

NATIONAL IMMIGRANT JUSTICE CENTER

A HEARTLAND ALLIANCE PROGRAM

March 29, 2018

NIJC Case List

NIJC *pro bono* attorneys report that representing immigrants in need of protection is one of the most rewarding experiences of their careers. *Pro bono* attorneys fight for their clients' due process rights, help them navigate the complicated immigration system, and ensure that they are not deported to a country where they face persecution and torture.

There are currently 83 men, women, and children who need *pro bono* representation in their immigration cases:

- [Special Immigrant Juvenile Status Predicate Order Cases](#)
- [Detained Asylum Cases](#)
- [Unaccompanied Immigrant Children's Asylum Cases](#)
- [Asylum Claims Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity](#)
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- [Asylum Claims Based on Political Opinion or Opposition to Criminal Organizations](#)
- [VAWA Cases](#)
- [U Visa Cases](#)

To find NIJC's most urgent matters, please search and find for "urgent"

No matter what type of case interests you, the next steps to help an NIJC client are easy:

- 1) **Watch a webinar from a past training.**
- 2) **Choose an NIJC client to represent.**
- 3) **Utilize NIJC's extensive pro bono resources and in-house expertise** to prepare a strong case for your client.

A detailed explanation of the various types of *pro bono* cases available for representation can be found on NIJC's [website](#). For more information about **detained** cases, please contact Jesse Johnson at (312) 660-1681 or jejohnson@heartlandalliance.org. For more information about **LGBT** cases, please contact Veronica Portillo Heap at (312) 660-1306 or vportilloheap@heartlandalliance.org. For more information about all other **asylum** cases and **SIJS** cases, please contact Anna Sears at (312) 660-1307 or ansears@heartlandalliance.org. For more information about NIJC's **U Visa** or **VAWA** cases, please contact Sylvia Wolak at (312) 660-1318 or sywolak@heartlandalliance.org.

Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) Predicate Order Cases

SIJS is a form of immigration relief available to unmarried children who have suffered abuse, neglect, or abandonment by a parent or legal guardian. In order to apply for this relief, the child must first have a state court order asserting that they have suffered abuse, abandonment or neglect. In these matters, NIJC represents the child in her immigration case, and will attend all immigration court dates with the child. The pro bono attorney handles the state court matter only, representing the parent or guardian to obtain a custody or guardianship order with the special findings necessary for SIJS. NIJC will work closely with the pro bono attorney to ensure that the pleadings and orders in state court comply with the immigration requirements.

1. F. is a 17-year-old boy from Mexico who turns 18 in September of 2018. He speaks Spanish and lives with his older sister in DuPage County. (17-0117370)

F.'s father passed away approximately nine years ago. Prior to his death, F.'s father was an alcoholic and physically abused F., his mother and his siblings. He failed to find and keep a job and rarely provided any support for F., who was raised primarily by his mother. In June of 2017, F. came to the United States to live with his older sister after receiving threats in Mexico. He was apprehended and detained in the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, and eventually released to his sister's care in July 2017. A *pro bono* attorney will need to file a guardianship or non-parent custody case on behalf of F.'s sister, and obtain an order finding that F.'s reunification with his father is not viable due to his abuse, neglect and subsequent death, and that it is not in F.'s best interest to return to Mexico.

2. P. is a 16-year-old boy from Honduras who turns 18 in January 2019. He speaks Spanish and lives with his older sister in Cook County, Illinois. (17-0119104)

P. lived with his mother and father until he was seven years old and his mother passed away. P. then moved in with his maternal grandfather, where he was made to work in coffee fields and leave school at age 11. At age 13, P. moved out of his maternal grandfather's house and started working for boarding and food on different coffee farms. While P. saw his father occasionally, his father never provided any support for him. P. came to the United States with his younger sister in July 2017 to be reunited with his older sister after his family started receiving threats from gangs. He was apprehended and detained in the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, and eventually released to his sister's care in July 2017. P. has not yet been placed in removal proceedings. A *pro bono* attorney will need to file a non-parent custody case on behalf of P.'s older sister, and obtain an order finding that P.'s reunification with his father is not viable due to abandonment/neglect, and that it is not in P.'s best interest to return to Honduras. This order must be obtained well before P.'s 18th birthday in January 2019.

3. H. is an 11-year-old boy from Guatemala. He speaks Spanish and lives with his mother in DuPage County, Illinois. (16-0112442)

H. has never had a relationship with his father. When H. was three months old, his father moved to the United States, leaving H. and his mother in Guatemala. H's father began to drink heavily and would call H's mother drunk. After several months, H's father stopped calling altogether. Neither H. nor his mother has heard from his father since that time. H's mother came to the

United States when H. was 7 years old in order to work and support him. H. followed to join her in late 2016. He was apprehended at the border and detained in the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement before being released into his mother's care. A *pro bono* attorney will need to file a custody case on behalf of H.'s mother, and obtain an order finding that H.'s reunification with his father is not viable due to his abandonment, and that it would not be in H.'s best interest to return to Guatemala.

4. *D. is a 16-year-old girl from Guatemala who lives with her adult brother in DuPage County, Illinois. She and her brother speak Spanish. (17-0117773)*

D. grew up in a household with an abusive father. He regularly beat D., her mother, and her siblings, and spent his days in the streets, failing to provide support for D. To escape the abuse, D. eventually came to the United States to join her older brother, entering in October of 2016. D. was apprehended at the border and detained in the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement before being released into her brother's care. A *pro bono* attorney will need to file a guardianship case on behalf of D.'s older brother, and obtain an order finding that D.'s reunification with her father is not viable due to his abuse and neglect, and that it would not be in D.'s best interest to return to Guatemala.

Asylum Cases

Detained Asylum Cases

Because Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) detains immigrants at government expense, detained asylum cases are adjudicated more quickly than non-detained cases. The clients below should be scheduled for a merits hearing about six-eight weeks after their asylum application is filed. Although these individuals are often detained at county jails hours away from Chicago, pro bono attorneys will be able to conduct telephonic meetings with them in lieu of meeting in person. NIJC has successfully represented hundreds of men and women in detention and will help pro bono attorneys navigate the detention system and prepare strong cases.

5. *F. is a young man from Eritrea. F's Master Calendar hearing is on April 4, 2018. F. is detained at Jerome Combs Detention Center in Kankakee, IL, and speaks Tigrinya (18-0123034)*

In approximately 2015, the Eritrean government attempted to conscript F. into military service after he stopped attending school to care for his bedridden mother. F., who was just 15 years old at the time, refused to join the military. The Eritrean government then arrested his mother in retribution and F. turned himself in to the authorities in exchange for his mother's release. The authorities detained F. for several months, then transferred him to a military training facility for another three months. During this time, F. was frequently beaten and on one occasion, F.'s teeth were cracked. Several weeks after this beating, F. escaped and briefly returned to stay with friends before escaping to Sudan in April 2017 before beginning his journey to the United States. F.'s *pro bono* attorneys will need to submit a skeletal asylum application for F. at his next Master Calendar hearing. All affidavits and supporting materials to F.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his individual merits hearing, which will occur 6-8 weeks after his next hearing.

- 6. *G. is a young man from Eritrea. G.'s Master Calendar hearing is on April 4, 2018. G. is detained at Jerome Combs Detention Center in Kankakee, IL, and speaks Tigrinya (18-0123097)***

The Eritrean government attempted to conscript G. into military service at age 14. When G ignored letters ordering him to report for service, the Eritrean government discontinued the family's access to its food rationing system. To reinstate it, G. turned himself into the military and was jailed for about one month before he was transferred to a military training camp where he stayed for about nine months. During this time, Eritrean officials wanted G, to act as a spy and provide information on individuals who were planning to escape. G. never complied and officers tortured him each time someone escaped. G. finally escaped in the summer of 2016 and fled to Sudan where he stayed for about eight months before beginning his journey to the United States. G.'s *pro bono* attorneys will need to submit a skeletal asylum application for F. at his next Master Calendar hearing. All affidavits and supporting materials to G.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his merits hearing, which will occur 6-8 weeks after the Master Calendar hearing.

- 7. *A. and J. are brothers-in-law from Honduras. A.'s next Master Calendar hearing is on April 4, 2018. J.'s next Master Calendar hearing is on April 16, 2018. A. is detained at Pulaski County Detention Center in Ullin, IL, and speaks Spanish. J. is currently detained at Jerome Combs Detention Center in Kankakee, IL, and speaks Spanish (18-0123390)***

In May 2017, gang members killed A. and J.'s sister-in-law, B., for unknown reasons. A.'s wife witnessed B.'s murder. Immediately afterwards, the gang began to threaten the family and tell them that they needed to leave town. The family reported the threats to the Public Ministry, but were told that the Ministry could not assist since the family could not identify the suspects. After the family filed this report, the gang's threats increased. Men began watching the house and the family found a note threatening them for reporting the threats to the police. In August 2017, the whole family fled the country and presented themselves at the U.S. border to ask for asylum in December 2017. ICE paroled both A. and J.'s wives into the United States, along with their children, and they reside with family members, but would not release A. and J. NIJC is presently seeking to consolidate the two cases before the immigration court. A. and J.'s *pro bono* attorneys will need to file separate asylum applications for A. and J. at their respective upcoming Master Calendar hearings. If the cases are consolidated before the court, all affidavits and supporting materials to A. and J.'s case will be due 15 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which will likely occur 6-8 weeks after J.'s Master Calendar hearing.

Unaccompanied Immigrant Children

In recent years, thousands of children have fled horrific violence in their home countries to seek protection in the United States. Despite their ages and inability to speak English, these young asylum seekers do not have the right to appointed counsel.

- 9. *G. is a young man from El Salvador. Because he is an unaccompanied immigrant child, USCIS has initial jurisdiction over his asylum application. G. speaks Spanish and lives in a northwest suburb of Chicago. (17-0119214)***

G.'s parents came to the United States when he was very young and he was left in the care of his maternal grandmother. After the gang presence in his school increased, G.'s parents enrolled him in a private school and hired a private van to take him there each day, both of which they were able to afford because they lived and worked in the United States. In about October 2016, gang members hijacked the van and pulled G. out, but left other children in the van. They told him it was time he joined them and threatened him if he did not. Armed gang members continued to threaten him regularly for the rest of the month until one incident in which they forced G. to walk with them and said they had asked him to join too many times and he had to join now. G. fled to the United States in November 2016. After he fled, his family made a police report on his behalf to document the gang threats because they knew it would be too dangerous for G. to do so while he was still in El Salvador. Although G. was issued a Notice to Appear (NTA), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has not filed the NTA with the immigration court and so G. is not yet in removal proceedings. NIJC timely filed G.'s skeletal I-589 application for asylum with USCIS in December 2017. His affidavit and supporting documents will be due prior to his interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information. G.'s attorneys should plan to focus his claim on G.'s vulnerability as a child whose parents reside in the United States and are perceived as wealthy, as well as G.'s repeated opposition to the gang's demands.

