Welcome

Ashley Huebner,
Managing Attorney
National Immigrant Justice Center

Supporting Immigrants Post-Election

- Who is an immigrant? Share your client stories with friends, family, colleagues, and neighbors.
- Take an NIJC pro bono case (and encourage your colleagues to do so) to allow NIJC’s in-house resources to focus on the fight ahead.
- Prepare strong case records in anticipation of litigation.
- Donate!
National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC)

• Defends the human rights of immigrants at the individual and systemic level
• Provides legal services to 10,000+ immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers each year with the support of nearly 1,500 pro bono attorneys
• Challenges laws, policies, and practices that violate human rights through federal litigation
• Advocates for reform with members of Congress and the White House

NIJC’s Approach

• Advocate violations of human and constitutional rights
• Collaborate with community organizations
• Provide actionable recommendations to policy makers
• Challenge laws, policies, and practices that violate the Constitution or U.S. immigration laws through federal litigation
• Educate immigrants on their rights
• Provide low-cost or free legal representation to immigrants

Strategic Impact Litigation Advances Reform
Non-citizens do not have the right to appointed counsel, even when they are

- Facing deportation
- Asylum seekers
- Mentally ill
- Detained
- Children

Why are Pro Bono Attorneys Important for Immigrants?

Lawyers Make the Difference

Percent of cases where immigrants obtained relief 2005-2010

With representation 74%
Without representation 13%

NIJC's pro bono attorneys provide legal representation to people fleeing persecution and torture

> 90% NIJC's asylum approval rate

45% the nationwide asylum approval rate

NIJC's asylum approval rate
How NIJC’s Pro Bono Programs Work

An immigrant contacts NIJC and needs an attorney

NIJC staff conduct an in-depth case screening and assessment

If case is accepted, NIJC signs a retainer with the client and begins to look for pro bono placement

A pro bono attorney team accepts the case. NIJC remains of counsel and provides attorney support, document review, and technical assistance throughout the life of the case.

NIJC Resources for Pro Bono Attorneys

NIJC Resources for Pro Bono Attorneys

The Basics of Asylum Law

Ashley Huebner
National Immigrant Justice Center
Who are NIJC’s Asylum Clients?

The Asylum System

Asylum Office/Affirmative Process

File Affirmative Application

Asylum Office Interview

Grant

Referral

“Notice to Appear” Issued

Master Calendar Hearing

Merits Hearing

Immigration Ct/Defensive Process

Client apprehended at port of entry

Client apprehended internally

Unaccompanied child client apprehended

Client in U.S.; no NTA issued

The Asylum System

- An individual is eligible for asylum if she meets the definition of a refugee.
  - Immigration & Nationality Act (INA) § 208(b)(1)(A).

- A refugee is “any person who is outside any country of such person’s nationality . . . and who is unable or unwilling to return to, and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.”
  - INA § 101(a)(42)(A)
  - Definition based on international law: UN Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, Art (1)
Asylum: Elements

1. “Well-Founded Fear”
2. of “Persecution”
3. Perpetrated by the government or an entity the government cannot/will not control
4. “On account of”
5. – Race
   – Religion
   – Nationality
   – Political Opinion
   – Membership in a Particular Social Group

   These elements are SEPARATE!

“Well-Founded Fear”

Burden of Proof: reasonable possibility

- “One in ten” chance of persecution (INS v. Cardoza-Fonseca, 480 U.S. 421 at 431)

Established two ways:
1. Past persecution
2. Fear of future persecution

Argue both whenever possible!

Past Persecution

Past persecution
+ all other asylum elements

Rebuttable presumption of future persecution

Rebutted by

- changed circumstances
- safe, reasonable internal relocation
Future Fear Only

Subjectively genuine fear
objectively reasonable fear (with all elements)
+ no safe, reasonable internal relocation
Well-founded fear of future persecution

Asylum on a Humanitarian Basis

Past persecution + all asylum elements

Severity of Past Persecution
Possibility of Other Serious Harm
(No Nexus!)

