

March 22, 2021

## **NIJC Pro Bono Case List: 54 cases need pro bono representation.**

Immigrants do not have the right to appointed counsel and without pro bono representation, many of NIJC's clients would be forced to seek immigration relief on their own. NIJC pro bono attorneys defend the legal rights of immigrants, prevent permanent family separation and deportation to persecution and torture, and help ensure access to justice for all.

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### **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 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 information about:

- **Detained** cases, contact Dave Faherty at [dfaherty@heartlandalliance.org](mailto:dfaherty@heartlandalliance.org).
- **LGBT** cases, contact Michelle Velazquez at [mivelazquez@heartlandalliance.org](mailto:mivelazquez@heartlandalliance.org).
- All other **asylum** cases, contact Rachel Milos at [ramilos@heartlandalliance.org](mailto:ramilos@heartlandalliance.org).
- **SIJS** cases, contact Hillary Richardson at [hrichardson@heartlandalliance.org](mailto:hrichardson@heartlandalliance.org).
- **U Visa** or **VAWA** cases, contact Lizbeth Sanchez at [lisanchez@heartlandalliance.org](mailto:lisanchez@heartlandalliance.org)

For general information regarding pro bono opportunities at NIJC, contact Ellen Miller, Pro Bono Manager at (312) 660-1415 or [emiller@heartlandalliance.org](mailto:emiller@heartlandalliance.org).

## **Detained Cases: Litigation**

- 1. J. is a young man from Guatemala. J. seeks to challenge prolonged detention via a habeas petition. He is currently detained at Jerome Combs in Kankakee, Illinois. (20-0142616)*

J. first entered the United States in 2014 as an unaccompanied minor. Shortly after his 17th birthday, J. was shot in the head during a drive-by in Louisville, Kentucky. J. was rushed to the hospital where he underwent several surgeries to remove the bullet fragments lodged in his brain. When he woke up from the coma—he could not walk or speak—he had to re-learn how to do everything. He also began hearing voices and experiencing extreme paranoia. In response, J. began carrying weapons as a way to protect himself. He was later convicted of wanton endangerment and brandishing a weapon. After completing his sentence for these convictions, J. was transferred to ICE in February 2020. In May 2020, the immigration judge found him incompetent and appointed NIJC to be his attorney. NIJC secured a U Visa certification for J. based on the harm he suffered from the gunshot wound and in March 2021, the immigration judge granted J. a waiver of inadmissibility grounds related to the U Visa. However, because this is only the first step of the U Visa process, J. must await adjudication of the visa application by USCIS, a separate administrative agency dealing with significant adjudication backlogs. He seeks pro bono counsel for a habeas petition challenging his prolonged immigration detention without an individualized bail determination because he has been in immigration custody for over a year. His petition for a writ of habeas corpus would need to be filed in the Central District of Illinois, where NIJC has had success in a number of cases challenging unlawful detention.

## **Asylum Matters**

### **Asylum: Unaccompanied Immigrant Children**

- 2. J. is a young man from Honduras. USCIS retains initial jurisdiction over his application for asylum because he was designated as an unaccompanied immigrant child when he entered the United States, even though he may soon be in removal proceedings. J. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago, Illinois. (20-0140934) \*Urgent\**

Members of the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) gang threatened to kill J. and his family when he refused to join the gang and sell drugs for them. During the same period, one of J.'s friends was murdered by the gang for refusing similar threats. J. never reported the direct threats to the police out of fear and instead, he fled to the United States in 2019. Although J. was issued a Notice to Appear (NTA), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has not filed the NTA with the immigration court. NIJC timely filed J.'s application for asylum with USCIS in September 2020. J.'s affidavit and supporting documents will be due one week prior to his interview at the asylum office, which could be scheduled at any time in the coming months.

### **Asylum: 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.*

- 3. *A. is a gay man who was born in Saudi Arabia and is an Indian national. A. lives in Chicago and speaks English. His merits hearing is scheduled for February 1, 2022. (20-0141472)***

A. was born in Saudi Arabia, and lived most of his life there. He began realizing his sexual orientation as a teenager. He lived in a very conservative society, so was not able to be open and out. He left Saudi Arabia and went to India in 2011. While there, he faced verbal harassment and threats. He applied for a tourist visa to get away. A. most recently entered the U.S. in 2012. He was on F-1 status for a short time, but fell out of status before applying for asylum. He applied for asylum in 2016, but the Asylum Office referred him to EOIR without an interview. He was granted continuances in his removal proceedings since 2017, and now has his merits hearing scheduled for February 1, 2022. A. has not met his one-year filing deadline, but may be eligible for an exception due to changed personal circumstances or mental health extraordinary circumstances. He filed his I-589, asylum application, on July 18, 2016. His affidavit and other supporting documents will be due 30 days prior to his merits hearing.

- 4. *B. is a gay man from Mexico. B. lives in the western suburbs and speaks Spanish. His merits hearing is scheduled for July 12, 2022. (18-0124146)***

B. knew that he was gay from a young age. He was raped as a child, and also beaten by his mother. His family kicked him out of the house because of his sexual orientation. He came to the U.S. in 2004. Here, he was the victim of domestic violence. B. married his husband in 2013. Shortly after, B.'s husband became aggressive and abusive. The husband initiated false DV charges against B., which led to B. being in ICE custody in 2017. He was found not guilty of those charges and then bonded out of ICE custody. B. filed his I-589 in 2018. B. has not met his one-year filing deadline, but may be eligible for an exception due to changed personal circumstances. His husband outed him to family in Mexico. The husband's family began threatening B. and his family. NIJC filed his I-589, asylum application, on May 3, 2018. His affidavit and other supporting documents will be due 30 days prior to his merits hearing.

## **Asylum: Based on Domestic and Gender Violence**

*Although many adjudicators have historically believed that the case law regarding domestic violence and gender violence-based asylum claims was unclear, these claims have a strong legal foundation, particularly in the Seventh Circuit, even after an Attorney General decision attempted to undermine them. 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.*

- 5. *J. is a woman from Honduras. Her daughters, Z., R., and E. are derivatives on her application for asylum and are each also independently eligible for asylum. J., Z., R.,***

***and E. speak Spanish and live in northern Illinois. (20-0143297) (20-0143719) (20-0143721) (20-0143802)***

J. was in a relationship with the father of her daughters, C., for around twenty years. While they were together, C. abused J. almost daily. He beat her, insulted her and threatened to kill her. Even after they separated, he continued to come to her home under the pretense of visiting their daughters and beat her. In spring 2019, members of the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) gang chased J.'s brother to J.'s home where they nearly killed him in front of J. and her daughters. The gang member threatened to come back and kill J. and her daughter and to burn their house down. J. and her daughters fled to the United States right after this. Although J. and her daughters were issued Notices to Appear (NTAs) when they entered the United States, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has not yet filed their NTAs with the immigration court. Unless and until their NTAs are filed with the court, USCIS retains initial jurisdiction over their applications for asylum. NIJC filed J., Z., R., and E.'s applications for asylum with USCIS in August 2020. Because these applications were filed more than one year after J. and her daughters entered the United States, their pro bono attorneys will need to argue that they merit an exception to the one-year filing deadline for asylum eligibility. NIJC will assist them in making this argument. All affidavits and supporting materials to J., Z., R., and E.'s cases will be due one week prior to their interview at the asylum office, unless their NTAs are filed with the immigration court.

