A recent episode of the Netflix series “Chef’s Table” tells the story of a Mexican woman fleeing a violent husband and crossing the border to a better and safer life. She started a barbacoa restaurant in the U.S., divorced her ex-husband, and remarried a U.S. citizen. To this day, she has not been able to be documented, although she has tried. She has not seen her daughter, who was left behind in Mexico, for 10 years. Her story is typical of many of the families who come to the U.S. seeking freedom from family violence, sexual assault, drug and gang violence, or corrupt governments. The recent conversation about immigrants ramps up fear that those crossing our borders are hardened criminals, coming here to wreak havoc on our law-abiding citizens. This Coalition Chronicles seeks to shed light on the immigrant experience, explore the laws that protect them, and dispel common myths that are generating fear about immigrants.

At End Domestic Abuse WI, we have been working to provide protection and services to immigrant victims of domestic and sexual violence for more than 15 years. Our RISE Law Center provides direct legal representation for around 700 victims each year. Our Immigration and Poverty Law Attorney provides advocates working at local programs with information and tools to assist victims. We are proud to be a part of the solution, though our work is far from over. We continue to work towards an equitable society in which every life is valued and recognized for their humanity. Thank you for reading this journal offering from End Domestic Abuse WI.
RISE Law Center: Victim-centered legal service to Wisconsin’s immigrant & refugee communities
Robin Dalton

Dominique\(^1\) was afraid to leave her home, family, friends and community. She was worried about how her daughter would fit in at a new school where she would probably be the only kid from Trinidad. She was also excited and happy to finally live with her new husband, whom she had dated for more than five years. During that time, he visited to celebrate holidays with Dominique’s family, went to church with her, and assumed the role of step-father to her daughter. On her last night at home, Dominique’s family had a huge celebration to send her off to her new life in the United States. When she arrived, Dominique anticipated that adjustment would be challenging, but her husband seemed different almost immediately. One night he raped her. She begged him to stop, which only seemed to make him more aggressive. Afterwards, her husband fell asleep, and Dominique found that she was bleeding from the assault. This was the first of many sexual assaults; Dominique’s husband raped her frequently, his sexual violence increasing in intensity until one day he raped her in front of her daughter.

After this assault, Dominique sought help from a doctor, who referred her to a shelter for victims of domestic abuse. Dominique and her daughter were accepted into the shelter, where an advocate assisted Dominique to obtain a restraining order. Dominique’s situation was complicated. She did not want to talk about the abuse. She worried about how she would be seen in her family and community if they knew what happened. She also felt stuck because her husband had not wanted Dominique to work or visit her family, and so he had never applied for her green card. He told her that if she did not return to him, he would divorce her and report her to immigration.

The advocate reached out to RISE for legal help on behalf of Dominique and her daughter. RISE attorneys were able to successfully represent Dominique both in family and immigration matters. RISE attorneys represented Dominique in her divorce, where she was granted temporary spousal maintenance until she could gain work authorization, and in her immigration petitions for work

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\(^1\) Client name and country of origin have been changed to protect confidentiality.
authorization and lawful permanent residency. With her legal concerns removed, Dominique was able to begin her healing journey from the trauma of abuse. Dominique and her daughter are currently thriving, with a base of support in their Wisconsin community.

In 2019, RISE Law Center celebrates fifteen years of providing culturally humble victim-centered legal service to Wisconsin’s immigrant and refugee communities. RISE was established in response to Wisconsin domestic abuse and sexual assault programs reporting the need for pro bono legal assistance to immigrant survivors in their communities. Founded and led by women of color, including immigrant and refugee attorneys, RISE staff is multilingual and continues to reflect the demographics of the clients served. Through End Abuse, and partnerships with WCASA and local agencies, RISE has provided direct legal services to thousands of immigrant survivors in family law, protection orders, immigration, and related legal matters. Starting with immigration, RISE filed Wisconsin’s first U Visa, going on to train domestic abuse and sexual assault advocates, law enforcement, and attorneys throughout Wisconsin on the U Visa process. RISE serves programs throughout the state and has served immigrant and/or refugee survivors from North and South America, Africa, Australia, Asia and Europe.

As Wisconsin’s immigrant population grows and diversifies each year, RISE provides training on new laws, rules, and policies that affect this population. Current US Census numbers show over 280,000 people in Wisconsin were born outside of the US, a number that the Department of Homeland Security estimates is undercounted by 10 percent. Increasingly frequent Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids have deepened anxiety among immigrant communities, which may prevent those who are currently in abusive homes from coming forward. More and more, RISE clients report that they are afraid to file legal protections, preferring to stay in the shadows until it feels safer to seek legal assistance. Although such fears are pervasive among immigrant survivors, RISE continues to work with programs to ensure that they have access to legal information about protections and legal representation where possible.

