



National Immigration Summit

From Harm to Hope: Supporting Kids and Empowering Communities through Advocacy and Practice

September 25th | 1:00 PM ET | 12:00 PM CT | 10:00 AM PT

Featured Speakers



Priya Pandey, Policy Analyst, Immigration and Immigrant Families, Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

Priya Pandey is a policy analyst on the Immigration and Immigrant Families team at CLASP, where she focuses on immigrant access to public benefits, ICE enforcement actions, children in immigrant families, and the intersection of childcare and immigration policy. Her work supports CLASP's broader anti-poverty and racial equity agenda.



Suma Setty, Senior Policy Analyst, Immigration and Immigrant Families, Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

Suma Setty is a Senior Policy Analyst on CLASP's immigration and immigrant families team and the daughter of Indian immigrants. She manages the team's research portfolio and is currently engaged in research projects that assess immigrants access to public benefits as well as documenting the impact of recent immigration enforcement activities on young children. Prior to CLASP, Suma worked at the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) a university-based policy research center, leading and coordinating mixed-methods policy research with low-income families on paid leave, immigration enforcement, and immigrant integration. She has presented her research findings to affected communities, advocates, and state and federal policymakers. In her work at CLASP, she analyzes evidence on the harms of immigration enforcement on children and

strategically integrates research into policy advocacy efforts. She also co-chairs the Children Thrive Action Network's and Protecting Immigrant Families' research working groups. She holds an MPH from Columbia University and a BA in Environmental Studies and Political Science from Macalester College



Wendy Cervantes, Director of Immigration and Immigrant Families, Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

Wendy Cervantes is the director of immigration and immigrant families. In this role, she oversees the organization's cross-team work to develop and advocate for policies that support low-income immigrants and their families. She is an expert on the cross-sector policy issues that impact children of immigrants, including economic security, child welfare, immigration, education, health care, and human rights. Prior to joining CLASP, Ms. Cervantes was Vice President of Immigration and Child Rights at First Focus

where she led the organization's federal policy work on immigration and established the Center for the Children of Immigrants. Ms. Cervantes also served as Director of Programs at La Plaza, a Latino community-based organization in central Indiana, where she oversaw the implementation and evaluation of education, health, and social service programs. Earlier in her career, Ms. Cervantes worked at the Annie E. Casey Foundation where she managed the national immigrant and refugee families and the District of Columbia portfolios. She also has experience as a community organizer and an adult ESL instructor. The proud daughter of Mexican immigrants, Ms. Cervantes holds an M.A. in Latin American Studies and Political Science from the University of New Mexico and a B.A. in Communications from the University of Southern California.



Rachel Prandini, Managing Attorney, Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC)

Rachel is one of ILRC's managing attorneys based in San Francisco. Rachel focuses on immigrant youth issues, including unaccompanied minors and immigrant youth in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Rachel provides technical assistance and trainings to immigration and state court attorneys, social workers, and judges. She works on statewide and national policy that affects the rights of immigrant youth and is frequently consulted for her expertise in Special Immigrant Juvenile Status. Rachel co-authored the

ILRC's publication *Special Immigrant Juvenile Status and Other Immigration Options for Children and Youth*.

Prior to joining the ILRC, Rachel represented detained and released unaccompanied minors in removal defense and led a project focusing on Special Immigrant Juvenile Status at Esperanza Immigrant Rights Project in Los Angeles. While at Esperanza, Rachel also performed "Know Your Rights" work in southern California immigration detention

centers for minors. Previously, Rachel worked as an associate at Paul Hastings, LLP and volunteered as a Child Advocate for unaccompanied minors. Rachel earned her law degree from the University of California at Davis, where she was a member of the Immigration Law Clinic and worked on complex deportation defense cases and detention issues. She received her undergraduate degree from Westmont College, where she double-majored in philosophy and political science. Rachel is admitted to the bar in California. She is conversant in Spanish.



University of Virginia.

Anne Kelsey, Senior Policy Analyst for Disability Rights, Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights

Anne Kelsey (she/her) is the Senior Policy Analyst for Disability Rights at the Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights, where she focuses on the intersection of immigration and disability rights for unaccompanied and similarly situated immigrant children. Anne has worked on disability and health rights issues for more than a decade. She has previously held positions at the Center for HIV Law and Policy; the Community Service Society of New York; and at Disability Rights Advocates. Anne received her J.D. from Fordham University School of Law and her undergraduate degree from the



years, Esther has worked to advance the well-being of immigrant families through direct services, community organizing, organizational leadership, advocacy and research.

