

ARKANSAS
JUSTICE
COLLECTIVE

SINGING THROUGH THE STORM

2018 ANNUAL REPORT



arkansaslaw.org



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The American Immigration Council estimates that 70,000 undocumented immigrants comprised 48 percent of the immigrant population and 2.4 percent of the total state population in 2014. During the same period, 1 in 20 children in the state was a U.S. citizen living with at least one undocumented family member (33,354 children in total).

ARKANSAS JUSTICE COLLECTIVE

SINGING THROUGH THE STORM

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Six-year-old Elizabeth came into our Springdale office sporting pink crocs, black tights, and a pink tutu. Her black tee-shirt had pink sequin faux suspenders, read “Pony Power,” and featured two brightly colored ponies flying through space on rainbows. Four pink ribbons adorned her hair, black as coal. “*Se viste sola*,” her mom said, laughing, “She dresses herself.” The humor and resilience her mom showed in the face of deportation proceedings is not uncommon, and neither were her family’s legal needs. According to the Migration Policy Institute, around 5% of Arkansas’ population is foreign born, totaling around 139,000 residents in 2016. The percentage growth of foreign born individuals in Arkansas is nearly double that of the nation as a whole. Contributing to this growth, the [Office of Refugee Resettlement has released hundreds of unaccompanied minors to sponsors in Arkansas over the last four years.](#)

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Stephen Coger established the Arkansas Justice Collective (AJC) in 2015 after years of learning from and working alongside Latinx immigrants, people from the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and [LGBTQIA+](#) people in Northwest Arkansas (NWA). AJC is a nonprofit law firm born of an understanding that people who are forced to live at the margins because of their immigration status lack access to life chances such as medical care, education, and driver’s licenses. Many NWA immigrants and refugees are in danger of deportation, sometimes for merely driving without a license they are not allowed to have. These threats of detention and deportation due to immigration status simultaneously limit people’s access to opportunities and make them vulnerable to exploitation by employers and others. That is why providing immigration legal services is the primary mission of the Arkansas Justice Collective. We see immigration law as interconnected with people’s dignity and needs. Initially, AJC practiced immigration law exclusively. However, given the changing politics in the country, AJC expanded its services and began representing undocumented immigrant children in guardianship proceedings to ensure that they have all the support and care they need.

When Elizabeth left our meeting, it was raining a hard summer rain and she paused on her walk through the parking lot to dance and sing in the rain. Her mother had to take her by the hand to end the impromptu dance session.

We hope you feel inspired by Elizabeth’s singing and dancing, by the brilliance and resilience of all the clients AJC serves, and also by AJC’s work throughout Arkansas. Please read on and let us know what you think. For more information on our organization, including how to contact us, please visit www.arkansaslaw.org.



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ARKANSAS JUSTICE COLLECTIVE

MISSION:

The Arkansas Justice Collective works to protect immigrant livelihoods through the practice of immigration law. We also advance justice through direct advocacy and published reports on situations that hurt LGBTQIA+ people, black and brown people, indigent people of all colors, and other vulnerable populations.

VISION:

The Arkansas Justice Collective envisions a world where no one lives in fear of state violence like deportation raids and unfair policing. We see communities connecting locally and internationally to build a world where we all live and thrive in ways that sustain healthy lives for the planet and all the beings living on it.



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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Since 2015, the Arkansas Justice Collective has served thousands of people, nearly all of them immigrants and refugees, by advocating for their rights and providing them with free or low-cost legal representation and advice. As of this writing, undocumented immigrant children who have survived abuse, abandonment, or neglect comprise over half our caseload. AJC remains the only Arkansas nonprofit law firm representing non-citizens in deportation defense. The need is greater than our resources, and the national political climate and recent changes in immigration law and policy have, by design, made the process of helping immigrants in these situations increasingly challenging.

