper**

Holly Cooper, Co-director of the Immigration Law Clinic at UC Davis School of Law, has extensive litigation experience defending the rights of immigrants and is a nationally recognized expert on immigration detention issues and on the immigration consequences of criminal convictions. After law school, Cooper worked for Reed Smith LLP (formerly Crosby, Heafey Roach & May LLP), The Law Offices of Fellom & Solorio, and the Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project. As the Senior Staff Attorney at the Florence Project, Cooper initiated the Detained Immigrant Children's Rights Project, provided representation and pro se assistance for adult detainees, and mentored pro bono attorneys. She currently serves on the UC Haiti Initiative's Steering Committee and is on the Advisory Board for the Gifford Center for Population Studies. Cooper joined the School of Law faculty in 2006. In the Immigration Law Clinic, she focuses on advocating for the rights of detained immigrants. In 2011, she was the recipient of the King Hall Legal Foundation's Outstanding Alumni Award and the Carol Weiss King award from the National Lawyers Guild. Cooper also trains lawyers on a national level and regularly speaks at academic conferences. She provides expert legal advice to public defenders and was the American Immigration Lawyers Association's Liaison to the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge for two years. In the international domain, Cooper has worked on human rights issues in Haiti and has volunteered on multiple human rights delegations to Haiti since the earthquake. Cooper is a graduate of UC Davis School of Law, where she was on the Board of the King Hall Legal Foundation and an active member of the National Lawyers Guild. She received her B.A. in Political Science from the University of California, San Diego.

## **Linda Evarts**

Linda Evarts is a staff attorney in the International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)'s Litigation Department. She was previously a staff attorney at The Bronx Defenders, where she represented hundreds of indigent clients charged with misdemeanors and felonies in Bronx Criminal and Supreme Court. After law school, Linda served as law clerk to the Honorable Dolly M. Gee of the United States District Court for the Central District of California. Linda graduated from Yale Law School, where she received the C. Larue Munson Prize for her work in the Veterans Legal Services Clinic and the Criminal Justice Clinic. During law school, Linda was an intern at the New York Civil Liberties Union and the Orleans Public Defenders, and she was an editor of the *Yale Journal of Law & Feminism*. Prior to law school, Linda was a U.S. Student Fulbright Scholar in Bogotá, Colombia, and she worked as a paralegal at the Federal Defenders of New York. Linda earned a B.A. from Brown University with Honors in Latin American Studies.

## **Alice Farmer**

Alice Farmer is the Legal Officer for UNHCR's Washington D.C. office. The office serves as a resource to policymakers in drafting and implementing refugee protection measures; monitors U.S. compliance with international standards; and assists asylum-seekers and their representatives in presenting claims. Ms. Farmer oversees strategic litigation and judicial engagement, directs programming on children in the U.S., and works to ensure due process and access to counsel for asylum-seekers. Previously, Ms. Farmer served as the protection officer in the Washington office. Prior to joining the Washington office, Ms. Farmer worked on refugee and human rights issues in various capacities for Human Rights Watch, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the Norwegian Refugee Council, as well as in other offices of UNHCR. Ms. Farmer has researched and published on the human rights of children in displacement in more than twelve countries. Ms. Farmer, in her capacity at Human Rights Watch, created and led the organization's global campaign against immigration detention of children. Ms. Farmer started her legal career with the U.S. Department of Justice Honors Program, in the Executive Office for Immigration Review. She has lectured on human rights at Harvard Law School, Georgetown University Law Center, and the Institut d'études politiques de Paris (Sciences Po), and published with Oxford's *Forced Migration Review*, the *Georgetown Immigration Law Journal*, and the *Yale Human Rights and Development Law Journal*, among others. Ms. Farmer holds a J.D. from New York University School of Law, a master's degree in public administration from Harvard's Kennedy School, and a bachelor's degree from Harvard College.

## **Ashley Feasley**

Ashley Feasley is the Director of Policy for Migration and Refugee Services at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Prior to working at USCCB, Ashley worked as the Director of Advocacy for the Catholic Legal Immigration Network (CLINIC). She has taught at Fordham University School of Law and at the Columbus School of Law at Catholic University of America. Ms. Feasley focuses her work and scholarship on migration law, including immigration law, human trafficking, refugee and asylum law, and protection of vulnerable mobile populations. She has testified before Congress, published numerous articles and has appeared in the media speaking about migration-related issues. Ashley also previously clerked for the Honorable Evan J. Wallach at the United States Court of International Trade in New York.

## **Amelia Frank-Vitale**

Amelia Frank-Vitale is a cultural anthropologist focused on Central American migration and violence. After years in Mexico studying transit migration, her current project focuses on life in and around San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Using ethnography and participatory photography, she documents how deportees

reconfigure their lives and reimagine their futures after being sent back to some of the world's most dangerous neighborhoods. Amelia's dissertation fieldwork is funded by the Social Science Research Council, the Wenner-Gren Foundation, the Inter-American Foundation, the Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship Program, and the Rackham International Research Award from the University of Michigan. She currently is a doctoral candidate in Anthropology at the University of Michigan. She holds a B.A. in Anthropology from Yale University, an M.A. in Ethics, Peace, and Global Affairs from American University, and an M.A. in Anthropology from the University of Michigan. She is also a collaborator with Dr. Jason De León's Undocumented Migration Project, currently housed at UCLA.

