Overview of Achievements 2018-2019

The Survivors of Violence Immigration Initiative at Lutheran Social Services of New York’s Immigration Legal Program (“LSSNY-ILP”) provides immigration legal assistance to survivors of violence in the New York City metropolitan area, whether the violence occurred abroad or here in the United States. These survivors include individuals who have suffered politically and religiously motivated violence, victims of female genital mutilation (“FGM”) or forced marriage, survivors of domestic abuse, unaccompanied minors, and certain survivors of crime in the United States.

During the 2018-2019 grant year (FY 2019), LSSNY-ILP provided immigration legal services that benefitted more than 1560 individuals, including retained clients and their family members. Our office closed a total of 1206 cases, including consultations and brief legal assistance, representation in Immigration Court and Family Court, and applications for legal status and work authorization, among others. Over the course of the year, LSSNY-ILP obtained citizenship for 158 individuals, and lawful permanent residence for 49 individuals. A total of 5 Family Court Cases were closed, and minors obtained special findings in Family Court, allowing them to pursue lawful permanent residence.

In September 2018, two new Immigrant Justice Corps fellows joined LSSNY-ILP’s staff. The Immigrant Justice Corps awards two-year fellowships to recent law graduates who have a demonstrated commitment to providing legal services to indigent immigrants. The Fellows conducted intake throughout FY 2019. Each Fellow was required to take on 65 complex cases for representation and this increased LSSNY’s ability to serve clients and meet demand.

Immigrant Survivors of Violence are often isolated, even within their own communities. To reach out to them, in partnership with Mayor’s Office on Immigrant Affairs, LSSNY-ILP held presentations on immigration law at community-based organizations, schools and case management programs that reached 599 people. These presentations were specifically targeted at immigrant workers and making sure that they were aware of their rights. For many, the help received from LSSNY-ILP in gaining legal status represents the first step towards a safe and stable life in the United States.

Population Served: Low Income Immigrants and Refugees
Area Served: New York City Metropolitan Area

Total Funding: $767,719

Total IOLA Grant: $110,000

Staffing - Full Time Equivalents:
- Total Staff: 7.90
- Lawyers: 5.90
- Paralegals: 1.00
- Other: 1.00
LSSNY-ILP represented SF, a young man from the Gambia. He had been active in a youth peace movement as well as being an anti-Female Genital Mutilation and women’s rights activist. Because of his activism he was repeatedly arrested by the National Intelligence Agency (“NIA”) in the Gambia. He was deprived of food and water and suffered both physical and mental torture during his arrests. After several arrests his family worried that he would not survive if he were arrested again and he fled to the United States. SF had already applied for asylum on his own and after an interview at the asylum office he was referred to immigration court. SF came to LSSNY-ILP, and we worked with SF to gather evidence of his persecution. We also scheduled him for psychological and mental health assessments to support his case. We prepared SF to testify in court and recount what had happened to him in the Gambia. After over 2 years since he first submitted his asylum application, the New York Immigration Court granted SF asylum.

LSSNY-ILP represented a young boy from Venezuela, L age 17. He had come to the US with his mother, but she had left him in the custody of his aunt and had returned to Venezuela. He had very limited contact with her, and no contact at all with his father, who had abandoned the family after the birth. He was traumatized to be in the United States without his mother. His aunt brought L to LSSNY-ILP to see if anything could be done to gain him legal status in the United States. LSSNY-ILP filed guardianship and special findings motions in Brooklyn Family Court. The court awarded guardianship of the child to his aunt, allowing her to care for him in an official capacity, and made special findings motions for the child, allowing him to apply for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status. Because the child was from Venezuela and had entered the US with a visa, LSSNY-ILP was able to apply for a green card for him at the same time as the Special Immigrant Juvenile Status applications. As he was under 18 and an affirmative case, he was approved without an RFE, and received his green card.
Other Services...

Number of People Benefitted by Services Other Than Direct Legal Representation

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Community Legal Education</td>
<td>849 people</td>
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<td>Pro Se Assistance</td>
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**Other Legal Related Services: Overview**

LSSNY-ILP routinely provides extensive community legal education to immigrant communities throughout the five boroughs. During FY19 we partnered with the Mayor’s Office on Immigrant Affairs to present Know Your Rights presentations to various community organizations with a particular focus on the rights of immigrant workers. Though this grant we have reached over 300 people through March 2019. We expect to reach 800 people by the end of the grant period in July 2019. We additionally distribute a Know Your Rights pamphlet in English and Spanish created by our staff and our staff and community partners have disseminated several hundred copies of it.

**Other Legal Related Services: Example**

As part of our current grant for the rights of immigrant workers with the Mayor’s Office on Immigrant Affairs, as well as prior grant focused on immigration benefits in FY 19 LSSNY provided Know Your Rights (KYR) presentations, serving approximately 599 people. The presentations were targeted at low income immigrant workers and discuss what rights immigrant workers have under the law as well as KYRs discussing the rights of immigrants in general. These presentations were all held with community-based partners in the five boroughs, as well as at churches and other religious groups. Through these presentations, low income immigrant workers learn that they do have options if they are being exploited at work due to their immigration status and immigrants learn what immigration benefits they might be eligible for and how to apply.
Significant Collaborations

LSSNY-ILP works closely with many other providers and organizations, including two programs accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals—the Bellevue/NYU Program for Survivors of Torture (“PSOT”) and the Ansob Center for Refugees (“Ansob”). LSSNY-ILP attorneys supervise the work of the accredited representatives at both organizations through weekly supervision. We also partner with the New York Mennonite Immigration Program (NYMIP) where we supervise their paralegal in the provision of legal services for clients and help staff clinics for low income immigrants. We additionally staff a weekly clinic at Ansob, where we provide legal assistance on Ansob’s most complex cases.

LSSNY-ILP additionally had a partnership with Women for Afghan Women (WAW), a community-based nonprofit in Fresh Meadows, Queens which ended in July 2018. Through this partnership, we staffed a weekly naturalization clinic at their site and prepare citizenship applications on behalf of students and family members of students at WAW. The majority of the clients served at WAW have been Afghani and Pakistani women who are additionally enrolled in English and citizenship classes on site. The majority of these clients are now having their naturalization interviews scheduled, so LSSNY-ILP continues to have contact with the client although the partnership has now concluded after the end of the grant year.
Pro Bono Volunteer Involvement

LSSNY-ILP frequently works with pro bono attorneys, law students, and other volunteers in order to expand its capacity to accept cases. Volunteers assist clients at legal clinics, with complex applications, and in immigration court. Other volunteers serve as interpreters during client meetings, physician evaluations, and immigration interviews. Our office also works closely with volunteer physicians and psychiatrists throughout the city in order to obtain necessary evaluations of clients in support of their cases.

LSSNY-ILP works with local schools, including law schools, John Jay College and the Fieldstone School for Ethical Culture to place students in volunteer positions at ILP. Students learn about the practice of immigration law and have exposure to the immigration legal system. ILP is glad to host a variety of student volunteers.

During the past fiscal year, LSSNY-ILP has worked with a total of 30 volunteers. Of that number, 3 were attorneys who provided pro bono assistance. There were also 2 law student interns, and 25 other volunteers who provided translation, technical assistance, and social service support to clients. LSSNY-ILP is currently working with MoloLamken LLP who is representing a client in an appeal before the Second Circuit.

Pro Bono Statistics

Attorneys: 3 Volunteers 150 Hours
Law Students: 2 Volunteers 800 Hours
Other Volunteers: 25 Volunteers 200 Hours

Sources Of Funding

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<th>Source</th>
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