2 See census.gov/quickfacts/wi
Serving Immigrant Survivors in Rural Wisconsin

Araceli Wence

An immigrant is someone who leaves his or her country of origin to move to another country. The fact that we are immigrants doesn’t mean that we are all undocumented. Some reasons to migrate include safety, economics, school, and family. The majority of immigrants want to make a living and be safe without bothering anyone. Men, women, and children migrate to other countries with the desire to better themselves and their lives.

When we think about immigrants, one image that we may have is the undocumented, uneducated person looking for any type of job. This is a stereotype. Not all immigrants are alike. Some examples of immigrants in history who did not fit this stereotype include: Albert Einstein, Isabel Allende, Oscar de la Renta, and Mariano Rivera. There are many more.

Children often do not have the luxury of having their opinion considered when it comes to immigration. Entire families migrate, bringing underage children who have no say on leaving or staying. In most cases the male makes the decision, and the female and children go with it.

Culture is something immigrants carry wherever they go. At times this can create issues. Hispanic culture is a good example. Religion, traditions, machismo, and marianismo are a huge part of this culture. When Hispanics migrate, this is still part of their lives. At times, immigrants commit a crime without realizing it or without knowing the seriousness of the event. For some people hitting a child or telling their partner what to do and what not to do is part of their culture and is not considered abuse.

Some of the barriers that immigrants may encounter are related to language, documents, transportation, safety, and isolation. Immigrants leave behind not only their countries of origin, but also their families and their sense of identity. For most immigrants it is a painful sacrifice to live away from home, family, traditions, and all the things that really fulfill us. Most people wouldn’t choose to live away from their loved ones, missing them and the lives they shared. In many cases, immigrants never see their loved ones again. This is the agonizing reality of most immigrants, a truth that most Americans do not see.

Imagine you are an undocumented immigrant who is experiencing abuse. Would you reach out to an organization that, in your eyes, might have ties to the government? Would you trust sharing your personal information with someone you have never seen? Maybe our answer would be no, not ever, if we put ourselves in the shoes of the thousands of immigrant people who live in our counties. People who are experiencing abuse and living in a new country may need twice as much help as someone who is not an immigrant.

It was hard enough to have these disadvantages as immigrants in years past; currently the political climate and all the controversy surrounding immigration is making the lives of immigrant people worse. It seems that
people with power have given permission to others to behave in openly racist ways.

These are some of the reasons it may be difficult to convince clients that receiving services and reporting crime is safe. The fear of deportation is higher than ever. People are afraid to receive public benefits, as this had been linked to the government finding out where people live.

Advocating for immigrants in Walworth and Jefferson Counties has been very rewarding. The sense of helping people who feel there is no hope and being able to create a safe place for them makes a huge difference. On the other hand, adjusting to the reality that some counties have fewer resources than do others has been somewhat of a challenge and a reminder that we do the best we can with what we have.

Providing advocacy for immigrants is different than providing advocacy for non-immigrants. Especially in a rural area, the lack of public transportation is one of the main concerns. When immigrant clients have the need to attend court but they don’t have a driver’s license or a car, that is a big issue. I would bet that non-immigrant people would not choose to work under a fake name, to use someone else’s social security number, or to not have a valid driver’s license. People generally choose to do these things only when they feel they do not really have another choice.

Often our biggest challenge is to convince the client that our organization is a safe place and that we, as advocates, would not do anything to hurt them. Reporting a crime and attending court when you are an immigrant can be particularly intimidating. The fact that most immigrants do not know the laws in this country affects their

Arte Sana (art heals) is a national Latina-led nonprofit committed to ending sexual violence and other forms of gender-based aggressions and engaging marginalized communities as agents of change. Arte Sana’s 2019 Nuestras Voces National Bilingual Sexual Assault Conference on May 2 & 3, 2019 in Milwaukee, WI features several talleres/workshops put on by Wisconsin program staff, including those listed below.

- Estigmas de la violencia sexual: Ginna Isunza, YWCA Rock County & Araceli Wence, New Beginnings APFV
- Mejorando Servicios para Sobrevivientes de Violación Sexual viviendo en un Albergue: Alma Mann, Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- La Persona Que No Ves, Pero Esta Presente: Benoni Martinez, UMOS Latina Resource Center
- Healing and Building Community: Cultivating a Sense of Belonging in the Workplace: Mary Eldridge, University of Wisconsin-Madison & Katryn Duarte, RVAP
- La Perspectiva del Hombre & Creative Strategies to Work with Victims of DV and SA: Veronica Figueroa Velez, Lorena Guimaraens, & Fernando Cano Ospina, UNIDOS Against Domestic Violence
- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status and Asylum: Megan Sprecher, End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin & Hillary Richardson, National Immigrant Justice Center
judgment of what they can or cannot do. For example, many people do not know that a restraining order is not a criminal law issue unless it is violated.