***6. M. is a woman from Honduras. Her daughter, D., will be a derivative on her asylum application and is also independently eligible for asylum. M. and D. speak Spanish and live in northcentral Indiana. (20-0143663) (20-0143734)***

When M. was a young teenager, her uncle raped her and then forced her to live with him for years, where he beat and raped her regularly. As a result, M. gave birth to her daughter when she was about 16 years old. After continued abuse, M. finally escaped to the United States with her daughter, D., in 2019. Although M. and D. were issued Notices to Appear (NTAs) by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) when they entered the United States, their NTAs have not yet been filed with the immigration court. Unless and until their NTAs are filed with the court, USCIS retains initial jurisdiction over their applications for asylum. NIJC filed M. and D.'s applications for asylum with USCIS in August 2020. Because these applications were filed more than one year after M. and D. entered the United States, their pro bono attorneys will need to argue that they merit an exception to the one-year filing deadline for asylum. NIJC will assist them in making this argument. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due one week prior to M. and D.'s interview at the asylum office, which could occur at any time in the coming months, unless their NTAs are filed with the immigration court.

***7. D. is a young woman from Mexico. Her daughter, E., and her son, M., will be derivatives on D.'s application for asylum, and are each also individually eligible for asylum. They are awaiting the rescheduling of their Master Calendar Hearing. D., E., and M. speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois. (20-0140566) (20-0140567) (20-0140568)***

D.'s ex-partner N. abused D. and threatened to kill her if she ever started a relationship with

another man. D. and her ex-partner separated and he began a relationship with another woman. In 2017, Mexican police arrested D.'s ex-partner for the murder of his new partner and D. cooperated with their investigation. After his arrest, D.'s ex-partner began calling D. frequently and threatening to kill her and her children if she did not visit him. Not long after, D. also began receiving anonymous calls from outside the prison from a man making the same threats to harm her and her children. The man told D. that he was following her and knew detailed information about the whereabouts of her children. One night, the man told D. that he was waiting outside her house in a black truck, which D. could see from her window. Fearing for her life and for her children's lives, D. fled Mexico with E. and M. NIJC timely filed D., E., and M.'s skeletal applications for asylum with the immigration court in July 2020. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**8. *M. is a woman from Nigeria. She is currently awaiting the rescheduling of her Master Calendar Hearing. M. speaks English and lives in Central Indiana. (20-0144500)***

After M. became pregnant with her first child, her ex-husband's family began visiting her and pressuring her to consume traditional medicines to ensure that their child would be male. Three months later, M. miscarried. When M. became pregnant again two years later, she refused to comply when her ex-husband's family attempted to interfere in the same way. When M. refused to consume the traditional medications, her ex-husband's relatives attacked her, which resulted in another miscarriage. Soon after, family members of M.'s ex-husband threatened to force her to participate in a traditional fertility ritual because they were angry with her for not conceiving again. During this ritual, they held M. down and made incisions all over her body using a razor. When M. gave birth to her daughter in 2017, her ex-husband's family attempted to kidnap the child and force her to undergo female genital mutilation (FGM). M. contacted the police in Nigeria to request protection from these relatives, but was told that it was a "family issue" and received no assistance. M. divorced her ex-husband and fled to the United States in 2018. She filed a timely, *pro se* application for asylum with USCIS in 2019. After attending an interview with an asylum officer, USCIS referred her application to the immigration court for further review. All affidavits and supporting materials to M.'s case will be due 30 days prior to her individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**9. *M. is a young woman from Honduras. Her son, O., is a derivative on her application for asylum and is also independently eligible for asylum. They are currently awaiting the scheduling of their merits hearing. M. and O. speak Spanish and live in northern Illinois (18-0130624) (18-0131084)***

M.'s father and other caretakers physically and emotionally abused her throughout her life in Honduras. When she was 15 years old, she met O.'s father. Soon after they began a relationship, he started to beat and rape M. frequently, and continued to do so throughout her pregnancy with O. He and his family also emotionally abused M. and blamed her for the abuse. M. fled to the United States shortly after O.'s birth. NIJC timely filed M. and O.'s applications for asylum in 2019. All affidavits and supporting documentation for M. and O.'s case will be due 30 days prior to their merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**10. F. is a woman from Mexico. Her children, T. and O., are derivatives on her application for asylum, and are also independently eligible for asylum. They are currently awaiting the rescheduling of their Master Calendar hearing. F. and her children speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois. (19-0137996) (19-0138001) (19-0138002)**

F.'s ex-partner, G., physically and emotionally abused F. throughout their years-long relationship. G. was controlling and violent towards F., and threatened to kill her on multiple occasions. When F. was pregnant with her daughter, O., she began receiving anonymous phone calls from people threatening to kill her family and demanding money from F. G. later told F. that members of a cartel had been threatening him and trying to force him to work for them, but he had refused. The cartel told G. that they would kill him and his entire family if he did not work for them. Fearing reprisals from the cartel and continued abuse from G., F. fled Mexico with her two children in 2015. F.'s application for asylum was filed with the immigration court in 2017. Because this application was filed more than one year after F. entered the United States, her *pro bono* attorneys will need to argue that she merits an exception to the one-year filing deadline for asylum. All affidavits and supporting materials to F.'s case will be due 30 days prior to her individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**11. K. is a woman from Mexico. Her daughter, L., will be listed as a derivative on her application for asylum and is also independently eligible for asylum. They are awaiting the scheduling of their merits hearing. K. and L. speak Spanish and live in southern Indiana. (20-0142644) (20-0142680)**

K.'s husband verbally, sexually, and physically abused her in Mexico for about three decades. In 2019, K. discovered that her husband was also sexually abusing their daughter, L. As a result of the abuse, L. began to self-harm and experience suicidal ideation. K. began making plans to flee her husband, but he threatened to kill both her and L. if she ever tried to leave or take his child away from him. Fearing for her own life and for the life of her daughter, K. fled Mexico with L. soon thereafter. NIJC timely filed K. and L.'s asylum applications with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**12. H. is a woman from Nigeria. Her husband, D., and their three children, will be derivatives on her application for asylum and are also independently eligible for asylum. Their first Master Calendar hearing is scheduled for May 20, 2021. H. and her family speak English and Yoruba and live in Central Indiana. (20-0145257) (20-0144688) (21-0145523) (21-0145524) (21-0145525)**

H. and her husband, D., have been practicing Christians for over 30 years and have held senior leadership positions within their church for some time. H. and her husband both adamantly oppose the spiritual practices of their family ethnic group, which include fertility rituals, female circumcision, and the worship of idols. Because of their opposition, H. and her family members suffered physical attacks and ongoing threats from family elders. They relocated to Lagos in order to avoid further harm, but were unable to live there safely. In 2010, a group of elders forced their way into H.'s home and beat her with sticks. H. was badly bruised all over her body

and was hospitalized for over a month; this attack resulted in the stillbirth of her child. In 2014, family elders began to demand that H. and her husband submit their daughter, K., to them for female circumcision. When they refused, the elders began threatening to kidnap H. and D.'s children and kill H. and D. if they did not comply. H. and her family fled to the United States in 2019 and filed for asylum with the USCIS asylum office, but USCIS referred their applications to the immigration court for further review. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***13. D. is a woman from Mexico. Her children, F. and J., will be derivatives on her application for asylum and are also independently eligible for asylum. They are currently awaiting the rescheduling of their next Master Calendar Hearing. D. and her children speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois. (19-0139086)(19-0139809) (19-0139810)***

