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We envision a world where the fundamental right to move is respected and appreciated by all. Our view is that all human beings are entitled to respect, documents, and a process through which to move, settle, and resettle in the world.



Quarterly Newsletter | April 2020

A Year in Review

Dear Friends and Family,

In the wake of COVID-19, the past month has been challenging. Some of our clients have lost their jobs and are struggling to feed their families. Others are locked in ICE detention centers, engaging in [hunger strikes](#) to demand their release. Pangea's essential services continue during this time, as we work around the clock to advocate for the freedom and well-being of our community.

In times like these, good news can feel hard to come by. That is why we want to take a moment to reflect on the past year with you. We hope you will enjoy these highlights of the positive steps we made towards a more just future.

We hope you are in a position to take care of yourselves right now, your families, and all those closest to you. We always love hearing from you, so don't hesitate to reach out. We are thinking of you all.

Bianca, Celine, Edwin, Esperanza, Etan, Gladys, Jehan, Luis Angel, Marie, Mariel, Nilou, Pete, Roxana, and Sean



Pangea joined a car protest outside the San Francisco Immigration Court to demand ICE prioritize safety and release those in detention. (April 7, 2020)

Highlights from the Past Year:

- Strengthened sanctuary protections in [Santa Clara County](#).
- Coordinated attorneys across the country to respond to the [Mississippi ICE Raids](#)
- Passed a historic law [banning private prisons](#) in CA, putting the state at the forefront of the nationwide fight to shutdown inhumane private prisons
- Passed a San Francisco [Resolution](#) directing ICE to bring home our client Oumar
- Liberated and defended two clients against illegal government abuses, including use of [pepper spray](#) and other physical [assaults](#) against our clients
- Led 17 public campaigns with clients and community; [one client met with Presidential Candidate Bernie Sanders](#)
- Trained 25 *promotores* on community-led deportation defense

- [Won release from ICE custody for five clients in the wake of COVID-19](#)

Pangea clients and staff were joined in these incredible successes by other local organizations, including: African Advocacy Network (AAN), Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI), California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice (CCIJ), California Immigrant Youth Justice Alliance (CIYJA), Community United Against Violence (CUAV), Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC), Forum for Immigrant Rights and Empowerment (FIRE) Coalition, and the Santa Clara County Rapid Response Network, among many others.

Together, we continue to fight for the release of more people from ICE detention in the wake of COVID-19 -- you can join us:

**TAKE ACTION:
CALL GOV. NEWSOM
TO #FREETHEMALL**

THOUSANDS OF IMMIGRANTS IN DETENTION CENTERS THROUGHOUT CA ARE AT DANGER OF CONTRACTING COVID19 DUE TO ICE'S INACTION TO DEPOPULATE. GOVERNOR NEWSOM NEEDS TO ACT NOW BEFORE ITS TOO LATE!

**MAKE A CALL
(916)-445-2841**

"HI MY NAME IS ___ AND I AM A RESIDENT OF CALIFORNIA. I AM CALLING TO URGE GOVERNOR NEWSOM TO IMMEDIATELY USE HIS EXECUTIVE POWER UNDER THE CALIFORNIA EMERGENCY SERVICES ACT TO HALT THE EXPANSION OF IMMIGRATION DETENTION, TO SUSPEND ALL TRANSFERS TO ICE & TO PUSH ICE TO FREE EVERY SINGLE IMMIGRANT HELD IN CA. THANK YOU"

Pangea's 2019 Stats and Successes

Phone consultations with

112 DETAINED INDIVIDUALS

17 PUBLIC CAMPAIGNS

496 CLIENTS REPRESENTED IN FULL-SCOPE SERVICES

4 FEDERAL COURT VICTORIES

Out of 64 litigated and completed

63 CLIENTS WON LONG-TERM RELIEF

Pangea clients reunite with their loved ones and engage in political action



After 10 months in ICE custody at Yuba County Jail, where he was physically assaulted by a white corrections officer, in February 2020, **Ricardo** was granted cancellation of removal for lawful permanent residents and is now safely living with his fiancée and children.



