



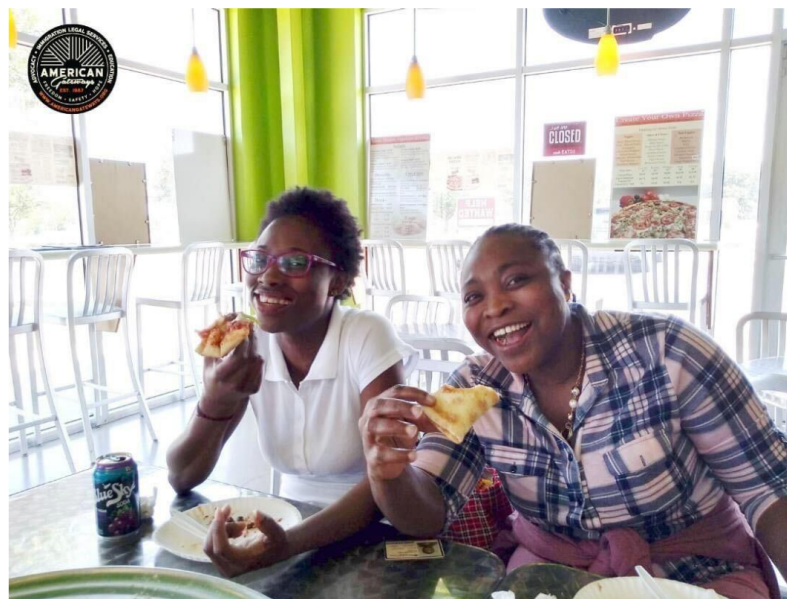
AMERICAN GATEWAYS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

February 2023

From the Desk of Rebecca Lightsey , Co-Executive Director

During Black History Month, we at American Gateways recognize the Black immigrants we serve. Last year, nearly 10% of all our full representation cases were Black immigrants. These individuals came from several African countries including Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, and from the Caribbean, including Haiti. We met many of these individuals when they had been detained in the detention centers - we served and helped many of them secure their release for the detention.



Jolie's family and community were abusive because of her sexual orientation. Ellen is a survivor of female genital mutilation and forced marriage. They decided to leave their home country and made the difficult journey to the US. With the help of American Gateways and pro bono attorneys, Jolie and Ellen were granted asylum and now live in safety, hope, and freedom.

This month, we are also delighted to formalize our robust partnership with [Casa Marianella](#), Austin's remarkable resource for homeless immigrants. Casa hosts large numbers of immigrants from across Africa and Haiti. With our new formal partnership, we will be able to provide much more legal assistance to Casa residents. [And we're hiring now for that position!](#)

Congratulations to our board member, Anne Drane!

Anne has been nominated as one of KXAN's Remarkable Women! Anne truly is an extraordinary woman with a heart and drive for helping others -- through her leadership on our Board of Directors and as Founder and CEO of Sawa Sawa. Anne had turned to American Gateways when she was a recently-arrived student from Kenya who found herself in a very difficult, dangerous situation here in Texas. We helped her find safety and secure her immigration status. And now she is helping us! She is also helping Kenyan women through her company, Sawa Sawa, a sustainable, non-profit fashion brand handmade by artisan women in Kenya. Its mission is to empower artisan women in Kenya to make a sustainable, dignified living by harnessing ancient craftsmanship in weaving, beading, basketry, art and more. Check out [Sawa Sawa here!](#)



[U.S. launches pilot program to allow private sponsorship of refugees from around the world](#)

The Biden Administration has implemented a new initiative allowing US citizens to help in resettling refugees, as a response to the ongoing refugee crisis and to counteract the impact of the Title 42 policy put into place by the previous administration.

This new initiative allows US citizens and lawful permanent residents the opportunity to sponsor refugees for resettlement in the United States, providing them with the necessary support, both financial and emotional, as they settle into their new life. The specifics of the process are still being developed and more details will be available in the future.

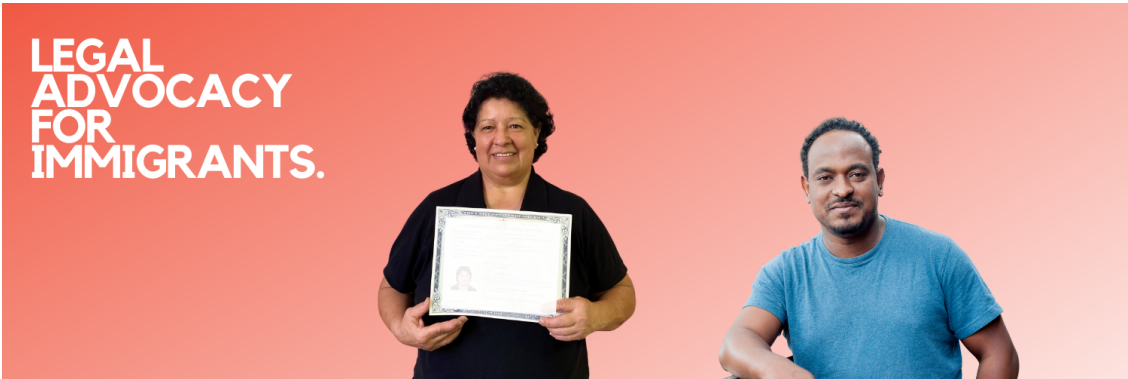
American Gateways appreciates the initiative but cautions individuals who are interested in sponsoring refugees to fully understand the parameters of the sponsorships by seeking legal advice from an immigration attorney.

Team Anniversaries

Congratulations to our teammates!

[Annabel Watson](#), Staff Attorney - 4 years.

[Laura Flores-Dixit](#), Staff Attorney - 3 years



Want to get involved?

Our Austin office will be co-hosting a Citizenship Clinic with the City of Austin, NALEO & Tx AFL-CIO on **April 22, 2023**. We are looking for volunteers to help! We are hosting a Volunteer Training for the event on April 3 at noon. If you're interested, please contact Edna Yang at ednay@americangateways.org.

We are hiring!

We are hiring for staff attorneys and a Development Coordinator in our Austin office. You can see the [postings here](#).

Want to know more about our work?

We invite you, or anyone you know to our Virtual Immigrant Justice 101 events, which take place quarterly. Our next event will be on March 10, 2023. You can register [here](#).



Amplify Austin Day

Join us in the biggest event in Central Texas!

Early Giving for Amplify Austin 2023 is open! Your gift will help us provide exceptional legal services to asylum seekers and survivors of conflict and crime. Amplify Austin is a day of collective action to build a city where every family can thrive.

Give Today



Copyright © 2023 American Gateways, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

