

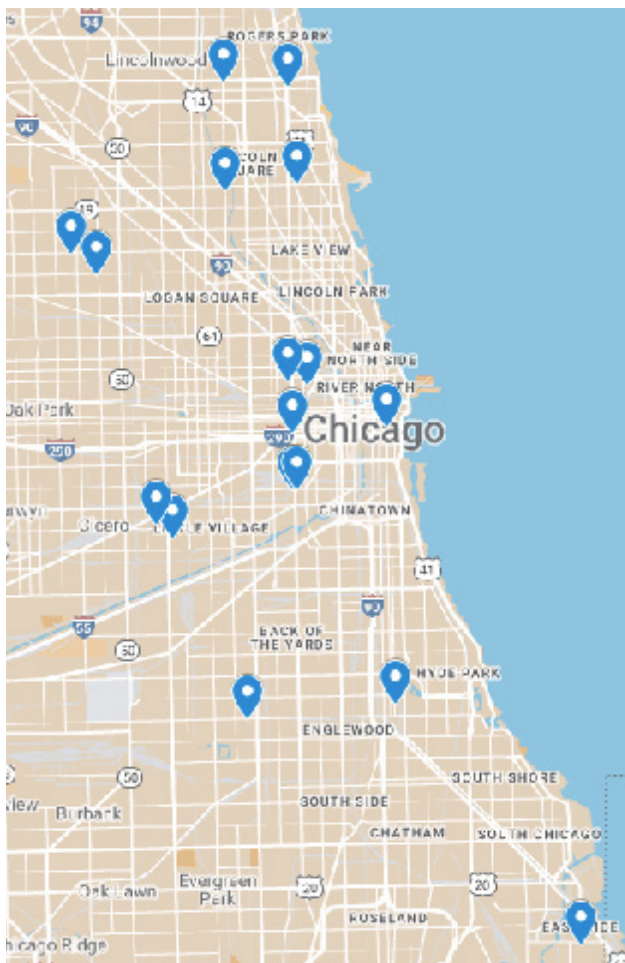
Sixth Annual Report of the Chicago Legal Protection Fund Helping Chicagoans Respond to Global Crisis

In its sixth year, the Legal Protection Fund (LPF) has helped thousands of Chicagoans defend their rights and access new legal protections, including communities affected by war and natural disaster. As Chicago opened its arms to welcome those fleeing their home countries in the aftermath of the evacuation of Afghanistan, the turmoil of war in Ukraine, and natural and political disasters in other parts of the world, LPF's legal staff and Community Navigators allowed more people to secure legal status. These services remain critical to help people build their lives in Chicago.

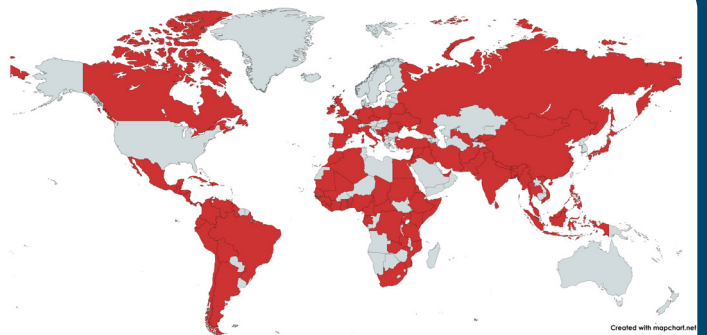
In the first 10 months of 2022, under LPF, the National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC) conducted more than 968 legal screenings and provided representation in 1,570 cases, including opening more than 443 new cases. NIJC, The Resurrection Project (TRP) and 10 Community Navigator organizations presented Know Your Rights and resource education sessions to more than 25,319 people.

This fall, NIJC provided over 2,681 recent arrivals with legal orientations shortly after their arrival to Chicago from Texas.

Services Provided Through the Legal Protection Fund



LPF administrative and Community Navigator organizations have permanent offices throughout the city, and hold hundreds of events in many other locations. *You can view an interactive version of this map at immigrantjustice.org/LPFreport*



LPF has represented Chicagoans from 131 countries of origin.

Immigrants with lawyers are **5 times more likely to win** their cases than immigrants without representation.