Florice (center left, in red and blue) traveled to Sacramento and spoke directly to lawmakers about her experiences in ICE detention, contributing to the passage of AB 32 -- a historic law in the fight to end private prisons from profiting off of people of color, the poor, and those who have been taken advantage of by this system. Read more about it below!



After three years, ICE tried to re-detain **Joaquin** in December. After a Federal District Judge ruled their actions illegal, an Immigration Judge eventually ruled in



Thank you to all of **Aida's** supporters who continued to come to her court hearings after she won asylum in May 2019 and DHS continued to fight her case, forcing her to remain in detention. ICE needlessly

Joaquin's favor that he has not only "complied with the Court's conditions of release, but he has exceeded the Court's requirements to seek treatment for his rehabilitation." In January 2020, Joaquin, center, met with Sen. Bernie Sanders to talk about his experience as a U.S. veteran facing deportation.

incarcerated **Aida** for 11 months before she won her liberty back and was able to return to her family in the Bay Area, CA. In January 2020, she finally became an asylee. Aida is grateful for everyone's help to reunite her with her family.



Oumar outside of the Yuba County Jail, CA, where ICE detained him both before and after Pangea successfully sued ICE for its illegal activities. (April 17, 2020)

Oumar Is Free!

Oumar is an LGBT asylum seeker from Chad who has lived in San Francisco for almost 10 years. In August 2019, ICE arrested him in his home while claiming to be looking for someone else. After Pangea filed a motion to reopen his case, ICE illegally deported him overnight without notifying his family or legal team. Pangea filed suit in federal court, and in December 2019, a judge order ICE to bring Oumar back to San Francisco. ICE refused to adhere to the federal order. Pangea then initiated a broad-based public campaign that convinced both the [City of San Francisco](#) and [Senator Dianne Feinstein](#) to support Oumar and demand an end to ICE's illegal behavior. Pangea finally succeeded in getting ICE to correct its error and bring Oumar back to the U.S. in March 2020. But ICE detained Oumar as soon as he stepped onto U.S. soil. In April 2020, after eight months of fierce legal and community advocacy, Oumar was finally set free to his family and friends in San Francisco, CA.

Watch an interview of Pangea team member, [Sean, talking about Oumar's case](#) on The Young Turks, by clicking on the photo below!



Community Empowerment: Responding to ICE Raids, Organizing Public Actions, and Training our Community in Self-Defense



Nakia Woods with Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI) at a press conference before the introduction of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors resolution to #BringOumarHome. (Feb. 4, 2020)

Bay Area ICE Raids

In July 2019, after receiving news of impending raids, Pangea and Bay Area **rapid response networks** spoke out at rallies to denounce ICE's plans, helped lead a press conference at SFO to expose ICE's scare tactics, and [delivered demand letters to ICE field offices](#). Pangea attorneys also responded to reports of ICE arrests coming through the rapid response hotlines. When ICE denied Pangea attorneys access to individuals arrested in the raids, **Pangea and the ACLU sued ICE**. As a result, [a federal judge put ICE on notice](#) that it must provide individuals with the right to speak to an attorney before deporting them. These actions contributed to massive community mobilization that ultimately preempted raids in the Bay Area on the day the Administration threatened thousands of arrests.

Mississippi ICE Raid

In August 2019, **ICE arrested 680 immigrant workers in Mississippi** as part of the [biggest ever workplace immigration raid](#) in a single state. Those affected by the Mississippi raid were **detained largely incommunicado for up to six months** before ever seeing a judge in courts where basic human and legal rights are regularly violated. With few local resources available, organizers with the [Mississippi Immigrants Rights Alliance](#) put out an emergency call to immigration attorneys around the country. Pangea responded and organized across the U.S. to take on *pro bono* cases. Pangea also represented three affected families on a *pro bono* basis. A Pangea attorney **traveled to the ICE detention center in Louisiana** twice to represent three detained individuals, advocating forcefully to obtain hearings before the court, and **ultimately securing the release of two fathers** while continuing to appeal a third case.