D. entered a relationship with her ex-partner, S., while she was in college in Mexico. Soon after the relationship began, S. forced D. to move in with him and his family and drop out of school. S. and his parents were extremely controlling, and rarely allowed D. to leave the house. When D. told S. that she wanted to leave him, he began to physically abuse her and threaten to kidnap their children if D. ever tried to end the relationship. D. attempted to leave S. multiple times, but S. was always able to locate D. and punish her for trying to leave him. S. worked for a drug cartel in Mexico, and frequently used drugs in the home in front of S. and their children. As their children, F. and J., grew older, S. began to verbally abuse them as well. D. knew that she would not be able to safely leave S. and remain in Mexico because of his connections to the cartel. D. and her children fled to the United States in late 2019. All affidavits and supporting materials to D. and her children's case will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***14. M. and her partner S. are from Honduras. Her children, R. and N., are derivatives on her application and also are independently eligible for asylum. They are currently awaiting the rescheduling of their next Master Calendar Hearing. M., S., R., and N. speak Spanish and live in a western suburb of Chicago, Illinois. (20-0143710) (20-0143711) (20-0143712) (20-0144738)***

M.'s former partner, D., abused her throughout their relationship, including while she was pregnant with their son. After they physically separated, D. continued to threaten M. and physically assaulted her. D. worked with the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) gang and repeatedly told M. that MS-13 would harm her if he could not. M. moved multiple times to try to stay away from him. Eventually, M. met S. and began a new relationship with him. When S. took legal steps to be recognized as N.'s father, D. renewed his threats against the whole family and M. learned that D. had purchased a gun with the intent of killing her and S. The family fled to the United States soon after. NIJC filed M., S., R., and N.'s applications for asylum with the immigration court in December 2020. Because these applications were filed more than one year after they entered the United States, their pro bono attorneys will need to argue that they merit an exception to the one-year filing deadline for asylum. NIJC will assist them in making this argument. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**15. H. is a woman from Guatemala. Her daughter, K., is a derivative on her application for asylum and is also independently eligible for asylum. Their first Master Calendar hearing was canceled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and has not yet been rescheduled. H. and K. speak Spanish and live in northcentral Indiana. (20-0141981) (20-0142050)**

When H. was a young teenager in Guatemala, an older man in her community raped her regularly for about three years. Then, another abuser forced her to have sex and she became pregnant with her daughter. While pregnant, she survived an assault and attempted rape by strangers. Later, a family member of the owner of the factory where she was working started raping and threatening her, claiming that she belonged to him. Fearing ongoing sexual and physical abuse, H. fled Guatemala with K. Her most recent abuser continues to search for her and to threaten to harm H. if she returns to Guatemala. NIJC timely filed H. and K.'s skeletal asylum applications with the immigration court in April 2020. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**16. E. is a woman from El Salvador. Her children, Y. and C., are derivatives on her application for asylum and are also independently eligible for asylum. E., Y., and C. are awaiting the scheduling of their individual merits hearing. E. and her children speak Spanish and live in Central Indiana. (20-0144034) (20-0144227) (20-0144229)**

E. began her relationship with her former partner, K., when she was a teenager and later learned that he was a member of the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) gang. During their relationship, K. repeatedly physically assaulted and raped E., including while she was pregnant with their children. When E. was pregnant with their second child, K. demanded that she terminate the pregnancy and forced her to drink concoctions intended to induce a miscarriage. K. later migrated alone to the United States, where he was convicted of child molestation and rape. While he was serving his prison sentence in the United States, E. began dating another man. When K. learned of E.'s new relationship, he became furious and told E. that she would always be his. Terrified that K. would send other MS-13 members to harm her and her children, E. fled to the United States with Y. and C. in 2018. K. has since finished his prison term and has been deported back to El Salvador. E. timely filed her application for asylum with the immigration court, and NIJC assisted in filing applications for Y. and C. as well. All affidavits and supporting materials to E.'s case will be due 30 days prior to her individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

**17. R. is a woman from Guatemala. Her two children, G. and T., are derivatives on her application for asylum. Their merits hearing is on July 21, 2022. R. speaks Chuj and 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. After R.'s husband was deported back to Guatemala, he continued to beat her, attempted to kill her, and tried to kidnap their 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. NIJC timely filed R.'s application for asylum with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials for R.'s case will be due 30 days prior to her individual merits hearing in 2022.

***18. K. is a woman from Honduras. K.'s merits hearing is on June 6, 2023. K. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago, Illinois. (19-0134871)***

K.'s former partner, D., threatened and abused her for many years. Afraid to leave him even though she had tried to end the relationship, K. continued living with D. while pursuing a new relationship. K.'s new partner was also abusive, and he threatened to kill K. if she did not move out of the house she shared with D. and their daughter, M. K.'s new partner began to beat her, and on one occasion, he put a knife to her throat. Fearing further abuse, K. fled to the United States in 2012 and left her daughter in D.'s care. After K. left, D. began to physically and sexually abuse K.'s daughter. Although K. was apprehended by immigration in 2012 and passed a credible fear interview at that time, her NTA was not filed with the immigration court until 2018. NIJC filed K.'s application for asylum with the immigration court, but because this application was filed more than one year after K. entered the United States, her pro bono attorneys will need to argue that K. merits an exception to the one-year filing deadline for asylum. NIJC will assist them in making this argument. K. is otherwise eligible for withholding of removal and relief under the Convention Against Torture. All affidavits and supporting materials to K.'s case will be due 30 days prior to her individual merits hearing in 2023.

***19. D. is a woman from Mongolia. Her husband, J., is a derivative on her application for asylum. She speaks Mongolian and lives in Chicago, Illinois. NIJC will assist her attorneys in identifying an interpreter. (17-0116073)***

D. 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 D. soon became financially dependent upon E. About five months after the couple moved in together, E. began to abuse D. verbally and physically. He tried to control her behavior, demanded she do what he told her, and kicked and beat her. In 2013, when D.'s brother witnessed E. punching D. in the face, he was able to get the police to come to the house and arrest E., something that D. believes was only possible because her brother was a man. D. 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, D. told a coworker about the abuse and was urged to flee to the United States in order to escape the relationship. D. surreptitiously applied for a visa, which was granted, and entered the United States in 2016 without telling E. Later, D. 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 D.'s application for asylum with USCIS in May 2017. Affidavits and other supporting documents will be due one week prior to her interview at the asylum office. The date of the interview is uncertain at this time.

## **Asylum: Based on Political Opinion, Religious Beliefs, or Opposition to Criminal Organizations**

*Asylum claims based on political opinion or religious beliefs 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.*

***20. B. and T. are a husband and wife from Mexico. Their daughter, E., is a derivative on their applications for asylum and their son, A., is independently eligible for asylum. Their merits hearing is on October 26, 2021. B., T., A., and E. speak Spanish and live a western suburb of Chicago, Illinois. (17-0115637) (17-0115363) (17-0115635) (17-0115638) \*Urgent\****

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, who took several kilos of silver from B.’s silver shop as a bribe. The threatening calls continued, however, 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 to the United States. Soon after they left, B.’s cousin was murdered and T.’s brother’s house was burglarized. NIJC timely filed B. and T.’s skeletal asylum applications with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due 30 days prior to their merits hearing.