Arkansas Justice Collective Has Served Thousands Of People

Despite these challenges, we continue to move ahead creatively. The program known as [DACA, or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals](#), is in limbo because the president has attempted to end it. For many young people though there remains a lesser-known opportunity called [Special Immigrant Juvenile Status \(SIJS\)](#). SIJS has helped many undocumented young people in NW Arkansas by providing them a path to citizenship. AJC uses SIJS to help protect young people from deportation, and thanks to a collaboration with another local nonprofit, SIJS is also helping undocumented children gain access to Medicaid for children.



Arkansas Justice Collective Director Stephen Coger (left) visiting with a Client



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Additionally, we have increased our outreach to schools and juvenile courts to ensure that we find undocumented children who can proactively apply for immigration relief. Rather than the more expensive and traumatic task of applying defensively once they have been placed in deportation proceedings, many children who have survived abuse, neglect, or abandonment qualify for a path to citizenship and are simply unaware of it. This distinction—applying affirmatively versus applying defensively—is very important as applying affirmatively is less expensive and less traumatic. It avoids multiple long trips to the immigration court in Memphis where people are often ordered deported. When AJC is able to find young people who are not in deportation proceedings, we can apply for a path to citizenship in a way that is not exactly simple, but comparatively inexpensive and less frightening for the applicant.

We also conduct outreach by visiting poultry plants, going to classes where immigrant parents are learning English, and attending worship services all over Arkansas. Outreach is an important part of what we do because it is estimated that over 15% of undocumented immigrants qualify for a path to citizenship and either do not know they qualify or simply cannot afford to access legal services.

At AJC, we know that a major indicator of the strength of an organization is its capacity to collaborate. Our goal is to serve as part of a wider network so that immigrants know we are a reliable resource and can access our services. Thanks to funding from generous donors, AJC further developed its connections with Catholic Charities Immigration Services, area schools, and also moved forward with new partnerships. Specifically, we teamed up with a local organization dedicated to helping young survivors of abuse (ages 0-5). Children who have survived tragic situations can sometimes help their undocumented family members qualify for a path to citizenship, making this new partnership crucial to connecting immigrant families to our services. Other new collaborations include connecting immigrant and refugee children with mentors. Another helps families by referring them to HARK Northwest Arkansas. HARK NWA built a cloud-based referral system that, with the help of Mercy Hospital, enables AJC clients to more efficiently obtain holistic services including mental health, housing, and food support.

As a result of our outreach, we have found many immigrant parents and adult children who qualify for a path to citizenship through the filing of [I-601A Waivers of Unlawful Presence](#). Through these waivers, a documented parent or spouse explains to United States Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) why they would suffer extreme hardship in the absence of their loved one. Approved waivers mean a path to work authorization and eventually citizenship for many immigrants in Arkansas. As we help clients elaborate on the relevant hardship in our memoranda to USCIS, we might explain and provide evidence regarding the documented person's mental health needs and/or their limited income. Often, our clients live with severe disabilities and depend on their undocumented spouse for their basic subsistence needs. In the bizarre, labyrinthine systems of immigration, a severe mental health disability becomes a sort of

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AJC's youngest client is 9 months old and was separated from his grandmother at the border. She brought him to Arkansas because his mother passed away while giving birth. AJC has served the family by having her appointed guardian of her grandson. We also prepared and filed the application for SIJS for the child. We referred the grandmother to another attorney for her deportation proceedings.

boon to an immigrant's application, potentially enabling a family member to work and drive legally.

In addition to our immigration services, we have helped grow justice in other ways. Alongside a Latinx activist, [we organized "Don't Deport Dad," a Father's Day rally with gospel music and free ice cream aimed at raising awareness around the harm caused by 287g.](#) 287g is a xenophobic program aimed at initiating deportation proceedings against the county's immigrant and refugee residents; and, the county sheriff has chosen to participate in it. We helped the city of Fayetteville identify and end a very problematic practice of over-policing a particular neighborhood, one of the few remaining bastions of affordable housing in the city and one of the few places in town where many black and brown people live. We filed Freedom of Information Act paperwork with Arkansas courts which seemed to be running debtors' prisons. [This advocacy actually led to a lawsuit against one such court in White County](#) which we hope will help protect low-income people living there. Also outside the realm of immigration law, we began facilitating the Relationship Skills Class (RSC). The RSC helps foster safer, more resilient and connected communities by offering people -- especially LGBTQI+ people -- a space to examine their relationship patterns and to practice new ways of engaging that are in alignment with their values and goals.