10. V. is a young woman from Honduras. Because she is an unaccompanied immigrant child, USCIS has initial jurisdiction over her asylum application. V. speaks Spanish and lives in Milwaukee, WI. (17-0116133) *Urgent*

V.'s mother fled Honduras in 2014 after gang members threatened and extorted her at her business. When V.'s mother reported the threats and extortion attempts to the police, gang members found out and came to V.'s home the same day and threatened to kill them. V.'s mother left the country immediately to come to the United States, leaving V. in the care of her maternal grandmother. In 2016, a member of the same gang that threatened V.'s mother started pursuing V. When V. tried to refuse his advances, the gang member told her that if she did not become his girlfriend, he would kill her. Fearing for her safety, V. fled to the United States in March 2017. Although V. was issued a Notice to Appear (NTA), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has not filed the NTA with the immigration court and V. does not yet have a court date. NIJC timely filed V.'s skeletal I-589 application for asylum with USCIS in March 2018. V.'s affidavit and other supporting documents will be due one week prior to her interview at the asylum office, which will likely occur in mid-late April.

11. K. and L. are siblings from El Salvador. Because they are unaccompanied children, USCIS has initial jurisdiction over their asylum application. K. and L. speak Spanish and live in central Indiana. (17-0119846) (17-0119852) *Urgent*

K.'s father came to the United States to work when she was two years old. K.'s father subsequently got a new family and abandoned K. and her mother. L.'s father is in El Salvador and has not provided for L. In 2012, K. and L.'s mother came to the United States leaving K. and L. with a maternal aunt. Shortly after her mother left to the United States, members of the Mara

18 gang started sexually harassing K. and telling her to be with them. K. refused to be a gang girlfriend and the gang soon began threatening her and her entire family. During one incident, a gang member tried to molest her at knifepoint. Fearing for her life, K. fled to the United States with her very young brother L. in May 2013. Although K. and L. were issued a Notice to Appear (NTA), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has not filed the NTA with the immigration court. K. and L.'s one year filing deadline has passed and K. and L.'s *pro bono* attorneys will have to argue that K. and L. warrant an exception to the one year filing deadline because they entered as unaccompanied immigrant children and NIJC will assist them with that argument. NIJC will file K. and L.'s skeletal I-589 applications for asylum with USCIS in March/April 2018. K. and L.'s affidavits and supporting documents will be due one week prior to their interview, which will likely occur 1-2 months after their applications are filed.

12. M. is a young woman from Honduras. Because she is an unaccompanied child, USCIS has initial jurisdiction over her asylum application, even though she is in removal proceedings. M.'s next Master Calendar hearing is November 27, 2018. M. speaks Spanish and lives in Northcentral, Indiana. (15-0103726) *Urgent*

In 2014, M.'s mother fled Honduras and M. stayed in Honduras with her maternal aunt and grandmother. At school, one of M.'s classmates was trying to recruit her to join a gang. M. tried to distance herself, but the classmate continued to apply pressure and became angry. This classmate stabbed M. in the hand with scissors and then wrote her a threatening note. One day after school, the same classmate locked M. in a room for several hours. M. feared the classmate was calling other gang members to rape her. Eventually, M.'s grandmother came with the police and freed her, but the police did not follow up regarding the situation. M. was too afraid to continue her education after this, so she stopped going to school and then fled to the United States. NIJC recommends that M.'s skeletal asylum application be filed as soon as possible. Although M. is past her one-year filing deadline, she qualifies for an exception to the deadline, and NIJC will assist her *pro bono* attorneys in making that argument. Her affidavit and other supporting documents will be due two weeks prior to her interview at the asylum office, which will likely occur 1-2 months after the date of filing.

13. M. is a young girl from Guatemala. Because she is an unaccompanied immigrant child, USCIS has initial jurisdiction over her asylum application. M.'s next Master Calendar hearing is December 4, 2018. M. speaks Ixil and Spanish and lives in a western suburb of Chicago. (17-0117773) *Urgent*

From a young age, Ms' father abused her by kicking her and beating her with various objects, such as his belt and tree bark. Despite her neighbors' awareness of the abuse, no one stepped in to protect M. In 2017, M. escaped from her abusive father by fleeing to the United States. M. now lives in the care of her older brother J., who has confirmed their father's domestic violence. M. fears returning to Guatemala because she believes she will be subjected to more, and likely worse, abuse. M. believes her father is even capable of killing her. NIJC recommends that M.'s skeletal asylum application be filed as soon as possible. Although M. is past her one-year filing deadline, she qualifies for an exception to the deadline, and NIJC will assist her *pro bono* attorneys in making that argument. Her affidavit and other supporting documents will not be due until one week prior to her interview, which will likely occur 1-2 months after the date of filing.

Because M. is more comfortable communicating in Ixil, NIJC suggests that her *pro bono* attorneys secure an Ixil interpreter for this case.

14. G. and R. are young sisters from El Salvador. Because they are unaccompanied children, USCIS has initial jurisdiction over their asylum applications. G. and R. speak Spanish and live in Chicago, IL. (18-0122558) (18-0122560)

G. grew up in El Salvador with her younger, half-sister R. R.'s father physically abused G. and R.'s mother. When G. and R.'s mother came to the United States to flee R.'s father, G. and R. stayed with their maternal aunt who also physically and verbally abused them. While living with their aunt, R.'s father would often come by their house and verbally and physically abuse G. and R. R.'s father also sexually abused R. Around the same time, a Mara 18 gang member began trying to force G. to be his girlfriend. When she refused, he beat G. and then sent threatening messages to her. Fearing for their safety, G. and R. fled to the United States in October 2016. G. and R.'s one-year filing deadline for asylum has passed, but they are eligible for an exception to this deadline based on their status as unaccompanied children. Their attorneys should file their skeletal asylum application as soon as possible or at least before G. turns 18 in July 2018. G. and R.'s affidavits and supporting documents will be due one week prior to their interview, which will likely occur about 1-2 months after their application has been filed.

15. A. is a young man from Guatemala. Because he is an unaccompanied immigrant child, USCIS has initial jurisdiction over his asylum application even though he is in removal proceedings. A.'s Master Calendar hearing is on December 4, 2018. A. speaks Spanish and lives in a northwest suburb of Chicago. (17-0121636) *Urgent*

A.'s father was an alcoholic and regularly beat A. and his siblings. At 10 years old, A. began working in the capital of Guatemala selling goods to help support his family, leaving home for three to four months at a time. When A. was 13 years old, another vendor began beating and threatening A. The vendor often referenced A.'s indigenous ethnicity while targeting him. A. attempted to get help from police officers on multiple occasions, but because A. only spoke Mam, an indigenous language, he could not communicate with the officers. Fearing for his safety, A. fled to the United States in December 2015. A.'s one-year filing deadline for asylum has passed, but because A. is an unaccompanied immigrant child, he is eligible for an exception to this deadline. A.'s attorneys should file his skeletal asylum application as soon as possible. A.'s affidavits and supporting documents will be due one week prior to his interview, which will likely occur about 1-2 months after his application has been filed.

16. B. is a young man from Honduras. Because he is an unaccompanied immigrant child, USCIS has initial jurisdiction over his asylum application. B. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago, IL. (18-0122471)

B.'s father was an alcoholic and regularly beat his mother and his siblings. In October 2016, B.'s mother and older sister came to the US. Because B.'s mother did not have enough money to bring B. as well, B. was left with his father. While B. was living with his father, his father regularly got drunk and left B. alone at home, often not providing food for B. to eat every day. B.'s father would yell at B. and break and throw things when he was home. B. fled to the United

States in October 2017 and joined his family in Chicago. Although B. was issued a Notice to Appear (NTA), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has not filed the NTA with the immigration court and B. does not yet have a court date. USCIS must receive B.'s asylum application by October 29, 2018. B.'s affidavit and supporting documents will be due one week prior to his interview, which will likely occur about 1-2 months after his application is filed.

17. G. and J. are brothers from El Salvador. Their Master Calendar hearing is on May 25, 2018. G. and J. speak Spanish, and live in northern Illinois. (15-0101816)(15-0101817)

In El Salvador, G. and J. lived with their mother (a teacher), their father (a police officer), and their sisters. In 2009, two members of the Mara Salvatrucha (MS) gang murdered their older sister and the family believes she was killed because of their father's status as a police officer and because their father had reported the men to the police in the past. The police issued arrest warrants for the two gang members, who lived next door to G. and J.'s family, but the police did not capture them. Because of their sister's murder, their parents required G. and J. to spend most of their childhood confined to their home. Several years later, G. and J.'s mother received a letter from one of the gang members who killed their sister, demanding that she withdraw her police report and accusation against him or the gang would target their remaining children. Fearing for their children's lives, their parents sent G. and J. to the United States on tourist visas to stay with their uncle for protection. Upon entering the United States, however, immigration officials revoked their visas, determined them to be unaccompanied immigrant children, and transferred them to the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). G. and J. initially applied for asylum with the asylum office, but the asylum office declined to grant their applications, and referred their cases to the immigration court. At their next hearing, their attorneys will need to request a merits hearing and prepare supporting documentation to be filed prior to the merits hearing.

18. L. is a young man from Honduras. His merits hearing is on March 20, 2019. L. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago, IL (16-0107442).

In the 1990s, prior to L.'s birth, the Mara 18 gang forcibly recruited L.'s uncle after threatening to kill L.'s grandmother and mother if he disobeyed. In the early 2000s, L.'s uncle escaped from the gang and has lived in hiding ever since. However, his departure from the gang resulted in the gang threatening and surveilling other members of L.'s family. In the late 2000s, a criminal group affiliated with the Mara 18 began trying to forcibly recruit L.'s older brother and ultimately murdered him when he failed to comply with their demands. The family learned that the group had targeted L.'s older brother because the boys' uncle had left the Mara 18 gang without permission. In late 2009, the Mara 18 threatened that they would kill L.'s family if they did not leave town and L. and his family went into hiding. In 2013, they learned that leaders of the criminal group had been killed, making the family think they could return to their home safely. Soon after they did so, however, the Mara 18 began threatening them again and shot at their house. L.'s mother and sister fled to Spain, while his father fled to the United States, leaving L. living in relative hiding with other family members. In 2015, the family learned that the Mara 18 was planning to recruit L. because of his relationship to his deceased brother and his former gang member uncle. They immediately arranged for L. to flee to the United States, where he was designated an unaccompanied immigrant child. L. filed a timely application for asylum with the asylum office, but his case was referred to the immigration court. L. already has

substantial documentation in support of his claim. His attorneys will need to supplement and further develop that documentation and prepare his case for his immigration court merits hearing.

Asylum Claims Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

In most cases involving asylum based on sexual orientation or gender identity, NIJC has a significant amount of country conditions research already available. Pro bono attorneys will need to update and supplement this material, but the greater portion of time will be spent working with the client to establish and document the individual aspects of the client's claim.

***19. F. is a genderqueer individual from Mexico. She speaks Spanish and lives in a northern suburb of Chicago, IL. Her merits hearing is on November 16, 2018 (17-0119477)
*Urgent****

F. was assigned male at birth but, at different times, presents her gender in different ways, occasionally going by a feminine name, V. As a teenager, F. was bullied in her community due to her gender presentation. On several occasions, police officers extorted F. after seeing her holding hands with male partners. In 2016, F. was raped by two men on her way home from work because F. was perceived as gay by her attackers. Later that year, F. was recruited to work for a cartel and when she refused, the cartel threatened that she would be forced to work with them. Fearing for her life, F. fled to the United States where she presented herself at the southern border to seek asylum in December 2016. F. was taken into ICE custody and detained for several months before being released on bond to the Chicago suburbs. She has submitted her I-589 asylum application, but *pro bono* counsel will need to supplement the record with affidavits and supporting materials 15 days prior to her merits hearing.

