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# PANGEA LEGAL SERVICES

Quarterly Newsletter | April 2014

*The mission of Pangea Legal Services is to stand with immigrant communities and to provide services through direct legal representation, especially in the area of deportation defense. In addition to direct legal services, we are committed to advocating on behalf of our community through policy advocacy, education, and legal empowerment efforts.*

## Legal Advocacy and Representation: Focus on Deportation Defense and Family Unity

As the number of immigrant families being deported and separated continues to increase, Pangea is responding by representing an increasing number of immigrants in removal proceedings, in Immigration Court and in the custody of Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Below are a few case highlights.



Jesus Ruiz Diego on 1010AM Radio after his DACA win,  
February 2014

- In January 2014, Pangea won a complicated and [precedent-setting DACA](#) case for our client, community advocate, and friend, Jesus Ruiz Diego; he

was in removal proceedings a little over a year ago, but now has work authorization, has become an active immigrant rights leader, is pursuing his work and education, and is together with his family in San Jose, California. [Read more about his case here.](#)

- Between January-April 2014, Pangea won 5 defensive Guatemalan, Peruvian, and Guinean/South African **asylum** cases in removal proceedings; we also succeeded in obtaining 3 affirmative Syrian, Iranian, and Guatemalan asylum grants. These clients are now on a pathway to citizenship.
- Between January-March 2014, Pangea began representation in 3 complex **employment violation-based U visa** cases, including 1 *pro bono* Jamaican case in collaboration with the National Guestworker Alliance.
- In January 2014, Pangea successfully **reopened** the removal proceedings for an indigent, indigenous client from Mexico who had been **ordered removed in absentia**, but is eligible for asylum and a U visa.
- In March 2014, Pangea provided a **credible fear interview** training for individuals in Mexico and is supporting the legal representation of the participants of the Bring Them Home campaign, organized by [NIYA](#).
- In April 2014, Pangea was **successful in reversing a negative reasonable fear finding** for a client in withholding-only proceedings.
- Pangea continues to represent immigrants in other **complex removal defense cases**, including immigrants who are material witnesses in federal prosecutions and are held in **U.S. Marshals** custody, **unaccompanied minor children**, and immigrants with **prior removals** or deportation orders. Our commitment to this removal defense work is our belief in family unity and placing our community members who qualify on a **pathway to citizenship**.

## Office Warming and Fundraiser Report-back

In January 2014, Pangea celebrated its one-year anniversary and office warming party by hosting its first fundraiser to support our community services. With a turnout of approximately 50 partners, friends, clients, and advocates at our office, we successfully raised about \$3,500. We want to especially acknowledge our Board Member, Kristi Tarnstrom, who contributed the majority of the legwork for this fundraiser. The \$3,500 will support free 1-hour consultations for 70 indigent clients!

In addition to celebrating our one-year anniversary and new office space, we were humbled to **honor some of the leaders in our community** who inspire, motivate, and support us at Pangea:

- **Bill Hing** and **Mark Silverman** (ILRC)
- **Lorena Melgarejo**, **Jesus Ruiz Diego** and **Jaiderman Diaz de Leon** (SFOP/PACT/PICO)
- **Joe Sciarillo** and **Adoubou Traore** (African Advocacy Network)

- **Christine Stouffer, Cara Jobson, Bernardo Merino, Leah Price** (Private Immigration Attorneys)
- **Scarlet Nerad and Michelle Gaudet** (Community Resource Initiative)
- **Francisco Ugarte and Jackie Shull-Gonzalez** (Dolores Street Community Services)

In February 2014, our advisory board member, partner, and dear friend, Leah Price, raised ~\$400 for Pangea through her birthday party, which she dedicated to Pangea. Thank you!

We would love for you all to join in [becoming a monthly sustainer or contributor](#) of our organization! Please consider signing up to [give a monthly donation, by clicking here](#).

## Education and Outreach



Rally to request administrative relief and family unity from President Obama, March 2014

Pangea participated in a number of outreach events for advocates and community members. Below are a list of some of our efforts in legal empowerment.

- Pangea presented on a [CLE panel organized by the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Defense Committee](#) to educate attorneys and advocates on the San Francisco Due Process Ordinance
- We partnered with the National Employment Law Center to host a [training for advocates on workplace crime based U visas](#)
- Pangea gave a presentation to graduating students at Georgetown University Law Center on incubating nonprofit organizations like Pangea Legal Services

- We participated in various Bay Area immigration clinics, including the Legal Orientation Program at West County Detention Facility, organized by our partners at Centro Legal de la Raza

## Policy Advocacy and Direct Action: Local and National Efforts to Keep Our Families Together

Pangea was selected as 1 of 3 recipients for a **Nonprofit Scholarship** by the **American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA)** NorCal to participate in the National Day of Action in Washington, D.C. in April 2014. Pangea helped plan and lead meetings with congressional and senatorial legislators in order to [advance immigrant rights](#).

In March 2013, Pangea joined Bay Area coalition partners from [San Francisco Bay for Immigrant Justice to rally](#) and offered **legal observer support** for the civil disobedience action. This local effort was in solidarity with national actions organized around the country demanding executive action for administrative relief and **to stop the deportations and separations of our families**.

Pangea is currently working with partner organizations to prepare a [Petition calling for the rescission of the recently issued Credible Fear Interview Lesson Plan](#) used by asylum officers to screen asylum seekers with a higher burden of proof. Stay tuned.



With AILA NorCal Advocates in Washington, D.C., April 2014

*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.*

## **Support Pangea**

Any support and contribution enables us to serve indigent and rural communities, advocate for more humane immigration policies, and further empower people to know their rights.

Pangea Legal Services is a registered 501(c)(3) organization, and donations are tax-deductible.

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