

# PANGEA LEGAL SERVICES

Quarterly Newsletter | October 2016



*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.*

## Let Your Voice Be Heard!

With Election Day rapidly approaching, we are inspired by all the ways that immigrants are radically democratizing the political process at the ballot box and on the streets. Immigrants are reshaping the political map with a record number of naturalizations and undocumented immigrants are "voting with their feet" - [marching to make their presence known](#) and pushing the boundaries of political participation and human rights beyond the vote.

For all those who can, please vote on November 8th!



## Legal Services Spotlight: The Positive Ripple Effects of Ending Immigration Detention

What happens when someone is released from immigrant detention?

We often talk about the negative consequences of detention and incarceration, but this quarter we want to focus on the resilience of our clients and some of the positive things that happen when an immigrant is released!

Take Ivan, for example. Ivan is the proud father of a seven-month-old son

and the sole breadwinner for his family. Ivan was picked up by ICE when his baby was just one month old. With Ivan in detention, the family struggled financially and Ivan's wife and baby were evicted from their home and forced to move into a homeless shelter.



Former detained client, Ivan, and his family rallying in front of ICE, calling for the release of other immigrant detainees who are separated from their families.

Pangea worked tirelessly to get Ivan released on bond. Once out, Ivan immediately got his old job back and soon will be able to afford an apartment for his family. His premature baby's health is more stable because his wife has more time and resources to go to doctors' appointments. Finally, just two weeks after being liberated from detention, Ivan (baby in tow) and [former detained client Saul](#), [rallied in front of ICE and added their voices to the larger movement to end immigration detention.](#)

Ana\* is another example of how ending detention has positive ripple effects. Ana is the mother of 5 U.S. citizen children. After visiting her dying mother in Mexico in 2014, Ana was detained and deported several times for trying to reunite with her children. With Ana in detention, Child Protective Services threatened to take her children away.

Pangea co-counseled with [API Legal Outreach](#) to apply for immigration relief and get Ana out on bond. Ana is now reunited with her family and she has resumed her role as primary caretaker. She takes her children to and from school every day, is home with them at night (instead of a babysitter), and hopes to have them back in after-school activities soon.

Ana\* and Ivan's stories show how ending immigrant detention and keeping families together lead to healthier, happier, and safer communities. Please support Pangea in continuing our [pro bono work for detained families](#), and if you are part of an organization or agency, please consider signing this [petition demanding an end to the detention of immigrants and asylum seekers](#).

\*Name has been changed.



Former detained client, Saul, speaking out against the detention system.

## Exploited Jamaican Guest Worker Gets Immigration Relief After 3 Years



This quarter, Pangea client "Tina" received deferred action based on her pending [workplace-crime U visa application](#)! This is a first at Pangea and a relatively rare occurrence nationwide. Tina is a Jamaican guest worker who was lured to the U.S. with the promise of a good job. When she got here, her employer forced her to live in a cramped apartment, underpaid her, and threatened to call Immigration if she complained. She suffered from a back injury, knee injury, weight loss, and PTSD.

Together, Tina and her co-workers filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor. Pangea was asked by the [New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice](#) to represent Tina in her application for a U visa, a special visa for victims of crimes. Three years later, after responding to multiple legal requests from immigration and filing hundreds of pages of documents, Tina and her spouse received protection against deportation and now have a pathway to citizenship.

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### Advocacy Spotlight: California Governor Supports Increasing ICE Transparency But Vetoes Shutting Down Private Immigration Detention Facilities

Advocating on behalf of our clients and community is a fundamental part of what we do at Pangea. As the statewide legislative cycle comes to a close, we'd like to take a moment and reflect on some of the largest successes and areas where we will continue to push for pro-immigrant change.

#### **TRUTH Act (AB 2792): Passed!**

Pangea joined advocates across the state and nation to push back on Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE)'s shifting enforcement tactics and to ensure greater transparency, accountability and due process for all. The [TRUTH Act](#) expands the protections of its predecessor the TRUST Act by requiring that:

- Community forums be held in districts where ICE has been given access to



Pangea team at the state capitol  
on Immigrant Day

- individuals;
- ICE get written consent from individuals before conducting an interview/interrogation;
- Local law enforcement give individuals a copy of any ICE request and inform individuals if they intend to comply with that request; and
- All records provided by local law enforcement to ICE be part of the public record.

