Overview of Achievements

Catholic Charities Community Services (CCCS) provides immigration legal services to residents of all 5 NYC boroughs and 7 counties of the Lower Hudson Valley (LHV). Two-thirds of those we serve are NYC residents; 75% of our client base hails from the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Colombia, Jamaica, Ecuador, Guyana, Haiti, Trinidad, and China, and most live with significant economic and social disadvantage. This year, our staff continued to serve these communities primarily remotely due to the pandemic, providing services via phone and video conferencing, while beginning to return to the provision of more in-person services toward the end of the reporting period. During the reporting period, our staff, pro bono attorneys, law students and volunteers:

- Screened 6,052 adults and children, accepting more than 1,100 new cases for representation.
- Closed 2,055 cases (880 through administrative agency decisions, 152 through court decisions, as well as 1,023 non-litigation advocacy decisions).
- Provided legal updates, Know Your Rights (KYRs) presentations, legal orientations and trainings by phone and through Zoom, Facebook, televised interviews, radio shows and printed materials to more than 34,000 people on topics including policy and regulatory changes, the immigration court process, rights during immigration enforcement actions, public charge, Temporary Protected Status (TPS), Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), resources for immigrants during the pandemic, how to avoid being defrauded by unscrupulous immigration providers, and more.
- Operated 3 hotlines that answered more than 64,400 immigration-related calls and provided more than 47,000 referrals, and hundreds of appointments with legal services providers.

Population Served: Low Income Immigrants and Refugees

Area Served: New York City and 7-County Area of Lower Hudson Valley

Total IOLA Grant: $230,000

Staffing Full Time Equivalents:
- Total Staff: 115
- Lawyers: 43
- Paralegals: 35
- Other: 37
Direct Legal Services: Cases

Immigration:
We first met Edwin in July 2018 during a clinic at the Pathways to Graduation Bronx Hub, a NYC public high school serving the educational needs of recently arrived immigrant students. After representing Edwin in family court and before the immigration court, his SIJ petition was approved on March 27, 2020, during the height of the pandemic. Like many of his peers, Edwin had to wait years for the opportunity to apply for a green card despite being granted SIJ status. As a Guatemalan national, Edwin is subject to a visa backlog that left him unable to obtain a work permit or apply for residency, despite having an approved SIJ petition. His case had also languished in immigration court under the Trump administration because the government refused to agree to administrative closure or termination for such cases, despite the availability of permanent relief once they reached the top of the SIJ visa wait list. The Biden administration is now encouraging the use of prosecutorial discretion to dismiss such cases from immigration court. Edwin can now wait for his green card without having to fight against deportation.

In April 2022, CCCS submitted a proposed joint motion to dismiss to the ICE attorney. Edwin is currently finishing his senior year at Pathways to Graduation and hopes to attend college and one day become a chef.
Direct Legal Services: Cases

Immigration:
Rosanna and her children, Miguel, Flora, and Franco fled El Salvador after Members of the Barrio 18 gang brutally murdered Rosanna’s daughter. Shortly after cooperating with the police, Rosanna began receiving threatening phone calls from gang members, who then stalked the family for months. Fearing for their lives, Rosanna and her children fled El Salvador, resettling in Port Chester, New York. CCCS first encountered the family through a consultation in November 2017 and filed their asylum application in 2018. During the pandemic, we disbursed emergency financial aid to the family, as they were not eligible for any government help. Rosanna’s PTSD, depression, and panic attacks, made testifying in detail about the murder of her daughter extremely difficult. She struggled to recall specific dates during her asylum interview, resulting in her case being referred to immigration court. Rosanna finally had the opportunity to present her case to an Immigration Judge on April 20, 2022. Rosanna’s attorneys successfully negotiated for a favorable exercise of prosecutorial discretion and a grant of asylum. The family will now be eligible to apply for green cards in April 2023, allowing Rosanna’s now college-age children to access federal grants. Miguel has worked hard to study English and is preparing to take the High School Equivalency Exam so that he may attend college in the United States, and Flora and Franco both graduated from high school and plan to attend college.

Impact Cases

Persistent Sustained Advocacy for Ms. Q
On September 9, 2021, Catholic Charities and partner organizations filed a Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) complaint against the ICE Buffalo Field Office and the Rensselaer County Jail on behalf of Ms. Q and all other women currently or previously help in ICE custody at the Rensselaer County Jail in Troy, NY. The complaint details how Ms. Q was physically brutalized by an ICE officer while being transferred to the jail, resulting in a fractured ankle. Once at the Rensselaer County Jail, Ms. Q was denied the ability to shower and call her family for two weeks, denied access to medical care, and suffered discrimination and verbal harassment from jail officials. After lodging the Complaint, Catholic Charities advocated to schedule a doctor’s appointment to examine Ms. Q’s ankle. Even with our advocacy and attempts to intervene by DHS, it took nearly four months after ICE physically brutalized Ms. Q, she received a doctor’s appointment, and the doctor confirmed Ms. Q’s ankle was fractured. The four-month delay exacerbated the damage to her ankle. On December 3, 2021, Ms. Q was finally released from ICE detention. Her release came nearly a week after we learned that Ms. Q’s foot was fractured, and likely had been for more than three months. While detained, she received no medical care and was told over and over she was fabricating her pain. Ms. Q’s release was the result of extensive and consistent sustained advocacy, including a Civil Rights Complaint, press coverage detailing the deplorable conditions in the Rensselaer County Jail, organizing, and activism. Her release does not end CCCS’ advocacy efforts on behalf of Ms. Q as there are plans in place to help her secure long term status and support in a partner organization seeking relief for the pain and suffering that Ms. Q suffered.
Other Services: Overview

