

# PANGEA LEGAL SERVICES

Quarterly Newsletter | April 2016

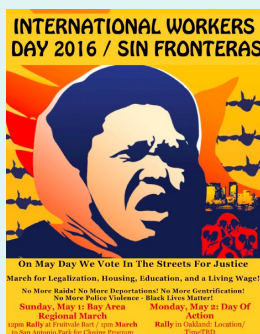


*Pangea Legal Services is a nonprofit organization committed to advocating for immigrants in deportation proceedings through legal representation, community empowerment, and policy advocacy.*

## Marching Together for Immigrant Rights!

On May 1, 2006, an [unprecedented event unfolded](#) across the country. Hundreds of thousands of immigrants and their allies rallied, taking to the streets and lifting their voices. What began as a targeted response to punitive legislation that would criminalize immigrants, quickly evolved into a large-scale movement for social change and immigration reform.

Almost ten years later, the movement continues to grow stronger in light of mass deportations, delays in administrative relief for parents, and incendiary rhetoric from presidential candidates.



[This May Day, Pangea is excited to join](#) thousands - **and hopefully millions** - of people across the country, marching to demand justice for immigrants and workers. [On the cusp of a Supreme Court decision on DAPA](#), national elections in November, and humanitarian emergencies in Central America, Mexico and Syria, now is the time to show our leaders that we are a united and strong community.

On May 1, 2016, Pangea staff and clients will be marching  
from the [Fruitvale Bart Station at 1 p.m.](#)

**COME JOIN US!!**

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## Policy Advocacy Spotlight: Moving Towards Universal Representation of Detained Immigrants

This quarter, Pangea has been energized by a growing movement across the country to ensure that all immigrants in deportation proceedings, especially those who are detained, have **access to counsel**.



Pangea attorney Marie volunteering at the detention center in [Dilley, Texas](#)

Currently, immigrants in deportation proceedings do not have a right to a government-appointed attorney. This is despite the fact that

**deportation can cause serious consequences:** deprivation of liberty, loss of employment and

home, permanent separation from family, and even death. A movement has been growing to ensure that all immigrants facing deportation have legal counsel. [New York City is paving the way with its NY Immigrant Family Unity Project](#), providing universal representation to every detained indigent person facing deportation. Organizations in [Southern California](#) are using the New York example to push for universal representation across the state. And nationally, [legislation has been introduced in the House and Senate to guarantee counsel to all children and vulnerable individuals](#).

Pangea knows first-hand that this movement towards **universal representation is critical to keeping immigrant families safe and united**. This quarter, Pangea traveled to New York City to meet with and learn from the [Immigrant](#)

[Family Unity Project](#). We also went to Washington D.C. as part of [AILA's National Day of Action](#), where we encouraged lawmakers to support universal representation of immigrants. In the coming year, we will be prioritizing and supporting local and statewide efforts to ensure that all detained immigrants have access to counsel.



Pangea attorney Nilou and AILA NorCal members advocating on the Hill

In other advocacy news, as part of the [FREE-SF Coalition](#), Pangea has continued to push the city of San Francisco to maintain its position as a Sanctuary City and stepped up local efforts to strengthen laws that disentangle local law enforcement from federal immigration authorities. By maintaining this separation, we can ensure that cooperation with local law enforcement doesn't translate into the [double victimization](#) of vulnerable communities.

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## Legal Services Spotlight: Celia, the Gonzalez Brothers, and Ammar

Deportation defense can be a rollercoaster - sometimes moving at lightening speed, and other times moving at a glacial pace. This quarter, Pangea received news in several of our complex cases that highlight the challenges of deportation defense work.

**Celia.** Deportation defense requires **quick action** when a person is detained. This quarter, Pangea represented Celia,\* a mother of three U.S. citizen children who has lived in California for most of her life. In 2015, Celia was detained by ICE and denied asylum by an immigration judge. In the span of two short months, Pangea successfully appealed her asylum case with the Board of Immigration Appeals, filed for a U visa, and obtained her release from detention. Celia is now reunited with her children and fighting her case with the full support of her community.