### **Tianna Gibbs**

Tianna Gibbs is an Assistant Professor of Law at the University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law. She co-directs the General Practice Clinic and teaches Civil Procedure. Professor Gibbs received her B.A. from Stanford University and her J.D. from Yale Law School. Prior to joining the law faculty at UDC, Professor Gibbs was a Supervising Attorney in the Domestic Violence/Family Law Unit at the Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia for nearly a decade. While at Legal Aid, she represented domestic violence survivors in custody and civil protection order cases as well as custodial and noncustodial parents in child support cases. She also engaged in policy advocacy and court reform efforts to improve the District's child support system. Professor Gibbs is currently a member of the DC Child Support Guideline Commission and the Judicial Conference of the District of Columbia Circuit Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services. She was previously a member of the Steering Committee of the DC Bar Family Law Section and the DC Superior Court Paternity and Child Support Rules Drafting Committee. Professor Gibbs' research interests include access to justice issues that impact litigants in high-volume courts, particularly courts that handle domestic violence and family law matters.

### **Angela Gonzalez**

Angela Gonzalez is the Language Access Monitor at the DC Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs where she works in collaboration with DC government agencies to ensure that Latinos with limited or no English proficiency have equal access to government services. Ms. Gonzalez has over 10 years of experience implementing programs and research projects that empower vulnerable populations in the DC area. Her most recent experience includes working at the Latin American Youth Center where she implemented positive youth development programs addressing complex needs of immigrant youth and families in areas such as housing, mental health, recreation and financial literacy. Previously, she led the implementation of field research studies aimed

at improving financial access and resources for Latino immigrants in DC. Ms. Gonzalez currently serves as co-chair of the American University Latino Alumni Alliance where she works to increase engagement of Hispanic heritage alumni in AU networks and activities; she also serves as the president of the board of the Langley Park Civic Association, a community-led organization aimed at improving the quality of life of Langley Park, MD residents. Ms. Gonzalez holds a Master's degree in International Development with a concentration in Community Development from American University and a Law degree from Central American University (UCA) in El Salvador.

### **Mark Greenberg**

Mark Greenberg joined the Migration Policy Institute as a Senior Fellow in July 2017. His work focuses on the intersections of migration policy with human services and social welfare policies. From 2009-17, Mr. Greenberg worked at the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. He served as ACF Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy from 2009-13; Acting Commissioner for the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families from 2013-15; and Acting Assistant Secretary from 2013-17. ACF includes the Office of Refugee Resettlement, which has responsibility for the refugee resettlement and unaccompanied children program, and has a strong research agenda relating to the programs under its jurisdiction. Among these are a wide range of human services programs, including Head Start, child care, child support, child welfare, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Previously, Mr. Greenberg was Executive Director of the Georgetown Center on Poverty, Inequality, and Public Policy, a joint initiative of the Georgetown Law Center and Georgetown Public Policy Institute. In addition, he previously was Executive Director of the Center for American Progress' Task Force on Poverty, and the Director of Policy for the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP). He is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School, and was a legal services lawyer in Florida and California for ten years after graduating law school.

### **Sheila Starkey Hahn**

Sheila Starkey Hahn has practiced immigration law for more than 20 years. She has a solo practice in upstate New York, focusing on employment-based immigration and the pro bono representation of asylum applicants before Immigration Courts nationwide. She is currently the Chair of the AILA National Pro Bono Committee. Ms. Starkey Hahn lectures on topics of immigration law at universities, embassies, international organizations and AILA conferences. She is the author of numerous articles on a variety of topics in immigration law. Ms. Starkey Hahn has traveled to Artesia, New Mexico and Dilley and Karnes, Texas to provide pro bono representation to detained Central American asylum seekers. She is also the recipient of the 2018 Michael Maggio Pro Bono Award.

## **Lindsay Harris**

Lindsay M. Harris is an Associate Professor of Law at the UDC David A. Clarke School of Law, and Co-Director of the Immigration and Human Rights Clinic. Professor Harris supervises students representing indigent DC community members in removal proceedings and applications for humanitarian immigration relief. She also leads service-learning trips to detention centers and the U.S./Mexico border. Before joining UDC Law, Professor Harris taught in the asylum clinic at Georgetown Law and taught Asylum and Refugee Law at George Mason University School of Law. She also worked with the American Immigration Council focused on efforts to end the detention of immigrant families and at the Tahirih Justice Center as an Equal Justice Works fellow and staff attorney leading the African Women's Empowerment Project. Professor Harris clerked on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals for the late Judge Harry Pregerson. Professor Harris's publications address contemporary issues in asylum law and policy as well as best practices in clinical pedagogy. She has published in the *Wisconsin Law Review*, the *New York Review of Law and Social Change*, the *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*, the *Clinical Law Review*, among other journals. With Professor Laila Hlass from Tulane University, Professor Harris is the co-creator of the Legal Interviewing and Language Access Film Project, a teaching tool and resource to address legal interviewing and collaboration across difference. Professor Harris earned her J.D. summa cum laude from Berkeley Law (Boalt Hall) and her L.L.M. from Georgetown. She serves as Vice-Chair of the National Asylum and Refugee Liaison committee and as the Vice-Chair of the Board of DC-area non-profit, the Asylum Seeker Assistance Project.