We have to provide the resources so people can feel safe to report crimes and attend court if needed. We, the advocates, have the obligation to educate people, create rapport with them and build trust. This is our way to promote safety and prevent violence.

The reality is that some immigrants worry about authorities finding out that they don’t have documents. People are afraid that they will have to speak in court, and they do not speak the language. They worry that the community will find out they were victims of a crime and will gossip about it. Most people who are victims of crime would want to attend court hearings. Many immigrants, on the other hand, don’t want to miss work. They want to pay their bills and move on with their lives.

When people actually reach out for services and begin trusting the organization and the advocate, it is important to be sure the advocate is able not only to speak the language but also to be culturally sensitive. Those two things are not easy to find. When hiring, my suggestion is to state exactly what you are looking for in the job requirements: asking for a bilingual person might not be enough. Once you have the perfect fit for the job, it is important to honor the advocate’s holidays in order to retain them at the agency. Every culture has different holidays that must be honored.

Just like any minority, immigrants need advocates who understand their language and culture. At the end of the day, what matters is that the clients receive the services they need, and they are treated with respect and dignity.

Advocates know we don’t have an easy job. Our commitment and passion to serve the community are what keeps us going. We will continue working hard on every case that we have and with every client that we help. This is our way to make it better. This is our passion and motivation, so regardless of a person’s nationality, native language or color of their skin, we will continue helping the ones who need us.
Domestic violence victims seeking help from the court system through the restraining order and injunction process face many challenges. Victims whose first language is not English are confronted with even greater obstacles: maneuvering through a confusing maze of legal processes that may seem impersonal and cold; listening to people explain the steps to follow in English and legalese; and being forced to share personal and painful details about their lives to strangers who don’t speak their language, hoping that the facts and details are conveyed. For Limited English Proficient (LEP) victims, interpreters can serve as a victim’s lifeline by ensuring effective and meaningful communication.

Under Wisconsin law, the circuit courts must provide interpreters to a party, witness while testifying, a victim, parent or guardian of a minor or party, or a deaf juror in any type of court proceeding. In accordance with federal law such as Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 13166, recipients of federal funds are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of national origin, which generally encompasses English language proficiency. In addition, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires courts to provide reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities to allow them the opportunity to participate. Under the ADA, communication with applicants, participants, members of the public, and companions with disabilities must be as effective as communication with individuals who do not have disabilities.

The bottom line is that courts cannot treat non-English speakers differently from English-speakers. LEP victims trying to obtain a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) or injunction are entitled to a qualified interpreter at every stage of the process at no cost to them. Questions and answers about language access are found to the right and on the following page.

**Who can make the request for an interpreter?**

The person needing the interpreter, friend, family member, advocate, or attorney can make the request in the county where the petition is being filed.

**To whom should the request be made and when?**

Every courthouse in Wisconsin schedules interpreters differently. Some larger counties have designated staff responsible for coordinating language access services. DV survivors who need interpreting services should start with the clerk of court’s office. Court staff will inform the requester if they are able to schedule the interpreter or whether a different individual or department will need to be contacted.

It is helpful to inform the court as soon as possible for the interpreter need. While many courthouses have freelance or staff interpreters onsite who speak Spanish, for other languages, it may take time for the county to locate a qualified interpreter. If an advocate is working with a client who needs interpreting services, the advocate should notify the court of a specific time and date when the client will be coming into court to file the TRO petition, if known, so the court can make arrangements ahead of time.
How should the request for an interpreter be made?
Some counties require the use of a specific form such as the GF-149 Interpreter Request or GF-153 Accommodation Request, both of which can be found on the court’s public website at https://www.wicourts.gov/forms1/circuit/ccform.jsp?FormName=&FormNumber=&beg_date=&end_date=&StatuteCite=&Category=16. These forms should be submitted to the clerk of court before the LEP victim’s first encounter with the court. Most counties do not require that these specific forms be used; therefore, a phone call or email may suffice. Each county is required to have a Language Access Plan (LAP) on file, which is a document that outlines the procedures for requesting interpreting services in all types of situations. Many counties have their LAPs posted on their website so it will be helpful to locate it and follow the procedures accordingly.