**The Gonzalez Brothers.** Deportation defense also requires **thinking outside the box and pursuing all avenues of relief**, however slim the chance. This quarter, Pangea won T visas for two Salvadoran brothers in deportation proceedings. The eldest brother, Pedro\* was forced to work as a mule for a gang member in El Salvador. When he tried to stop and leave, he was beaten almost to death. Despite the challenging legal issues in his case, and the fact that T visas are typically only granted to victims of human trafficking that have been abused on U.S. soil, Pangea decided to take a chance and apply for the T visa regardless. We received news this quarter that the Gonzalez brothers\* won their case. They are ecstatic about remaining in the U.S. safely with their family, and pursuing their dreams of going to college.

**Ammar.** Deportation defense sometimes requires extreme **tenacity and persistence**. There is no better example than the case of Ammar, a proud father of three children and supporter of indigenous rights in Algeria. Ammar fled to the U.S. in 2007, after extremist militants tortured his family and tried to kill him. Pangea began representing him in 2012. Three and a half years later - after 8 individual merits hearings, thousands of pages of research and filings, testimony from 2 mental health experts, and support from [African Advocacy Network](#), [Asian Law Caucus](#), and legal mentors - Ammar finally won his asylum case. In her 37-page decision, the immigration judge meticulously detailed why she found Ammar to be a credible witness and why he is eligible for U.S. protection. Now, after 8 years of living in limbo, Ammar can petition for his wife and children, and be reunited with his family.

\* Names have been changed.



Ammar and Pangea celebrating his big win

If this work inspires you, donate to Pangea on  
**[May 3rd, Silicon Valley Gives Day!](#)**

Every dollar makes a difference, and it helps us to continue representing individuals like Celia, Pedro and Ammar.

**Thank you!**

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## Community Empowerment Spotlight: Radio, Rallies, and Teach-Ins

This quarter, several Pangea clients **courageously shared their stories** publicly, becoming involved in a larger movement for immigrant justice and using their voices to impact their communities. Here's a snapshot of our empowerment efforts:

- [Three Pangea clients in deportation proceedings shared their stories with KPFA radio in an in-depth interview](#) session (at 34 mins). The interviews shined a light on the extreme violence families are facing in Central America, the dangers they encounter when traveling north, and how they are treated when seeking protection at the U.S. border.
- Pangea staff and board presented on immigration detention at a high school Social Justice Teach-In in Atherton.
- One of Pangea's long-time clients, Jaiderman, shared publicly what it means to be undocumented in a country that labels him "illegal." His testimony was part of [Immigrant Youth Coalition's](#) Coming Out of the Shadows, an annual event where undocumented people across the country share their stories and declare openly that they are **undocumented and unafraid**.
- Pangea acted as a legal monitor for a



Jaiderman sharing his thoughts at Coming Out of the Shadows event





Sit-in participants demanding an end to deportations

press conference and sit-in at Senator Feinstein's office. Led by the [Human Rights Alliance of Child Refugees and Families](#), and the [Central American Refugee Action \(CARA\)](#), the action demanded an end to detention and deportations of Central Americans.

Several affected youth participated in the sit-in, inspiring the community with

their courage and resolve.

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## Pangea Welcomes Two New Board Members

We are excited to share that we have two new members on our **Board of Directors:** [Elaine Orr](#) and [George Madrigal](#).



Elaine is the director of investments at Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and George is the Founder and CEO of Penserra, a financial services firm in San Francisco



and New York. We are looking forward to working together in the future and learning from their diverse skill sets!

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## Save the Date for SV Gives: May 3, 2016!

On [Tuesday, May 3rd](#), the Silicon Valley Community Foundation will be crowd funding for hundreds of South Bay nonprofits, including Pangea.

**Check out our [link](#)**, forward to your friends, and consider making a donation! Our goal is to raise \$5,000 to support our direct services work,

and we value every dollar that you can contribute.

**SV Gives Campaign**  
Tuesday, May 3, 2016

Please help us bring positive change to our immigrant community.



**Thank you for your support!**

Warmly,

Pangea Family

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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.*



## **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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**Pangea Legal Services**

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