## **Lauren Heidbrink**

Lauren Heidbrink is an anthropologist and assistant professor in Human Development at California State University, Long Beach. Her research and teaching interests include childhood and youth, transnational migration, performance and identity, engaged methodologies and Central America. She is author of *Migrant Youth, Transnational Families, and the State: Care and Contested Interests* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), an ethnography on unaccompanied child migration and detention in the United States. Her book *Migranhood: Youth in a New Era of Deportation* (Stanford University Press, 2020) examines the post-deportation experiences of indigenous youth in Guatemala, uncovering the transnational effects of the securitization of migration management and development aid on young people and their families. She received a doctorate in anthropology from Johns Hopkins University and a M.A./M.S. in International Public Service Management from DePaul University. She is a recent recipient of an American Council of Learned Society fellowship and the Fulbright Schuman 70th Anniversary Scholar Award to conduct comparative research on child migration in Greece, Italy,

Belgium, and UK. She is co-founder and editor of Youth Circulations ([www.youthcirculations.com](http://www.youthcirculations.com)), a curated digital exhibit tracing the real and imagined circulations of global youth.

### **Eric Hershberg**

Eric Hershberg is Director of the Center for Latin American & Latino Studies (CLALS) and Professor of Government at American University. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and has taught at Simon Fraser University, New York University, Southern Illinois University, Columbia, Princeton, and the New School. From 1991 to 2005 he served as a Program Director at the Social Science Research Council in New York City. Prof. Hershberg is Past-President of the Latin American Studies Association (2007-2009) and has published widely on issues of political economy, development and democracy throughout Latin America. His most recent books include *New Institutions for Participatory Democracy in Latin America: Voice and Consequence*, co-edited with Maxwell A. Cameron and Kenneth Sharpe (Palgrave-MacMillan 2012); *Left Turns: Politics, Policies and Trajectories of Change in Latin America*, co-edited with Maxwell A. Cameron (Lynne Rienner 2010); and *State and Society in Conflict: Comparative Perspectives on Andean Crises*, co-edited with Paul W. Drake (Univ of Pittsburgh Press 2006). He has submitted numerous expert affidavits for immigration cases stemming from the recent wave of youth and family migration from the region. With colleagues at CLALS he has led studies of challenges to resettlement of youth migrants in the Washington, DC metropolitan area and beyond.

### **Tim Huether**

Tim Huether is an Associate at Jones Day, where he represents commercial clients on sensitive, complex civil litigation matters in federal and state trial courts. He has advised clients at all stages of litigation, ranging from consulting on viable claims to seeking post-verdict relief. Tim has provided counsel in matters involving contracts, trusts, fiduciary duty, bankruptcy, §1983 claims, and employee benefit plans. Tim is dedicated to pro bono work. He represents clients seeking asylum in the United States through the Firm's nationwide pro bono efforts to assist unaccompanied minors and women seeking refuge in the United States from violence in Central America. Tim also represents a DC resident in proceedings before the DC Housing Authority, and he recently obtained a positive result for a client in a child custody matter before the DC Superior Court.

### **Ruchi Jain**

Ruchi Jain is the pro bono counsel for the Washington, DC office of Kirkland & Ellis LLP. Before joining Kirkland, Ruchi was a special assistant to President Obama, where she worked with other senior White House officials on federal

agency management, political nominations, and personnel matters. She held several other roles in the Obama Administration, including senior counsel to the assistant attorney general for the Office of Justice Programs at the Department of Justice. Previously, she was a litigation associate at Dickstein Shapiro LLP. Ruchi has a Juris Doctorate from Georgetown University Law Center and a bachelor's from Rice University.

### **Andrew Lorenzen-Strait**

Andrew Lorenzen-Strait is the Executive Director of the Holistic Migrant Support Program at Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSSNCA). Mr. Lorenzen-Strait previously served as Director of Children and Family Services at Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), where he oversaw a national network of both faith-based and non-profit partners that provide foster care and case management services to unaccompanied immigrant children. Prior to LIRS, Lorenzen-Strait served as the country's first national migrant Public Advocate within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). At ICE, Lorenzen-Strait led humanitarian programming in the areas of LGBTQ care, language access, religious services, legal access, mental health care, disability accommodation, segregation oversight, parental rights, and trauma-informed care. During his tenure at DHS and ICE, Lorenzen-Strait launched a new alternative to detention program for individuals seeking asylum in the U.S. The Family Case Management Program (FCMP), which began in January 2016, tested whether providing access to holistic community-based services for eligible families released from DHS custody could mitigate flight risk and promote compliance with immigration legal obligations. The success of the FCMP has been regularly referenced by political leaders and immigration policy experts as a way-forward for immigration enforcement. Mr. Lorenzen-Strait holds a Bachelor of Arts in political science from the University of California at Irvine, a Juris Doctorate with an emphasis in child advocacy from Whittier Law School, and a Certificate in National Security Leadership and Decision-Making from the U.S. government.

