



AMERICAN GATEWAYS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

October 2023

From the Desk of Edna Yang, Co-Executive Director

We hope you all had a great Halloween and enjoyed the chilly weather.

We wanted to send a very special thank you to all of you who attended and supported our Immigrant Justice Luncheon in October. Your generosity allows us to respond to the emerging needs of our immigrant neighbors. We are grateful for each of you.



The Texas Legislature is in special session, and the results so far for our community are devastating. Instead of coming together to see what our state can do to provide support for communities welcoming migrants seeking protection, our state legislators have chosen to divide and discriminate. Lawmakers should be ensuring protections for vulnerable immigrant populations and recognizing the humanity and dignity of not only immigrants fleeing harm, but those of us working to protect the ideal of due process and justice on which this country was founded.

The passage of SB 4 by the Texas Legislature is a clear signal that immigration policies are not about protecting our communities, but about spreading hate and fear. SB 4 was rushed

through the legislative process with little debate or discussion about its true impact. It would target innocent people and service providers helping undocumented individuals who have legal rights in the U.S. We will be out in the community to provide education and know-your-rights information to those who need it.

The special session isn't over. There are two additional bills that could still become law. HB 6 will allocate over a billion dollars to build a border wall - which we all know does nothing to enhance our safety or secure our border. HB 4 will authorize local law enforcement to essentially arrest and try to deport individuals who they believe are undocumented back to their home countries.

In this overly politicized climate, it can be hard to remember the human side of immigration. The people who come seeking a better life, seeking freedom, seeking safety; the basic things we all want for ourselves and for our families. There is no easy solution. Conflicts in other areas of the world will impact us as people flee to survive. It is up to us to decide how we will meet those challenges and how we will work to find solutions that benefit all of us.

We also wrapped up national pro bono month. We were proud to recognize several pro bono champions this month who give their time and expertise to ensure that all of those we serve can access our justice system. **Congratulations to Latham & Watkins LLP, Skadden Arps Slate Meagher & Flom LLP, John Williams, and Juan Gonzalez.**

Staff Anniversaries

Join us in celebrating our staff in their work anniversaries!

[Griselda Barrera](#), Co-Director of Programs & Operations - 15 years

[Blanca Camargo](#), Senior DOJ Accredited Representative - 9 years

[Luz Rueda](#), Senior DOJ Accredited Representative - 6 years

[Elizabeth Barrera](#), Legal Caseworker - 2 years

[Whitney Drake](#), Senior Staff Attorney - 7 years

[Edna Yang](#), Co-Executive Director - 21 years

Want to Donate?

Donate today to provide access to justice to immigrants. Your partnership allows us to provide critical legal services to individuals and families seeking safety, hope, and freedom.

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