When we look to the future, we see AJC expanding the geographic reach of our immigration legal services.

When we look to the future, we see AJC expanding the geographic reach of our immigration legal services. We have just begun to establish a Little Rock office, and we hope to further expand our reach into central and eastern Arkansas. We eventually hope to have a staff member in Memphis who would attend hearings with our clients before the immigration judges there. This growth will be important because it is risky and financially burdensome for a client far from NW Arkansas to travel to our Springdale office and because the Springdale office staff have limited resources for travel around the state. In order for us to broaden our service reach, we hope to find support for these offices. Furthermore, we intend to expand our legal representation to serve more adult immigrants not only for affirmative filings, but also for defensive filings; that is, when they are in deportation proceedings. Due to our limited resources, we often refer undocumented adults to other attorneys who are members of the [American Immigration Lawyers Association \(AILA\)](#). Ideally, we would represent a whole family to determine how best to serve the needs of everyone.

With your support and encouragement, we know that AJC can continue to grow and help create an Arkansas where immigrants and refugees live securely and have equitable access to life chances like education and health care. I hope you enjoy this, our first-ever report.

Thank you for reading!

Yours,

Stephen Cogger

Arkansas Justice Collective, founder & director



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BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Frank Head has worked on immigrant and refugee issues for nearly three decades, and he mentored the Arkansas Justice Collective into existence. Frank is the director of Catholic Charities Immigration Services in Springdale, Arkansas. He continues to guide AJC, while helping us reach clients and find the necessary funding to represent them.



Bertha Gutierrez worked for years as a financial counselor for low-income immigrant families. She has since become a full-time artist. In her capacity as an AJC board member, she has put her financial acumen to use and ensured the financial viability and sustainability of AJC. She has also designed some gorgeous fliers.



Stephen Coger worked at a nonprofit law firm in Arkansas for years before serving abroad as a Fulbright Scholar. Stephen attended law school as a Gates Public Service Law Scholar and worked internationally on immigrant and refugee issues before returning home in 2015 to focus on immigration.



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Iris Aquino



Skye Austin



Mayra Esquivel



Maria Cueva



Laura Villegas

STAFF

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Iris Aquino is AJC’s asylum specialist. She also handles various other types of cases, and joined AJC after years of working for immigrants and refugees in Arkansas.

Skye Austin is AJC’s first-ever law student extern. She is helping undocumented families with various issues, and is perhaps most excited to help undocumented children who have survived traumatic situations to apply for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status.

Stephen Coger founded the Arkansas Justice Collective in 2015. He has worked with marginalized people for over a decade in Arkansas, Washington State, and on two other continents.

Maria Cueva helps AJC clients with everything from naturalization to referrals for medical care. She manages to work for us while earning an undergraduate degree and preparing for the law school admissions test.

Mayra Esquivel is AJC’s paralegal and Special Immigrant Juvenile Status specialist. She advocated for immigrants and refugees for years before joining AJC’s legal team.

Laura Villegas has been volunteering with AJC for months now and has helped families with work permits, as well as tackling the voluminous translations necessary for some of our asylum applicants, and much more.



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OUR WORK

AJC approaches our cases holistically. While we hold our role as a legal services provider at the center of what we do, we also understand that we have a responsibility to work with our clients to ensure that they are safe, able to access medical and psychosocial support, and that they have access to resources for their education. Additionally, we often work not only with the child client, but also with their families. We always offer their adult caretakers free consultations whereby we screen them for eligibility for immigration relief, as well as connect them to other resources to meet their diverse needs, such as dental care or new asthma inhalers.

The following case examples will give you a sense of the vast repercussions of living in the USA without permission. Immigration status is deeply interconnected with so many needs: education, travel, and protection from deportation to violently misogynist or homophobic places, just to name a few.