How should we report problems?
If an interpreter was not provided by the court after a request was made, it is best to let the clerk of court, presiding judge or court commissioner, or District Court Administrator (DCA) know of the issue. Trained court interpreters are required to follow a Code of Ethics which is found in Wisconsin’s Supreme Court Rules (SCR) Chapter 63. Interpreters are not allowed to give legal advice or assist in any manner other than to provide interpretation in an unbiased manner. If a victim and/or advocate has concerns with the quality of the interpretation or conduct of the interpreter, the Director of State Courts through the Court Interpreter Program (CIP) has a procedure to file a complaint against a specific interpreter. This complaint procedure can be found at https://www.wicourts.gov/services/public/interpretercomplaint.htm. Finally, victims and/or advocates can always report irregularities or problems by contacting Carmel Capati, who manages the CIP. She can be reached at 608-266-8635 or at carmel.capati@wicourts.gov.

In order for LEP victims to obtain protection from the court system, they must be given an opportunity to do so from the start of their case to the finish. When courts provide vital interpreting services, they ensure due process by giving everyone a chance to tell their story in any language.

Juanita Davis, JD, of the National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL)

Older Immigrant Victims
This video (5 minutes, captioned) spotlights considerations to be aware of when assisting older immigrant victims. Video presenters: Juanita Davis (NCALL), Evelyn Laureano (Neighborhood Self Help by Older Persons Project, NY), and LaTrice Hogan (Consultant). Produced by NCALL and Terra Nova Films.

View the video at: Older Immigrant Victims Video. Additional videos available in NCALL’s video library.
Take Action to Support Immigrant Victims of Human Trafficking

UNIDOS Against Domestic Violence

Across the state of Wisconsin, victim services for immigrants are limited, even more so when it comes to services for victims of human trafficking. Lack of awareness of resources for survivors and lack of knowledge among the general public about the issue of trafficking leads to significant underreporting. To support survivors and make real change, we need to understand the complexity of the problem.

Immigrant and undocumented victims of labor or sexual trafficking face unique barriers that affect their ability to report abuse. When working with such victims, building trust is particularly important, and critical to ensure their safety and confidentiality. When working with interpreters, make sure they do not know the victim or the accused trafficker and that they speak the same language and dialect as the victim. Language may be the first and most critical barrier, but it is not the only one: social and cultural taboos may prevent victims from sharing information, which—like can be the case with sexual abuse—contributes to trafficking remaining an “invisible” issue. In addition, limited understanding and fear of the legal system stops many victims from attempting to shed light on their situation. Immigration policy changes that are inherently xenophobic and anti-immigrant are an immense deterrent and directly contribute to the underreporting of these crimes. People are hesitant to seek legal remedies or to contact law enforcement when the fear of deportation looms over them.

Helping undocumented immigrants can be complicated. It requires us to be in a place of cultural humility in which we recognize the inherent worth and validity of a survivor’s cultural values. Every survivor’s experience is different, and this becomes especially apparent when family members become involved. A family’s reaction to sexual abuse and coercion can be vastly different from culture to culture, and this is especially important to recognize when working with families of trafficked survivors.

We must acknowledge that a successful response to human trafficking requires collaboration among service providers. As the undocumented immigrant population continues to increase, increasing demand for culturally competent professionals is inevitable. In response to this growing issue, UNIDOS has partnered with Project Respect to provide support to survivors of human trafficking within the Latinx community. Through our programs, we can provide advocacy, support, language access, and connection to resources in the city of Madison. As part of our preventative work, UNIDOS also provides education and outreach to the general public concerning the subject of human trafficking via Spanish radio shows and presentations at local high schools. Take action against trafficking by learning more about the issue and educating others in your community. Join Project Respect and UNIDOS as we work to make the community a better place for survivors.
The Legal Services Corporation (LSC) has strict requirements for client eligibility beyond financial need. One source of confusion among advocates and those who work with a client base that overlaps with those served by LSC service providers is the citizenship or immigration status of the client, and whether that status prevents eligibility for services. Generally, clients must be citizens of the United States to be eligible for LSC services. That being said, there are exceptions to that rule that allow non-citizens to obtain services from an LSC-funded organization.

Some non-citizens are eligible for LSC-funded services on the basis of documented immigrant status. Specifically, being a lawful permanent resident allows for the same services citizens would be eligible for based on other eligibility requirements. An individual who is the spouse, parent, or unmarried child under 21 years of age who has also filed an application for adjustment of status to lawful permanent resident is also eligible for services if they are otherwise ineligible. Other types of documented non-citizens who may be eligible for LSC-funded services include asylum seekers, refugees, or temporary workers who have H-2A or H-2B visas.

