ANNUAL REPORT 2002-2003

Protecting and promoting the basic human rights of immigrants of all nationalities in Florida
Dear FIAC Friends and Supporters:

Because you share our belief that immigration is one of our country’s strengths, you know that representation and advocacy must be available to immigrants in need. Your support has helped FIAC emerge as a leading force in immigrant advocacy through multifaceted programming that protects and promotes the rights of immigrants.

We see immigrants’ rights threatened constantly, as Florida has become the nation’s testing ground for anti-immigrant measures and enforcement, including: mandatorily detaining asylum seekers from certain nations, forcing asylum seekers to wear electronic monitoring bracelets, criminally prosecuting asylum seekers using false documents to enter the country, deputizing local law enforcement officers to enforce immigration law, and implementing unreasonable restrictions on driver’s licenses.

History has shown that advocacy groups, which protect human rights and defend the freedoms we enjoy as citizens, are the driving force in changing society. Without FIAC and others serving as watchdogs in Florida, punitive government policies enacted here recently may be implemented elsewhere and thus be detrimental to even more immigrants throughout the country. FIAC aims to forestall the steady erosion of immigrants’ civil and human rights resulting from actions undertaken in the name of domestic security.

FIAC’s efforts in bringing public attention to these injustices continue to meet with success. But the unprecedented challenges that immigrants face since September 11th are forcing FIAC to become more visible, more innovative, and more effective than ever.

The operating revenue for 2002 represents an increase of more than 70% in comparison with our starting-year budget in 1996. FIAC continues to be fiscally responsible and stretch the funds that are beginning to recede even as the importance of our work expands. We must, however, seek new and ongoing sources of revenue to continue crucial services on behalf of thousands of immigrants.

We owe a debt of thanks to our Board of Directors, for guiding FIAC through such tremendous growth in the last seven years; and to our funders and donors, for placing their confidence in our ability to protect and promote the rights of so many who desperately seek our services.

Gratefully,

Cheryl Little, Esq.
Executive Director
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2002 FIAC closed 6,122 cases and continued its advocacy efforts through multiple channels. FIAC's recent accomplishments include:

ADVOCACY

Seeking fair treatment for asylum seekers, immigrants defending themselves from deportation, and others with affirmative claims.

Working to restore immigrants' access to food stamp and Medicaid benefits, and to secure eligibility for driver licensing.

Litigating Convention Against Torture claims in federal courts to protect detainees from being returned to countries where they will be imprisoned and tortured.

Litigating issues that have an impact on many immigrants, such as prolonged detention of Haitians and the use of bone and dental exams to establish age.

Winning landmark cases extending asylum protection to a new class of domestic violence victims, to children forced to join street gangs, and to groups opposing the current government in Haiti.

Helping shape the new T-visa for trafficking victims.

Encouraging the Department of Homeland Security to improve conditions for immigrants in detention.

Submitting amici curiae briefs in key cases before the U.S. Supreme Court and the Board of Immigration Appeals.

TRAINING

Training shelter advocates and social service providers regarding victims of domestic violence and human trafficking.

Educating detainees about their rights.

Overseeing training and education programs on trafficking issues in a seven-state region.

Disseminating information statewide through fact sheets, e-newsletters, conferences, training sessions and media relations.

Training legal services and pro bono attorneys as well as judicial staff regarding the rights of immigrant children in state court.

Training and consulting with federal and state public defenders and immigration attorneys regarding the immigration consequences of crimes.

Providing technical support for dozens of agencies, organizations, and individual advocates working with immigrants.

PARTNERING

Extending services by drawing on pro bono attorneys donating more than 7,000 hours of work, and legal interns, who also gave more than 7,000 hours.

Working closely with local and state government, the private sector, major law firms and community-based organizations to create new strategies for better treatment of immigrants.

Organizing dozens of immigrant rights organizations and hundreds of advocates through the Florida Immigrant Coalition, a network that relays information and works for change.

Partnering with national groups, such as Amnesty International, ACLU, Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, and Women's Commission for Refugee Women & Children to forestall the erosion of civil and human rights.

Partnering with law firms to litigate cases.

Collaborating with other organizations to provide comprehensive services to trafficking victims.
Impact Advocacy
FIAC employs creative strategies to fight discriminatory policies, including litigating, informing the media, advising elected officials, working closely with local leaders and national advocacy groups, meeting with immigration officials to clarify local implementation of policies, negotiating settlements, and releasing reports about specific problems.