Please know that identifying details have been modified so as to protect the anonymity of our clients. Also, be forewarned that these true stories involve violence. The first story, Javier’s, is the only one where sexual violence is present.

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JAVIER

Javier was referred to us by his cousin who was also an AJC client. Javier fled his country after surviving severe physical and sexual abuse. His mother and 3-year-old sister had come to the US three years before him. After his mother's departure, Javier and his younger brother were left in the care of their aunt. Meanwhile, his mother worked under the table in Arkansas and sent money back to her son. Despite this long-distance support, Javier lacked sufficient parental protection. This made him visibly more vulnerable to the area's gangs.

Eventually, he was cornered by a local gang and given the choice to either allow his house to serve as a center for drug storage and trade or to be killed by them. Faced with this choice, he allowed them to use his house, and initially, members of the gang simply bullied him. Gradually, the mistreatment escalated to physical assault and rape and it culminated in weekly sessions of gang leaders pimping him out to other drug dealers. This trauma continued to unfold for over a year, until the gang members threatened to do the same with Javier's younger brother. In order to protect his younger brother, they left the capital, San Salvador, with the intention of making it to the US border to seek asylum. They traveled for three weeks, on foot, hitchhiking and using buses when possible. Upon their arrival at the US-Mexican border, they were placed in a children's detention facility. It was there Javier learned he is HIV positive. At that facility, he had a fantastic social worker who provided a safe space for Javier to come out as gay for the first time. This would later aid his asylum application.

Currently, Javier is in deportation proceedings, along with his mother and siblings. AJC has filed multiple petitions for the young man: a [T-Visa](#) (for survivors of severe human trafficking), an [asylum petition](#), and an [SIJS petition](#) (for children who have been abandoned/abused/neglected by at least one parent). He is awaiting adjudication of the T-Visa and the SIJS application, but his asylum case was just approved in the fall of 2018! AJC will now file a motion to terminate his deportation proceedings based on the asylum approval. It is important to note that concurrently, AJC filed for a guardianship for Javier to help facilitate his access to medical and educational resources. Fortunately for this young man, under Arkansas law merely applying for SIJS status qualifies young people for Medicaid through ARKids.

Additionally, AJC provided Javier with referrals in order to receive free HIV medication and counseling. So that he could support himself and his family, AJC filed for and acquired a work permit for Javier. While attending high school, he started a part time job repairing air conditioners, a job that he hopes will become his career.

Javier's case is representative of the types of cases AJC handles, and how those cases come to us and evolve. Javier found us through a family member; after initially ensuring his HIV medications were made available, we proceeded to represent him and his minor family members. Specifically, AJC applied for his younger brother and sister to receive SIJS. We also applied for his mother to receive a work permit while her asylum application is pending. His mother has begun working at a poultry plant and finally has the financial independence she needed to get an apartment for her family. In many cases involving minors with parents present in the US, AJC extends its support to them as well to the extent our resources permit. In Javier's case, AJC referred his mother to competent legal counsel for her asylum case, and connected her with the resources needed for her to leave her violent partner.

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ALICIA

In 2017, we began representing Alicia, who arrived at the border at age 17. Alicia’s father is an influential politician in their Guatemalan town, and he had been receiving death and kidnapping threats, in efforts to extort him. Once the threats began to explicitly target Alicia, she was forced to flee her home country. She was taken into a prison-like facility for unaccompanied immigrant children in Florida. [While there, Alicia faced traumatic mistreatment.](#) One of her jailers, who was supposed to serve as her social worker, even threatened to not release Alicia to her family until she was too old to apply for SIJS. Her family reached out to AJC and together we were able to help ensure Alicia was finally able to reunite with her family in Arkansas. One of AJC’s *pro bono* attorneys managed to get her guardianship order just in time for her to qualify for SIJS. AJC is representing her and has filed for both SIJS and asylum on her behalf. Her case is ongoing.