The requirements for non-citizen eligibility are more confusing when the client is not able to meet the above criteria. Fortunately, status as an undocumented resident is not an automatic bar to receiving services from an LSC-funded organization. The federal regulations do allow for eligibility for non-citizens under the anti-abuse provisions. The requirements for services for individuals in these circumstances necessitate additional documentation that other eligible clients do not have to provide. The primary criterion for an undocumented individual to be eligible for LSC-funded services is related to the individual’s status as a victim of crime or abuse. Eligibility under these exceptions to the lawful residence or citizenship requirements can be achieved before an application for nonimmigrant status has been submitted or even if the individual does not plan to apply for nonimmigrant legal status.

There are five categories of individuals who fit in this area as outlined by the LSC: aliens subjected to battery, extreme cruelty, sexual assault or trafficking; victims of severe forms of trafficking; minor victims of severe forms of trafficking; certain family members of victims of severe forms of trafficking (“derivative T visa holders”); and aliens qualified for a U visa. Broadly, these categories mean LSC-funded organizations may represent someone regardless of immigration status if the individual is a victim of domestic violence or abuse if the individual seeking assistance—or their child—has been abused or subjected to extreme cruelty in the United States by a parent, spouse, or, if the parent or spouse acquiesced to the abuse, by a family member of the parent or spouse who lives in the same household.

1Restrictions on Legal Assistance to Aliens 45 C.F.R. § 1626.4
2The term “alien” is used in this article to mirror the language used by the LSC regulations.
If a client is in one of these categories and has not applied for nonimmigrant status or received other government documentation of the abuse, advocates are able to assist the individual in documenting the abuse in other ways to become eligible for LSC-funded assistance. An alien who falls into one of the five categories for LSC eligibility must be prepared to provide verification documentation. Acceptable documentation does not have to be from a government agency or include police reports. The LSC regulations allow an individual to document the abuse and their status as a victim of abuse in the form of an affidavit or unsworn written statement. This statement may be drafted by the individual or it can be a written summary of a statement or interview of the individual by another person. The person writing the summary statement can be a police officer, judge or other court official, medical personnel, school officials, clergy, social workers, or other social service agency personnel. An order for protection or evidence of legal steps to end the qualifying abuse is also acceptable. Evidence that the individual sought safe haven in a shelter from the qualifying abuse is also acceptable and can be a straightforward statement from a domestic abuse or sexual assault advocate.

In addition to a statement of the qualifying abuse, the legal assistance requested must be related to preventing further abuse or extreme cruelty or obtaining relief from the abuse. The legal assistance may be obviously related, such as assistance with a civil order for protection, or it may be assistance in a more permanent removal from the abuser, such as a divorce action or housing assistance. In Wisconsin, there are two LSC-funded organizations: Wisconsin Judicare, Inc. and Legal Action of Wisconsin.

**Wisconsin Judicare** provides services to the northern 33 counties of Wisconsin and the 11 federally recognized Indian tribes. **Legal Action** serves the southern 39 counties and farmworkers in all 72 counties. For information on the services offered by each organization or to apply for services, visit [www.judicare.org](http://www.judicare.org) or [www.legalaction.org](http://www.legalaction.org).
Interview with Grace Huang
Immigrant Rights: The National Landscape

This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Megan Sprecher (MLS): Thank you so much for taking the time to speak with me today! Our first question is, how has the landscape for immigrant survivors seeking humanitarian immigration relief changed over the past few years?

Grace Huang (GH): It has gotten exponentially more difficult for survivors who are seeking protections under our immigration laws. There have been multiple actions taken by the current administration that don’t necessarily target survivors of gender-based violence specifically, but have had a really negative impact on accessibility for survivors. These actions have created many more barriers to survivors seeking protections. This includes executive orders, court decisions, Attorney General decisions, including Matter of A-B-, Board of Immigration Appeals decisions and decisions by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services or by Immigration Customs and Enforcement in how they are interpreting particular policies.

In terms of interior enforcement, the administration has rescinded prior guidance related to prosecutorial discretion and has issued new guidance that there are no longer categories of people that are generally exempt from enforcement if they are here in violation of immigration laws. This undoes protections regarding where enforcement can happen and has led to highly publicized arrests at courthouses. All of this has a chilling effect.

Immigration officers are getting conflicting information about how to treat survivors. The first executive order on interior enforcement said that any deferred action or prosecutorial discretion guidance was

Grace Huang is the Policy Director at the Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence, and is responsible for coordinating the Institute’s legislative, administrative, and court policy advocacy. Prior to her position at API-GBV, Ms. Huang worked at the state level to advance the interests of survivors of gender based-violence in the Washington State legislature. She worked at the national level to address the needs of victims in the federal Violence Against Women Act and the Family Violence Services and Prevention Act, and to ensure that financial resources authorized in federal legislation are accessible to domestic violence programs providing services for immigrant survivors of domestic violence. Ms. Huang previously worked as an attorney, both in private practice and in civil legal services, representing immigrant survivors in immigration, family law, government benefits, and housing.

