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PANGEA LEGAL SERVICES

Quarterly Newsletter | July 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.

The Political Landscape & Pangea's work with Increased Numbers of Immigrants in the Bay Area



Immigrant Day in Sacramento

Our work and clients at Pangea are feeling the impact of the recent [rhetoric of antagonism](#) around immigration and focus on increasing deportations from the political leadership in Washington, D.C. The tone has also shifted for the [refugee children](#) we represent. Even in San Francisco, the sanctuary city, our work in the courts has become more challenging because of the government's adversarial directives.

Nevertheless, we continue to move our cases forward and have had some remarkable successes in the last quarter. Below is a snapshot:

Policy Advocacy

- In July, one of Pangea's partner coalitions, [SF Bay for Immigrant Justice](#), met with Senator Feinstein and Congresswoman Pelosi's offices to discuss the impact of Washington's recent policies on our immigrant communities. A Pangea client, a refugee and mother of a 4 year-old, "Blanca," joined us in these meetings and described her

experience upon entry at the border a few months ago, where she and her 4-year-old daughter were [placed in a hielera](#) (holding cells used by the Department of Homeland Security, also known as "ice box" because of their freezing cold temperatures), only fed two small sandwiches per day, and forced to stand in the cold room that had only one open toilet for 20 people. Pangea will continue to lift up our community's voices and ask for a humane immigration policy.

- In May, we celebrated the end of ICE holds in Alameda and Contra Costa counties. After years of tireless advocacy work led by [Alameda County United in Defense of Immigrant Rights \(ACUDIR\)](#), Alameda and Contra Costa Sheriffs announced that their counties would no longer respond to ICE requests to hold immigrants past their release date solely on the basis of their immigration status.
- On [Immigrant Day](#) this year in May, Pangea joined the [California Immigrant Policy Center's](#) organized efforts to support various immigrant-friendly bills, including [SB 1310](#) (limiting deportations of LPRs) and [AB 1876](#) (Affordable County Jail Phone Calls). Immigrant Day is an annual event where advocates and community members from throughout the state of California meet with legislators in Sacramento in an effort to push for statewide laws that advance immigrant rights.



Immigrant Day in Sacramento: Katie Lynn, Alejandra, Bianca (May 2014)

Legal Services

- Pangea secured asylum in Immigration Court for 7 refugees from Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Haiti, and Guinea.
- We closed court proceedings for 10 unaccompanied children in order to pursue their cases affirmatively through other agencies.
- We worked together with DHS to jointly file motions to reopen in complex cases with significant procedural barriers.
- We obtained 3 deferred action (U Visa) and SIJS approvals for individuals in removal proceedings.



ICE Rally for Clients (June 2014)

Education and Legal Empowerment

- Pangea is currently working with various partners to develop pro se materials for immigrant children in removal proceedings.
- Pangea collaborated with the [Immigrant Legal Resource Center](#) to record a [podcast on the negative impact of the New Credible Fear Standard](#) for asylum seekers in the United States.
- Pangea and its partners at CARECEN and the Transgender Law Center held a phone conference with Mr. John Lafferty, the Chief of the Asylum Division regarding the [community's request to rescind the new Credible Fear lesson plan](#). While it is unlikely that the plan will be rescinded at this time, the community lifted up its concerns, with 77 organizational supporters and 2800+ individual signatories.

Foundation Grants and Awards

THE
SAN
FRANCISCO
FOUNDATION

We have exciting news: Pangea received its first-ever grant this quarter and we are incredibly grateful! In May 2014, The San Francisco Foundation awarded Pangea \$25,000 for the development of core operations in support of our mission to assist low-income immigrants by direct representation, policy advocacy, and education/legal empowerment.



We were also awarded \$35,000 from The Silicon Valley Community Foundation to support our work for residents of the San Mateo and Santa Clara County counties.



In June, Pangea participated in the Full Circle Fund's [Jamathon](#). After brainstorming the question of "How can we use technology to promote effective and

interactive learning for our clients before meetings?" Pangea was awarded the most funds during a flash giving circle!