### **Andrea Mangones**

Andrea Mangones is the Managing Attorney of KIND's Washington DC and Virginia satellite office where she leads a team providing legal services and social service referrals to unaccompanied children living in DC and Northern Virginia. Prior to joining KIND, Andrea was a Litigation and Trial Associate at Latham & Watkins LLP where she maintained an active pro bono immigration practice. Andrea also served as Pro Bono Liaison to the Tahirih Justice Center where she spent a year as a full-time volunteer Immigration and Public Policy Attorney. Andrea received her J.D., summa cum laude from American University's Washington College of Law and her master's degree in International Policy from the School of International Service in 2009. Prior to law school,

Andrea worked at the District of Columbia's Office of Administrative Hearings. She holds a B.A. in International Relations from Duke University.

### **Stephen Manning**

Stephen W. Manning is the founder and director of Innovation Law Lab, a non-profit that is equal parts software engineers, immigrant rights lawyers, and community organizers who work together to advance immigrant and refugee justice. Considered the most innovative lawyer in North America for 2017 by *The Financial Times*, he is the recipient of the 2015 AILA Founders Award for the person who had the most impact on immigration policy, the 2010 Jack Wasserman Memorial Award for Excellence in Immigration Litigation, the 2009 Edith Lowenstein Memorial Award for Excellence in Advancing the Practice of Immigration Law, the 2008 Gerald R Robinson Award for Excellence in Immigration Litigation, a Bill & Ann Shepard Law Scholar and other awards and recognition. He is an accomplished distance runner, climber, open water swimmer, and ski mountaineer. He lives with his husband, James Wilson, in Portland, Oregon in a home they designed and built.

### **Susana Martinez**

Susana Martinez, MSW, began with the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) in 2005 and became the Chief Strategy Officer and National Director of the Promotor Pathway in 2016. She currently provides oversight of the organization's strategic plan and is responsible for the national expansion of LAYC's Promotor Pathway, an intensive case management model for disconnected and disengaged youth. Susana was a key member of the LAYC team that first developed the Promotor Pathway, and served as Director during the external evaluation of the model as part of the Social Innovation Fund investment. Susana is a Clinical Social Worker who has worked with Latino communities in Texas and Washington, DC, and has expertise in providing clinical and case management services to immigrant families, victims of domestic violence, and families within the child abuse and neglect system. In addition, she has been a lead trainer and author of LAYC's Positive Youth Development training curriculum. Susana has presented research and best practices at various national conferences and volunteers as a child advocate with the Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights. Susana received her Bachelor's in Psychology from Georgetown University and her Master of Science in Social Work from the University of Texas at Austin.

### **Michelle Mendez**

Michelle Mendez is the Director of Defending Vulnerable Populations at CLINIC. Before directing the Defending Vulnerable Populations section, Mendez oversaw CLINIC's role in the CARA Pro Bono Project in Dilley, Texas, which focuses on providing legal assistance to detained asylum-seeking mothers and

children. Prior to joining CLINIC, she served as senior managing attorney in the Immigration Legal Services Program at Catholic Charities for the Archdiocese of Washington, where she began as an Equal Justice Works Fellow sponsored by DLA Piper. Mendez has taught the Immigration Litigation Clinic at Catholic University Columbus School of Law, served as a Visiting Clinical Lecturer in Law at Yale Law School, and assisted the Immigrant Rights Clinic at the University of Baltimore School of Law. Mendez was awarded the 2015 American Immigration Lawyers Association's Joseph Minsky Young Lawyer Award, recognized as one of the "Very Important Professionals Successful by 40" by Maryland's Daily Record in 2014, chosen as one of 25 "Women to Watch in 2017" by *The Baltimore Sun*, awarded the 2018 Rising Star Award by the Maryland Francis King Carey Law School for her exemplary contributions of service and leadership, and chosen as a 2018 *National Law Journal* Immigration Trailblazer. The National Institute for Trial Advocacy has selected Mendez for its faculty and appointed her program director for its immigration public programs. Mendez received her law degree from the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law and her bachelor's degree from the University of Richmond. She also holds a certificate in nonprofit management from Georgetown University and a professional certificate in peace and conflict resolution through the Rotary Peace Center at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand. She is a native Spanish speaker, originally from Medellín, Colombia, and also speaks French.

### **Michael Mintz**

Michael Mintz, Psy.D., is the associate director of the Child Development Clinic at Children's National Hospital. He is a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences. Dr. Mintz first began working with immigrant youth in the mid-2000's as a case manager at the Transitional Living Program of the Latin American Youth Center. Prior to that time, he had been living abroad, improving his Spanish and, later, working on political campaigns. Working with adolescents struggling with homelessness led Dr. Mintz back to his childhood dream of becoming a psychologist. After graduate school at George Washington University, Dr. Mintz spent a year in Harlem, primarily working with young children on the autism spectrum. He returned to Washington, DC, to train as a post-doctoral fellow at Children's National, transitioning to an attending-level position the following year. Although his clinical work at Children's National is focused on early childhood mental health, Dr. Mintz serves as a CHAI affiliate faculty member, primarily advocating on behalf of immigrant youth with the goal of increasing their access to mental health services. Outside of his work at Children's National, Dr. Mintz administers bilingual psychological evaluations to adults, adolescents, children, and families with unstable immigration statuses, such as people applying for asylum.