20. T. is a gay man from Sri Lanka. He speaks English and lives in central IL. (17-0121929)

T. always acted effeminately when he was young, wanting to play with girls and his mother's jewelry, saris, and cosmetics. Such behavior earned him the reproach of his father, who wanted T. to be more athletic and masculine. In the seventh grade, T. was repeatedly sexually assaulted by his boarding school roommate and an older man. T. experienced bullying all throughout his schooling years, including at university, where the bullying also included a sexual assault. T. has also been mistreated on multiple occasions by the police, medical professionals, coworkers, and passers-by in Sri Lanka on account of his sexual orientation. Since 2015, T. has been open about his being gay, which has led to threats, mistreatment, and harm, including from his own family, and from radical religious groups. T. fled to the United States in August of 2017 on a student visa to study chemistry. USCIS must receive T.'s skeletal I-589 application for asylum before August 2, 2018. His affidavit and supporting documents will be due prior to his interview at the asylum office, which will likely occur 1-2 months after the filing date.

21. M. is a gay man from Kyrgyzstan. He speaks English and lives in Chicago, IL. (18-0122924)

M. realized that he was attracted to men as a young child but did not tell anyone. Though there were no open conversations about LGBT issues in Kyrgyzstan at the time, he was raised in Islam

where he was taught that same-sex attraction was sinful and learned of people who were murdered for being gay in his country. When he began dating men secretly on dating sites, he was very careful, as he was afraid of entrapment by the police. In 2009, M. tried to repress his sexual orientation by marrying a woman but the relationship ended a few years later in divorce. In 2017, M. began receiving anonymous phone calls that were virulently anti-LGBT, suggesting the caller had videos and photos of M., and threatening to “out” him as gay. The caller also threatened to kill M. At the same time, M. was asked to leave his position as a journalist because his employers had learned about his sexual orientation. Shortly afterwards, M. fled Kyrgyzstan and entered the United States on a visitor visa in January of 2018. USCIS must receive M.’s skeletal I-589 application for asylum before January 16, 2019. All affidavits and supporting materials to his case will be due one week prior to his interview at the asylum office, which will likely occur 1-2 months after the filing date.

22. *H. is a gay man from Tunisia. He speaks English and lives in Lafayette, Indiana (18-0123398)*

H. knew from a young age that he is attracted to men. Growing up H. was perceived as feminine by his peers and was consequently bullied and beaten regularly. H. knew that he had to keep his sexual orientation and same-sex relationships secret as it is illegal to be gay in Tunisia. In 2009, H. met what he thought was a man via a fake Facebook profile and tried to meet him in-person. When he arrived to the meeting place, the man attacked him, held a long knife to his throat, and tried sexually assaulting him. H. was able to escape this situation left him terrified. From September 2014 to August 2015, H. was a student in the United States. During his studies in the U.S., he became more confident in his identity as a gay man. A family death forced H. to return to Tunisia in August of 2015. Once he returned, H. believed he could help change Tunisia and make it a more LGBT-friendly place. Although he had to hide his sexual orientation from his family, H. still searched for romantic relationships in Tunisia. In 2016, H. met a man for the first time that attacked and sexually assaulted him. This man ended up being a police officer and threatened to take H. to jail. That same year H. co-founded an LGBT rights organization in Tunisia, which led to constant harassment by police. Since 2016, police imprisoned and severely tortured H. on three separate occasions. Fearing for his life, H. managed to enroll in a PhD program in the U.S. and fled Tunisia on December 11, 2017. He left the U.S. on January 11, 2018 for 13 days in order to conduct research for his dissertation in Jordan, and re-entered on his F1 visa on January 24, 2018 without issue. USCIS must receive H.’s skeletal I-589 application for asylum before January 28, 2019. All affidavits and supporting materials to H.’s case will be due one week prior to his interview at the asylum office, which will likely occur 1-2 months after the filing date.

23. *A. is a gay man from Jordan. He speaks English and lives near Chicago, Illinois. (17-0121627)*

Growing up in Jordan, A. hid his sexual orientation from his family and community, engaging only in secret relationships with men. He attempted suicide twice due to the psychological toll of living as a closeted gay man. In 2015, his uncle and his cousins began to suspect that A. is gay, and they began to threaten him with violence. A. fled to the United States in October 2016 and was granted an authorized stay as a visitor, which expired in October 2017. In November

2017, A. was diagnosed with HIV and his fear to return to Jordan was heightened, as the government may quarantine him or deny him medical treatment. A. is also afraid of the extreme social stigma against HIV positive individuals in Jordan and that his HIV positive status will make him more likely to be perceived as gay. A. fears that once his sexual orientation is confirmed to his family, he will be murdered in an honor killing. NIJC timely filed A.'s skeletal I-589 application for asylum in December 2017. His affidavit and supporting documents will be due prior to his interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

24. A. is a lesbian woman from Kyrgyzstan. She speaks English, Kyrgyz, Russian and Turkish. She lives in Chicago, IL. (17-0117735)

From a young age, A. was mistreated by her father as well as by peers at school because she did not present herself as traditionally feminine. At age 17, she visited the United States for an academic year through the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) Program; while here, she was in her first relationship with another young woman. After she returned to Kyrgyzstan at age 18, A.'s father learned of her sexual orientation and beat her. He also forced her to work with a conversion therapist who threw her into freezing water. After this incident, her father denied her medical care. A. saved money at various jobs until she was able to return to the United States on a J-1 Visa in May 2017. She fears further violence from her family or from other people in Kyrgyzstan, due to widespread anti-gay violence. NIJC timely filed her skeletal I-589 application for asylum in September 2017. Her affidavit and supporting materials will be due prior to her interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

25. W. is a gay man from Russia. He speaks English and lives in Wisconsin. (17-0118563)

W. began to feel different at 4 years old, when he preferred to play with dolls and girls, instead of playing sports with boys. He realized that he was gay at age 12, by searching for the term on the internet. At school, W. felt as though he could not tell anyone. He was constantly bullied, and W. ultimately switched schools, but the bullying continued to be severe in his new school. In August of 2014, W. tried to meet other gay people online, and arranged to meet with someone who said that he was 15. It turned out to be two men around 20 years old, searching for "pedophiles." The men attempted to rob W., and publicly berated him for being gay. The persistent homophobia in Russia has led to depression and suicidal thoughts for W., who fled to the United States in July 2017, entering on a J-1 visa, for an exchange program in Wisconsin. W. filed a timely, *pro se* I-589 application for asylum with USCIS in August 2017. All affidavits and supporting materials to W.'s case will be due one week prior to his interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

26. D. is a gay man from Macedonia. He speaks Macedonian and limited English and lives in Chicago, IL. (17-0114892)

When D. was 14 years old, his father caught him kissing a male friend. D.s' father called the boys derogatory terms, beat D., and forbid him from seeing his friend ever again. D. secretly continued his relationship with his friend and other students learned of it. D. was then beaten so badly at school that he passed out and woke up at the hospital. When D. was a young adult, he was having sex with a man at a park at night when they were discovered by police officers, who recorded their information from their identification documents. On another occasion, D. was beat up by strangers, called a "faggot" and thrown out of a night club where he was with several female friends. D. fled to the United States in May 2016 and NIJC timely filed his skeletal I-589 application prior to the one-year deadline. His affidavit and supporting materials will be due one week prior to his interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

27. L. is a transgender woman from India. She speaks English, Malayalam and Tamil. She lives in Chicago, IL. (17-0117735)

About 10 years ago, L. began her transition while in her early 30s. In the years following, L. was verbally abused and physically attacked in public on several occasions, including being sexually assaulted by a group of men. She also was the victim of domestic violence at the hands of a male partner. L. did not seek assistance from the police regarding these crimes because she knew that they would not protect her because she transgender. In about 2011, L. obtained a multiple-entry visa to Malaysia to try to find a safe place to live, but ultimately found that conditions there were also negative for transgender women. In May 2017, L. entered the United States on a P-3 artist visa to teach cultural Indian dance classes, and to seek refuge in the United States. NIJC timely filed her skeletal I-589 application for asylum in August 2017. Her affidavit and supporting materials will be due prior to her interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

28. R. is a gay man from Nigeria. His wife and their two children are derivatives on his application. They speak English and live in Indianapolis, IN. (16-0109695) (17-0115954) (17-0115956) (17-0115958)

R. grew up hiding his sexual orientation and struggled to come to terms with his attraction to men. In 2008, R. began a secret relationship with a man, O., which lasted nearly a decade. In 2010, R. married a woman, S., in order to hide his sexual orientation from his family and community. In April 2016, R. and O. were caught engaging in sexual activity by a neighbor, who cried out and gathered a mob. R. and O. escaped the area with the help of a friend. Once in safety, R. called his wife to inform her of the incident and confess that he was in a relationship with a man. Shortly after R. fled the area, S. was taken to the police and questioned about her husband's sexual activity, and she suffered a miscarriage shortly afterwards. R. fled Nigeria in May 2016, entering the United States on a tourist visa, because he was afraid that he would be imprisoned or killed if he stayed in Nigeria any longer. In August 2016, S. along with her and R.'s two children entered the United States on tourist visas. R. and S. have decided to continue their marriage for the sake of their children. R. was recently in therapy in the U.S. with S. at local church in an attempt to change his sexual orientation, as a result, S. is expecting a third

child. R. is still in the process of discovering who he is, and hopes to do so safely here in the United States. R.'s I-589 application was filed on December 1, 2016, and S. and their children were included as derivative applicants. R. and S.'s affidavits and other supporting documents will be due prior to their interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

Asylum Claims Based on Domestic and Gender Violence

Although many adjudicators previously believed that the case law regarding domestic violence and gender violence-based asylum claims was unclear, a 2014 Board of Immigration Appeals decision established that individuals who have escaped domestic and gender violence may be eligible for asylum in the United States. NIJC has been involved in federal litigation regarding gender-based asylum claims and attorneys who handle these cases will have access to a wealth of resources that will help them prepare strong cases for their clients.

29. T. is a woman from Nigeria. Her husband and three children will be derivatives on her asylum application, although her daughter J. has her own independent claim for asylum as well. T. and her family speaks English and live in Chicago, Illinois. (17-0120768), (17-0120756), (17-0120769), (17-0120770), (17-0120772)

Shortly after T. was born, members of her community circumcised her. T. nearly died from the procedure and her father began to oppose the tradition, though T.'s mother still strongly supported it. When T. became pregnant with her first daughter, J., her mother was upset that T. was expecting a girl. T.'s mother insisted that J. undergo circumcision, but T. and her family refused. When T.'s mother threatened to bring J. to their home village and circumcise her, T. and her family moved homes. T.'s mother and other relatives found their new home and tried to kidnap J., but T.'s brother managed to stop them. However, because T. and her family continued to get threatening calls from her mother, they determined they needed to flee to the United States. T. fears that if they return, her mother and family members will be able to find them and will forcibly circumcise her daughter. Her father also tells T. that her mother would harm the family upon return for refusing to comply with tradition. T. is eligible for asylum based on her prior circumcision, the likelihood that she will be physically harmed if she refuses to allow her daughter to be circumcised, and the psychological harm she will suffer if her daughter is forcibly circumcised. T.'s daughter J. is also independently eligible for asylum based on the possibility that she will be circumcised in Nigeria. USCIS must receive T. and J.'s skeletal asylum applications by July 19, 2018. Affidavits and other supporting documents will be due two weeks before their asylum interview, which will likely occur 1-2 months after the filing date.