***21. O. is a woman from Guatemala. Her son, I., is a derivative on her application for asylum and is also independently eligible for asylum. Their first Master Calendar Hearing is on May 11, 2021. O. and I. speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois. (19-0139797) (19-0139798)***

O. owned a small gas station in Guatemala. In early 2019, gang members began calling O. and extorting her business. When O. refused to pay the extortion fees, gang members threatened to kill O. and her son, I. O. stopped sending I. to school out of fear that he would be killed by the gang in the street. O. reported the threats to the Guatemalan police, but she was unable to obtain protection from the gang, and she continued receiving phone calls threatening her life. O. stopped going to work in order to avoid the threats, but the gang continued to contact her and threaten to kill her and her son. Fearing for her life and her son’s life, O. fled to the United

States with I. in 2019. After leaving Guatemala, gang members sent another death threat to O.'s gas station. NIJC timely filed O. and I.'s applications for asylum in 2020. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***22. L. is a man from Honduras. L.'s next Master Calendar Hearing is on June 16, 2021. L. speaks Spanish and lives in a southwestern suburb of Chicago. (20-0142467)***

In 2018, L. was living with his former partner, D., when she began to receive threatening text messages from her ex-husband. Within a few days, D.'s ex-husband murdered her. Soon after, L. began to receive threatening messages from men associated with D.'s ex-husband. These men also started to intimidate L.'s family while they were looking for him. L. assisted D.'s family in making a police report about the murder, but nothing significant came of it and police even tried to blame L. for D.'s death. L. fled Honduras about a month after D.'s death, fearing that the same people who killed her would come for him next. L. filed a pro se application for asylum with the immigration court in 2020. Because this application was filed more than one year after he entered the United States, L.'s pro bono attorneys will need to argue that he merits an exception to the one-year filing deadline for asylum. NIJC will assist them in making that argument. All affidavits and supporting materials to L.'s case will be due 30 days prior to his individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***23. F. is a man from Somalia. His next Master Calendar hearing is on June 9, 2021. F. lives in Chicago and speaks Somali. (20-0145316).***

When F. returned to Somalia after studying at a university in Ethiopia, Al-Shabaab repeatedly threatened him and accused of being an infidel and a spy. Even after F. tried to relocate, Al-Shabaab found him and continued to threaten his life. An immigration judge previously granted F. withholding of removal while he was detained and pro se, but denied him asylum as a matter of discretion solely because the judge disliked the fact that F. had traveled through multiple countries before reaching the United States. After F. appealed the asylum denial to the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA), the BIA granted the appeal and remanded to allow the court to conduct further fact-finding on the discretionary determination. Because the government did not appeal the withholding grant, that decision is not at issue on remand. With asylum, F. will have a path to citizenship in the United States, but with only a grant of withholding, he will not be able to obtain permanent status. F.'s attorneys will need to prepare additional evidence to support a positive discretionary grant prior to his merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***24. P. is a woman from Nicaragua. Her children, D. and R., are derivatives on her asylum application and are also independently eligible for asylum. Their next Master Calendar hearing was cancelled and they will soon be scheduled for a merits hearing. P., D., and R. speak Spanish and live in Wisconsin. (20-0141803) (20-0142449)***

P. and her husband were members of an opposition political party in Nicaragua. Police came to P.'s home in January 2019, demanding that she remove a flag that signified their family's opposition. The police also accused her and her husband of providing financial support to protesters, searched their home, and warned P. to stop participating in the opposition party. The police returned in February and attempted to detain P. and her husband, but left when they saw

her husband was not home. Terrified, P. and her family went into hiding at her brother's home before fleeing to the United States. P. entered the United States with her daughter R. in June 2019, and her son D. entered alone in October 2019. Although P. and R. were issued Notices to Appear (NTA) when they entered the United States, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has not yet filed their NTAs with the immigration court. Unless and until their NTAs are filed with the immigration court USCIS retains initial jurisdiction over P. and R.'s applications for asylum and all affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due one week prior to their interview. *Please note that P.'s son D separately entered the United States as an unaccompanied child and is therefore in a separate procedural posture. NIJC is representing him in his asylum case.*

***25. R. is a woman from El Salvador. Her children, S. and A., are derivatives on her application for asylum and are also independently eligible for asylum. R., S., and A. are currently awaiting the rescheduling of their Master Calendar hearing. R.'s husband, J. and their son, P., entered the United States separately. The entire family speaks Spanish and lives in a northern suburb of Chicago, Illinois. (20-0145270) (20-0145273)(20-0141796) (20-0142695) (20-0142696)***

The Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) gang controlled the neighborhood in El Salvador where R. lived with her family. Gang members extorted, threatened and robbed R.'s husband, J., ultimately forcing him to flee the country with their son, P. In early 2019, Salvadoran police shot and killed a gang member near R.'s home during a campaign to round up and arrest multiple gang members in the area. Shortly after, gang members came to R.'s home and accused her of collaborating with the police and giving them information about gang activity. During the same period, gang members attempted to forcibly recruit R.'s son, and threatened to kill the entire family if he refused. R. made a police report, then quickly fled to the United States with her children, S. and A. NIJC filed R., S., and A.'s applications for asylum with the immigration court in August 2020. J. and P. are not yet in proceedings before the immigration court, so NIJC filed their asylum applications with USCIS on January 7, 2021. Because the family's applications were filed more than one year after they entered the United States, their pro bono attorneys will need to argue that they merit an exception to the one-year filing deadline for asylum eligibility. NIJC will assist them in making that argument. All affidavits and supporting documents to R., S., and A.'s case will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled. J. and P.'s affidavits and other supporting documents will be due one week prior to their interview at the asylum office. The timeline for this interview is uncertain.

***26. M. is a woman from Guatemala. M.'s daughter, D., is a derivative on M.'s application for asylum, and is also independently eligible for asylum. They are currently awaiting the scheduling of their merits hearing. M. and D. speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois. (20-0142086) (20-0142087)***

M. owned and operated a small food stand in Guatemala to support herself and her daughter, D. M. was a single mother who lived alone with her daughter after attempting to distance herself her abusive ex-partner, D.'s father. Members of the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) gang came to M.'s food stand and threatened her at gunpoint, stating she needed to pay them a portion of her weekly earnings. The gang members threatened to kidnap D. as punishment if she refused. Afterwards,

M. began receiving threatening notes and phone calls from MS-13 members, continuing to demand money from her. Out of fear, M. eventually closed her food stand, but unfortunately MS-13 members continued to target and threaten M. and her daughter. During the same period, D.'s father continued to verbally abuse M. and threatened to take D. away from her multiple times. Fearing for their lives, M. and D. fled to the United States. While in the United States, M.'s family in Guatemala told M. that D.'s father had sexually assaulted M.'s sister. NIJC timely filed M. and D.'s applications for asylum with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***27. D. is a young woman from El Salvador. Her children, J., L., and H. are included as derivatives on her asylum application and are also independently eligible for asylum. E. is D.'s adopted son who is also independently eligible for asylum. They are awaiting a new Master Calendar hearing date. D., J., L., H., and E. speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois. (20-0140962) (20-0140976) (20-0141188) (20-0141189) (20-0141191)***