Check the regs and case law
(Matter of Chen; Matter of L-S; Kholyavskiy).

“Persecution”: Look to Case Law

- Stanokova v. Holder, 645 F.3d 943 (7th Cir. 2011)
  - Three types
    1. Significant physical force against a person’s body,
    2. the infliction of comparable physical harm without direct application of force . . . , or
    3. nonphysical harm of equal gravity.

- Harm constituting persecution can be less for a child than an adult.
  See USCIS Guidelines and 7th Circuit law.

- Must be considered cumulatively.
  Nzeve v. Holder, 582 F.3d 678 (7th Cir. 2009).
The Persecutor Does Not Have to be the State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governmental Entity</th>
<th>Entity the Government is Unable OR Unwilling to Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>Gangs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>Paramilitary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Forces</td>
<td>Guerrilla Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential Guard</td>
<td>Family Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor</td>
<td>Vigilante Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Chief</td>
<td>Opposing Political Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paramilitary?</td>
<td>Others?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gangs?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“On Account of a Protected Ground

Persecution

Protected Ground
- Race
- Religion
- Nationality
- Membership in a PSG
- Political Opinion

Nexus On Account Of One Central Reason

Keep These Separate!

Burden of Proof for Nexus

- Protected ground must be "at least one central reason" for the persecution. Matter of J-B-N- & S-M-, 24 I&N Dec. 208 (BIA 2007)

- Persecutor can still have mixed motives. J-B-N- & S-M-, 24 I&N Dec. at 211; Shaikh v. Holder, 702 F.3d 897 (7th Cir. 2012).

- Circumstantial evidence can be sufficient to establish the persecutor’s motives. Martinez-Buendia v. Holder, 616 F.3d 711 (7th Cir. 2010)
**POLITICAL ASYLUM**

1. Race:
   - Broad meaning (Congolese Tutsis)
2. Religion
   - (Christian, Atheist)
3. Nationality:
   - Not just citizenship; can include ethnic or linguistic group. May overlap with race
4. Political Opinion:
   - Actual or Imputed (e.g. child of political activist, man who criticizes government’s military policy)
5. Membership in a Particular Social Group:
   - One of the most common and most complex bases for asylum

---

**What is a Particular Social Group?**

Based on a “common, immutable characteristic” that “members of the group either cannot change, or should not be required to change.”
- Matter of Acosta, 19 I&N Dec. 211, 233 (BIA 1985)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BIA Case Law</th>
<th>Seventh Circuit Case Law</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Can’t be overly broad</td>
<td>• Breadth is irrelevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Must be considered a group by society</td>
<td>• No social distinction test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “Former” status/past experience is not enough</td>
<td>• “Former” status/past experience is enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Groups can’t be overly diverse</td>
<td>• Diversity not an issue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


---

**What Can Form a Particular Social Group?**

- Former Employees
- Being a witness
- Resisting a criminal group

- “A former association with a group” - Escobar v. Holder
- “A shared past experience or status” - Cece v. Holder

---

National Immigrant Justice Center
What Bars Relief?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bars Asylum?</th>
<th>Bars Withholding/Withholding under CAT?</th>
<th>Bars Deferral under CAT?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One-Year Filing Deadline - INA § 208(a)(2)(B)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleeing Reestablishment - INA §208(b)(2)(A)(ii)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persecution - INA § 208(b)(1)(A)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism - INA §208(b)(2)(A)(i)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Serious Crime - INA § 101(a)(43)</td>
<td>Yes, if the aggregate term of imprisonment sentenced was at least five years it is a PSC. But other crimes may also be found to constitute a PSC, notwithstanding the prison sentence.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conviction of an Aggravated Felony as Defined in INA § 1326(a)</td>
<td>Yes - is a PSC</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Non-Political Crime Outside the U.S. - INA §208(b)(2)(A)(ii)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danger to the Security of the U.S. - INA § 208(b)(2)(A)(i)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Issues That May Impact the Case

- Certain events in the client’s life may make her eligible for other relief
  - Marriage
  - Victim of a crime
  - Your client should not file applications for any other immigration benefits without consulting you first.