30. S. and her husband M. are from Honduras. Both S. and M. independently qualify for asylum and will be included as derivatives on each other's application. M.'s first Master Calendar hearing is on July 12, 2018. S.'s first Master Calendar hearing is on November 29, 2018. S. and M. speak Spanish and live in Northcentral Indiana. (17-0117653) (17-0117654)

When S. was a teenager, a man abducted her and regularly raped her for a year and a half. She became pregnant and had one child in captivity and was pregnant with her second child when she was rescued. S. reported the abduction and rapes to the police but the man escaped and later returned and abducted her two children for four months. After recovering her children, S. lived with her aging parents, who indicated S. would inherit the majority of their land. Two of S.'s brothers were furious about the expected inheritance and threatened their father; telling him to give them the land. They physically attacked their father and S. was beaten as she tried to defend him. S.'s father died from the attack and the brothers began threatening S.'s about the inheritance. Later, S. met M. They began a romantic relationship and she moved her family into his house. S. soon became pregnant. M.'s ex-partner, began to threaten S. and sent men to beat S., causing her to have a miscarriage. During this same time, M. was working in the fields when he witnessed Mara 18 gang members murder a young woman. Although he tried to flee, the gang members identified him and a few days later found him, beat him, and threatened him with a gun, telling him he would die if he ever talked. M. and S., who was pregnant again, fled Honduras to escape the Mara 18, M.'s ex-partner, and S.'s brothers. Since fleeing Honduras, the man who was caring for S. and M.'s home has been attacked by the Mara 18 gang members who demanded information about S. and M. The man suffered gruesome wounds from the machete attack. NIJC timely filed M. and S.'s asylum applications. Their *pro bono* attorneys will need to consolidate their cases before the court. Their affidavits and supporting materials will need to be filed prior to their merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

31. R. is a woman from Guatemala. Her two children will be derivatives on her asylum application. Her next Master Calendar hearing is on February 20, 2019. R. speaks Spanish and lives in Southern Indiana. (17-0121318), (17-0121553), (17-0121552)

R. married her husband when she was around 14 years old. Shortly after their marriage, R.'s husband began abusing her. He and his mother insulted her, threatened her, and beat her. Her husband controlled her and tried to force her to miscarry. When R.'s husband went to the United States, his mother continued to physically abuse R. until R. moved out of the house. During this time, R.'s father-in-law attempted to rape her and R. learned that her son has serious heart problems. R.'s husband was deported back to Guatemala, where he continued to beat her, attempted to kill her, and tried to kidnap her daughter. When R. tried to escape his abuse, he threatened her life, and R.'s family and community did not support her in leaving her marriage. Fearing for her life, R. fled to the United States. The immigration court must receive her skeletal asylum application by August 10, 2018. All affidavits and supporting materials for R.'s case will be due prior to her merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

32. O. is a woman from Guatemala. Her son will be a derivative on her asylum application. Her next Master Calendar hearing is on November 28, 2018. O. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago, Illinois. (18-0122794), (18-0122902)

O.'s partner R. became abusive after she gave birth to their daughter. He would insult her, beat her, rape her, threaten to kill her, and forbid her from leaving the house. O. once reported R.'s abuse to the Guatemalan police, but R. threatened to kill O. and the children until she withdrew her report. After R. gave the police information about crimes committed by a criminal organization, the group began threatening R., O., and their children. The Guatemalan

government put the family in a witness protection program, but the group still tracked them down, shot their home, and murdered R.'s cousin while looking for R. Fearing the group and R.'s continued abuse, O. fled to the United States with her infant son. R. followed a few months after, but was deported to Guatemala. He continues to threaten O. from afar. NIJC filed O.'s asylum application with the immigration court. Her *pro bono* attorneys will need to argue O. merits an exception to the one-year filing, and will need to prepare affidavits and other supporting documents prior to her merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

33. B. is a young woman from Honduras. Her son, F., will be a derivative on her application. Their merits hearing is on May 21, 2020. B. and F. speak Spanish and live in a northern suburb of Chicago. (17-0115101), (17-0115391).

B. left her childhood home when she was about nine years old as a result of continued verbal and physical abuse from her stepfather. She worked sporadically for a few years before she met her partner, G. when she was about 14 years old. Soon after, she became pregnant and moved in with G. and his parents. After she moved in with him, G began to physically abuse her. After the birth of their child, G. and his parents became very controlling towards B., rarely allowing her to leave the home and never with her child. G.'s abuse of B. worsened, to the point where he would strike her face with his fists even when she was holding F. in her arms. In late 2015, the Mara 18 began extorting G. for money, and eventually killed him because of his refusal to pay. After G.'s death, B. took F. to live in a small apartment in a very poor neighborhood. The apartment was in Mara Salvatrucha (MS) territory, and MS members began appearing at B.'s home demanding money from her and ransacking the apartment when she was not there, believing that G. had left her a large sum of money after his death. Meanwhile, Mara 18 members also began sending messages to B., threatening to kill F. because he was the son of a man who had opposed them. Being targeted by two rival gangs made B. feel as though she was no longer safe in Honduras, so in 2016, she fled with F. to the United States. NIJC timely filed B.'s skeletal asylum application with the immigration court in May 2017. Her *pro bono* attorneys will have to prepare B.'s affidavit and other supporting documents before her merits hearing in 2020.

34. B. is a woman from Guatemala. Her merits hearing is on July 13, 2020. She speaks Spanish and lives in Northwest Indiana. (13-0082110)

Growing up, B. lived with her parents, her older half-brother F., and her younger brother. B.'s father regularly beat F., who was the child of B.'s mother and another man. When B. was five years old, her parents divorced and F. left their home. Several years later, F. began to appear outside of B.'s school and beat B. and her brother. Although B. and her brother told their mother about the abuse, B.'s mother refused to take any action against F. since he was her son. In time, F. began to appear at B.'s home and would beat B., her brother, and her mother, blaming them for their father's abuse. On one occasion in April 2013, F. invaded B.'s home and violently cut B. with a knife. He tried to stab members of the family, and threatened to kill them. B.'s mother called the police, but the police did not intervene. Fearing F.'s escalating violence and the lack of protection from the police, B. and her brother went into hiding until they were able to leave Guatemala for the United States. B.'s asylum application was timely filed with the immigration court in 2014. Her *pro bono* attorneys will have to prepare B.'s affidavit and other supporting documents before her merits hearing in 2020.

35. G. is a woman from Mexico. Her merits hearing is on March 16, 2021. G. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago, IL. (16-0109893)

G.'s ex-partner abused her and a criminal organization forced G. to pay a tax on her clothing store. When the organization's leader was arrested, the new leader doubled the tax and G. was unable to pay. The organization visited G.'s store three times. First, they told her the new rules. The second time they tried to rob her. The third time they threatened her life. They said they would kidnap or kill her if she did not pay the tax. The same organization murdered G.'s brother-in-law for not paying the tax and said the same would happen to G. if she did not pay. G. tried to report the extortion and threats to her mayor, but the mayor said he could not protect her. G. fled to the United States with three of her four children, who are all U.S. citizens. After she left, the organization went looking for G. and beat up her brother, causing her oldest child fled to the United States too. NIJC timely filed G.'s asylum application with the immigration court. Her attorneys will have to prepare G.'s affidavit and other supporting documents before her merits hearing in 2021. G. has a 2004 firearms conviction that will not bar her from asylum, but will need to be addressed for purposes of the judge's discretionary decision.

36. S. is a woman from Swaziland. Her daughter and son will be derivatives on her application. Their merits hearing is scheduled for June 16, 2021. S. speaks English and lives in Chicago, IL. (15-0099771), (15-0099890), (15-0099891)

S.'s husband began to abuse her in 2006, after he demanded that she live with his parents and she refused. S.'s husband and his parents insulted her, told her she had to do what they demanded because they paid a dowry for her, and her husband slapped her in the face multiple times. After this incident, S.'s husband began to abuse S. constantly and often called her a prostitute and accused her of sleeping with other men. He also sexually abused her frequently. S.'s husband also beat their daughter and said he was teaching her how to be a good wife. In 2012, S. decided to cancel her husband's access to her bank account because his reckless spending was leaving her with no money to support her family. When her husband found out what she had done, he attacked her with a machete in the street, but S. managed to escape after a passerby helped her. After this incident, S.'s husband took their children and placed them in the care of his parents. He forbid S. from having any access to them and told her he would kill her if she ever saw their kids again. S. tried filing for divorce, but the court magistrate told her that she should return to her husband and denied her request. In May 2015, S. picked her children up from school and fled with them to the United States. NIJC timely filed S.'s asylum application with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due prior to her merits hearing.

37. Y. is a woman from Honduras. Her daughter, Z. is a citizen of Honduras and Mexico. Their merits hearing is on July 8, 2021. Y. and Z. speak Spanish and live in Chicago, IL. (16-0111109), (16-0111478)

Y.'s ex-partner abused her for nearly a decade. He would regularly beat her, rape her, stalk her, and threaten her. Y. fled to the United States in 2012 to escape his abuse, but did not have an attorney and was deported. When she returned, her ex-partner continued to attack, rape, and threaten her. She called the police to report him, but they never responded. In 2014, Y. again fled to the United States, but was deported due to her prior removal order. Y. returned to

Honduras, where her ex-partner continued to harm her. The Mara 18 gang also started extorting her clothing business after she stopped her sister from dating a gang member. The gang demanded money, tried to recruit her, and threatened to kill her if she did not make the payments. Once, a gang member put a knife to her chest and cut her. Y. moved to another city, but the gang continued search for her. Y. contacted a smuggler who promised to help her escape to the United States, but once in Mexico, he turned her over to a cartel. The cartel held her for a year, sex trafficking her near the U.S. border until she became pregnant with a cartel leader's baby, her daughter Z. Shortly after Z.'s birth, Y. managed to escape, crossed the river into the United States, and asked for help. Z.'s father continued to send Y. threatening text messages, promising to kill Y., Z., and their family in Honduras. Because she has a prior removal order, Y. is currently only eligible for withholding of removal and relief under the Convention Against Torture. Her daughter, Z., is eligible for asylum, although their attorneys will need to argue that Z. merits asylum from both Honduras and Mexico. NIJC timely filed Y. and Z.'s asylum applications. Their attorneys will need to prepare affidavits and other supporting materials before their merits hearing in 2021.