Esther Reyes, Campaign Strategist, Protecting Immigrant Families (PIF)

Esther Reyes is Campaign Strategist for the Protecting Immigrant Families coalition (PIF) and is responsible for leading the engagement of PIF member organizations and key allies in strategic projects and campaigns. Before joining PIF, Esther served as Director of Immigration Policy and Advocacy at the Children's Defense Fund-Texas. There, she collaboratively launched Seguro Texas, a statewide campaign that reached tens of thousands of immigrant families across the state with the message that it's safe to enroll eligible family members in public programs. For over 15



Melissa Stek, Advocacy Communications Consultant, MountainGem Advocacy & Communications
Melissa Stek is the founder and lead consultant of [MountainGem Advocacy & Communications](#). She helps organizations and campaigns amplify their voice and stories towards their advocacy goals. With experience as a social worker, organizer, researcher, educator, legislative assistant, lobbyist, and communications specialist in the immigrant rights movement, Melissa brings a robust set of skills and expertise to her clients. She is the proud great-granddaughter of immigrants and lives with her partner in Grand Rapids, Michigan.



Linda Corchado, Senior Director of Immigration, CHILDREN AT RISK (C@R)
Linda Corchado is Director of CHILDREN AT RISK's Children's Immigration Network. Linda is a graduate of Swarthmore College where she studied Political Science and minored in Latin American Literature. Linda lived in New York City where she attended law school at Cardozo and then moved back to El Paso where she spent many years working in immigration advocacy around such issues as separation of families, unaccompanied minors and working to reform the immigration court system. Linda's passion for immigration issues comes from personal experience in

that both of her parents were born in Mexico and Spanish was her first language.



Liv Cook, Public School Strong TN Campaign Organizer, Statewide Organizing for Community eMpowerment (SOCM)

Liv is the lead public education organizer for Statewide Organizing for Community eMpowerment (SOCM). Through the Public School Strong TN campaign, local leaders are trained to build strong, grassroots campaigns to win the honest, equitable, safe, and fully-funded schools their communities deserve. Public School Strong teams across the state connect on common issues to shift the balance of power in Tennessee. Before joining SOCM, Liv was a public

school special education teacher in rural East Tennessee, where she still lives and organizes.



Alison Hard, Director of Public Policy, National WIC Association

Ali is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist with a wealth of experience in federal nutrition policy. Her educational background includes a BA from Columbia University and a Masters in Nutrition and Public Health from Teachers College, Columbia University. Ali previously served as the Chief Policy Officer at USDA Food and Nutrition Service and played a crucial role on the House Committee on Education and Labor, where she led federal nutrition program and other health and human services policy. She also served as Senior Associate for Federal Government Affairs and Federal

Government Affairs Manager at the National WIC Association. Her return to NWA in November 2023 coincided with the exciting anticipation of her first child, who has a special connection to WIC, as her husband's family relied on WIC as new immigrants in the 1980s and 1990s.



Viridiana Marin, East TN Community Organizer, Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition

Viridiana Marin, originally from Puebla, Mexico, is a passionate organizer and advocate for immigrant and refugee rights, as the East TN Regional community organizer for the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC), Viri works to cultivate grassroots leadership alongside families, workers, students, and faith leaders. She believes in the power of our stories and the change we can create when we come together, center those stories, and address the challenges our communities face.

In response to the harmful legislation proposed by the state of Tennessee this year, she led efforts to protect every child's right to public education, regardless of race, income, or immigration status. Viri's lived experience as an immigrant and mother fueled her work with parents, students, and educators to ensure schools remain a place of opportunity and belonging.



**Ninfa Amador-Hernandez, Maryland Policy Manager,
CASA**

Ninfa Amador-Hernandez is CASA's Maryland Policy Manager, dedicated to advancing immigrant rights, supporting working-class families, and leading Maryland campaigns with a focus on healthcare expansion for immigrants and housing justice. Originally from Honduras and raised in the DMV area, Ninfa's experiences with undocumented and Black communities fueled her passion for transformative, people-centered public policy. She graduated summa cum laude from Randolph College in 2022 with a

degree in political science.

Outside of the policy realm, Ninfa enjoys podcasts, outdoor activities, and spending time with loved ones.