1“Prosecutorial discretion” is the authority of an agency or officer to decide what charges to bring and how to pursue each case. A law-enforcement officer who declines to pursue a case against a person has favorably exercised prosecutorial discretion.

2“Deferred action” is a discretionary decision by DHS not to pursue enforcement against a person for a specific period. Though an individual granted deferred action is considered by DHS to be lawfully present during the period deferred action is in effect, a grant of deferred action does not alter an individual’s existing immigration status or provide a path to citizenship.
rescinded. There is still an **ICE memo** that speaks to prosecutorial discretion for survivors who have criminal cases pending or who may be eligible for humanitarian relief. The current administration has said publicly that the ICE victim/witness memo wasn’t rescinded but the impact has been that effectively no one is exempt from enforcement because officers are getting mixed messages. There is so much disparity in how an individual officer will behave. This makes it really hard to advise people on whether they should reach out for help or relief.

We’ve done **survey** work of advocates across the country showing level of fear of victims reaching out for the very systems that we’ve worked on making more accessible (law enforcement, courts) to address the violence they’re facing. We will be redoing the survey shortly to see if things are the same, worse, or better.

The most recent **data** that has come out about DHS regarding the number of individuals seeking U Visas is that the number of people applying for U Visas has dropped, which echoes what we’re seeing about people being hesitant to reach out for help. This has all been cumulative. One thing builds on the next.

**MLS**: How can local programs most effectively advocate for immigrant survivors at the federal, state, and/or local level?

**GH**: Some of the national organizations that focus on this issue, like ASISTA, Tahirih Justice Center, API-GBV, and Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network are working on a project, the **Alliance for Immigrant Survivors**, to try to share updates on policy at the national level and information about what protections are out there. We plan to work on resources for issues that come up at the state level and are happening across many states. We have an **email list** that advocates are welcome to join.

Get connected to the local **immigrant rights organizations** for resources, practices, and networks they’ve established at the local level.

Keep up to date—there is a lot happening. The most important thing would be figuring out how to change the narrative around how survivors are impacted by all these changes in immigration policy. It’s really challenging for survivors to be willing to share their stories, but to the extent possible we need to talk about impact on real human lives. This could even be someone who went through the process many years ago. Try to figure out how to **collect stories** and share them. Engage survivors to the extent that they’re willing to engage themselves and participate in these processes. I think that’s the biggest way. I feel like our community—our larger society—has at least gotten to the stage that we do believe that DV/SA is wrong and we need to do something about it. We need to make sure that the stories of immigrant survivors are not left out of the discussion.
**MLS**: What do advocates need to know about U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services' change in practice on fee waivers? How does this impact survivors?

**GH**: USCIS has gotten much stricter about what kind of evidence they accept or how you can prove eligibility for a fee waiver. They keep saying they haven’t changed their policy, that they are just being stricter about how they want it documented. ASISTA has developed some great resources about how to document need for fee waivers, to the extent that people actually need fee waivers.

One challenge for survivors is they may not have access to some of the pieces of information USCIS regularly asks for. A way to approach that is talking to survivors individually and brainstorming how to gather documentation or replace it with a declaration. There is strategizing about how to get evidence when it isn’t easy to do while still considering an individual survivor’s safety.

**MLS**: Could you please explain a little about the deportation of Southeast Asians who came to the U.S. as refugees and the potential impact on Wisconsin’s Hmong community?

**GH**: There are large refugee communities in the U.S. that fled from countries like Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. Since the refugees arrived, a small percentage of them have received orders for deportation or removal over the years, sometimes a long time ago. The issue we are hearing about in the news is whether the country from which someone fled would accept someone back if they were ordered removed or deported, or if they continue to fear return due to past persecution. What’s happened in the past few years is that for Cambodia and Vietnam there are people who were ordered deported in the past (for something like a criminal conviction). Those particular countries didn’t have a process for individuals to be repatriated, and in some cases if an individual came to the U.S. as a refugee fleeing persecution there have been policies where the U.S. government would not deport them to a country from which they had fled. The current administration is being much more active in trying to remove refugees from Cambodia and Vietnam with removal orders and has ordered visa sanctions against Laos for not accepting deportees.