D's husband, P., was a member of the police force in El Salvador. Gang members from the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) gang started asking P. to work for them and when he refused, they targeted P., D., and their four children: J., L., H., and E. MS-13 gang members asked E. and L. to steal their father's police uniforms and beat them up badly when they refused. Soon after, gang members came to the family's house and attacked D. in front of her children. When E. found a note from MS-13 gang members slipped under the front door threatening to kill the whole family, D. and her four children J., L., H., and E. fled to the United States. NIJC timely filed D., J., L. H. and E.'s applications for asylum with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***28. Y. is a woman from Honduras. Her son, R., is a derivative on her application for asylum and is also independently eligible for asylum. Their next Master Calendar Hearing is on April 1, 2022. Y. and R. speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois. (20-0143799) (20-0144299)***

Gangs in Honduras threatened Y.'s ex-partner and forced him to flee the country while Y. was still pregnant with R. After Y.'s ex-partner escaped Honduras, the gangs began extorting Y. and threatening to kidnap Y.'s son and kill Y. if she did not give them information about her ex-partner. Y. fled to the United States with R. in 2018 after gang members broke into their home while they were sleeping and threatened again to kill them if Y. did not help the gang to find her ex-partner. NIJC filed Y. and R.'s applications for asylum with the immigration court in 2020. Because these applications were filed more than one year after they entered the United States, their pro bono attorneys will need to argue that they merit an exception to the one-year filing deadline for asylum. NIJC will assist them in making that argument. All affidavits and supporting documentation to Y. and R.'s case will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***29. S. is a woman from Honduras. Her daughters, J. and L., will be derivatives on her***

***application for asylum and are also independently eligible for asylum. S., J., and L. are currently awaiting the rescheduling of their next Master Calendar Hearing. S., J. and L. speak Spanish and live in a western suburb of Chicago, Illinois. (20-0140225) (20-0140227) (20-0140228)***

In Honduras, S. owned and operated a restaurant with her husband. In 2018, members of the Mara Salvatrucha gang (MS-13) came to the restaurant and informed S. that she would need to start paying them “rent” every two weeks in order to avoid problems with the gang. S. was able to keep up with the payments at first, but they soon raised the amount and she could not afford to continue paying. When S. failed to pay, MS-13 members told her that they were watching her family members. Eventually, S. was forced to close the restaurant out of fear. S. then received written threats at the former restaurant and at her home, demanding that she resume payments to the gang. MS-13 members threatened J. on her way to work, followed S.’s partner, and shot at him in the street. S., her partner and her children fled to the United States after this, fearing for their safety. S.’s partner was initially detained and therefore his case proceeded separately and more quickly than the rest of his family. S.’s partner was granted withholding of removal in December 2019. NIJC timely filed S., J. and L.’s applications for asylum with the immigration court in 2020. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***30. B. is a man from Guatemala. He is currently awaiting the rescheduling of his next Master Calendar Hearing. B. speaks Spanish and lives in southern Indiana. (20-0142513)***

B. was a member of a human rights group in Guatemala that protested mining projects and advocated for the rights of agricultural workers in his village. In 2019, Guatemalan police came to B.’s home and threatened to kill him if he continued his involvement with this group. Soon after, police kidnapped and detained B. for about a day and a half, during which time they beat him and interrogated him about his participation with the group, telling him that if he continued to defy them he would not survive. Fearing for his life, B. fled to the United States as soon as he was released from police custody. B. filed his application for asylum with the immigration court in 2019. Due to a previous deportation, B. is not eligible for asylum, but remains eligible for withholding of removal and protection under the Convention Against Torture. All affidavits and supporting materials to B.’s case will be due 30 days prior to his individual hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***31. F. is a woman from Mexico. Her daughters, E. and S., will be derivatives on her application for asylum, and are also independently eligible for asylum. They are awaiting the rescheduling of their next Master Calendar hearing. F., E., and S. speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois. (19-0140079) (20-0140122) (20-0140123)***

F. and her brother owned a tortilla shop in Mexico. Members of La Familia Michoacana, a Mexican drug cartel, began to extort the tortilla shop by threatening F.’s brother. F.’s brother paid the extortion fees to the cartel for a short period, but eventually he became unable to continue paying. The cartel then threatened to kill F., her brother, and her children if any of them reported the extortion to the police. Soon after F.’s brother stopped paying the cartel, F.

found his dead body in his home. After her brother's murder, F. reported the threats to the police, but they did not investigate and F. was unable to obtain protection for herself and her children. Cartel members then began threatening and extorting F. at the tortilla shop. When F. learned that cartel members had gone to her home to search for her and her children, she fled to the United States with E. and S. NIJC timely filed F., E., and S.'s applications for asylum with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***32. G. is a man from Honduras. His son, S., is a derivative on his application for asylum and is also independently eligible for asylum. They are currently awaiting the rescheduling of their next Master Calendar hearing. G. and S. speak Spanish and live in southern Illinois. (20-0142465)(20-0142466)***

G. made a living driving a taxi in Honduras. In 2019, members of the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) gang began threatening G. and attempting to forcibly recruit both G. and S. into the gang. The gang wanted G. to help them collect the money they were demanding from other taxi drivers, and also for G. to be a personal driver for members of the gang. Gang members also beat up S. on multiple occasions and waited for him outside his school to pressure him into joining the gang. G. attempted to report the threats against both him and son to the Honduran police, but officers refused to take his statement and sent him away. Shortly after going to the police, a gang member came to the bus depot where G. frequently worked to intimidate him there. G. fears that the gang discovered that he tried to report them to the police and will want to punish him and his son. G. decided that he and S. were no longer safe in Honduras and they fled to the United States shortly after. NIJC filed M. and J.'s applications for asylum with the immigration court in 2020. Because these applications were filed more than one year after G. and S. entered the United States, their pro bono attorneys will need to argue that they merit an exception to the one-year filing deadline for asylum eligibility. NIJC will assist them in making this argument. All affidavits and supporting materials to G. and S.'s case will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***33. M. is a man from Guatemala. His wife, H., and their two children, P. and N., are derivatives on his application for asylum and are also independently eligible for asylum. H.'s daughter, T., is a derivative on H.'s application for asylum and is also independently eligible for asylum. They are currently awaiting the rescheduling of their next Master Calendar hearing. M., H., P., N., and T. speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois. (20-0140212) (20-0140213) (20-0140214) (20-0140215) (20-0140216)***

M. and H. owned a small businesses in Guatemala. Armed gang members from the Mara 18 gang started threatening them at their business and demanding that they pay rent money to the gang. On one occasion, gang members robbed H. and T. when they refused to comply with their extortion demands. The gang threatened to kill the entire family if they reported the threats to the police. Gang members also followed T. to and from school and tried to force her to sell drugs for them. A friend of T.'s has since been killed by the gang for refusing the same demand. Fearing for their lives, M., H., T., P., and N. fled to the United States in 2019. M. and H. filed timely, *pro se* applications for asylum with the immigration court, and NIJC timely filed independent applications for T., P., and N. with the immigration court as well. All affidavits and

supporting materials to their case will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***34. X. is a man from Honduras. His daughter, I. is a derivative on his application for asylum and is also independently eligible for asylum. X. and I. are awaiting the rescheduling of their next Master Calendar hearing. X. and I. speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois. (20-0143463) (20-0143713)***