Promotores: training in community self-defense

In 2019-2020, the *promotores* program -- a curriculum to train immigrant leaders to advocate for their own cases and communities -- expanded to Santa Clara County and **trained 25 directly affected families**. So far, **15 graduates of the program, including three Pangea clients, have become full-time organizers**, forming their own organization, and are members with voting rights of the Steering Committee for the Santa Clara County Rapid Response Network (SCRRN). They lead community trainings in their neighborhoods and support various Pangea client campaigns. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, *promotores* have continued to organize by joining a statewide calling campaign to successfully demand that Governor Newsom provide [\\$125 million in disaster relief for undocumented immigrants](#), who are excluded from the federal stimulus.

Advocacy: Passing the Most Radical Policies in the Country to Shut Down Private Prisons and Strengthen Sanctuary Protections



Pangea team member Jehan Laner Romero addresses community members rallying in support of AB32, a new law that prohibits private prisons in California. (Dec. 2019)

Ending Private Prisons in CA: AB 32

In October 2019, our communities passed California law [AB 32](#), which is a historic law that prohibits the operation of private, for-profit prisons, including facilities that operate as immigration detention centers. To aid in its passage, Pangea clients publicly shared first hand experiences about the abuses they suffered in the prison system. As soon as we passed this bill, the private prison company GEO Group and the federal government sued California. While awaiting a final ruling from the federal court, community members throughout the state are working together to push back on new expansions of private prisons and uphold the law. To get involved, join [a day of virtual advocacy on May 7](#).



As a member of the Forum for Immigrant Rights & Empowerment (FIRE) Coalition of Santa Clara County, Pangea celebrates after defending and improving nation's strongest sanctuary policy. (June 2019)

Defending Sanctuary in Santa Clara County

In early 2019, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors announced that it would consider changes to the county's sanctuary policy, and engage in greater collaboration with ICE. (See [Pangea Newsletter, April 2019](#).) In response, Pangea and the Forum for Immigrant Rights & Empowerment (FIRE) Coalition sprang into action. **Five Pangea clients spoke directly** to the Board about their experience of ICE terrorizing immigrant families. After hearing testimony, **the Board voted unanimously** not only to maintain the county's sanctuary policy, but to clarify and strengthen it, making it the [strictest non-cooperation policy with ICE in the nation](#).

Pangea Welcomes Two New Attorneys, Gladys and Roxana!

Please join us in welcoming the newest members of the Pangea team, **Gladys Hernandez** and

Roxana Moussavian! Gladys and Roxana both started with Pangea in November 2019, growing our team to 14 full-time staff.

- [Gladys](#) works in our San Jose office, representing clients in removal proceedings. Gladys grew up in a family and community of immigrants in California's Central Valley. Before coming to Pangea, she was a paralegal at Van Der Hout LLP and student advocate at the UC Davis Immigration Law Clinic.
- [Roxana](#) works in our San Francisco office. Her fellowship focuses on suing ICE in federal court on behalf of detained immigrants with disabilities. Roxana is a daughter of immigrants and grew up in Santa Clara County, CA. Before Pangea, Roxana was a member of the Criminal Justice Clinic and the Worker and Immigrant Rights Advocacy Clinic at Yale Law School. Previously, she worked as an economic policy advisor and made short documentary films.

Thank you for your continued support and solidarity

We know the economy is not doing well and many people are in need of assistance. While there are countless worthy causes to contribute to right now, should you feel compelled to help support Pangea's continued operations and legal services, [please consider giving here](#).

SUPPORT OUR WORK



**With Love & Gratitude,
The Pangea Family**

(Bianca, Celine, Edwin, Esperanza, Etan, Gladys, Jehan, Luis Angel, Marie, Mariel, Nilou, Pete, Roxana, and Sean)

Pangea Legal Services is a registered 501(c)(3) organization, and donations are tax deductible. We will put every dollar of your generous contribution to work by providing direct legal services, policy advocacy, and legal empowerment for low income immigrant communities.

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