38. H. is a young woman from Chad. She speaks French and lives in Chicago. (17-0118762)

In mid-2016, H. was on her way to university in N'Djamena when she was kidnapped in an attempted forced marriage. The man who ordered the kidnapping, L., was an older member of a powerful ethnic group who had been pursuing H. since she was approximately 14 years old. H. was forcibly taken to a home on the outskirts of the city where L. told her threatened to kill her if she ever disobeyed him. Later that night, H. learned that L. had ordered that she be circumcised in preparation for the marriage. H. escaped the house in the early hours of the morning, and fled to the home of her aunt. The next day her parents told her that L. had already been to their house looking for her and making threats about what would happen if they did not reveal H.'s location. H. remained in hiding until she obtained a visa to come to the United States. NIJC timely filed H.'s I-589 asylum application in December 2017. Affidavits and other supporting documents will be due two weeks prior to her interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

39. R. is a woman from Eritrea. She speaks Tigrinya and lives in Chicago, IL. (17-0115581)

In about 2006, R. was completing her required National Service duty when a man who was her superior in the military raped her and she became pregnant as a result. When her family learned she was pregnant, they forced her to marry her rapist. R. had FGM performed on her as a child and as a result, required significant surgery in order to be able to give birth. She had a second FGM performed on her after the birth of her first child. R.'s husband beat R. regularly. While she was pregnant with their second child, he beat R. until she required hospitalization. R.'s parents knew about the physical abuse but said she had a duty to stay with her husband. R. asked the police for help but they refused to get involved because they said it was a family problem. R. filed for divorce but as revenge, R.'s husband reported R. to the police for being a Pentecostal Christian, which is a banned religion in Eritrea. R. was arrested, imprisoned and tortured for several weeks for her involvement in the Pentecostal religion. R. was released only after promising to never practice Pentecostal Christianity again. R. fled Eritrea and arrived in the

United States on November 3, 2016. R. filed a timely, pro se asylum application with USCIS. Affidavits and supporting documents will be due two weeks prior to her interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

40. U. is a woman from Mongolia. She speaks Mongolian and lives in Chicago, IL. (17-0116073)

U. grew up in the Mongolian countryside and moved to the capital, Ulaanbaatar, to attend university in 2009. Shortly after she moved, she became romantically involved with her neighbor, E. The couple moved in together and U. soon became financially dependent upon E. About five months after the couple moved in together, E. began to abuse U. verbally and physically. He tried to control her behavior, demanded she do what he told her, and kicked and beat her. In 2013, when U.'s brother witnessed E. punching U. in the face, he was able to get the police to come to the house and arrest E., something that U. believes was only possible because her brother was a man. U. had attempted to seek help from the police on her own in the past, but had never been able to get protection. E. was detained for a few days, but then released. In 2014, U. told a coworker about the abuse and was urged to flee to the United States in order to escape the relationship. U. surreptitiously applied for a visa, which was granted, and entered the United States on May 20, 2016 without telling E. Later, U. called E. to tell him where she was after she heard that he had been threatening her friends and family trying to find her. When they spoke on the phone, E. threatened to harm her if she ever returned to Mongolia. NIJC timely filed U.'s skeletal asylum application in May 2017. Affidavits and other supporting documents will be due one week prior to her interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

Asylum Claims Based on Political Opinion or Opposition to Criminal Organizations

Political opinion-based asylum claims represent the stereotypical asylum case and are often more straight-forward than other types of asylum cases. Asylum claims based on opposition to cartel or gang violence may involve a political opinion-based claim, but are typically based on the protected ground "membership in a particular social group" as well. These claims offer an opportunity to navigate a nuanced and rapidly evolving area of asylum law. NIJC has successfully represented men, women, and children from Central America and Mexico who fear cartel and gang violence and has the resources to help pro bono attorneys prepare strong cases for these asylum seekers.

41. W. is a man from Togo. W. speaks French and lives in Chicago, IL. (18-0122239)

W.'s family is well known for supporting the Togolese political opposition. Many years ago, his cousin and brother fled Togo due to their opposition membership and the Togolese government forcibly disappeared another of his brothers. More recently, W.'s mother, a midwife, had begun providing first aid to opposition protesters who feared going to government hospitals. One day, when she was out of town, two young people from W.'s neighborhood came to the family home. Injured from an opposition protest, they begged W. for help. As W. was providing first aid, the

Togolese police broke down his door and beat W. and the protesters. W. managed to escape out the back door and hid at a friend's house. The next day, the police returned to the family home with W.'s photo, accusing him of supporting the opposition. When they could not find him, they arrested his cousin instead. Knowing he could not be safe in Togo, W. fled to the United States via Ghana. USCIS must receive W.'s skeletal asylum application by November 15, 2018. Affidavits and other supporting documents will be due two weeks before his asylum interview, which will likely be scheduled 1-2 months after the filing date.

42. N. is a man from Mauritania. He speaks Arabic and limited French and lives in central Illinois (18-0123195)

N. was a human rights activist in Mauritania, frequently organizing and participating in awareness campaigns and public marches in support of human rights reform in his country. One of the main issues that N. advocated around was the abolishment of forced labor and indentured servitude in his country. N. was arrested various times in connection with his activism, and on a few of those occasions he was beaten and injured. Members of his family and tribe began to grow angry with N. over his continued public criticism of the government and threatened to disown him. In 2017, N. discovered that one of his relatives, who was also a member of his tribe, was keeping an underage girl in his home as a slave. N. went with the girl's mother to report the situation to the police. When the accused relative's sons found out that N. had made the report, they beat him badly and called him a disgrace to the tribe. A few nights later, these men led an armed mob of N.'s tribesmen to N.'s home. N. was not home at the time, but they threatened his wife and young daughter and said that they would kill N. when they found him. Soon after, N. was contacted by his father, who formally disowned him from the protection of the tribe. Fearing for his life, N. fled to the United States. USCIS must receive N.'s skeletal asylum application by November 29, 2018. All affidavits and supporting materials must be submitted prior to his asylum interview, which will likely occur 1-2 months after the filing date.

43. C. is a man from Eritrea. He speaks Tigrinya and lives in Chicago. (18-0123046)

C. gained notoriety in Eritrea for playing for local soccer teams, and was eventually recruited to play for the Eritrean national team. In 2006, C. was drafted into the Eritrean national service and told that his assignment was to continue playing soccer for the local Asmara team, but that from then on he would give his entire salary to the military. C. openly criticized the Eritrean government at a meeting of national service members in 2015, and a few days later, he was arrested. C. remained in jail for approximately a year, where he was frequently interrogated and tortured. After being released, C. was invited to do an interview about his soccer career on Eritrean television, and during the interview he spoke out about the government's treatment of the national service members. The next day C. received a threatening call from a government official, saying that C. was using his platform and popularity to spread anti-government ideas. They told him that he had to report for interviews with the police every ten days. C.'s family bribed another government official to help smuggle him out of the country, and C. arrived in the United States in late 2017. USCIS must receive C.'s skeletal asylum application by October 06, 2018. All affidavits and supporting materials to C.'s case will be due prior to his interview at the asylum office, which will likely occur 1-2 months after the filing date. Two of C.'s brothers have been successfully represented by NIJC in the past in their asylum cases.

44. R. is a man from Eritrea. His master calendar hearing is on April 25, 2018. R. speaks Tigrinya and lives in Chicago, IL. (16-0109287)

As a teenager, R. was forcibly conscripted into the Eritrean National Service, a mandatory government service program required of all Eritreans. As part of his National Service, R. was sent to a labor camp to work for several years. One day, when he arrived late, he was accused of trying to desert the National Service and was detained and beaten over the course of several weeks. He was then required to continue his National Service work and eventually forced to work as a teacher. When R. asked permission for leave so that he could get married, the government refused to give permission. He left and got married anyway and did not return to his post. Government forces then arrested and detained him for about a month. During this time, they interrogated him, accused him of working against the government, and tortured him. He was released from prison, but sent back to his post as a teacher. Not long afterwards, R. fled to Kenya and then eventually made his way to the United States in December 2105 and requested asylum at the U.S. border. After passing a credible fear interview, R. was placed into removal proceedings to seek asylum. R. filed a timely, *pro se* asylum application. His *pro bono* attorneys will need to prepare his affidavit and other supporting documents prior to his merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

45. C. is a woman from El Salvador. C's next Master Calendar hearing is on May 9, 2018. C. speaks Spanish and lives near Kankakee, IL. (17-0113323)

The Mara 18 gang began to target C. and her family in 2016, after she began to run a small store out of a home in her neighborhood that had previously been occupied by one of her friends. This friend had fled to the United States after being repeatedly targeted by the same gang and she and her family are currently seeking asylum through NIJC. Shortly after C. opened her store, the Mara 18 began to extort her, referencing her connection to her friend. She could not pay the money and told the gang she would close the store, but they threatened to kill her children if she didn't find the money some way. Soon afterwards, one of the gang members came to her home, forced her to leave with him and then raped C. A short time later, police came into C.'s community and began targeting certain gang members, causing the gang to believe that C. had reported them. They began to threaten C.'s husband, claiming C. had reported them to the police, and began extorting them again. The same gang member also returned and raped C. again, telling her she belonged to him. A few months later, C. learned she was pregnant, but was not certain of the father. The gang member who raped her was in prison at this time, but his sister told her that the gang member wanted her to go to the prison so they could resume their relationship and that she had to have an abortion, or the gang would force her to abort the child. C. fled the country with her husband and several children, but they were deported back to El Salvador by Mexican immigration officials. Upon her return, the gang member's sister told her if she left again, they would force her to have an abortion and hurt her other children. C. then fled again, leaving her husband and children behind in hiding. NIJC has timely filed C's I-589 application for asylum with the immigration court. Her affidavit and other supporting documentation will be due before her merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

46. B. is a woman from Honduras. B.'s children, K., H., and M. are derivatives on her asylum application and are independently eligible for asylum. Their next Master Calendar hearing is on August 14, 2018. B. and her children speak Spanish and live in northern Indiana. (17-0118079), (17-0119075), (17-0120239) and (17-0120242).

B. entered a long-term relationship with R., the father of B.'s children, when she was about 18 years old. R. physically and verbally abused B. throughout their relationship. B. and R. moved to the United States around 2005 to earn money to support their growing family. During that time, B. entrusted family members in Honduras with the care of her daughters, K. and H., but these family members physically and sexually abused the girls while B. and R. were living in the United States. B. and R. returned to Honduras in 2009. However, R. continued to abuse B. and gamble away the little money they had, so B. evicted R. from the family home and opened a small store to support her family. A criminal organization loaned B. money for her business. When B. could not afford to pay the excessive interest rate on the loan, the criminal organization threatened to kill B. and her children. B. sold her business to avoid further harm. Meanwhile, B. entered a relationship with U., who raped, abused, threatened, and stalked B. and sexually assaulted B.'s oldest daughter, K. Fearing for her life and the wellbeing of her children, B. fled to the United States with her children in May 2016. Although B. and her children were ordered removed after missing a court hearing, NIJC successfully reopened their cases last year and have submitted their asylum applications to the court. B. may only qualify for withholding of removal since she was previously removed from the United States. The family's *pro bono* attorneys will need to argue that her children qualify to seek asylum. Counsel will also need to supplement their applications with affidavits, a brief, and supporting documents prior to their merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

47. G. is a man from Honduras. His next Master Calendar hearing is August 16, 2018. G. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago. (17-0119406)

G. was born in Mexico and brought to Honduras by his father at a very young age. After finishing high school, G. started working as a driver's assistant for a bus company that operated routes passing through the territories of two rival gangs, the Mara Salvatrucha (MS13) and the Mara 18 (M18). G. witnessed members of both gangs threatening and extorting the bus drivers. In late 2015, M18 members retaliated against the bus drivers for being late with their payments by opening fire into a crowd of passengers and drivers at a bus depot, murdering eight people, and G. witnessed this attack. G. became a driver for the company soon afterwards, and both gangs started extorting and threatening him as well. When G. was no longer able to make the payments, two M18 members came up to him on the street and threatened to kill him if he did not pay within four days. G. reported this incident to the police, but no investigation was made. Fearing for his life, G. fled to the United States. Upon crossing the border, G. was kidnapped and held captive by a group of individuals who demanded a ransom payment from G.'s uncle. G. escaped the home where he was being held and fled the rest of the way to the United States. NIJC timely filed G.'s asylum application. His *pro bono* attorneys will need to prepare all affidavits and supporting materials prior to his merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled. Although G. only has official ID documents from Honduras, his *pro bono* attorneys should be prepared to argue that either he does not have Mexican citizenship or that he could not be safely returned there either.