## **Liana Montecinos**

Liana E. Montecinos is an asylee who became an immigration attorney. Ms. Montecinos is an Associate Attorney at Benach Collopy where she represents clients in immigration court, before Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Citizenship & Immigration Service (CIS) and the Department of State (DOS). She graduated from Law School from the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law and was admitted to the DC Bar in January 2019. Prior to being a member of the bar, Ms. Montecinos worked for seven years as a senior immigration paralegal with Benach Collopy. She has led two advocacy groups to the U.S. Southern border to advocate for the human rights of asylum seekers/refugees. In addition to her practice of law, Ms. Montecinos is the Executive Director of United For Social Justice, a non-profit organization that has been committed for the past 10 years to provide equal access to higher education to undocumented students. She is also a featured author for *Departamento 19*, a Honduran newspaper, where she writes in Spanish about immigration and human rights issues especially those affecting the Honduran community in the U.S. Ms. Montecinos found her vocation in the legal field through her personal experience of being in removal proceedings and of living a life of uncertainty due to her immigration status for over a decade.

## **Karen Musalo**

Professor Karen Musalo is the founding director of the Center for Gender & Refugee Studies at UC Hastings College of the Law. She is lead co-author of *Refugee Law and Policy: An International and Comparative Approach* (5th edition), as well as numerous reports, book chapters and articles. Prof. Musalo has litigated major cases in gender asylum, serving as lead attorney in *Matter of Kasinga*, counsel in *Matter of R-A-*, amicus in *Matter of A-R-C-G-*, and co-counsel in *Matter of A-B-*. She is recognized for her innovative work on refugee issues. Prof. Musalo was the first attorney to partner with psychologists in her representation of traumatized asylum seekers and she edited the first handbook for practitioners on cross-cultural issues and the impact of culture on credibility in the asylum context. She has received numerous awards for her pioneering legal work, including an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Lehman College in 2012. Her current research focuses on gender based violence in the northern triangle countries; Prof. Musalo's recent authoritative article on El Salvador is entitled *El Salvador: A Peace Worse than War: Violence, Gender, and a Failed Legal Response*, published in the *Yale Journal of Law & Feminism*.

## **Jennifer Nagda**

Jennifer Nagda is the Policy Director for the Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights. For more than a decade, her work at the Young Center has focused on protecting the rights of immigrant children in government custody—in particular, their right to have their best interests considered in every

decision. In 2015, Jennifer was appointed by then-DHS Secretary Johnson to the ICE Advisory Committee on Family Residential Centers. From 2012-2015, she staffed the federal Interagency Working Group on Unaccompanied and Separated Children, which published its Framework for Considering the Best Interests of Unaccompanied Children in 2016. Jennifer is a lecturer in law at the University of Pennsylvania Law School's Interdisciplinary Child Advocacy Clinic and previously taught at the University of Chicago Law School. Before joining the Young Center, Jennifer was an attorney at the Midwest Regional Office of MALDEF, where she litigated immigration, education and employment discrimination cases. She clerked for the Honorable James B. Zagel of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. Prior to law school, Jennifer was the Associate Director of what is now the CityBridge Foundation in Washington, DC. Jennifer received her J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School and her undergraduate degree from Duke University.

### **Laura Nally**

Laura Nally joined CAIR Coalition in 2019 with the detained children's program. Before joining CAIR Coalition, she was the managing attorney of the Houston office of Human Rights First, where she trained and mentored volunteer lawyers in the pro bono representation of asylum seekers, coordinated pro se assistance projects, and supported the advocacy team on issues of U.S. asylum law, policies, and practices. Before moving to Houston, Laura was a staff attorney in the Washington, DC office of Human Rights First and a staff attorney with Ayuda, where she specialized in representing child clients and survivors of domestic violence. Before joining Ayuda, Laura was a Pro Bono Coordinating Attorney in the Washington, DC office of Kids in Need of Defense (KIND), where she recruited, trained, and mentored volunteer attorneys in the representation of unaccompanied children. Laura began her career as a Legal Fellow at the American Immigration Counsel. She has also worked as pro bono fellow at a large law firm in Washington, DC and as a VAWA Staff Attorney with the Esperanza Center of Catholic Charities of Baltimore. Laura has a bachelor's degree from the College of William and Mary and a law degree from the Georgetown University Law Center.

### **Cristina Novoa**

Cristina Novoa is a senior policy analyst for Early Childhood Policy at the Center for American Progress. Most recently, she worked as a researcher on a range of early childhood issues at SRI International. Prior to joining American Progress, she completed fellowships at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine and in the office of Sen. Kirsten E. Gillibrand (D-NY). Novoa studied developmental psychology and public policy, specializing in the academic and behavioral development of children from immigrant families. She holds a doctorate in developmental psychology and a master's degree in public

policy from Georgetown University as well as a bachelor's degree in psychology from Yale University.