X. is an indigenous man from Honduras who owned land and fought for environmental rights in his community. A criminal organization took note of X.'s work and began forcibly recruiting him and demanding he give up the rights to his land. During the same period, X. participated in a national campaign with other members of the Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH) to protest the construction of a hydroelectric dam that would have disenfranchised indigenous landowners. The Honduran police began threatening X. for his participation in this campaign and demanded that he stop opposing the construction of the dam. The criminal organization that previously attempted to recruit X. also began threatening him for his participation in the campaign, leading X. to believe that the criminal organization was working with the police to put down the protests. X. fled to the United States with his daughter, I., in 2019. NIJC timely filed X. and I.'s applications for asylum with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will likely be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***35. L. is a woman from El Salvador. She is currently awaiting the rescheduling of her next Master Calendar Hearing. L. speaks Spanish and lives in northcentral Indiana. (19-0138522)***

L. ran a small business in El Salvador in a market controlled by the Mara 18 (M18) gang. Gang members extorted L.'s business and threatened to harm her if she did not pay. L. could not pay the gang and a few days later the gang members returned and physically assaulted her. L. avoided the market for a few weeks, but eventually returned because she had no other source of income. L. began paying extortion fees to the gang. When L. could no longer afford to make the payments, the gang members and a Salvadoran police officer returned to her business, threatened to kill her and physically assaulted her again. L. went to a police station over an hour away from her business and reported the extortion and beating. The police officer refused to take an official report. When L. returned to the market, the gang members were waiting for her. They shot at her and accused her of reporting them to the police. L. managed to escape the gang members and lived in hiding at a friend's house for a short time until she fled to the United States in 2019. NIJC timely filed L.'s application for asylum with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials for L.'s case will be due 30 days prior to her individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***36. R. is a man from Mexico. His wife, L., and his daughter, B., will be derivatives on his application for asylum, and are also independently eligible for asylum. R. and his family speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois. (19-0138307) (19-0138311)***

R. and his family lived in a rural community in central Mexico. In early 2019, members of the La Familia Michoacana, a Mexican drug cartel, shut down the electricity in R.'s village and sent messages to the residents informing them that the area was now under the control of the cartel. Cartel members started arriving at R.'s home and forcibly taking food and supplies from his family. Shortly after, members of the cartel began approaching R. and asking him to work for them. R. refused the requests of the cartel each time. Cartel members then attempted to kidnap L. and B. while they were on their way to B.'s school. Fearing further attacks from the cartel, R. and his family fled to the United States. Although R. and his family were issued Notices to Appear (NTAs) when they entered the United States, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has not yet filed their NTAs with the immigration court. Unless and until their NTAs are filed with the immigration court, USCIS retains initial jurisdiction over their applications for asylum. NIJC timely filed R., L., and B.'s skeletal applications for asylum with USCIS in April 2020. All affidavits and supporting materials for the family's case will be due one week prior to their interview at the asylum office, unless their NTAs are filed with the immigration court.

***37. P. is a man from Mexico. His wife, S. and his three daughters, E., G., R. will be derivatives on his application for asylum, and they are also independently eligible for asylum. P. and his family speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois. (20-0142076) (20-0142077) (20-0143342) (20-0143343) (20-0143344)***

In Mexico, P. worked for a bank. In 2018, a known member of a large drug cartel came to P.'s bank and demanded that P. open a bank account for him. P.'s bank would not approve the new account, and the cartel member became furious with P. Afterwards, the same cartel member started threatening P. and other members of the cartel contacted P. demanding money. Out of fear, P. left his job and relocated to another town, but he was unable to support his family and eventually resumed working at the bank. Despite his attempts to keep a low profile, the cartel continued to target and threaten P. and his family. Fearing escalating attacks from the cartel, P. and his family fled to the United States. Although P. and his family were issued Notices to Appear (NTAs) when they entered the United States, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has not yet filed their NTAs with the immigration court. Unless and until their NTAs are filed with the immigration court, USCIS retains initial jurisdiction over their applications for asylum. NIJC timely filed P., S., E., G., and R.'s skeletal applications for asylum with USCIS in September 2020. All affidavits and supporting materials for the family's case will be due one week prior to their interview at the asylum office, unless their NTAs are filed with the immigration court.

***38. J. is a woman from Honduras. Her son, D., is a derivative on J.'s application for asylum and is also independently eligible for asylum. J. and D. speak Spanish and live in northcentral Indiana. (20-0140392)(20-0140492)***

As a teenager, J. met the father of her two oldest children. The two began living together when J. became pregnant. In about 2010, J.'s partner became abusive and began carrying a gun. Around June 2010, J.'s partner fled to Tegucigalpa because he had run afoul of a local drug-trafficking group. The criminal group started threatening J. and her family as a way to get to her ex-partner. For years, J., her children, and her extended family received death threats from the criminal group. In mid-2012, police murdered J.'s partner at the behest of the organized crime group. J. reported the murder to police, but police laughed at her and dismissed her claim. She

and her family relocated within Honduras to hide, but the criminal group continued to stalk and threatened them. Around January 2019, J. fled to the United States with her youngest son, D. J. fears that if she is forced to return to Honduras with her son, they will be killed by the criminal organization that targeted them for nearly a decade. Although J. and D. were issued Notices to Appear (NTAs) by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) when they entered the United States, their NTAs have not yet been filed with the immigration court. Unless and until their NTAs are filed, USCIS retains initial jurisdiction over their applications for asylum. NIJC timely filed J. and D.'s skeletal applications for asylum with USCIS in 2020. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due one week prior to their interview at the asylum office, unless their NTAs are filed with the immigration court.

***39. R. and L. are a husband and wife from Honduras. Their children, P. and T., will be derivatives on their applications for asylum. The family is waiting for their next Master Calendar hearing to be rescheduled. R., L., P., and T. speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois. (19-0138764) (19-0138767) (19-0139752) (19-0139755)***

R. owned a dental practice in Honduras and L. worked as a teacher. In early 2019, members of the Mara 18 (M18) gang started extorting L. and one of her sons and threatening to kill them if they did not pay. When L. refused the gang's demands, gang members began threatening R. and threatening to kill the entire family if they continued to refuse to pay extortion fees to the gang. R. reported the threats to the police in Honduras, but the police did not investigate and the family was unable to obtain protection from the gang. Fearing for their lives, R., L., and their two daughters fled to the United States in 2019. NIJC timely filed the family's asylum applications. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***40. F. is a man from Mexico. His wife, C., and their children, T. and R., will be derivatives on his application for asylum and are also independently eligible for asylum. Their next Master Calendar hearing is scheduled for June 16, 2021. F. and his family speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois. (20-0143334) (20-0143335) (20-0143338) (20-0143339) (20-0143340)***

F. and his eldest son, T., were working together at their wood mill in Mexico when members of a cartel approached them and demanded that T. start working for them. F. refused to let the cartel take his son, and told the cartel members that T. wanted to remain with his family and earn an honest living. Soon after, the cartel members threatened to kill the entire family and kidnap T. if he did not work with them. The cartel gave the family two days to decide, and F. chose to flee with his wife and children. F., C., T., and R. entered the United States in December 2019. NIJC timely filed their applications for asylum. All documentation to F., C., T., and R.'s cases will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***41. L. is a man from Guatemala. L.'s merits hearing is on April 26, 2022. L. speaks Spanish and lives in Bloomington, Illinois. (14-0088061)***

When L. was about 14 years old, the Mara 18 (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 L. on the street and tried to hit him. His companion told him to stop, but the next day, the gang member went to L.'s home, flashed his gun, and told L. to leave by morning or he would kill him. L. left Guatemala immediately and entered the United States. He was apprehended by immigration officers and released from custody after he passed a credible fear interview. NIJC timely filed L.'s asylum application with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials to L.'s case will be due 30 days prior to his individual merits hearing in 2022.

