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PANGEA LEGAL SERVICES

Update from Nilou & Welcome to Pangea

Dear Family, Friends, and Companeros,

I am writing with excitement to share Pangea with you! As some of you already know, I started an immigrant rights organization in late 2012 called Pangea Legal Services. I have been pouring my heart and energy into it since we launched, and I am writing now to share with you what we are doing and to welcome your participation.

Why we created Pangea

To help fill the great need in deportation defense of immigrants in both, detained and non-detained immigration courts. I learned and witnessed this need in services during about two years of deep involvement in the San Francisco Bay Area immigration community - working as a solo practice immigration lawyer, attorney with the African Advocacy Network, Omid Advocates, the Arab Resource and Organizing Center, other SFILEN organizations, and SF Bay Area immigrant advocacy groups. This is why we created Pangea.

The United States is deporting immigrants at a record rate, and the need for in-court deportation defense services far exceeds the current capacity

With approximately 1,000 deportations of our 11 million undocumented immigrants in this country per day (!), the need for deportation defense services is high. The legal work is complex and time consuming as cases sometimes carry on for several years. As such, private immigration attorney fees are prohibitively high for most immigrants. Very few non-profit organizations provide free deportation defense services; Dolores Street Community Services and Asian Law Caucus are exceptions. There are also very few organizations, like Centro Legal de la Raza in Oakland and CLESPA in East Palo Alto, which provide low fee services in removal defense. The need for deportation defense far surpasses the capacity of the few organizations in the area that provide quality services and access.

Pangea Fills a Gap in Deportation Defense and Other Immigration Services Through a Sliding-Scale, Low Fee Model that is Scalable to Grow

Pangea seeks to fill a part of the gap in immigration services through a sliding-scale, income-based fee structure. Currently, we have one full time attorney, one part-time attorney, two volunteer attorneys and one legal intern on our team. In addition, we are receiving a Bridge Fellow (a graduating law student who will be funded by their law school) and intend to hire the fellow as a third Pangea attorney after the term of their fellowship.

As our client base and income through low-fees grow, our intent is to grow our attorney staff size and capacity in order to continually be able to meet the needs of the immigrant community.

The community members and clients we serve are largely Latino, African, Afro-Caribbean, and Middle Eastern.

Our current attorneys speak Spanish, French, Farsi, Sierra Leonean Krio, Chinese, Polish, German, and English. Our website (www.pangealegal.org) is available in most of these languages, through googletranslate (upper left corner). We are, ourselves, a community of first or second-generation immigrants and are committed to the mission of our organization at a very personal level.

Invitation to Join in Pangea Efforts

We welcome you all to our community here at Pangea and encourage you to become involved further as we plan events in the future. Currently, we are organizing small groups of community members to participate in two large-scale events with us:

- 1) **May 1st May Day:** Pangea and other organizations will participate in an upcoming May Day Rally in San Francisco. Please contact us at welcome@pangealegal.org for more information to get involved.
- 2) **May 20th Immigrant Day:** Pangea invites community members to join us in Sacramento as we advocate for Pro-Immigrant state policies. Please contact us at welcome@pangealegal.org for more information on how to join.

We also welcome support and contributions from you in the following ways:

- 1) **Graphic Designer:** Pangea would love to have a logo. We have some ideas and our friend, Ryan Bricker, has begun some designs for Pangea. We need someone with creativity and graphic design skills to further develop and transfer our logo to an electronic platform.
- 2) **Laptops:** Pangea needs 3 (three) nearly new laptops with lots of storage space and high functionality (for office and court use). We don't have a preference in brand as long as the laptop is highly functional.
- 3) **I-Phones:** Pangea needs 3 (three) cellular phones for office and court/calendar use. High functionality (not previously dropped in the toilet) I-phones are preferred, but any smartphone with internet and SMS capacity would be very useful.

Everyone in my e-mail contacts should be receiving this e-mail. I apologize if I have left out some of our friends or loved ones. Please forward this message and add any community members who would like to be on this list to receive a regular newsletter update from us.

Finally, welcome to our new organization! We hope to see you at events in the future and hope you stay connected directly or through our newsletter.

Warmly,
Nilou

You can contact or find directly us at:
300 Montgomery Street
San Francisco, California 94104
Tel: (925) 785-8735
Fax: (415) 398-7500
Web: www.pangealegal.org

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Meet Our Team:

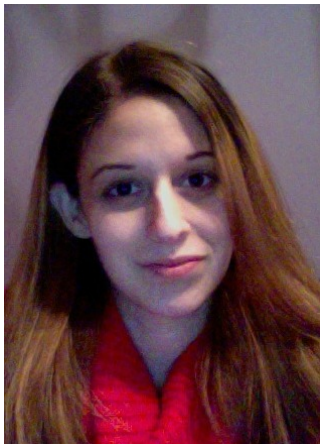


Niloufar Khonsari,
Pangea Founder &



Immigration Attorney

Marie Vincent,
Pangea Immigration Attorney



Elizabeth Louis,
Pangea Legal Extern



Pei Kuo,
Pangea Law Clerk



Magda Gruettner,
Pangea Volunteer &
Contract Attorney

Please also meet our Board Members:
Ms. Jennifer Karlin & Ms. Michelle Gaudet

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