

NATIONAL IMMIGRANT JUSTICE CENTER

A HEARTLAND ALLIANCE PROGRAM

November 13, 2019

NIJC NATIONAL Case List: 5 Cases that need *pro bono* representation!

These individuals live across the U.S. By helping an asylum seeker navigate the complicated immigration system, you can change a life!

Asylum Cases: (for more details see case blurbs below)

Detained Asylum Seekers:

- **San Diego, CA:** I. is a man from Pakistan. He speaks Urdu and is currently detained near San Diego, CA. **Urgent**

Non-Detained Asylum Seekers:

- **Los Angeles, CA:** C. is a transgender woman from El Salvador. She speaks Spanish and lives in Los Angeles.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

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.

For further information, contact Ellen Miller, *Pro Bono* Manager at (312) 660-1415 or emiller@heartlandalliance.org.

Asylum:

Detained Asylum Seekers.

- 1. I. is a man from Pakistan. He is a plaintiff in a class action lawsuit against the “Asylum Ban 2.0.” He speaks Urdu and is currently detained in near San Diego, CA. (19-0136950) *Urgent**

I. grew up practicing Sunni Islam, the dominant religion of Pakistan, but converted to Shia Islam a few years ago. After converting, I. started receiving threats from his Sunni family members and from an extremist Sunni Islamic group. The extremist group would wait for him outside of Shia religious gatherings and attack him on his way home. They would beat him, call him a traitor to the religion, and tell him that they would kill him if he did not become Sunni again. After a particularly brutal attack that sent I. to the hospital, I.’s father tried to report the attack to the police. However, the police refused to help, instead saying that I. should just stop being Shia. I. moved to Lahore for several months but still felt that he could not practice Shia Islam openly. When he returned to his village, the Sunni extremist group attacked him again, and he had to return to the hospital for treatment. After coming home from the hospital, his uncles also threatened to kill him if he did not convert back to Sunni Islam. I. fled Pakistan and entered the United States on July 24, 2019. Initially apprehended by CBP, they transferred him to U.S. Marshals custody for prosecution for illegal entry. I. was recently transferred back to ICE custody and he remains detained in Calexico. I. is also currently a plaintiff in a class action lawsuit against the “Asylum Ban 2.0.” (July 16, 2019 DOJ/DHS interim final rule (8 CFR § 208.13(c)(4)). His master hearing could be in 4-6 weeks. He has not yet filed his application for asylum. Once filed, the merits hearing is typically about six to eight weeks later. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 15 days prior to the merits date.

Non-Detained Asylum Seekers

- 2. C. is a transgender woman from El Salvador. She is a plaintiff in I.A. v. Barr, a class action lawsuit challenging the most recent asylum ban. She speaks Spanish and lives in Los Angeles. (19-0138878)*

C. has understood herself to be a woman since she was 16 years old. She is attracted to men and, in El Salvador, was perceived as gay. Before fleeing her country, C. was active in the LGBT community by organizing support groups. She received multiple death threats for doing this. On one occasion, she was targeted by a group of men who know of her participation in the community and taunted her because of it. She was told she must be a woman for associating with LGBT people and so she would be raped like one. The men then held her down and attempted to rape her, but the commotion drew the attention of others nearby and the men fled. C. attempted to relocate within El Salvador multiple times but always ended up receiving threats and abuse for her work with the LGBT community. She eventually realized she had to leave the country to be safe. After entering the United States, C. was detained in Elizabeth, NJ. She initially did not disclose her sexual-orientation- and gender-identity-related fears to the asylum officer who conducted her credible fear interview and so was denied. A nonprofit in New Jersey represented her during a judicial review of this decision and succeeded in getting it reversed. She appeared before a judge once more for a bond hearing and was released. She is still waiting for her case to be re-docketed in Los Angeles, which should take about four to six weeks. At that point, her next court date will be scheduled. At her next hearing, she will need to file her I-589 asylum application.

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