***42. M. is a woman from El Salvador. Her children, O. and A., are derivatives on her application for asylum and are also independently eligible for asylum. O. and A.'s first Master Calendar hearing is on May 20, 2021, but their cases should soon be consolidated with their mother's case. M.'s merits hearing is on May 2, 2022. M., O. and A. speak Spanish and live in Chicago, Illinois. (20-0141496) (20-0142097) (20-0142098)***

M.'s ex-partner and father of her children is a gang member in El Salvador. Other members of his gang stalked and threatened M. frequently, and later kidnapped her children. Gang members told M. that her children belonged to the gang because their father was a gang member, and that M. belonged to her ex-partner. After multiple death threats and renewed threats of kidnapping, M. fled to the United States in 2018 and her children followed her in 2019. M. timely filed her asylum application with the immigration court in 2019. All affidavits and supporting documentation to M.'s case will be due 30 days prior to her individual merits hearing in 2022. Because O. and A. entered the United States as unaccompanied children, USCIS retains initial jurisdiction over their applications for asylum, even though they are also in removal proceedings. NIJC filed O. and A.'s applications for asylum with USCIS in September 2020. All affidavits and supporting documentation to O. and A.'s case will be due one week prior to their interview at the asylum office, which could occur at any time in the coming months.

***43. L. is a woman from El Salvador. Her sons, F. and N., are derivatives on L.'s application for asylum. L., F., and N.'s merits hearing is on January 30, 2023. L. and her sons speak Spanish and live in central Indiana. (18-0130104) (18-0130370) (18-0130372)***

L. and her family lived across the street from a house that the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) used for meetings. L. ran a small store in her home, selling pupusas, tortillas, and other goods. Gang members demanded food from L.'s store. Not wanting to support the gang, L. shut down her store. Later, gang members demanded that L.'s husband help them transport drugs and weapons in his car and threatened to kill him and his family if he ever told anyone about their activity. L.'s husband refused the gang's demands, and the gang threatened to kill their son, F., if he did not comply. Soon after, several gang members in an automobile followed F. on his motorcycle and rear-ended him, leaving him with severe wounds. The MS-13 continued to threaten L.'s family, eventually saying that they would kill L., her husband, and her sons if they did not vacate their home. Fearing for their lives, L. and her sons fled to the United States. NIJC timely filed L., F., and N.'s applications for asylum with the immigration court in 2019.

All affidavits and supporting materials to L.'s case will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing in 2023.

**44. J. is a young man from Honduras. His merits hearing is on February 15, 2023. J. speaks Spanish and lives in a northwest suburb of Chicago, Illinois. (19-0135978)**

When J. was four years old, his mother sold him to neighbors as a servant. The neighbors brutally abused J. for several years until he escaped to his mother's house. When his mother kicked him out of the house at the age of 13, J. worked a series of jobs while living with different family members. Eventually, he moved in with his sister's family and became the youngest member of a construction crew building new cells within a gang-controlled prison. Gang-affiliated prisoners immediately attempted to force J. to run drugs for them, and when J. ignored their demands, they threatened to send their associates outside the prison to kill J. and his family. As J. continued to receive threats, he also escaped a prison riot during which prisoners killed multiple police officers. Fearing for his life, J. fled Honduras in February 2018. J. timely filed his application for asylum. All affidavits and supporting materials to J.'s case will be due 30 days prior to his individual merits hearing in 2023.

**45. B. is a woman from El Salvador. Her children, W. and D., are derivatives on her application for asylum and are also independently eligible for asylum. B.'s merits hearing is on July 20, 2023. B. and her children speak Spanish and live in central Indiana. (17-0121105) (17-0121956) (17-0121957)**

B. ran a small business along with her partner, J., selling fruit in a market. J.'s daughter did not support the relationship. J.'s daughter's boyfriend is a Mara 18 gang member. When J. came to the United States, B. was left alone to run the business. Soon after, Mara 18 gang members took control of B.'s home and began extorting her business. The boyfriend of J.'s daughter and two other Mara 18 gang members kidnapped B. and gang raped her, taking photos to send to J. When B. became pregnant from the rapes, the Mara 18 members told her she had to get rid of the baby because it would cause problems for them with their girlfriends. B. denied her pregnancy but eventually could not hide it any longer. B. fled to the United States to avoid retaliation from the Mara 18 gang members for refusing to get an abortion. After arriving in the United States, B. missed a court date and was ordered removed in absentia. A few years later NIJC successfully reopened B.'s court case. Because B. and her children did not file their applications for asylum with the immigration court until more than one year after they entered the United States, B.'s pro bono attorneys will need to argue that they merit an exception to the one-year filing deadline. NIJC will assist them in making that argument. All affidavits and supporting documents to B.'s case will be due 30 days prior to their merits hearing in 2023.

**46. P. is a young man from Honduras. P. speaks Spanish and lives in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. (18-0124617)**

P.'s father regularly abused him throughout his childhood, up until his father's death in 2015. After his father's death, a local gang began to heavily recruit P. Although P. refused to join the gang, the gang forced P., under threat of death, to assist them with gang activity, such as transporting drugs, serving as a lookout, and robbing others. As the threats became more serious, P. decided to flee to in March 2017, fearing that the gang would force him to participate

in worse activities or kill him if he refused. Upon his entry into the United States, he was designated as an unaccompanied immigrant child. Although P. was issued a Notice to Appear (NTA), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has not filed the NTA with the immigration court so P. is not yet in removal proceedings. Unless and until DHS files the NTA with the court, USCIS maintains jurisdiction over P.'s asylum application. NIJC filed P.'s asylum application, but because it was filed more than a year after he entered the United States, P.'s pro bono attorneys will need to argue that he merits an exception to the one-year filing deadline. NIJC will assist his pro bono attorneys in making that argument. P.'s affidavit and other supporting documents will be due one week prior to his interview at the asylum office. The timeline for his interview is uncertain.