LINDA

Some of our clients find that their safety is endangered in their home country and in the U.S. Often, their immigration status makes them more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse because their abusers doubt that they will report the violence to anyone. Linda, age 17, lives with her uncle in Pine Bluff. She began receiving threatening text messages from an anonymous number, and shortly after, she was stabbed four times outside her home. Linda’s family texted Stephen, and AJC reached out to the detective to interpret for him, and also to help Linda with school-related issues. AJC also contacted Linda’s mother in Guatemala to arrange for Linda to move to a safer place where they had trustworthy family inside the USA. AJC is currently gathering the evidence necessary to file a [U-Visa](#) petition for Linda, in addition to her already-filed asylum and SIJS applications.



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ROSITA

Rosita, a mother of four from Mexico, has been in the US since 2004. Three of Rosita’s children have special needs, and while she does her best to care for them, being undocumented makes it even more difficult. Given her status, Rosita is unable to have a driver’s license, and, consequently, she was ticketed for driving without a license. To make matters worse, she faced jail time because it was not her first offense. Unfortunately, the Washington County Sheriff’s Office voluntarily participates in 287g, a xenophobic alliance with ICE, by which any undocumented person booked into the jail can ultimately face deportation. AJC worked with the city prosecutor, who very kindly agreed to let Rosita avoid jail and pay a fine after learning her story.

In order to ensure that Rosita is able to stay with and care for her children and husband, AJC worked to convince USCIS that Rosita’s US Citizen husband would have undergone extreme hardship without Rosita. By providing evidence of this, USCIS approved her application for a Waiver of Unlawful Presence. AJC referred Rosita to Catholic Charities Immigration Services (CCIS) for support in arranging for her consular interview in Mexico. Soon she will go to her interview and—hopefully—return to the United States to live as a legal permanent resident.

Soon she will go to her interview and—hopefully—return to the United States to live as a legal permanent resident.

MARLENE

AJC holds immigration legal services as our primary mission, but we also work to provide communities with tools to support healthy relationships through the Relationship Skills Class (RSC). Marlene lives with severe mental health issues and is a mother of two LGBT+ teens. She participated in the first-ever RSC which AJC facilitated in partnership with Patrick Yang, a local social worker. Halfway through the 6-week course, she reported that she had begun to identify her own relationship patterns and behaviors that were not in alignment with her values. She told AJC volunteers that after years of abusive relationships, she began to make clear boundaries with potential partners and that their response informed her decision as to whether she should continue dating them. In her own words, we helped her repair her “broken picker.” She also reported that she improved her ability to state clearly her expectations for her children, and has begun modeling these behaviors so that they can learn better skills by observation.

We also work to provide communities with tools to support healthy relationships through the Relationship Skills Class



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LAURA

AJC recognizes that an informed community is a united community, and so we welcome opportunities to speak about issues that impact the lives of refugees and immigrants. Sometimes, we find helping hands in addition to listening hearts. When we presented last summer to the Washington County Democratic Women, Laura Villegas approached our organization. Laura is a 75-year-old retired educator and community worker. Laura wanted to be involved in the work we are doing, and has since begun volunteering full-time with CCIS and AJC. Laura is fluent in Spanish and is an incredibly fast learner. She has been tremendously helpful and we are very thankful for her. As a nonprofit, volunteers are invaluable for us to provide our services and expand our reach.





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HOW WE WORK

AJC provides representation on a wide variety of cases:

SPECIAL IMMIGRANT JUVENILE STATUS (SIJS)

This is our most frequent type of case. SIJS is a path to lawful permanent resident status available for children who have been abandoned, abused, or neglected. SIJS has the added advantage of protecting the child from deportation.