- Other life changes may compromise eligibility
  - Travel
  - Marriage (in some cases)
  - Crimes (even convicted crimes) here or abroad

Contact NIJC immediately if there are changes in your client’s life or if you think your client might be eligible for other relief!

Other Protection-Based Relief

(Request All!!)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discretion</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Burden of Proof</th>
<th>Petition for Family?</th>
<th>FASFA?</th>
<th>Travel Abroad?</th>
<th>Become a Citizen?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asylum</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Persecution on account of a protected ground by govt/govt is unable or unwilling to control</td>
<td>Reasonable possibility (&gt; 10%)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withholding</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Same as asylum</td>
<td>More Likely than Not (&gt;50%)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relief under the Convention Against Torture</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Torture by the gov’t or within the gov’t’s acquiescence</td>
<td>More Likely than Not (&gt;50%)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preparing Your Case

Keren Zwick,
Managing Attorney
National Immigrant Justice Center

Who’s Involved: The Agencies

The Department of Homeland Security

• Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE)
  • Office of Chief Counsel (OCC)
  • Enforcement & Removal Operations (ERO)
• U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS)
  • Asylum Office
  • Customs & Border Protection (CBP)

The Department of Justice

• Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR)
  • Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA)
  • Immigration Courts

What to File

Asylum Office (Nebraska Service Center)

- Appearance form: G-28
- TVPRA Instruction Sheet (for unaccompanied children only)
- Asylum App (I-589) and 1 passport photo
- Two copies, plus an one copy for each deriv.
- No filing fee!

One week before the interview, file (with the Chicago Asylum Office)

- Legal memo
- Client affidavit/declaration
- Annotated index
- Supporting documentation, including identity documents, expert affidavits, and other corroboration

Immigration Court

- Appearance form: G-28
- Asylum App (I-589) and 1 passport photo
- Serve one copy of the I-589 on DHS
- No filing fee!

Prior to the merits hearing, file:

- Brief
- Client affidavit/declaration
- Annotated index
- Supporting documentation, including identity documents, expert affidavits, and other corroboration

Anytime you file anything with the Court, you must serve a copy on the government.
Keep the Big Picture in Mind

- Affidavit
- Legal Argument
- Corroborating Evidence

Step 1: Obtain Your Client's Immigration History

- There is no discovery in immigration proceedings.

- File a USCIS FOIA
  - Expedited processing if in removal proceedings – request Track 3 processing

- Client in removal proceedings: review the court file/hearing tapes

- Unaccompanied child: request the ORR file

Step 2: The Skeletal Asylum Application
Step 3: 
Drafting the Affidavit or Declaration

- Credibility is the most important part of any asylum case
- Can be based on demeanor, candor, inherent plausibility, consistency of statements (made any time/any circumstance)
- The adjudicator’s credibility determination will be based primarily on the client’s affidavit and testimony, so…

Your client’s affidavit is THE MOST IMPORTANT EVIDENCE in your case.

Affidavit Best Practices

- The most important document
- Statement of the client in his/her own voice
- Balancing detail
- Chronological
- Bulk of your prep time will be here: meet early and often
- Cover the 5 Ws + H
- Consider length


SAMPLES AVAILABLE ON NIJC’S WEBSITE

Affidavit of CLIENT
In Support of the Application for Asylum, Withholding of Removal and Relief under the Convention Against Torture

1. My name is CLIENT. I am a citizen of the Republic of the Congo. I fled to the United States with my children on DATE, because the Congolese military forced us, threatened us and tried to kill us. The military surmised to become my former partner, the father of my children, was involved in a plot against the government for the disappearance of his brother during the Dungan War in 1998.

No Background

2. I was born on DATE in Bujumbura, the capital of the Republic of the Congo. I had a fairly happy childhood. I am an only child and my parents loved me and were able to give me what I needed, even though we were not rich. I graduated from high school and then studied and graduated from medical school. When I returned to my country to become a doctor.