★ Working Together to Help Chicagoans Navigate the Courtroom and the Clinic

Having legal representation is a key part of helping all Chicagoans secure their rights. Studies have shown that immigrants with legal representation are five times more likely to prevail in their cases than those without. Part of what makes LPF so successful is the trauma-informed services it provides to Chicagoans—where NIJC fights for clients in the courtroom, TRP and other Community Navigator organizations help to connect people to social services and other resources. In 2022, LPF referred 1,681 individuals to services including immigration legal services, housing assistance, vaccination information, and applications for public benefits.

Little Village: Rosa has been an NIJC client since 2010 when NIJC represented her in securing lawful permanent status based on her status as a survivor of domestic violence. She returned to NIJC after an application for citizenship she filed on her own was denied because she incorrectly answered questions during a sworn testimony. Because of NIJC's trauma-informed approach, Rosa's legal team recognized her errors were due to the effects of trauma on her memory. NIJC provided evidence of that to the court. Her team then requested another hearing, where the officer acknowledged that Rosa had no intention to misrepresent herself. With some continued advocacy and representation, Rosa now has her citizenship!



Rosa, with her citizenship certificate



Angee checks in volunteers at a Community navigator event

Southwest Organizing Project: During a Know Your Rights presentation, Community Navigator Angee Peralta met a single mom of four children who was struggling to keep food on the table for her children. She was afraid to accept public aid benefits because of her undocumented status. Angee connected her to a community health organization to help her apply for food and medical assistance for her children — and herself.

★ A Welcoming Home for New Chicagoans Seeking Safety from War, Persecution and Climate Disaster

Chicago continues to welcome people from all corners of the world seeking safety. This welcome is particularly important in a year marked by the war in Ukraine and following the evacuation of Afghan nationals, and when asylum seekers from all over face increasing dangers in their journeys. NIJC and the Community Navigators worked with communities to provide presentations and resources to recent arrivals, and represent individuals to secure asylum.

Bronzeville: Paul* came to the United States from Haiti when he was 23 years old on a student visa to pursue his studies at Harold Washington University. In hopes of staying in the United States to continue his education and pursue a career, Paul sought NIJC's legal assistance to apply for Temporary Protected Status (TPS)—a type of immigration status granted to those from countries that are in particular tumult. NIJC's partnerships with law firms meant that Paul could participate in Sidley Austin's TPS Pro Bono Clinic, and submit his TPS application, which is pending approval.

Near East Side: Helena* is from Ukraine. NIJC represented her at a July 2022 TPS clinic. Under TPS, she is protected from deportation, can legally work in the United States by obtaining a work permit, and may also be granted travel authorization. TPS is critical given that the ongoing war in Ukraine leaves Ukrainians in an extremely vulnerable state and threatens their lives.

Rogers Park: Rosalie* came to the United States when she was 21 as a result of violent circumstances in Cameroon, her home country. She is in the process of filing an asylum application with Erie Neighborhood House, a Community Navigator organizations. She was also referred to NIJC for representation in seeking TPS while her asylum case is adjudicated. Rosalie's child remains in Cameroon and Rosalie hopes that she will be able to support her family from the United States.

★ Protecting Chicagoans With Disabilities

The U.S. immigration system is difficult enough to navigate without considering factors such as disabilities and serious illness, all of which can create additional challenges in an inflexible system. Having support from knowledgeable, trusted NIJC attorneys empowers people to advocate for their needs, and can make defending rights within everyone's reach.

Gage Park: In 2019, after being a legal permanent resident in the United States for years, Dinaly came to NIJC seeking representation to become a U.S. citizen. However, because Dinaly is diagnosed with Turner's syndrome, which can cause a variety of physical and intellectual disabilities, it was imperative to request a medical exception and an oath waiver. NIJC worked closely with Dinaly's mother to obtain the necessary documentation for an oath waiver, including showing that Dinaly's mother is legally recognized as her legal guardian. After three interviews and extensive advocacy, Dinaly attended her naturalization ceremony in June 2022!



Community Navigators from a number of different organizations ready to greet new arrivals.

★ Rapid Response to Texas Buses

Having an established Legal Protection Fund for Chicago immigrants meant that when the city learned that migrants would be arriving on buses from Texas, leaders were able to mobilize quickly to respond. LPF organizations have been at the forefront of the City's response. Community Navigators, mobilized and trained by The Resurrection Project, have been vital in providing translation, sharing resources, answering questions, and welcoming new arrivals to Chicago with kindness and compassion. NIJC provided legal orientations to over 2,600 recent arrivals and responded to urgent legal questions. Chicago could not call itself a "welcoming city" if not for the hard work of LPF organizations and their Community Navigators.