### **Katharina Obser**

Katharina Obser is a Senior Policy Advisor in the Women's Refugee Commission's Migrant Rights and Justice program, where she advocates for the rights of women, children and families seeking protection. An expert on U.S. immigration detention, she writes and presents frequently on immigration detention and refugee protection issues, and has researched and authored numerous reports on asylum and detention in the United States as well the European refugee response. She previously researched and advocated on immigration detention issues at Human Rights First, where she also worked to expand access to legal representation nationally for asylum seekers and immigrants. Katharina holds a B.A. in Political Science and French from the University of Michigan, and a Masters Degree in Forced Migration Studies from the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa.

### **Jayesh Rathod**

Jayesh Rathod is Associate Dean for Experiential Education, Professor of Law, and Director of the Immigrant Justice Clinic at American University Washington College of Law. His areas of expertise and scholarly interests include immigration law, labor and employment law, and clinical legal education. As Associate Dean, Rathod oversees the law school's clinical, externship, and trial advocacy programs, and fosters the development of new experiential offerings. Professor Rathod has been recognized for his innovative teaching, including the use of technology and the promotion of bilingual education within U.S. law schools. His body of scholarship includes empirical, applied and theoretical work, and covers topics relating to immigration law, labor and employment law, and legal pedagogy. His research appears in a variety of prominent journals, including the *Arizona Law Review*, *Houston Law Review*, *Michigan Journal of Law Reform*, and *U.C. Irvine Law Review*. In 2018, he received the Pauline Ruyle Moore Award for outstanding scholarship in the area of public law. In 2016, Professor Rathod was a Fulbright Scholar at two universities in Brazil, where he taught courses on U.S. immigration law and comparative migration policy, and conducted research relating to the Brazilian immigration system. He is fluent in Spanish and proficient in Portuguese. Over the course of his career, Professor Rathod has worked with numerous non-governmental organizations to advance the civil and human rights of communities in the United States and abroad. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of Ayuda, a non-profit organization based in the Washington, DC area.

### **Rachel Kaplan Reicher**

Rachel Reicher, Counsel at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, advises

a wide variety of clients on federal regulatory policy related to derivatives. Ms. Reicher's clients have included trade associations, investment managers, major corporations, financial and commercial end-users of derivatives (including pension organizations and energy companies), and swap dealers, as well as designated contract markets, swap execution facilities, a leading clearinghouse and a swap data repository. She has represented clients before the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the Federal Reserve Board and Congress on a broad range of issues arising under Titles II, VII and VIII of the Dodd-Frank Act and the Commodity Exchange Act. She won Skadden's 2019 Counsel Pro Bono Award for leading global pro bono teams in analyzing high-profile, complex regulatory policy developments, and in creating advocacy documents that clients shared with Congress and regulators to highlight the illegalities and the adverse impacts of the policies and to preserve judicial challenges. Ms. Reicher is a member of the board of directors of Kol Shalom in Rockville, Maryland.

### **Alan Shapiro**

Alan Shapiro, M.D., FAAP is the Senior Medical Director of Community Pediatric Programs and Assistant Clinical Professor of Pediatrics at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine/Montefiore Health Systems. He is the co-founder and Medical Director of Terra Firma, a medical-legal partnership focusing on the complex needs of newly-arrived immigrant children and families. Dr. Shapiro is on the Executive Committee of the American Academy of Pediatrics' Council on Immigrant Child and Family Health and has co-authored the Academy's policy statement, *Detention of Immigrant Children*, published in *Pediatrics* (2017). He also has co-authored articles in other peer-reviewed journals including *Terra Firma: Medical-Legal Care for Unaccompanied Immigrant Garifuna Children in the Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy* (2015) and *Unaccompanied Children Seeking Safe Haven: Providing Care and Supporting Well-being of a Vulnerable Population in the Children and Youth Services Review* (2018). Dedicated to providing care to vulnerable children throughout his career he was the 2015 recipient of the American Academy of Pediatrics' Local Hero award. Advocacy work has included participation in monitoring groups of detention facilities and migrant camps at the border. He received a BS in psychology from Emory University, an M.D. from State University of NY Health Sciences Center at Brooklyn, and completed a Pediatric residency from Montefiore's Residency Program in Social Medicine.

### **Anita Sinha**

Anita Sinha is an Assistant Professor of Law and the Director of the International Human Rights Law Clinic at American University Washington College of Law (WCL). Professor Sinha joined the WCL faculty in 2012 as a Practitioner-in-

Residence in the Immigrant Justice Clinic. She began her career as a Skadden Fellow with the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, and in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina Professor Sinha led civil rights litigation and human rights advocacy on behalf of displaced New Orleans residents. As a clinical teacher, she has supervised students on U.S. immigration cases, as well as transnational and international projects. Professor Sinha has been cited in several major news outlets, including *The New York Times* and Associated Press, and is a *Huffington Post* contributor. Her research and scholarship address human rights issues related to forced migration and detention, and the intersection of immigration and constitutional law. Professor Sinha graduated summa cum laude from Barnard College, and cum laude from New York University School of Law where she served as Articles Editor for the *N.Y.U. Law Review*.