No Background

3. While my family life was happy at home, the political situation in my country was terrible throughout my childhood. There was always violence between ethnic groups, and different factions taking power. Most of the civil war in the Republic of the Congo has been between the north and the south fighting each other to rule the country. My family was never involved in the violence. We are a small part of people who had to keep living in the community. Even though my family was not involved in politics and didn’t have any violence, we listened, like all Congolese citizens, about the government’s corruption and the violence that came to people who opposed or questioned the government. I learned in a child but even though we say our children have “rights” to things like freedom of speech and the ability to criticize the government, the reality is that people are frequently hurt on purpose if they try to oppose the government.
Client Affidavit/Declaration Cont.

- “On May 1, 2010, three police officers invaded my home and arrested me” → too much detail
- “In early May, 2010, several police officers invaded my home and arrested me.” → good!
- “I am applying for asylum because I have a well-founded fear of persecution on account of my political opinion.” → too much legalese
- “I am applying for asylum because I am afraid the government will beat, torture, or kill me because of my work with a group that opposed the government.” → good!

Step 4: Corroborating Your Case

Corroboration is the second most important part of an asylum case.

Don’t leave it until the end!

Can be required “unless the applicant does not have the evidence and cannot reasonably obtain the evidence.”

But, “[t]he testimony of the application, if credible, may be sufficient to sustain the burden of proof without corroboration.” 8 C.F.R. §1208.13(a)

Corroborate each asylum element OR show why your client cannot reasonably obtain corroboration.

How Much Corroboration is Necessary?
Obtaining Corroboration

Country Conditions | Client-Specific | Past Persecution | Future Persecution
State Dept Human Rights Reports | Facts, dates, times, Rights, DATE OF ENTRY, IDENTITY | Forensic Medical Evaluation | Evidence of past incidents that may not rise to persecution
Amnesty Intl & Human Rights Watch | Physical Evidence: pictures, police reports, receipts | Mental Health Evaluation | Affidavits from similarly situated individuals who have suffered harm
UNHCR Refworld (www.unhcr.org/refworld) | Witness Affidavits | Medical Reports | Expert Affidavits (especially for court cases)
Domestic and Foreign News Sources | Google Earth, Hand Drawn Maps | Pictures | Country Conditions

Practice Pointers for Obtaining Corroborating Evidence

- Work with your client
- Establish chain of custody.
  - Ask you client how he/she obtained the document
  - Provide evidence of the document’s origin (e.g. copy of the envelope containing the postmark from the country of origin)
- If you doubt the authenticity of a document, leave it out.
- All foreign documents must be translated into English.

Presenting Corroborating Evidence
Step 5: Drafting the Legal Memo or Brief

- Keep it brief
  - Legal Brief (for cases before EOIR) < 30 pages
  - Legal Memo (for cases before the AO) < 10 pages
- Follow the elements & don’t conflate them.
- Case law:
  - Supreme Court
  - Federal Circuit Court of Appeals
    - Stick to the Seventh Circuit
  - Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) precedent decisions
- Preserve all arguments and claims to relief

Filing Format

- Follow the Immigration Court Practice Manual
- If filing requirements are not met (tabs, pagination, two-hole punch, certificate of service, etc.), the Court may reject your filing.
- Check notes from the status hearing for other requirements
- Copy of all filings must be submitted to DHS (use the OCC email address for e-filings)

Be sure to annotate your index and highlight important information in country condition reports

Presenting Your Case: the Asylum Office

Ashley Huebner,
National Immigrant Justice Center
The Asylum System

Asylum Office/Affirmative Process

- File Affirmative Application
- Asylum Office Interview
- Grant

Immigration Ct/Defensive Process

- Client apprehended at port of entry
- Client apprehended internally
- Unaccompanied child client apprehended
- “Notice to Appear” issued