48. L. is a man from Guatemala. L.'s next Master Calendar hearing is on December 12, 2018. L. speaks Spanish and lives in Bloomington, IL. (14-0088061)

When L. was about 14 years old, the M-18 gang began to forcibly recruit him. They threatened to kill his family if he did not join them and beat him when he refused to comply with their demands. For several years, the M-18 gang waited for him outside of his school and, on occasion, beat him so severely he fell unconscious. L. repeatedly told the gang he would not join them, but they continued to threaten and assault him. In August 2013, a gang member saw N. on the street and tried to hit him. His companion told him to stop, but the next day, the gang member went to N.'s home, flashed his gun, and told N. to leave by morning or he would kill him. L. left Guatemala immediately and entered the United States on about August 5, 2013. He was apprehended by immigration officers and released from custody after he passed a credible fear interview. NIJC timely filed L.'s asylum application. All affidavits and supporting materials to L.'s case will be due 15 days prior to his merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

49. W. and Y. are a husband and wife from Honduras. Both W. and Y. independently filed for asylum and were included as derivatives on each other's applications along with their son, T. Their cases are consolidated in court and their merits hearing is on January 22, 2019. W., Y., and T. speak Spanish and live in Northcentral Indiana. (17-0113479) (17-0113480) (17-0113481)

W. and Y. owned a small business in Honduras in an area controlled by the Mara 18 gang. About a year after opening the business, Mara 18 gang members began extorting W. and Y. For a time, W. and Y. paid the gang to avoid trouble. Soon the gang members demanded more money and W. and Y. refused to pay. Because they would not pay, the gang members beat W. on two occasions and threatened him at gunpoint. The gang threatened to hurt Y. and to kidnap their son, T. if they didn't pay. W. and Y. feared retaliation if they went to the police, but about two weeks later, they reported the beatings to the police and to the Office of Human Rights. A day after filing the police report, a gang member contacted W. and said he knew that W. had reported to the police and that W. would regret it. That same day, W. and Y. took T. out of school and fled to the United States. W. and Y.'s asylum applications were timely filed with the immigration court. Their *pro bono* attorneys will need to prepare affidavits and other supporting documents prior to their merits hearing in 2019.

50. O. and T. are a father and daughter from Honduras. Their merits hearing is on December 16, 2019. They speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois. (17-0113595), (17-0113596)

One night, O. witnessed the Mara 18 gang murder his neighbor. When the police arrived, O. described the assailants to the police and sent the police in the assailant's direction. As a result, the police arrested one of the Mara 18 members. Shortly after, O. began receiving frequent phone threats from the gang. The gang asked what O. had seen and reported, and they threatened to kill him for having worked with the police. When the gang started threatening to kill O.'s daughter T., they fled Honduras. O. passed a Reasonable Fear Interview and is eligible for withholding of removal, while T. is eligible for asylum. NIJC timely filed O. and T.'s asylum

applications. Their *pro bono* attorneys will need to prepare affidavits and other supporting documents prior to their merits hearing.

51. G. is a man from El Salvador. His merits hearing is on April 22, 2020. G. speaks Spanish and lives in a northern suburb of Chicago. (17-0114097)

G. lived in a neighborhood controlled by the Mara 18 gang. Because of this, members of the Mara Salvatrucha (MS) gang, including G.'s cousin, frequently threatened him, and the police regularly beat him and accused him of being a gang member. G. fled to the United States, but his smugglers kidnapped him and other migrants, holding them hostage for several weeks and mistreating them. After the group crossed into the United States, immigration arrested them and asked G. to testify against one of the smugglers. G. testified and the smuggler was convicted. Because the smugglers have connections to G.'s hometown, G. fears they would harm him because he testified against them. G. also fears that the Mara 18 will view him as a traitor for fleeing their territory and that the police and MS will continue to target him due to his prior connection to the Mara 18. NIJC filed G.'s I-589 application for asylum with the immigration court. His *pro bono* attorneys will need to argue G. merits an exception to the one-year filing deadline but G. understands he may only receive withholding of removal. All affidavits and supporting materials to G.'s case will be due prior to his merits hearing.

52. S. and her husband K. are from El Salvador. They are both independently eligible for asylum. Their daughter, R., will be a derivative on both S. and K.'s applications. S. and R.'s merits hearing is on October 6, 2020. The family speaks Spanish and lives in Northcentral Indiana. (17-0114070), (17-0113291), (17-0113292)

S.'s husband, K., sold candy from a truck in El Salvador. Gang members robbed K. multiple times, and he reported the robberies to local authorities. After being robbed at gunpoint around December 2014, K. reported the incident, even though the gang members told him they would kill him and his family if he did so. Soon after K. spoke with the prosecutor's office, gang members repeatedly threatened him, saying that they knew he had reported them and they would kill him and his family for doing so. K. fled El Salvador in May 2015 and entered the United States without inspection or contact with immigration officials. Afterward, S. received a phone call from the gang, telling her that if K. wanted S. and their daughter R. to remain alive, he had to pay the gang \$1000 per month. Fearing for her life, S. stopped leaving the house and waited until she had enough money to flee El Salvador with her daughter. S. and R. were apprehended by immigration upon entering the United States. NIJC filed S.'s skeletal asylum application with the immigration court. The family's *pro bono* attorneys will need to prepare affidavits and other supporting documents prior to their merits hearing. Because K. is not in removal proceedings, NIJC filed his skeletal asylum application with USCIS. The family's *pro bono* attorneys will need to argue that K. merits an exception to the one-year filing deadline. Affidavits and other supporting documents will be due shortly before his interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

53. R. is a woman from Guatemala. Her son, T., will be a derivative on her application and is independently eligible for asylum. Their merits hearing is on June 7, 2021. R. and T. speak

Kanjobal and T. also speaks Spanish. They live in Champaign, IL. A family member has been interpreting in Kanjobal for them, but their pro bono attorneys should expect to pay an interpreter for some case preparation. NIJC can assist with securing an interpreter. (16-0111803), (16-0111805)

R.'s husband (T.'s father) hit T. as he was growing up and regularly raped R. When T. was older, the Mara Salvatrucha (MS) started recruiting and threatening T. When he refused to join them, they kidnapped him and kept him for a month. They demanded R. pay a ransom for his release and when they let T. go, they told him the next time he would join or die. Soon after, they told T. he had one week to join the gang. Around the same time, R.'s husband began seeing another woman and threatened to harm R. and T. if they didn't leave the country. Fearing for their lives, R. and T. fled to the United States. NIJC timely filed R. and T.'s I-589 applications for asylum with the immigration court. Their *pro bono* attorneys will need to prepare affidavits and other supporting documents prior to their merits hearing.

54. P. is a man from Togo. His merits hearing is on June 21, 2021. P.'s wife, L., is not in immigration court proceedings and is independently eligible for asylum. P. and L. speak French and live in Chicago, IL. (17-0115018) and (17-0115921).

P. and L. married in 2012. In 2015, L.'s father, who was active in opposition politics, was arrested, detained, tortured, and killed by the Togolese government. P. was close to L.'s father, and after his death, P. and L. received anonymous threatening messages even though P. was a businessman and was not involved in politics. In late 2015, P. and his wife visited the United States to attend his brother's wedding. While in the United States, he received a call from an employee telling him that the Togolese military had come to P.'s office looking for him and had arrested his secretary. P.'s employee said that they were looking for P. because they received reports that he had been responsible for organizing a student-led protest against the government at the local university. The military said they would not release the secretary until they had P. in custody. L. remained in the United States while P. flew to Ghana and then crossed into Togo on foot in order to help secure the release of his secretary. When he arrived in Togo, his neighbor told him that the military had arrested all of his remaining employees and ransacked his house looking for him. P. stayed with his neighbor for several days, but the neighbor was too afraid of the military to keep him and told him he had to leave. P. fled Togo and returned to the United States before the military could find him. P. arrived in the United States for the second time on February 26, 2016. When P. arrived at the airport, he expressed a fear of return, was detained. After passing a credible fear interview, he was placed in removal proceedings to seek asylum. P. timely filed his asylum application. NIJC filed L.'s asylum application with USCIS, but it was not filed before the one-year deadline had passed. Their *pro bono* attorneys will need to prepare P.'s affidavit, brief, and other supporting documents prior to his merits hearing and L.'s affidavit and cover letter prior to her asylum interview. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information. If L. is referred to the immigration court prior to P.'s merits hearing, then their cases can be consolidated before the court.

55. L. is a man from Mexico. His next merits hearing is August 8, 2021. L. lives in Chicago, IL and speaks Spanish. (17-0116219)

L. first entered the United States in around 1995, returned to Mexico, and then came back to the United States in about 1999. In about 2013, while L. was in the United States, the Zetas cartel began to extort and threaten L.'s sister, who owned a shop in Veracruz. When she closed her shop because she could not pay, they murdered her husband. Soon after, L.'s son Y. was deported from the United States and after he arrived back in Mexico, the Zetas began to extort and threaten him. When Y. did not pay, they murdered him. After Y.'s murder, the cartel also threatened L.'s sister and daughter, promising to kill them if they reported them to the police. In late 2016, L. returned to Mexico to visit his dying mother and the Zetas quickly learned he was there. They began asking and threatening his daughter about him; L. believes they wanted to extort him since he had been in the United States and also believed he might want revenge for their murder of Y. In early 2017, shortly after his mother's funeral, his sister saw one of the Zetas' cars near their house and told L. to flee. After he escaped, the Zetas asked his sister about his location. L. immediately fled to the United States, entering on January 22, 2017. Soon after L. fled Mexico, the Zetas found L.'s brother in the street, demanded to know L.'s location, and beat him when he did not know. L.'s has several DUI convictions from the early 2000s, but none since then. These convictions will not bar L.'s asylum eligibility. NIJC timely filed L.'s I-589 application for asylum with the immigration court. L.'s affidavit and other supporting documents will be due prior to his merits hearing in 2021.

56. B. and T. are a husband and wife from Mexico. Their children, A. and E., are derivatives on their applications. Their merits hearing is on October 26, 2021. B. and T. speak Spanish and live in Chicago, IL. (17-0115637), (17-0115363), (17-0115635), (17-0115638)

B. was friends with a municipal police officer, G., who became corrupt. When B. and T.'s son A. was in junior high, G. found A. in school and threatened to harm him if he did not sell drugs for a cartel. A. began staying home from school, but soon after, B. and T. received threatening calls insisting that A. sell drugs. G. and several other officers showed up and B.'s business, demanding A.'s participation. B. begged G. to negotiate with his commander and the officers left, taking several kilos of silver from B.'s silver shop as a bribe. The threatening calls continued, referencing the family's whereabouts, threatening A.'s life, and demanding money for his safety. The officers again found B. at the family's home and demanded a large sum of money. One officer hit B. when he said he could not pay. B. begged G. for time to sell his car and get them the money and G. agreed, but threatened to kill B. and his family if they did not get the payment. B. sold his car and used the money to flee with his family. Soon after they left, B.'s cousin was murdered and T.'s brother's house was burglarized. NIJC timely filed B. and T.'s I-589 applications for asylum. Their *pro bono* attorneys will need to prepare affidavits and other supporting documents prior to their merits hearing in 2021.