My advice would be that individuals in the Southeast Asian communities impacted who have a deportation order should seek individualized legal advice on their situation. There has already been a lot of organizing on cases in the Cambodian and Vietnamese refugee communities. Some people who have been ordered deported have had past criminal convictions vacated or pardoned so the person is no longer deportable.
There are multiple layers as to what the Hmong community in Wisconsin might want to pay attention to: where families came from, what is happening with repatriation agreements, the possibility of pardons/vacations of past convictions. There has been a lot of organizing to attack various stages that might make someone vulnerable to potential removal in the future: protesting detentions of individuals, preparing for possible detention and doing safety planning with family members regarding care of children, property, and communications, determining how to minimize likelihood of someone getting picked up, challenging when someone has already been removed and trying to bring them back. Learn from each other from organizing happening in other communities.

**MLS**: What projects or policy work are you engaging in currently that will positively impact immigrant survivors?

**GH**: Let me talk a little about Alliance for Immigrant Survivors. We pulled it together mostly for the DV/SA advocacy community and for people engaged in policy work who might not be immigration experts. We’re building out resources and encouraging people to take a look and give us feedback. We’ll be doing surveys to figure out what would be most helpful for the DV/SA advocacy community to be more engaged. In preparation for future work we’ll be developing some tools to collect some of the stories about why changes in policy are needed and how existing protections have been critical and lifesaving: how Violence Against Women Act self-petitions and U Visas have changed survivors’ lives. We’ll be working on doing story collections.

We’re excited about AIS and that it will provide resources to help people participate in a way that works for them. We encourage people to sign up for the e-newsletter. We’ll have some specific campaigns on immigration policy affecting survivors that people want to bring forward. We’ll be working on legislation that addresses some of the bigger problems in the U Visa system like access to work authorization and caps on numbers of visas issued per year. Right now, we are mostly focused on ensuring that things going forward aren’t negative or hurting survivors. We’re trying to bring all the resources there are together, so people don’t have to go to 5 or 10 different websites, and to make existing resources relevant to the DV/SA field.

**MLS**: Thank you so much, Grace! We really appreciate your time.

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**Hablame**

It’s difficult to put into words what the journey is like for a migrant trying to come to the U.S. It’s even more difficult trying to explain that to a child. A new music video collaboration between Chicano Batman and Caloncho, “Hablame” tells the story of one boy’s journey from the South to the North in hopes of finding his mother. Find the video at [https://hiplatina.com/chicano-batman-caloncho-music-video/](https://hiplatina.com/chicano-batman-caloncho-music-video/)

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Green Card Voices was launched in 2013, to share various stories of our nation’s 40 million immigrants and put a human face to the current immigration debate.

In the fall of 2018, Green Card Voices travelled to Wisconsin to record the stories of 30 immigrant high school students. These brave students’ stories will be featured in a new book, *Green Card Youth Voices: Immigration Stories from Madison & Milwaukee High Schools*. 

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The Black & Brown Womyn Power (BBWP) Coalition is offering training for advocates in Wisconsin. The mission of the BBWP Coalition is to build the capacities of Black and Brown advocates and communities to end violence against womyn, queer and trans folx, and young people. These trainings are funded by the Office of Crime Victim Service's VOCA Core Training Grant. Victim service providers are eligible to receive scholarships to attend! Visit the BBWP Coalition website for more information or to register for these and other trainings.

**Foundations to Gender-Based Violence: What Advocates Need to Know** (May 30-31, Madison) will provide an introduction into intimate partner violence advocacy work with emphasis in the Hmong community. It will present domestic violence from a gender-based analysis with patriarchy and power as the root causes, share lessons learned, and examine critical issues impacting the Hmong community.

**Sexual Assault Capacity Building for Hmong Programs** (August 7-9, Wisconsin Dells) will allow advocates to build a shared analysis of what sexual assault victim services look like within the Hmong community and how that affects their provision of services to Hmong victims.

Widen the Road: Removing Barriers to Driver License Eligibility

Most Undocumented Residents Have Lived in the U.S. for More than a Decade. 1 out of 10 undocumented immigrants in WI have lived in the U.S. for at least 20 years.

From: Widen the Road: Removing Barriers to Driver License Eligibility Will Improve Safety, Support Families, and Boost Businesses.

Voces de la Frontera: DRIVER’S LICENSES FOR ALL

In May 2005 the U.S. Congress passed the REAL ID Act, requiring all states to check immigration status before issuing a driver’s licenses or state ID, and to only issue driver’s licenses to persons who are US citizens or have legal status. The state of Wisconsin, in anticipation of the REAL ID Act, passed a state law in March 2006 entitled Act 126, which took effect on April 1, 2007. Under Act 126, undocumented immigrants and people who do not have a social security number can no longer obtain a driver’s license or state identification.