NIJC legal staffers preparing legal orientations for recent arrivals from Texas.

★ Defending DACA Protections

LPF partners and many Chicagoans have spent the year anxiously monitoring the federal courts as the fate of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program hung in the balance. DACA provides protection from deportation and work authorization to those who were brought to the United States as children. Unsure whether the courts would ultimately end the program, attorneys worked to renew DACA protection for dozens of people and provided legal educational materials, following each new court decision. In the next year, we anticipate even more challenges to DACA, and are working to ensure as many people are able to benefit from the program as possible.

Portage Park: Yafarah is originally from Mexico. He is a DACA recipient and has been working with NIJC for the renewal of his DACA since 2018. During his appointments with NIJC, he has expressed fear of returning to his home country. However, with the help of NIJC, Yafarah successfully applied for a DACA renewal, which was approved in only 12 days.

★ Empowering Leaders in Chicago Communities and Building an Immigrant Legal Aid Pipeline

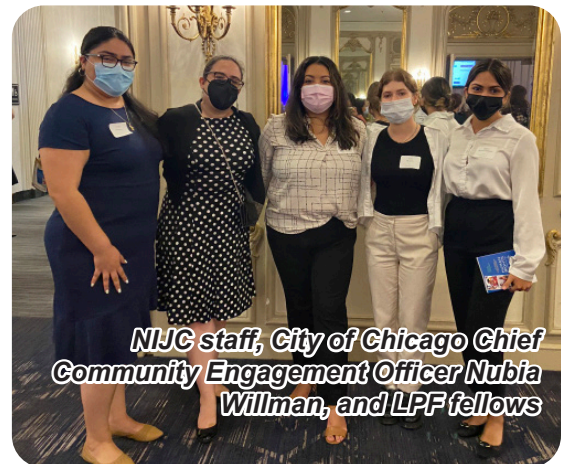
LPF has been strengthened by the Community Navigators who tirelessly advocate for their communities. Their leadership has connected thousands of immigrants in Chicago to educational presentations, public resources, and NIJC's immigration legal services. NIJC was able to introduce LPF summer fellowships, allowing college and law school students to work directly with clients. These fellows allowed NIJC to increase capacity, which expanded the LPF team's language abilities to more easily communicate with a wider variety of clients. These fellowships help inspire and motivate the next generation of immigration advocates, to ensure the sustainability of our work.

Enlace Chicago: Adriana has been involved with Enlace Chicago since 2018, and has been able to develop strong leadership skills throughout her time as a Community Navigator. Her leadership and dedication to her role has given her the opportunity to take on more responsibilities. Now, in addition to her duties as a Community Navigator, she also helps oversee the Enlace Legal Clinic as their Immigration Navigator Coordinator. "I have felt many emotions full of gratitude when various members of the community thank me for having connected them to or given them resources to address their needs."



Community Navigators, TRP staff and Mayor Lori Lightfoot at the Mayoral Medal of Honor ceremony

NIJC: Gabi was an NIJC LPF summer fellow, and worked closely with the legal team. "As someone who is passionate about immigrant rights, and hoping to pursue a career in immigration law, working with NIJC was an incredible opportunity. The care, positive attitude, and dedication that the team puts into each individual case is a true testimony to the amazing work they do."



NIJC staff, City of Chicago Chief Community Engagement Officer Nubia Willman, and LPF fellows

HANA Center: Ji Sug, a HANA Community Navigator, has witnessed the power of sharing information. One of the aspects of being a Community Navigator that she greatly enjoys is that she is often among the first to learn about new programs and resources, giving her the opportunity to disseminate this new knowledge with her community. "Whenever I informed a friend or a community member about a program, his or her family in turn disseminated the information to others. I have witnessed how word of mouth is powerful while working as a community navigator. In addition, the biggest lesson that I learned through the community navigator work was that effective community education needs ACTION."

Legal Protection Fund Participating Organizations:

National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC) provides legal screenings and representation. **The Resurrection Project (TRP)** leads the Fund's Community Navigator Program, which provides residents support and counseling on strategies to protect their families and obtain legal status.

Community Navigator Organizations: Centro de Trabajadores Unidos, Centro Romero, Enlace Chicago, Erie Neighborhood House, Haitian American Museum of Chicago, HANA Center, Indo-American Center, Northwest Center, Southwest Organizing Project, and United African Organization.

Notes:

* Names have been changed to protect individuals' privacy