57. M. is a man from Honduras. His merits hearing is scheduled for January 10, 2022. M. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago, IL. (17-0113244)

In 2013, M. lived with his uncle and grandmother in Honduras. That year, the 18th Street gang began to extort his uncle, a mechanic shop owner. A week after M.'s uncle was unable to meet the gang's demands, he was murdered and his body was left on the street near their home. Fearing for their lives, M.'s grandmother fled to the United States and M. relocated to another

district in Honduras, hours away. Almost a year after his uncle's murder, gang members violently attacked a second uncle of M. because of his relationship to the first uncle (his brother) who had been killed. Then, in January 2016, the gang left a note at M.'s door, giving him an ultimatum: leave Honduras in three days or be killed. He fled the country the next day, traveling first to Mexico, where he stayed until he could save enough money to travel to the United States. NIJC timely filed his asylum application. His affidavit and other supporting documents will be due prior to his merits hearing.

58. P. is a man from Iran. P. speaks Farsi and lives in Champaign, IL. His merits hearing is scheduled for March 1, 2022. (17-0119063)

P. is a Christian convert and was involved with the Green (opposition) Movement in Iran. After the 2009 election, the Revolutionary Guard arrested, detained, and beat P. because he was attending a Green Movement march to protest the election results. P. was later released on bail, but told that he could be arrested again at any point for his actions. Some years later, P. connected with a Christian friend of his mother and began to covertly explore Christianity, which eventually led to his baptism in a secret ceremony. In February 2016, P. learned that the Revolutionary Guard had arrested a Christian friend, confiscated P.'s laptop, which had information materials about Christianity on it, and raised his home. Fearful for his life, P. fled Iran and arrived in the United States on September 24, 2016. P. filed a timely, *pro se* I-589 asylum application with the immigration court. His affidavit and other supporting documents will be due prior to his merits hearing.

59. B. is a woman from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. B. lives in Chicago and speaks French. (17-0119090)

B.'s father was active with the UNC, a Congolese opposition party. In 2012, B.'s extended family reported her father's political activity to the Congolese government. Shortly after, several masked men attempted to break into B.'s house. The men kidnapped two of B.'s family's guards before hearing gunshots and fleeing. On another occasion, B. was in the car with her father when they were shot at. Later, men grabbed B. on her way home and tried to rape her, telling her she would die because of her father's anti-government activity. B.'s parents sent her to study in the United States, hoping the situation would improve after the election. However, in 2014, B.'s father was arrested and detained for two weeks. In 2015, the president announced plans to extend his term and mass opposition protests began. The Congolese government came to B.'s family home, murdered a guard, and kidnapped her parents. B.'s uncle tried to locate them, but the Congolese government came after him and he fled the country. B.'s parents remain missing. Realizing her life was in danger, B. filed a *pro se* asylum application in 2015. B.'s affidavit and all supporting documents to her case will be due one week prior to her interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

60. Q. is a woman from Ethiopia. She speaks Amharic and limited English and lives in Chicago. (17-0121873)

Growing up, Q. faced many difficulties because her father was from a marginalized tribe in Ethiopia. In addition, members of Q.'s father's tribe pressured her mother to allow Q. to undergo female genital mutilation. Q.'s mother eventually sent her away to boarding school to protect her. As an adult, Q. worked for the UN and became involved in women's rights groups. Q. supported the anti-regime Semayawi party in the 2015 elections in Ethiopia, distributing flyers on their behalf and attending party meetings. In 2017, Q. attended a community meeting on her mother's behalf and spoke out against the government's harsh treatment of opposition groups and unarmed protestors. A few days later, Q. was arrested and taken to a jail for political prisoners. She was accused of being involved with anti-government groups and badly beaten. Q.'s mother bribed a guard to have her released, and soon after Q. fled to the United States. Q. filed a timely, *pro se* asylum application with USCIS in 2017. Affidavits and supporting materials for Q.'s case will be due prior to her interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

61. R. is a woman from Mongolia. She speaks Mongolian and lives in Chicago, IL. (16-0109397)

R. worked as an accountant for a mining company and frequently visited mining sites. During these visits, R. saw that mining companies, which had close ties to the Mongolian government, were not complying with environmental protection regulations. A reporter interviewed R. about what she saw and the clip aired on television. Soon after, R. began receiving death threats via phone. R. went to the police, but the police accused her of lying, detained her overnight, and hit her. Shortly after, a group of men attacked R., beat her, and discussed killing her before bystanders intervened and R. was hospitalized. A few days later, a mob kidnapped and badly beat R.'s brother, telling him it was punishment for not keeping his sister quiet. The situation made R.'s boyfriend's family resent R., and they began threatening R., while R.'s boyfriend became physically and verbally abusive. R.'s boyfriend ended the relationship under pressure from his family, but R. still feared harm from him, his family, and her attackers. R. fled Mongolia and arrived in the United States on March 18, 2015. R. filed a timely, *pro se* I-589 asylum application with USCIS in March 2016. All affidavits and supporting documentation to R.'s case will be due one week prior to her interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

62. P. and her daughter, L., are from Honduras. They are both independently eligible for asylum. P.'s daughter, L., is also a derivative on P.'s application. They speak Spanish and live in Northcentral Indiana. (17-0116572) (17-0116578)

The Mara 18 gang killed P.'s cousin in Honduras and because P. and her daughter were with P.'s cousin when he was killed, the gang immediately targeted P. and her daughter afterwards. They ransacked P.'s home and left a note saying that she and her daughter would be next if they said anything about what they had seen. P. and L. went into hiding and fled the country about one month after the murder. Although P. and L. were each issued a Notice to Appear (NTA), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has not filed the NTA with the immigration court, so they are not yet in removal proceedings. Unless and until DHS files the NTA with the court,

USCIS has jurisdiction over their asylum applications. NIJC timely filed P. and L.'s skeletal asylum applications with USCIS in May 2017. Their *pro bono* attorneys will need to prepare affidavits and other supporting documents prior to their interview at the asylum office or merits hearing at the immigration court. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

63. B. is a man from Eritrea. He speaks Tigrinya and lives in Chicago. (17-0121411)

B. was drafted into the Eritrean army in 2000 and wounded shortly thereafter when he was sent to the front lines of the war with Ethiopia. After receiving medical treatment for his wounds, B. did not return to the military for duty, and was subsequently arrested for desertion. He spent approximately six months in prison where he was frequently tortured. B. was released only when guards believed he was about to die from his wounds. B.'s family took him for treatment and he was allowed to convalesce in his home. A few years later, B. was forced back into military service when the officers in his community deemed that he had recovered from all his previous wounds. During this time, B. became very involved in Pentecostal bible study, which was banned by the Eritrean military. At a community meeting where government officials were present, B. spoke out in favor of religious freedom. He was arrested soon after and taken to prison where he was beaten and accused of participating in anti-government religious movements. B.'s family bribed a prison official to secure his release, and then helped B. flee to the United States. B. timely filed a *pro se* application for asylum in 2017. All affidavits and supporting documentation to B.'s case will be due one week prior to his interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

64. C. is a woman from Eritrea. She speaks Tigrinya and lives in Indianapolis, IN. (17-0115610)

In the 1990s, Eritrean authorities killed C.'s husband because of his anti-government political opinions. Around that same time, police officers raided C.'s home and accused C. of working for anti-government organizations. Around 2003, C.'s son became a Pentecostal Christian, which is a banned religion in Eritrea, and he was arrested several times as a result. In about 2006, after C.'s son was released from prison, he fled to Ethiopia. The Eritrean government then went to C.'s house to look for him and arrested and was imprisoned and tortured for several weeks. C. was released but was then arrested and imprisoned several years later for her involvement in a farmer's union and her anti-government speeches. C. was released from prison only after she promised that she would recruit for the ruling party. C. filed a timely, *pro se* I-589 application for asylum with USCIS in April 2016. All affidavits and supporting materials in his case will be due one week prior to her interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

65. M. is a man from Ethiopia. He speaks Amharic and lives in Chicago, IL. (17-0120326)

M. first became involved in politics while attending university in Ethiopia. He attended meetings in support of the pro-democracy Kinijit movement and encouraged others to attend as well. In 2005, he participated in an anti-government protest, where soldiers beat and arrested him before placing him in detention for approximately two months. In 2013, the Ethiopian government arrested over 100 leaders of the opposition Semayawi party, and M. decided to increase his political activities in response. He formally joined the Semayawi party a few years later and began speaking publically against the ruling party. He was arrested, interrogated, and tortured two more times after that, and was only released after his family bribed officials at the prison. M. fled to the United States in 2016, meanwhile the Ethiopian police continued to issue warrants for his arrest. M. filed a timely, *pro se* I-589 application for asylum with USCIS in December 2016. All affidavits and supporting materials in his case will be due one week prior to his interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

66. P. is a man from Eritrea. He speaks Tigrinya and lives in Chicago. (17-0120879)

P. was born to an Eritrean family in Ethiopia during the Eritrean war for independence from Ethiopia. When Eritrea officially split from Ethiopia in 1991 when P. was a teenager, the Ethiopian government rounded up and forcibly expelled P., his family, and many other Eritreans across the border into Eritrea. P. was ordered to report to a military camp after finishing high school, but he did not do so because he opposed the ongoing war with Ethiopia. As a result, two years later, he was arrested and taken to a prison where he was tortured for about nine months. Instead of being released from jail, P. was taken directly to a military camp for training. In the military, P. experienced prejudice and abuse by his superiors because of his childhood in Ethiopia. When the officers called a meeting with soldiers to discuss suggestions for improvements, P. spoke out about the poor conditions and the fact that the military was refusing to release soldiers from expired military contracts. After the meeting, P. was arrested and taken to a military prison close to the border with Sudan where he was tortured again. With the help of a guard and another prisoner, P. escaped the prison and crossed into Sudan and eventually South Sudan. P. remained in South Sudan for several years without permanent status. In 2015, P.'s family later bribed a government official to smuggle him back into Eritrea to that he could visit his sick mother. Through bribes, this same official helped P. exit and reenter Eritrea two others times to assist family members, before ultimately helping him escape Eritrea and come to the United States. P. filed a timely, *pro se* application for asylum in 2016. All affidavits and supporting materials in his case will be due one week prior to his interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

67. M. is a man from Chad. He speaks French and lives in Chicago. (17-0118552)

In 2016, members of M.'s ethnic group organized a peaceful protest against the government after men from the president's ethnic group gang raped a young girl from M.'s ethnic group. M. did not participate in this protest, but afterwards, the police arrested him as part of campaign to target members of his community after the event. They interrogated him about his connection to the organizers of the protest, and tortured him when he denied involvement. M. was imprisoned for

approximately three weeks, and was released on the condition that he spy on members of his community. M. had to report on his efforts to gather information to a local official and the police repeatedly threatened to imprison him again if he did not comply. M. applied for a tourist visa and entered the United States on October 22, 2016. NIJC timely filed his I-589 asylum application with USCIS in October 2017. All affidavits and supporting materials in his case will be due one week prior to his interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

68. N. is a man from Ethiopia. N. speaks Amharic and lives in Chicago, IL. (17-0120439)

N. served as president of his high school's student union in Ethiopia. He often met with students from other schools to discuss the government's human rights abuses. During a meeting with government officials in early 2017, N. spoke out against the illegal arrests and killings of anti-government protestors. Later that day, police officers arrived at N.'s home and arrested him. N. was detained for approximately one month in a detention center for political prisoners, during which time he was beaten and tortured almost daily. Eventually, N.'s father bribed a government official to allow N.'s conditional release. Upon release, officials threatened to arrest N. and his family if he spoke out against the government again. N. fled to the United States about one month later. When N. did not return to the jail for a check-in the following month, police officers arrested N.'s father. N. filed a timely, *pro se* asylum application with USCIS in September 2017. All affidavits and supporting materials in his case will be due one week prior to his interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