Children's Legal Project
Represents unaccompanied minors held in detention at Boystown and immigrant children who are dependents of the state.

LUCHA: A Women's Legal Project
Helps women resolve their immigration status without the assistance of their abusive domestic partners. Also represents victims of trafficking and coordinates services with partner organizations to ensure that these clients receive social, employment and mental health services.

Immigration Court Representation
Defends immigrants with complex cases in immigration court, often raising cutting-edge issues.

Affirmative Claims including Asylum
Files affirmative claims for immigrants from all over the world, focusing on complex asylum cases.

Detention Project
Defends the basic freedoms of detainees, including immigrant women and children, and monitors conditions of detention to bring about systemic change.

Pro Bono Project
In conjunction with the Cuban American Bar Association (CABA), refers low-income, Spanish-speaking immigrants to pro bono attorneys for assistance with general civil matters, and handles uncontested divorces.

Florida Immigrant Coalition
FIAC houses the Coalition, a collective of community-based organizations promoting fair policies for immigrants in Florida.
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

INCOME 2002

Government Contracts 50%
Foundation Grants 43%
Contributions 3%
Events 3%
Interest & Misc. 1%

Sources of Support & Revenue

2002
Government Contracts $1,191,834
Foundation Grants 1,001,691
Events 61,422
Contributions 60,306
Interest & Misc 16,907
Total $2,332,160

2001
Contributions $33,757
Foundation Grants 1,124,771
Government Contracts 813,000
Legal Fees 6,504
Interest & Misc 16,679
Events 48,509
Total $2,043,220

EXPENSES 2002

Programs & Services 88%
Management & General 12%

Expenses

2002
Program & Services $2,072,799
Management & General 291,853
Total $2,364,652

2001
Program & Services $1,923,935
Management & General 349,953
Total $2,273,888
SINCERE THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS

Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center is extremely grateful to the following funders, who have enabled us to serve more than 36,000 clients since FIAC opened its doors in 1996.

Abriendo Puertas
ACCESS Project
Allegany Franciscan Foundation/Dade County
American Bar Association
- Immigration Pro Bono Development Project
American Immigration Lawyers Association
Annie E. Casey Foundation
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Venice
Center for the Advancement of Human Rights at Florida State University
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Robert Lee & Thomas M. Chastain Foundation
CitiGroup Foundation
Colombia University Public Interest Law Foundation
Community Catalyst
Community Partnership for the Homeless/Homeless Assistance Center
Coral Gables Congregational Church
Cuban American Bar Association
Dade Community Foundation
- New Americans Project
- South Florida Community AIDS Project
Dade County Alliance Against Domestic Violence
Diageo

echoing green foundation
Equal Justice Works (formerly NAPIL)
- The Florida Bar Foundation
- Greenberg Traurig
- Mellon United National Bank
The Florida Bar Foundation
- Administration of Justice
- Civil Legal Assistance
- Emma Lazarus Grants
- Legal Assistance to the Poor
- Summer Fellowships
- Technical Assistance
Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Florida Department of Children and Families
- Refugee Program
- Special Immigrant Juveniles
Florida International University Victim Advocacy Center
The Ford Foundation - Public Interest Projects
Freedom Network Trafficking in Persons Training Institute
The Funding Exchange - Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media
Gaea Foundation
Health Foundation of South Florida

Conrad N. Hilton Fund for Sisters
Holland & Knight
- Chesterfield Smith Community Service Fellowship
Hope for Haiti
Immigrant Health Access Improvement Project
Immigrant Legal Resource Center
International Rescue Committee - Florida Freedom Partnership
Junior League of Miami
Ebel & W. George Kennedy Family Foundation
Tae John S. & James L. Knight Foundation
Levi Strauss Foundation
Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Services
Miami Coalition for the Homeless
Miami-Dade County
- Immigration Emergency Fund
- Department of Human Services
National Immigration Law Center
New York University Public Interest Law Foundation
Norman Foundation
NOW Legal Defense Fund
One Nation
The Reebok Human Rights Foundation
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St. Francis Medical and Health Care Foundation
Sisters of the Humility of Mary
- H. M. Grants for the Poor
- Ministry Endowment Fund
- Salmon Memorial Fund
Skadden Fellowship Foundation
George M. & Mabel H. Scoulum Foundation
State of Florida Office of Attorney General
State Welfare Redesign Grants Pool
Target Corporation Community Relations
U.S. Department of Justice
- Office of Refugee Resettlement
- Violence Against Women Office
United Way of Miami-Dade County
Women's Fund of Miami-Dade County
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