Accurate information not only clarifies misconceptions, educates community members about immigration and other benefits they may qualify for, but also protects community members from exploitation and false counsel. This past year, we have allocated considerable resources to providing legal and policy updates to members of immigrant communities and stakeholders who work within these communities. Tools for sharing updates included KYRs, legal orientations and presentations (including KYRs for unaccompanied minors and legal orientations for their custodians); trainings for staff, other legal service providers and stakeholders who regularly work with immigrants; use of our state and city hotlines to answer questions from the general public about specific topics (during this reporting period: Temporary Protective Status for designated countries, Disaster relief for undocumented who had damage from hurricane Ida and questions regarding immigration options due to the humanitarian crises in Afghanistan and Ukraine); media interviews, op-eds, and radio show appearances to discuss emerging issues; and distribution of informational packets. During this reporting period, our staff used these tools to provide community legal education – by phone, video conferencing, and materials distribution - to over 34,000 participants: presentations to over 10,000 individuals, provided information and referrals to over 47,000 people through our New York City and New York State hotlines, provided telephonic legal orientations to over 1,200 custodians of unaccompanied minors and distributed an excess of 1,000 informational packets.

During the reporting period, we provided pro se assistance on 248 applications through remote community legal clinics. Through the Immigration Court Helpdesk, we provided pro se assistance through 240 consultation clinics and 15 self-help workshops, where we assisted unrepresented immigrants in removal proceedings with the completion and filing of asylum and work authorization applications, motions to reopen, motions to change venue and changes of address with the immigration court.

### Number of People who Benefitted from Services Other Than Direct Legal Representation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>People Benefitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Legal Education</td>
<td>38,314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro Se Assistance</td>
<td>4,655</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

42,969 People Benefitted by Services Other Than Direct Legal Representation
Other Services: Technology and Other Innovations

In addition to the new intake/scheduling platforms referenced in our response to Part B.3., above, CCCS is currently making a major investment aimed at upgrading the entire IT platform at our headquarters offices in Lower Manhattan and is also upgrading the platform that hosts our three immigration hotlines. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to shape the model, means, and method of service delivery. Remote technologies, such as Zoom, Teams, and Slack, continue to be used to facilitate communications, external and internal. Individualized staff excel dashboards allows for monthly assessment of the number of individuals identified with relief options, the number of new cases opened, and the number of cases filed, which ensures effective outcome goal setting for targets, consistent oversight of outcome generation and staff accountability for representation and filing expectations. CCCS hosts an online volunteer platform that provides a one stop shop for pro bono attorney volunteers to review available cases, sign up for short-term and case placement volunteer opportunities, and access a wealth of training materials and practice templates. Our user-centered Pro Bono Project website and volunteer platform enables potential volunteers to learn about available opportunities and to access any support they need.

Other Services: Trainings

Our legal staff receive in-house, hands-on training on cases undertaken for representation from supervisors, and have access to substantive law and skills-based training opportunities through the NYIC, the American Immigration Lawyers’ Association, Immigration Advocates Network, and CLINIC. Our attorneys and paralegals are also active on various local and regional list serves and working groups. These staff meetings are supplemented with bi-monthly attorney and paralegal roundtables on new developments and case strategies. During this reporting period, CCCS trainings were primarily targeted at new practitioners. For example, CCCS developed a series of onboarding trainings for interns, paralegals and new attorneys. All trainings/sessions were virtual and recorded for future use for onboarding and continuing training for staff/volunteers/interns. The topics included were Introduction to Immigration Law and Ethics, Asylum Overview, Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, U and T Visas and VAWA, Brief Writing, Vicarious Trauma, Trauma Informed Services and Navigating the workplace as a woman and/or BIPOC identifying individual. In addition, during this reporting period CCCS ensured that training was targeted at all staff with a focus on cultural competency training. For example, during this reporting period CCCS contracted to offer a 3 sessions of a 2.5-hour training (virtual) on understanding gender for human services providers. Following upon last year’s intensive training series focused on racial justice, during the reporting period, our staff-led Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) committee continued its work with divisional leadership to ensure that diversity, equity, inclusion, and racial justice remain at the forefront of decision making and service delivery.
Pro Bono Volunteer Involvement