69. T. is a man from Ethiopia. He speaks Amharic and lives in Chicago. (18-0122467)

T. grew up in the Oromo tribe and regularly experienced prejudice because of his tribal identity. While working as a flight attendant for Ethiopian National Airlines, T. got to know other Oromo workers who were organizing and blogging in support of the opposition Semayawi party. In 2015, T. was arrested and briefly jailed after participating in an anti-government protest. After his release, T. continued supporting the Semayawi party more discreetly, by attending party meetings and meeting with Ethiopian expatriate supporters of the party when he traveled abroad as part of his job. In 2016, T. had a conversation with a group of his coworkers in which he expressed his anger at the Ethiopian government's treatment of the Oromo people. One of T.'s coworkers informed the government about what T. had said, and T. was arrested the next day and taken to a jail for political prisoners. T. was imprisoned for approximately six months, during which time he was frequently tortured and berated because of his Oromo identity. After a family member bribed an official to secure T.'s release from prison, T. applied for a tourist visa and fled to the United States. T. filed a timely, *pro se* asylum application in July 2017. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due prior to his asylum interview. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

70. D. is a man from Chad. He speaks French and lives in Northeast Indiana. (17-0113702)

Upon graduating from high school in Chad, D. began working for an NGO that advocated for human rights. While working at the NGO, he participated in several protests and spoke with student groups about corruption in the Chadian government. During these protests, the police used violence to disperse protestors. After D. participated in several protests, he received threatening text messages telling him to stop opposing the government or he would pay. Others members of the NGO also received threats. Although he was afraid, D. continued to protest and hoped things would calm down so he could stay in Chad to advocate for human rights. During a large protest in N'Djamena, men kidnapped and detained D. for several weeks. During this time they tortured him and told him that his actions were illegal and if he did not stop they would kill him or his family. The men also threatened to find him if he told anyone that he was kidnapped and tortured. D. went into hiding in rural Chad and then fled to the United States. NIJC timely filed his skeletal asylum application in August 2017. All affidavits and supporting materials in his case will be due one week prior to his interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

71. P. is a woman from Togo. P. speaks Ewe and lives in Chicago, IL. (17-0118466)

P. worked at a market selling clothes. One day, the Togolese government arrested and beat P. and other market sellers, accusing them of supporting an opposition party. This experience motivated P. to join the UFC and later the ANC, both political opposition parties. One day, a fire broke out at the market where P. sold clothes. The Togolese government, blaming the ANC for the fire, arrested P. outside her home and detained her. For several weeks, government soldiers beat, raped, and tortured P. while accusing her of having burned down the market. Later, while P. was in a hospital recovering from her injuries, government soldiers brought a summons to her home. P. escaped to Benin, but government continued to search for her, once beating her husband when P. was not at home. When P. heard reports that the Togolese government was arresting opposition members in Benin, she fled to the United States. NIJC timely filed P.'s asylum application with USCIS in September 2017. All affidavits and supporting materials in her case will be due one week prior to her interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

72. S. is a young man from Ethiopia. S. speaks Amharic and lives in Chicago, IL. (17-0120778)

While visiting the United States in 2016, S. learned of the Ethiopian government's record of human rights abuses. S. returned to Ethiopia and helped organize students at his school to protest against the government. In August 2016, S. marched with several thousand other citizens in a demonstration that ended when government forces began shooting at the crowd. Later that day, police officers came to S.'s home looking for S. Police officers beat S.'s father and killed S.'s brother before arresting S. Police tortured S. throughout the month he spent in jail. Eventually, S.'s father bribed a government official for S.'s release. After S.'s release, police frequently followed and interrogated him. When S. learned that police were arresting students like him for a second time, S. fled to the United States. A few days later, police officers came to

S.'s house looking for him and, when they discovered he was not there, arrested S.'s father. S. filed a timely, *pro se* asylum application with USCIS in August 2017. All affidavits and supporting materials in his case will be due one week prior to his interview at the asylum office. The interview timeline for applications filed before 2018 is uncertain. Please review the asylum office scheduling update at <http://immigrantjustice.org/policy/blog> for more information.

VAWA Cases

73. D. is a 51-year-old woman from Mexico. D. is eligible to file a VAWA self-petition. D. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago. (16-0105353)

D. married her abusive husband R. in 1990. Throughout their marriage, R. was physically and emotionally abusive towards D. On one occasion D. confronted R. after she learned that he was having an affair and he grabbed her and threatened to hit her. D. reported the incident to the police, but R. was not arrested. After suffering for many years, D. left her husband in 2011. D. has since obtained counseling and wishes to remain in the United States.

74. L. is a 24-year-old woman from Mexico. L. is eligible to file a VAWA self-petition. L. speaks English and lives in a suburb of Chicago. (17-0114904)

L. and her abusive USC husband J. met while they were both in middle school. After dating for many years, L. and J. married in 2014, and have two U.S. citizen children. Shortly after their marriage, J. became emotionally and physically abusive towards L. J. constantly insulted L. and would start fights with her so he could leave the house and go out with his friends. On several occasions, J. forced L. to have sexual intercourse with him. L. left J. in 2015 and has since obtained counseling. L. wishes to remain in the United States to continue working and providing for her children.

75. F. is a 29-year-old man from Mexico. F. is eligible to file a VAWA self-petition. F. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago. (17-0115646)

F. married his abusive U.S. citizen spouse, V., in 2016. Shortly after their marriage, F. found out that V. was addicted to heroin and other drugs. Throughout the marriage, V. would physically, emotionally, and economically abuse F. to support her drug addiction. Incidents of violence occurred during the relationship leading F. to get orders of protection against V., which he later vacated in hopes of saving their marriage. Recently, V. stole F.'s car and his money. F. is now separated from his wife and is working on filing for divorce.

76. L. is a 44-year-old woman from Panama. L. is eligible to file a VAWA self-petition concurrently with an application for adjustment of status. L.'s son J. will be a derivative of her application. L. and J. speak Spanish and live in a suburb of Chicago. (17-0119720), (17-0120851)(17-0121590)

L. married her abusive husband F. in 2015 in Panama. Shortly after their marriage, F. began to emotionally and sexually abuse L. When she came to visit him in the United States, F. would not let L. have access to money or a phone and began to control her. F. manipulated L. into

overstaying her visa and refused to file paperwork to legalize her status. F. regularly criticised L. and called her a prostitute. L. sought counsel through her church and has received therapy. L. has since separated from her abusive husband and is seeking a divorce.

77. G. is a 35-year-old woman from Ghana. G. is eligible to file a VAWA self-petition. G. speaks English and lives in northern Illinois. (17-0118788)

G. came to the U.S. as a student to pursue her master's degree in financial management and investment banking. While she was in school, G. became involved in the Church of Pentecost where she met her husband D. The couple married in November of 2016. Shortly after their marriage, D. began emotionally, physically, and sexually abusing G. G. sought help at their church and began obtaining counseling. G. eventually left her abusive husband and is now seeking a divorce.

U Visa Cases

78. A. is a 51-year-old woman from Mexico who is eligible to file a U visa application. A. requires a waiver of inadmissibility. A. speaks Spanish, and resides in a western suburb. A.'s application must be submitted to USCIS on or before May 25, 2018. (17-0121351)(18-0122634)

A. was the victim of domestic abuse from her ex-partner, C., the father of three of her children. C. was abusive towards A. over the course of many years and was constantly threatening A. In an incident in 2007, C. beat A. in the head and face, causing severe lacerations and resulting in A.'s hospitalization. A. called the police to protect herself and her children several times. A. is now separated from C. and continues to receive therapy.

79. G. is a 41-year-old woman from Mexico who is eligible to file a U visa application. G.'s son E. will be a derivative of her application. G. and E. require waivers of inadmissibility. The family speaks Spanish and English, and resides in Chicago. G.'s application must be submitted to USCIS on or before May 25, 2018. (18-0122605)(18-0122606)(18-0122550)(18-0122607)

G. was the victim of felonious assault by an unknown offender. G. was walking to the store when a man approached her from behind, grabbed her, and pulled down her pants and undergarments. G. was in shock and could not scream. The attacker then held G. by the neck and suddenly fled. G. called the police and has been helpful in the investigation. The abuser has not been caught and G. is still extremely traumatized and suffers from anxiety since the attack took place.

80. F. is a 60-year-old man from Mexico who is eligible to file a U visa application. F.'s wife M. will be a derivative of his application. F. requires a waiver of inadmissibility. The family speaks Spanish, and resides in Chicago. F.'s application must be submitted to USCIS on or before June 13, 2018. (17-0121325)(18-0122429)(18-0122401)

F. was the victim of felonious assault after four offenders approached him when he was coming home from work one night. The offenders robbed F. at gun point and stuck F. in the head and

knee. After the offenders left, F. called the police and participated in the investigation. Due to this incident, F. now has a difficult time walking and problems with his vision. F. has also had to change his transportation route because he no longer feels safe taking the bus home after work.

81. A. is 42-year-old woman from Mexico who is eligible to file a U visa application. A. speaks Spanish, and resides in a northern suburb of Chicago. A.'s application must be submitted to USCIS on or before July 11, 2018. (18-0123022)

A. has suffered years of abuse and control by her husband, who insulted and mistreated her. Her husband would not let her learn how to drive or work, made her feel worthless, and would constantly berate her. During one incident he threw a bottle at her, and when they separated he continued to send her threatening messages. A. obtained an order of protection against her husband, and wants to move forward with her life for herself and for her three US citizen children.

82. C. is 45-year-old woman from Mexico who is eligible to file a U visa application. C. requires a waiver of inadmissibility. C. speaks Spanish, and resides in Chicago. C.'s application must be submitted to USCIS on or before August 15, 2018. (18-0123823) (18-0123825)

C. is the victim of domestic abuse at the hands of her ex-husband. C.'s ex-husband, R., physically and emotionally abused C. for several years. During one incident when C. was 8 months pregnant, R. pushed C. in the stomach. Afraid for the safety of her unborn child C. called the police and reported the incident. C. and her children have suffered trauma and experienced extreme hardship due to the years of abuse. C. wishes to move forward with her life and remain in the United States with her children.

83. A. is 33-year-old woman from Mexico who is eligible to file a U visa application. A. requires a waiver of inadmissibility. A. speaks Spanish, and resides in Chicago. A.'s application must be submitted to USCIS on or before August 17, 2018. (18-0123649) (18-0123652)

A.'s minor daughters were victims of sexual assault at a very young age. A. has cooperated with the police and the prosecution since she learned of the sexual assault of her children. A. and her family have suffered a great deal as a result of this predatory criminal sexual assault. This incident has caused A. great emotional distress and trauma and she continues to attend therapy for her and her children. A. wishes to remain in the U.S with her children as she is the only one responsible for supporting her family financially and emotionally.

NIJC Announcements

Immigration Procedural Updates

NIJC encourages *pro bono* attorneys to regularly check NIJC's [Immigration Procedural Updates](#) page to learn about changes in immigration law, procedure, and case timing. Recent updates

includes changes to the employment authorization application and mailing address, Chicago Immigration Court staffing, and interview timing at the Chicago Asylum Office.