### **Michele Statz**

Michele Statz is an anthropologist of law and Assistant Professor at the University of Minnesota Medical School, Duluth. Statz's work includes interdisciplinary projects on global youth, reproductive justice, public interest immigration law, and rural access to justice. Her recent book, *Lawyering an Uncertain Cause: Immigration Advocacy and Chinese Youth in the U.S.* (Vanderbilt University Press 2018) examines the often contradictory rights, responsibilities, and expectations that motivate young Chinese migrants and the U.S. attorneys who work on their behalf. She is also the co-founder of YouthCirculations.com, a popular platform for art, research, and activism around youth mobility and the politics of representation. Statz's current research examines how socio-spatial dimensions of rurality influence legal advocacy and rights mobilization across northern Minnesota and Wisconsin. This research stretches the usual bounds of analysis by underscoring rural individuals' own expertise and experiences of the "rural lawscape." It likewise identifies necessary opportunities for these perspectives to inform and innovate policy, practice, and applied research methodologies. Statz has a Ph.D. in sociocultural anthropology and comparative law and society studies from the University of Washington.

### **Dennis Stinchcomb**

Dennis Stinchcomb is Assistant Director for Research at American University's Center for Latin American & Latino Studies. In this capacity, he manages the Center's portfolio of research on migration, Central American gangs, and immigrant integration in the U.S. Mr. Stinchcomb holds an M.A. in Spanish and Latin American Studies from American University and a B.A. from the University of Maryland, College Park. He is a J.D. candidate at American University Washington College of Law and currently serves as the Senior Articles Editor of the *American University Law Review*.

## **Kristen Torres**

Kristen is the Senior Policy Advisor for Immigration and Child Welfare at First Focus on Children where she leads the cross-sector federal policy work that impacts migrant children and children of immigrants. In addition, she leads the policy work related to the domestic foster care system and preventing child abuse and neglect. Kristen is also the Assistant Director for the State Policy Advocacy & Reform Center (SPARC), a coalition of state child welfare policy advocates. For the last three years Kristen has worked in Washington, D.C promoting policies and legislative proposals that increase opportunity and promote racial equity for low-income children and families. Due to the constant attack on immigrant children and families both at the border and within the United States interior, Kristen's current work is focused on establishing a "best interest of the child" framework for immigration enforcement practices and policies within the United States. Prior to joining First Focus, Kristen earned her Master's degree in Social Work from the University of Alabama. She was a HRSA grant recipient and selected for a competitive policy fellowship in Washington DC. As an undergraduate she completed her field practicum at the Hinds County Public Defender's office in Jackson, Mississippi where she advocated for policy changes related to mental health, criminal justice reform, and family economics. Before finishing her bachelor's degree, Kristen worked in healthcare for long-term and memory care patients.

## **Christie Turner-Herbas**

Christie Turner-Herbas is Deputy Director for Special Programs at Kids in Need of Defense (KIND). As an immigration law expert with over ten years in the field, Christie oversees KIND's family separation work nationwide, in addition to other special initiatives and projects. Christie previously served as Deputy Director of Legal Services, helping manage KIND's East Coast field offices. Christie also served as the Managing Attorney for KIND's Washington, DC and Northern Virginia field offices. Prior to joining KIND, Christie was a Supervising Attorney at Catholic Charities' Hogar Immigrant Services in Virginia, where her work included deportation defense and family-based immigration matters. A 2008 honors graduate of the University of Texas School of Law, Christie was a Fellow at the National Women's Law Center and interned at several immigrant rights organizations, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Catholic Charities of Washington, DC, and American Gateways in Austin, Texas. In addition, Christie participated in the University of Texas School of Law Immigration Clinic and Transnational Worker Rights Clinic and served as a Human Rights Scholar with the Rapoport Center for Human Rights and Justice. Prior to law school, Christie spent three years supporting consumer protection investigations and litigation at the Federal Trade Commission.

# CLALS RELATED INITIATIVES



## **Annual Latino Public Affairs Forum**

Latinos represent the fastest growing population in the United States, and they are the leading edge of a demographic change transforming the U.S. into a “majority minority” country. Their influence upon the direction of national political, cultural, and economic trends, and many other issues, continues to grow. Recognizing the dynamic role of Latinos in U.S. public life, American University’s Annual Latino Public Affairs Forum (ALPAF) convenes scholars, advocates, policy professionals, journalists, students, and other stakeholders, to address key questions and topics of concern for Latino communities across the country.

[www.american.edu/clals/alpaf.cfm](http://www.american.edu/clals/alpaf.cfm)

## **Central American Migration Research Initiative**

Projects under the umbrella of the CLALS Central American Migration Research Initiative explore the conditions motivating the migration of Central American minors and their families, their safety and welfare during the migration journey, and their integration experiences in the U.S. Recent work has also analyzed how communities across the country are addressing the legal, education, health, and social service needs of newcomers.

[www.american.edu/clals/central-american-migration.cfm](http://www.american.edu/clals/central-american-migration.cfm)

## **Central American Refugee Policy & Assistance Project**

The Central American Refugee Policy & Assistance project (CARPA) encompasses a range of activities aimed at informing the public regarding the factors driving mass migration from Central America and the challenges Central Americans encounter as they seek to settle in the U.S. As part of this initiative, CLALS faculty and other affiliates also draw on findings from Center-sponsored research to provide expert assistance to law firms and non-profit legal service providers representing Central American children and families seeking asylum.