Pangea was awarded a small nonprofit award by the American Immigration Lawyers Association in support of our work in Northern California.

These grants along with the individual donations that continue to trickle in, are allowing us to increase our capacity and expand our work to represent and empower our immigrant communities. Thank you for believing in us.

Pangea's Team Grows to 4 Full-Time Staff & We are Hiring!



Alejandra Hilsaca

This quarter, Pangea is thrilled to welcome [Alejandra Hilsaca](#) and [Bianca Z. Santos](#) to our Pangea family.

Alejandra serves as our new Director of Operations and Legal Advocate. Bianca was hired as an Immigration Attorney and Pangea's Director of International Human Rights Program.

Our wonderful UC Davis Law Fellow, Matthew Weisner, who completed his fellowship with Pangea in March, now works with Catholic Charities in the East Bay.

Our team is growing and Pangea [is recruiting a 4th attorney](#) to join our team! Please share this opportunity with attorneys who you think might be a good fit!



Bianca Z. Santos

The Pangea Family is Joined by DreamSF Fellow and Rockstar Summer Law Clerks

Pangea is honored to serve as a host organization for a [DreamSF fellow](#), funded by the San Francisco Office of Civic Engagement and

Immigrant Affairs (OCEIA). Our fellow, Joseline Gonzalez, is a college student at UC Berkeley and one of 14 amazing fellows selected to work with nonprofit organizations in the Bay Area.



SF City Hall, OCEIA Event:
Dmitri, Niloufar, Joseline, Katie
Lynn, and Alejandra (June 2014)

This summer, we hosted law clerks, Katie Lynn Anderson and Maria Turcios, and volunteer attorney, Dmitry Lieders. [A recipient of the International Human Rights Law Clinic Summer Fellowship at UC Berkeley Law](#), Katie Lynn reported, "Within a week, I was asked to do all kinds of work to support Pangea's mission of helping immigrant communities. I was in Sacramento lobbying for immigrant-friendly bills, in court working on deportation defense cases, and in the office developing training and education programs. It's been a whirlwind, and a very positive experience."



Pangea: (L-R) Marie Vincent, Bianca Santos, Katie
Lynn Anderson, Niloufar Khonsari, Maria Turcios,
Alejandra Hilsaca, Joseline Gonzalez (July 2014)

Thank you, Joseline, Dmitri, Maria, and Katie Lynn for your tireless contributions this summer!

Our Summer Wish List

Many of you have already been incredibly generous with your donations. We are very grateful and hope you continue to partner with us. We invite you to support our work and community this summer with the below gifts:

- [Tablets & Headphones](#)

Our clients will use these to watch know your rights videos while they wait for their appointments with one of our attorneys.

- [Projector](#)

Our conference room is prime for presentations because we inherited a projector screen when we moved to this office. What is missing from our training sessions, presentations, and meetings held in our conference room: is [this projector](#) to display our laptop screens and presentations.

- [Legos & Toys](#)

Our office is frequently filled with children waiting in our small lobby area. We have many books already and we welcome more, but we don't have any toys, and we would especially love large legos to share with children.

Our mailing address:
350 Sansome St, Ste 650 | San Francisco, CA 94104

Thank you for all your love.

Pangea Team Outing: Half Moon Bay

Pangea hosted its first annual team outing with staff, volunteers, interns, and board member.

The Pangea team picnicked and hiked a 7-mile loop through the stunning [Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve near Half Moon Bay](#).



Purisima National Park: Alejandra, Bianca, Dmitri, Marie, Katie Lynn, Michelle (June 2014)



Bianca, Marie, Katie Lynn, Alejandra, Dmitri,
Niloufar, Michelle (June 2014)

A special thanks to Dmitry Lieders, our volunteer attorney, for organizing this special day - it was absolutely beautiful.

We Have a Logo!



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A huge thank you to our law clerk, Katie Lynn Anderson, for designing Pagea's logo this summer!

Our logo portrays Pangea, the earth's original continent when it was one connected landmass 240 million years ago. For us, Pangea symbolizes the unity and oneness of our global community.

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.

Donate Here

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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