A lack of access to driver’s licenses is not limited to undocumented individuals, however. Low-income US citizens have also been affected by stringent laws that limit access to affordable driver’s education and penalize those who do not have the funds to pay their traffic and parking tickets. In 2016, 60% of license suspensions were due to unpaid fines rather than infractions related to unsafe driving. These harsh practices have disproportionately criminalized Black and Latinx drivers.

The information above is taken from Voces de la Frontera

Race Forward’s Drop the I-Word Campaign:
Why it matters now

Right now, immigrant families are facing a period of heightened persecution and crisis as President Trump continues to stoke the anti-immigrant sentiment that gained him popularity during the 2016 Election. We need to strongly reject efforts to criminalize immigrants.


In this 4 minute video (captioned) poet and organizer Sonia Guñansaca reflects on her many identities; shifting from being undocumented to documented, a migrant, a Queer/Femme women of color and artist.

Image taken from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p4cc4LkJFjg&t=19s
**SUPPORT END DOMESTIC ABUSE WISCONSIN TODAY!**

Please support our ongoing work to end violence.
Your gift will help further our mission to prevent and eliminate abuse.

To make a donation, visit: [http://www.endabusewi.org/](http://www.endabusewi.org/)

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### End Domestic Abuse WI Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Patti Seger, Executive Director</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Finance and Administration</strong></td>
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<td>Teresa Weinland Schmidt, Finance Director</td>
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<td>Sarah Carpenter, Associate Finance Director</td>
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<td>Molly Berenson, Senior Staff Accountant</td>
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<td>Patrick Christ, Technology Coordinator</td>
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<td>Julie Fisher, Development and Member Relations Coordinator</td>
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<td>Angie Trudell Vasquez, Operations Manager</td>
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<td><strong>Coalition Program Staff</strong></td>
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<td>Tony Wilkin Gibart, Associate Director</td>
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<td>Cyrus Behroozi, Justice Systems Program Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elise Buchbinder, Education &amp; Communications Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kathryn Chapman, Director of Education and Membership Services</td>
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<td>Colleen Cox, Education and Training Coordinator</td>
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<td>C.J. Doxtater, REACH Coordinator</td>
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<td>Danny Ho, Leadership and Advocacy Program Director</td>
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<td>Sara Krall, Homicide Prevention Program Director</td>
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<td>Simone Lewis Turner, D2K Youth Outreach Coordinator</td>
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<td>Stephanie Ortiz, Director of Prevention and Outreach</td>
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<td>Olivia Osborne, Homicide Prevention Coordinator</td>
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<td>Diara Parker, Director of Policy and Systems Change</td>
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<td>Adrienne Roach, Policy and Research Program Director</td>
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<td>Megan Sprecher, Immigration and Poverty Law Attorney</td>
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<td>Chase Tarrier, Public Policy Coordinator</td>
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<td>Cia Siab Vang, D2K Youth Outreach Coordinator</td>
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<td>Cody Warner, Children &amp; Youth Prevention and Outreach Coordinator</td>
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<td>Diane Wolff, Program Capacity and Support Coordinator</td>
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<td><strong>National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bonnie Brandl, Director of NCALL</td>
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<td>Juanita Davis, Associate Director of NCALL</td>
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<td>Katie Block, National Resource Center for Reaching Victims Project Coordinator</td>
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<td>Lisa Furr, Program Manager</td>
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<td>Ann Laatsch, Justice Systems Coordinator</td>
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<td>Sara Mayer, Communications Coordinator</td>
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<td>Nina Reynolds, Event Coordinator</td>
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<td>Ann Turner, Elder Victim Services &amp; Advocacy Coordinator</td>
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<td><strong>RISE Law Center</strong></td>
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<td>Gricel Santiago Rivera, Director of RISE</td>
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<td>Robin Dalton, Associate Director of RISE</td>
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<td>Lia Ocasio, Immigration and Family Law Attorney</td>
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<td>Hannah Rickey, Legal Assistant</td>
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<td>Mary Salutz, Immigration and Family Law Attorney</td>
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<td><strong>The Asha Project</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Antonia Vann, Asha Project Director and African American Services Training/TA Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crystal Ayad, Domestic Violence Victim Advocate</td>
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<td>Miss Betty Brown, Intake Specialist</td>
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<td>Tia Love, Domestic Violence Victim Advocate</td>
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<td>Rosalind McClain, Human Trafficking Project Coordinator</td>
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<td>Shawn Muhammed, Asha Project Associate Director</td>
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**End Domestic Abuse WI Board of Directors**

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