- Master Calendar Hearing
- Merits Hearing

Asylum Office Timing

Day 1: Asylum application received by Nebraska Service Center (Clock starts to run).
Day 10-20: Receipt and biometrics notice issued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unaccompanied Children</th>
<th>All Other Applicants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6+ months later (?,): Receive interview notice approx. 2 weeks before the interview date</td>
<td>~3 years later: Receive interview notice approx. 2 weeks before the interview date (currently interviewing ~December 2013 applicants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 week before the interview</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 weeks after notice</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~10 days – 6 months later</td>
<td>Decision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While Your Case is Pending

- Develop rapport with your client
- Maintain contact
- Determine what evidence is important and available and begin to gather it, especially from abroad (remember that you must corroborate everything!)
- Connect your client with a therapist and/or medical doctor for evaluations, if appropriate (NIJC can help!)
- File a work authorization application for your client when s/he is eligible and track the timing for renewals
Work Authorization

- Can be difficult to obtain - depends on the “asylum clock”
- Clock begins to run when the asylum application is filed (received)
  - By USCIS for asylum office cases (affirmative asylum)
  - By the immigration court for court cases (defensive)
  *Note Policy New Change!
- Apply for an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) at 150 days/can be issued at 180
- Clock stops if the applicant causes a delay
  - Declines an expedited hearing date
  - Requests a continuance or a change of venue
- Clock begins to run again when delay has stopped

Asylum Office Advocacy

- Before the interview
  - Obtain an interpreter and practice with interpreter & client
  - Prep client with open-ended questions
  - Explain the interview process and clarify the non-adversarial nature of the interview.
- At the interview
  - Attend interview with your client
  - Expect informal setting
  - You must provide an interpreter
  - Take cues from the asylum officer
  - Prepare a closing, but be flexible
  - No same-day answer

After the Asylum Office Decision

- If you win:
  - Let NIJC know immediately (30-day deadline for benefits)
  - Work Authorization, Social Security Card & Benefits
  - Advise client to contact NIJC to apply for derivative family members
- If you lose, the case is not over:
  - Refer to the immigration court for de novo review
  - DHS issues Notice to Appear (NTA) placing client in removal proceedings
  - Client is now seeking asylum as a defense to removal
  - Let NIJC know immediately and consult with NIJC re: timing and next steps
Presenting Your Case: the Immigration Court

Keren Zwick, National Immigrant Justice Center

Filing Your Appearance in Court

- E-28 appearance form: file as soon as possible
  - Can file electronically once registered or in paper format

- E-Registry
  - All attorneys appearing before the immigration court and Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) MUST register with the Executive Office for Immigration Review’s E-Registry system in order to appear before the Court or BIA.
  - E-Registry contains both an electronic and an in-person identification component.
  - See [http://www.justice.gov/eoir/engage/eRegistration.htm](http://www.justice.gov/eoir/engage/eRegistration.htm) for more information.

Filing Your Asylum Application in Court

- Can be filed at the court window or in open court
- Review filing procedures to ensure sufficient copies and format
- Obtain a date-stamped copy for your own records (very important!)
- File early to potentially make your client eligible for a work permit. Talk to NIJC about consequences.
Master Calendar Hearing

- What it is: a status hearing:
- Hearing procedures:
  • Arrive Early! YOUR CLIENT MUST APPEAR!
  • File appearance form (E-28) if you haven’t already
  • Admit/deny charges; concede removability
  • Decline to designate country for removal
  • Relief sought (asylum, withholding, CAT)
  • Request interpreter, with specific dialect
  • Accept/decline expedited hearing date (remember EAD consequences).

Court Proceedings: Notice to Appear

The Notice to Appear (NTA) is the charging document that places an individual in removal proceedings.

- Allegations: correct with IJ if necessary; admit
- Charge(s): correct with IJ if necessary; concede charge/removability

Immigration Court: Case Timing

Varies tremendously depending on the type of case and the judge.

