



# AMERICAN GATEWAYS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## A Letter From Co-Executive Director Rebecca Lightsey

It is heartbreaking to be watching the war in Ukraine, but we are glad to see that the Department of Homeland Security has recently granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Ukrainians who are already in the US. DHS has also just granted TPS for Afghans who are here. This allows Ukrainians and Afghans to remain in the US for 18 months without fear of deportation.

Want to help prospective citizens? Join us for a big in-person Citizenship Clinic in San Antonio on May 7. We expect to help over 50 individuals apply for their citizenship. If you are interested in volunteering please let Jessica Valenzuela ([jessicav@americangateways.org](mailto:jessicav@americangateways.org)) know. It is always an uplifting experience for us all.

Are you a Travis County resident? Want an easy way to support the immigrant community? If so, please take the County's [2022 Community Survey](#) on how they prioritize County resources. We are asking the County to allocate some of their American Rescue Program Act funding to fund legal immigration services for low-income immigrants.

A shout-out to our outstanding staff; so many have celebrated work anniversaries with us over the past couple of months. Anali Looper, the

director of our Waco office, and Erika Gonzalez, our Outreach & Communications Coordinator, just celebrated seven years with us! And I am privileged to have just passed my 5-year mark with AG. Marco Rosas, Laura Flores-Dixit, and David Cantor have also just celebrated work anniversaries. What a great team.

As always, thanks for your support.



## Thank You to our Spring Break Interns!

This spring break the San Antonio office had the help of nine law student interns from St. Mary's School of Law and University of Utah. These interns assisted with the Immigration Court Help Desk, preparing for the upcoming Naturalization Clinic, and with the South Texas Detention Center prepping seven individuals with asylum applications and petitions.

The Austin office had three law student interns in partnership with Texas Access to Justice. They assisted Austin's Legal Orientation Program team, translating evidence and asylum applications, found sponsorship for two asylum seekers, and submitted a successful petition for a third asylum interview

for an unrepresented individual. We are so grateful for our interns, their help is critical to us and those we serve.

## **A New US Citizen**

Thanks to the hard work of the San Antonio office, and especially staff member Erika Gonzalez, Mrs. Trujillo became a US Citizen this March. After waiting three months for USCIS to approve her application, and interview preparation by the San Antonio staff, Mrs. Trujillo finally attended her citizenship ceremony. Now, Mrs. Trujillo can petition for her DACA recipient son to apply for citizenship, so his status and residence in the US is no longer in jeopardy.



**Provide a Pathway to Citizenship**



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