***47. P. is a man from Venezuela. His wife, R., and their two children, M. and S., are derivatives on his asylum application and also independently eligible for asylum. The family speaks Spanish and lives in a northwestern suburb of Chicago. (20-0141867) (20-0142622) (20-0142623) (20-0142624)***

P. and his wife, R., were active members of an opposition party in Venezuela. They participated in marches and party meetings, and provided supplies to support the party. Members of a *colectivo*, or armed paramilitary group, threatened to kill P. on multiple occasions for his political activities. In 2017, *colectivo* members detained P. after a protest and threatened to kill him and his family if he did not stop supporting the opposition. In 2019, *colectivo* members threatened P. and his wife R. at gunpoint while they were attending a protest. Later that same month, *colectivo* members forced P. out of his car and beat him in front of his family members. After this incident, P. and his family fled to the United States. P. filed his asylum application *pro se* with USCIS in April of 2020 and NIJC filed independent I-589 forms for R., M., and S. in July of 2020. P. and his family were issued Notices to Appear (NTAs) when they entered the United States, but the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has yet to file their NTAs with the immigration court. Unless and until their NTAs are filed with the immigration court, USCIS retains initial jurisdiction over their asylum applications. P., R., M., and S.'s affidavits and other supporting documents will be due one week prior to their interview at the asylum office.

***48. S. is a man from Eritrea. His next Master Calendar hearing is scheduled for April 1, 2022. S. speaks Tigrinya and lives in a western suburb of Chicago. (20-0145321)***

S. was an active member of the Pentecostal Church, which is a prohibited religion in Eritrea. He participated in meetings, bible studies and often talked about his faith with people he met. Neighbors told S. to be careful about sharing his faith because he was being watched. Around 2006, Eritrean military officials arrested, detained, and questioned S. about his religious practices. S. remained in prison for the next ten years. During that time, he was repeatedly beaten and forced to work on a large farm. The entire time, he refused to denounce his faith. Around 2016, S. was able to escape and fled to Sudan. He lived and worked in Sudan for about three years, but faced threats and witnessed violence from Sudanese military officials there. In 2019, S. fled to the United States. S. timely filed his application for asylum *pro se* with the immigration court. All affidavits and supporting materials to S.'s case will be due 30 days prior to his individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***49. M. is a man from Ecuador. He is currently awaiting the rescheduling of his next Master Calendar hearing date. M. speaks Spanish and lives in Chicago. (20-0145604)***

M. owned a small business in Ecuador where people could pay to use computers and printers. His shop was located near the local market where corrupt police officers frequently forced vendors to pay them in order to sell there. Around August of 2018, two officers left behind a flash drive after using computers in M.'s store. After they left, M. opened the flash drive and discovered evidence of the overcharging of market vendors. When the officers came back to retrieve the flash drive, they warned M. that he would have problems if he had looked at the contents of the flash drive and spoke out against them. Afterwards, M. began to receive threats from the police and a gang affiliated with the police. Around January of 2019, gang members kidnapped M. and took him to a remote location where they beat him and took his money. After this incident, M. fled the country, but people continued to come to his shop looking for him and threatened to harm his girlfriend and daughter, which led them to flee as well. NIJC plans to file M.'s asylum application with the immigration court in March 2021. Although M. is passed his one-year filing deadline, he merits an exception to the deadline and NIJC will assist his attorneys in making this argument. All affidavits and supporting materials to M.'s case will be due 30 days prior to his individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

***50. J. is a man from El Salvador. His son, D., is a derivative on J.'s application for asylum and also has an independent claim. They are awaiting the rescheduling of their next Master Calendar Hearing. J. and D. speak Spanish and live in Indianapolis. (20-0143863) (20-0143876).***

J. owned a car painting business in El Salvador. Soon after he opened his business, members of the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) gang began demanding that he pay them every couple of weeks. They threatened to kill him and his family if he did not obey. J. paid the MS-13 on a regular basis for almost eight years, but it became more difficult over time to make the payments. At some point, J. told MS-13 members that he would have to stop paying them. Around this time, J.'s son, D., and his stepdaughter, A., were walking home when a man attempted to kidnap them. J. closed his business and he and his son D. fled to the United States. J. timely filed his asylum application with the immigration court in July of 2020. All affidavits and supporting materials to their case will be due 30 days prior to their individual merits hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

## **Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS)**

*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.*

**51. W. is a 17-year-old boy from Mexico who will turn 18 in September of 2021. He speaks Spanish and lives in southeastern Wisconsin with his mother. (Racine County) (20-0141553) \*Urgent\***

W.'s father abandoned him when he was two years old. W.'s father never emotionally or financially supported him. W. lived with his mother until she came to the United States seeking work to provide for W. W. then lived with his older brother, but after they were threatened by cartel members, they feared for their lives and fled to the United States in December 2019. W. was apprehended and detained in the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, and was subsequently released to his mother in Wisconsin. A *pro bono* attorney will need to file a custody case on behalf of W.'s mother, and obtain an order finding that W.'s reunification with his father is not viable due to his abandonment, and that it is not in W.'s best interest to return to Mexico. This order must be obtained prior to W.'s 18<sup>th</sup> birthday in September of 2021.

**52. B. is a 14-year-old girl from Mexico who speaks Spanish and lives with her mother in Northwest Illinois (Whiteside County). (20-0145327)**

B.'s father came to the United States from Mexico in 2018, and has not supported B. since that time. The family believes he lives in California, but his contact with B. has been minimal, and he has provided no financial or other support. B.'s mother came to the United States shortly thereafter, and B. remained in Mexico with her maternal aunts. Due to threats against the family in Mexico, B. also fled to the United States in 2019, and now lives with her mother in Illinois. A *pro bono* attorney will need to file a petition on behalf of B.'s mother seeking sole allocation of parental responsibilities for B., and obtain an order finding that B.'s reunification with her father is not viable due to abandonment, and that it is not in B.'s best interest to return to Mexico.

**53. J. is a 12-year-old girl from Honduras. She speaks Spanish and lives in a northern suburb of Chicago with her mother. (Lake County) (20-0142589)**

J. has never had a relationship with her father. When J. was about five years old, her mother came to the United States fleeing persecution. J. was raised in Honduras by her maternal grandmother. J.'s father never emotionally or financially supported J. and she has not had contact with him since she was two months old. J.'s grandmother also began receiving threats from gang members and it was not safe for J. to remain with her, so in February 2020, J. came to the United States. She was apprehended and detained in the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, and was subsequently released to her mother in Illinois. A *pro bono* attorney will need to file a custody case on behalf of J.'s mother, and obtain an order finding that J.'s reunification with her father is not viable due to his abandonment, and that it is not in J.'s best interest to return to Honduras.

**54. K. is a 14-year-old boy from Guatemala. He speaks Spanish and lives with his mother in Chicago. (Cook County) (20-0142899)**

K.'s parents were never married, and K.'s father physically abused K.'s mother for many years. In approximately 2010, K.'s mother fled to the United States, leaving K. and his older siblings with their father. In December of 2018, K.'s father declared he could no longer support K., and sent K. to live with his maternal grandmother, where he suffered physical abuse by a relative. K.

fled to the United States in January of 2019, where he was apprehended and detained in the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, and subsequently released to the custody of his mother. A pro bono attorney will need to file a custody case on behalf of K.'s mother, and obtain an order finding that K.'s reunification with his father is not viable due to his neglect and abandonment, and that it is not in K.'s best interest to return to Guatemala.

## **NIJC Announcements**

Have any recent changes in immigration laws or procedures that affect your immigration case? Bookmark NIJC's [Immigration Procedural Update](#) page and check it frequently for news that may impact your pro bono case, including the updates listed below.

Public charge  
MPP FAQ