These basic protections will empower the community to know and exercise their rights, expand due process and bring much needed transparency to local law enforcement collaboration with federal immigration authorities in California.

### **Dignity Not Detention (SB 1289): Vetoed**

Growing movements statewide and nationally have drawn attention to the particularly horrendous [abuses perpetuated in for-profit incarceration & immigrant detention](#). The Dignity Not Detention bill would have gradually closed down all private immigrant detention facilities in California and required all other detention facilities to uphold basic ICE detention standards.



Pangea client Ivan calling for an end to immigration detention

Pangea worked with the statewide Dignity Not Detention Coalition, reaching out to legislators, sharing information on social media, organizing local events, and lifting up the voices of directly impacted individuals. Two Pangea clients, Saul Estrada and Ivan Perez, gave [stirring accounts of their experiences in detention](#), educating the community about the real-life costs of detention at a vigil to raise awareness [asking to for an end to immigration detention](#).

We stand in solidarity with the movement to end immigrant detention and seek a more just world where the rights of every migrant are respected.

Check out a list of other [pro-immigrant bills here](#) that were enacted this legislative season.

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## **Community Empowerment Spotlight**

In addition to our direct legal service and advocacy work, Pangea also participated in several forums to educate and empower the community about their rights:

- Gave an immigration law presentation to 19 DACA fellows at the [San](#)



- Appeared on Univision 14 to warn viewers about predatory bond companies like Libre by Nexus and the [immigration consequences of DUIs](#)
- Presented on the immigration panel "Radical Lawyering at the Intersection of Criminal and Immigration Law" at the National Lawyers' Guild's [Progressive Law Day Conference](#)
- Presented on an immigration and refugee panel titled "National Policy Issues and On the Ground Realities"
- Participated in an immigration and workers' rights legal clinic organized by the [Katharine & George Alexander Community Law Center](#) at the Mexican Consulate of San Jose
- Presented on the [Bay Area Legal Incubator](#) Panel, "Unique Options in Law Practice Formation: Nonprofits, Cooperatives, Collectives, and More"
- Presented on a [OneJustice Executive Fellowship](#) alumni panel



One Justice Executive Fellowship Training

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## **Pangea Client, Roxana, Featured in Mini-Doc About Asylum Process**

In order to escape severe violence and possible death in Guatemala, Roxana had to leave her little daughter behind. Upon arrival in the United States, she was first held in a hielera and then in immigration detention for three months. Now, even with the help of her attorney moving her case along as quickly as possible, Roxana will have to wait over three years for a chance to present her asylum case in immigration court.

[Watch the mini-doc here to get a glimpse of what an asylum seeker in immigration court proceedings goes through.](#)



Pangea client Roxana waiting outside the San Francisco Immigration Court.

## Welcome New Attorney Etan & Welcome to Our New Office!

This quarter, we were joined by attorney [Etan Newman](#)!

Etan is a native Minnesotan who became involved in immigrant rights work [after visiting Postville, Iowa in the aftermath of a devastating immigration enforcement raid](#). He committed himself to becoming an advocate and to partnering with immigrant communities in their struggle to achieve recognition and justice. After receiving his undergraduate degree from Brown University in 2009 and his law degree from NYU in 2015, Etan worked with several organizations across the country including the Workers' Center for Racial Justice and the Urban Justice Center's Community Development Project. Etan joins Pangea after clerking for the honorable William A. Fletcher on the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

In addition to growing in staff size, Pangea grew its San Francisco office space this quarter to better be able to serve our community. We continue to be located near Montgomery Bart station within a few blocks of the immigration courts and other immigration agencies.



Sandy Valenciano and Maria Hernandez (Chuey) above. Pangea was thrilled to honor several immigration activists, advocates, and leaders in our Bay Area

community.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our Office Warming Party in October! We loved sharing our new space with you, and we hope that those of you who couldn't make it stop by another time - you are always welcome!

*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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