Our statewide ONA Liberty Defense Pro Bono Project engages firms and private bar attorneys to mitigate the lack of direct representation capacity throughout underserved immigrant communities in New York. Cases are identified through multiple intake streams, evaluated for appropriateness for pro bono placement, and are placed with law clinics and local pro bono attorneys interested in developing expertise in immigration law under CCCS’ mentorship and supervision. Our attorneys train these volunteers to prepare affirmative asylum applications for individuals afraid to return to their home countries; litigate asylum cases for mothers and children fleeing gang violence; help unaccompanied immigrant children obtain special immigrant juvenile status based on abuse, neglect or abandonment by their parents; empower survivors of violence to find safety, stability, and lawful immigration status through visas available to victims of crime, trafficking, and familial abuse; and assist immigrants to reunify with family members. While many volunteers join our Pro Bono Volunteer Advocate network with little immigration practice experience, our supervisory team ensures that each volunteer attorney feels confident and empowered to represent their immigrant clients.

CCCS engages with local bar associations, fellowship programs, law schools and many law firms to recruit pro bono attorneys, as well as with coalitions to develop in-person and web-based trainings to support pro bono attorneys on substantive issues. CCCS also boasts a robust volunteer cadre supporting our ICH/FGLOP programming at the three NYC Immigration Courts where volunteers are trained and supervised on gathering information from unrepresented immigrants for legal consultations as well as application assistance for asylum and other time sensitive submissions to the court for this vulnerable population. Particularly notable achievements over the course of the year include a return to in-person clinical services in June 2021 and February 2022 and the release from incarceration of detained clients, granting these immigrant New Yorkers with an opportunity to effectively partner with CCCS on their representation. In November, our Pro Bono Project held a “Mapping the Future Roundtable” with NYC law firms, including Cleary Gottlieb, Kirkland & Ellis, Paul Weiss, and Arnold & Porter, to discuss emergent immigrant community demands and potential partnering opportunities, including case placement gaps, for future collaboration.

104 Attorneys volunteered 6,600 hours

20 Law Students volunteered 400 hours

70 Other Volunteers volunteered 200 hours
Significant Collaborations

CCCS has a long-standing history of partnering with other legal service providers, community-based organizations and base building groups, local and state agencies, law schools and law firms, and other stakeholders to create partnerships, develop innovative programming, and improve gateways for immigrants seeking assistance and justice. Several of our significant partnerships include:

- **Haitian Response Initiative** – a collaboration with the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs and several Haitian immigrant serving community-based organizations with whom we are partnering to provide targeted immigration legal services to newly arrived Haitian New Yorkers as well as case management services and direct cash assistance.

- **ActionNYC** – ActionNYC offers free, safe immigration legal help in a network of trusted community-based organizations, public health facilities, public schools, and libraries. Our ActionNYC in Schools team provides legal services to foreign-born students in community schools.

- **CCCS** also operates the citywide ActionNYC Hotline, working closely with MOIA and a large network of ActionNYC legal services providers to coordinate appointment priorities, identify and respond to call trends and emerging issues, and organize phone banks.

- **Immigrant Children Advocates Relief Effort (ICARE)** – We continue to collaborate with The Door, KIND, The Legal Aid Society, Make the Road NY, and the Safe Passage Project at NY Law School in ICARE, a program funded by the NYC Council provide free legal services to immigrant youth facing deportation. We have also collaborated with ICARE partners on federal litigation to protect the rights of unaccompanied youth to seek SIJS.

- **Citywide Immigrant Legal Empowerment Collaborative (CILEC)** – CCCS serves on the steering committee of this consortium of organizations that provide representation in immigration and employment matters. Partners include: TakeRoot Justice, Catholic Migration Services, and Make the Road NY, as well as African Communities Together, Chinese Staff and Workers’ Association, Damayan Migrant Workers Association, Desis Rising Up and Moving, MinKwon Center for Community Action, National Mobilization Against Sweatshops, New Immigrant Community Empowerment, and the Workers’ Justice Project.

- **Bronx Immigration Partnership** – CCCS also serves on the steering committee this fast-growing coalition of Bronx-serving CBOs and legal service providers. We regularly participate in BIP legal clinics and join direct advocacy campaigns.
**Significant Collaborations**

- Lower Hudson Valley. Our coordinating attorney continues to build local collaboration on various projects to meet the needs of immigrant communities in the 7 counties we serve.

We also participate in several other local coalitions focusing on issues that affect immigrants, including Hudson Valley Immigrant Advocates, where we serve on the steering committee and develop the agenda for meetings; the NYIC Westchester Steering Committee; the Rockland Immigration Coalition; Proyecto Faro; the Orange County Safe Harbor Trafficking Task Force; the Newburgh Healthy Black and Latinx Coalition; and the Westchester Women’s Agenda.

**Sources of Funding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IOLA Grant</td>
<td>$230,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Funding</td>
<td>$2,966,328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City and County Funding</td>
<td>$4,178,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Funding</td>
<td>$5,064,707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$1,463,411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$13,902,546</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>