Please consult NIJC for a case-specific estimated timeline and to discuss the consequences of accepting or declining an expedited date.
Pre-Merits Hearing Issues

- Know your judge’s practice and preferences (contact NIJC)

- Filing Deadlines:
  - 15-day filing deadline for non-detained cases (unless the IJ tells you otherwise)
  - Review the Court’s file
  - Review the Immigration Court Practice Manual

- Contact ICE Office of Chief Counsel Trial Attorney
  - Not assigned until the month of the merits hearing. Contact ICE-OCC to find one which attorney will be handling your case.

Pre-Merits Hearing Issues: Fingerprints

- It is YOUR responsibility to obtain a fingerprint appointment for clients in court proceedings unless your client is detained or has previously been fingerprinted at an application support center.

- Fingerprints taken at the border do not count.

- If no fingerprints - NO RELIEF! IJ cannot grant relief and could deny the application for abandonment.

- See NIJC’s asylum manual and fingerprint FAQ for instructions

Evidence in Immigration Court

- Written:
  - Trial Brief
  - Supporting Documents
  - FRE do not apply (but will give more weight)

- Oral Testimony
  - Applicant
  - Fact witnesses, especially to corroborate identity
  - Experts
### Opening Statement

BE BRIEF: no more than about one to three minutes

- Offer a concise "roadmap"

- Brief review of the facts
  - Solomon is an Eritrean man
  - Persecuted for leaving the country without permission and evading forced conscription in the military
  - Perceived as a traitor
  - Country condition documentation
  - Letters from family members

- Brief mention of other major issues

### Direct Examination of Witnesses

- Key issue is credibility

- Don’ts
  - Don’t script answers
  - Don’t ask leading questions
  - Don’t waste time on irrelevant matters

- Do’s
  - Do follow a chronological story; use declaration as guide
  - Do draw the story out
  - Consider using visual aids, particularly maps
  - Make your record

### Preparing Your Client for Cross

- Anticipate questions

- Prepare client for leading questions

- Expect questions from judge

- Empower client, BUT remind client to maintain demeanor

- Remember cultural obstacles

- PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!
Closing Statement

➢ Take cues from the judge
➢ Make the legal argument
➢ Make the record
➢ Respond to issues

After the Merits Hearing

➢ If you win:
  – Let NIJC know immediately (30-day deadline)
  – For Court Cases, Need to get Client’s I-94
  – Work Authorization, Social Security Card & Benefits
  – Refer client to NIJC to apply for derivative family members

➢ If you lose, the case is not over:
  – Reserve right to appeal
  – Let NIJC know immediately
  – Appeal to BIA

Working With Your Client

Carolina Ramazzina Van Moorsel,
Asylum and Pro Bono Projects Supervisor
National Immigrant Justice Center
The First Meeting With Your Client

- Establish trust first! Don't just jump into the case.
- Explain your relationship with NIJC and your role in the process.
- Set up a regular communication and an emergency plan.
- Go through a road map of what you'll discuss in the meeting.
- Go through a road map of what will happen on his/her case.

Common First Questions

- What are my chances? Remind client of:
  - NIJC's screening process
  - Joint effort between attorney and client to achieve best possible result
  - Unpredictable immigration system
- When will I get a decision?
- Can I work? When?
- When can I bring my family here?

Other Client Meetings

- Explain the purpose of the documents you are preparing.
- When preparing your affidavit keep in mind:
  - Clients endured trauma, they might have a hard time explaining what happened and remembering details.
  - Different people tell their stories in different ways – you might need to help them with developing a timeline.
  - Don't try to get it all out in one day.
- Encourage your client to go to counseling. If they aren't yet connected with services, contact us. NIJC can help you with referrals.
Important Tips

- Be prepared for questions beyond the scope of the case.
- Empower your client and promote independence.
- Manage expectations on decision timing.

THANK YOU!

For more information contact
Carolina Ramazzina Van Moorsel
312-660-1307
cramazzinavanmoorsel@heartlandalliance.org

Other ways to support NIJC:
- NIJC Annual Appeal
- Twitter: @NIJC
- Facebook: facebook.com/immigrantjustice