[www.american.edu/clals/carpa.cfm](http://www.american.edu/clals/carpa.cfm)

## CLALS Working Paper Series

The CLALS Working Paper Series provides an opportunity for the timely presentation of ongoing research and scholarship that bridges and catalyzes dialogue between scholarly, policy, and practitioner communities. Papers in the series inform current policy debates, foreground the policy implications of Center research, summarize discussions at stakeholders convenings, and present preliminary findings prior to publication in academic journals. Contributors to the CLALS Working Paper Series include CLALS faculty affiliates, research fellows, graduate students, and partners from beyond AU engaged in ongoing Center projects.

[www.american.edu/clals/working-paper-series.cfm](http://www.american.edu/clals/working-paper-series.cfm)

Related titles in the series:

- No. 19 Newcomer Central American Immigrants' Access to Legal Services  
*Dennis Stinchcomb and Jodi Berger Cardoso*
- No. 17 Extending Temporary Status for El Salvador: Country Conditions and U.S. Legal Requirements  
*Jayesh Rathod, Dennis Stinchcomb, Victoria Garcia, LaSarah Pillado, María De Luna, Ricardo Castañeda, Jonathan Menkos, and Juan Urbina*
- No. 16 Extending Temporary Status for Honduras: Country Conditions and U.S. Legal Requirements  
*Jayesh Rathod, Dennis Stinchcomb, María De Luna, Ricardo Castañeda, Jonathan Menkos, Juan Urbina, and LaSarah Pillado*
- No. 15 Country Conditions in Central America and Asylum Decision-Making: Report from a January 2017 Workshop  
*Jayesh Rathod, Eric Hershberg, and Dennis Stinchcomb*
- No. 14 Diversity in the D.C. Area: Findings from the 2016 D.C. Area Survey  
*Michael D. M. Bader*
- No. 7 Unaccompanied Migrant Children from Central America: Context, Causes, and Response  
*Dennis Stinchcomb and Eric Hershberg*

# WCL IMMIGRANT JUSTICE CLINIC



The Washington College of Law Immigrant Justice Clinic (IJC) provides representation on a broad range of cases and projects involving individual immigrants and migrants, and their communities, both in the DC metropolitan area and overseas. Student attorneys in the IJC regularly appear in Immigration Court, and may also appear before federal district court, the courts of Maryland and DC, and before federal and state agencies. Since migration has a transnational dimension, the IJC occasionally advocates before regional and international bodies. The matters handled by the IJC allow students to develop core lawyering skills, such as interviewing, counseling, negotiation, and trial advocacy, while cultivating complementary skills in the areas of policy and legislative advocacy, community organizing, and working with the media.

IJC regularly represents immigrant youth seeking asylum, Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, and other forms of humanitarian protection. Faculty and students have been on the front lines of the Central American migrant crisis, volunteering to provide legal services at family detention centers and other sites near the U.S.-Mexico border. IJC has also worked with local non-profit organizations to advance policy proposals that are supportive of immigrant youth, including initiatives relating to language access, educational equity, and combating racial profiling.

<https://www.wcl.american.edu/academics/experientialedu/clinical/theclinics/ijc>

# AILA RELATED RESOURCES



AMERICAN  
IMMIGRATION  
LAWYERS  
ASSOCIATION

**AILA'S BLOG** ([thinkimmigration.org](http://thinkimmigration.org))

- **ThinkImmigration**

**AILA'S FEATURED ISSUES** ([aila.org/advo-media/issues/all](http://aila.org/advo-media/issues/all))

- Border Processing and Asylum
- Conditions in CBP Custody
- Immigration Courts
- Remain in Mexico and Tent Courts

## UPCOMING IN-PERSON EVENTS

- **AILA's 2020 National Day of Action**

March 5, 2020 • Washington, DC • [www.aila.org/NDA](http://www.aila.org/NDA)

AILA members and their clients are invited to meet and share with members of Congress how the administration's immigration policy changes are harming American families, businesses, and communities across the nation.

- **AILA 2020 Spring CLE Conference and Webcast: Government Relations Update**

March 6, 2020 • Washington, DC • [agora.aila.org/m/spring-CLE2020](http://agora.aila.org/m/spring-CLE2020)

Spend the day interacting with agency officials and AILA liaison committees to learn about the latest issues, policy changes, and hot topics.

- **2020 AILA Annual Conference on Immigration Law**

June 17-20, 2020 • San Diego, CA • [www.aila.org](http://www.aila.org)  
(Registration Opens February 18, 2020)

During this largest gathering of immigration law professionals in the country, attendees will get to hear issues attorneys are encountering across the country and learn the strategies and tactics they're using to overcome these challenges.

## IMMIGRATION LAW PRACTICE PRINT RESOURCES

Visit [agora.aila.org/publications](http://agora.aila.org/publications) for detailed information.

- *AILA's Asylum Primer*, 8th Edition
- *Immigration Law & the Family*, 5th Edition
- *Kurzban's Immigration Law Sourcebook*, 17th Edition (coming July 2020)





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