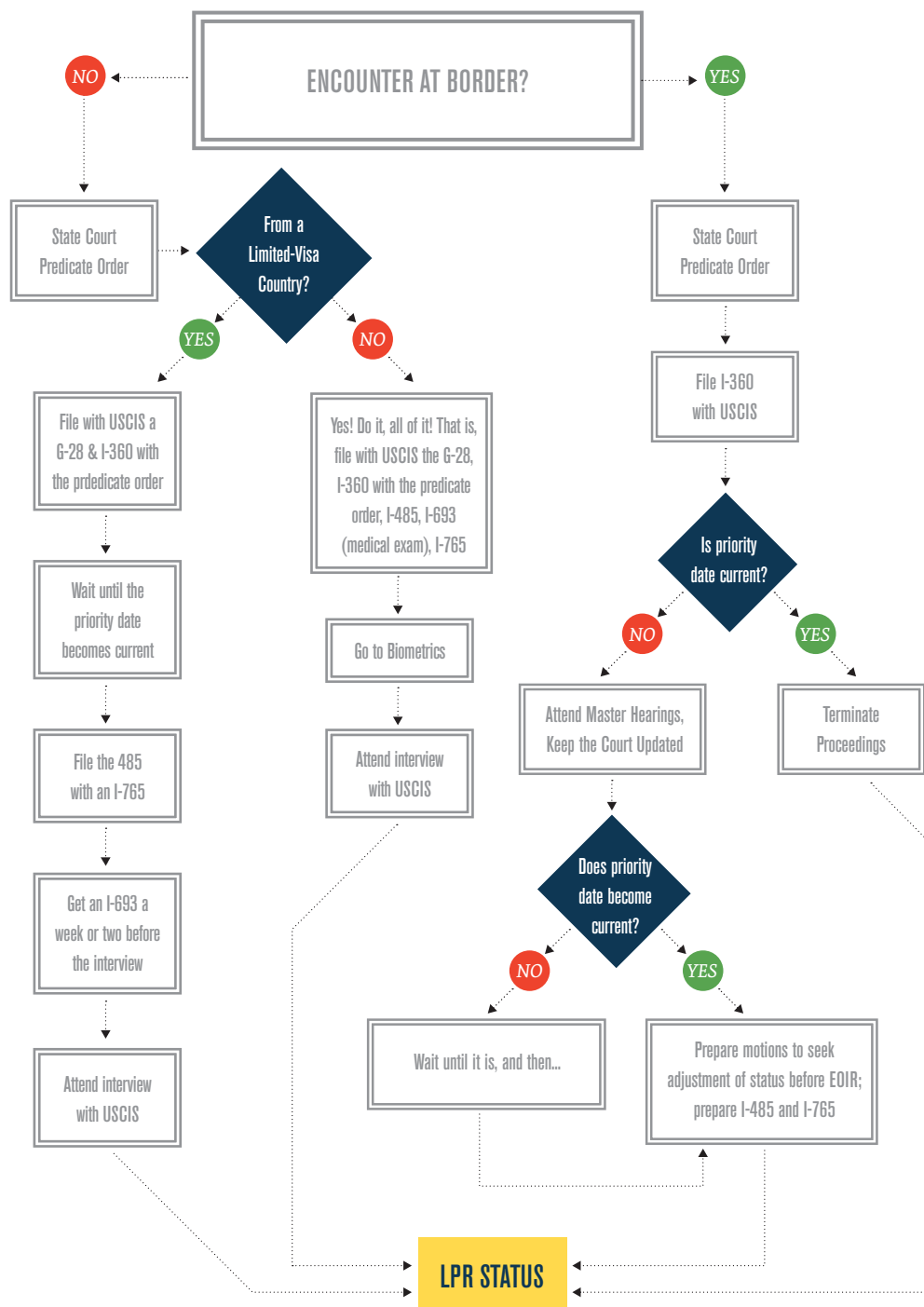
The government attorneys in immigration court have been directed to oppose even motions for a continuance as we await the adjudication of SIJS applications, effectively pushing for the deportation of children eligible for relief. Likewise, Immigration Judges (IJ) have been pressured to quickly dispose of cases on their docket. Specifically, [judges were given quotas](#) and told that they must clear at least 700 cases per year in order to receive a satisfactory rating on their job performance. This has created a hostile atmosphere for immigrants and their advocates in immigration court. These changes have also resulted in our inability to temporarily close cases while we await the adjudication of a child’s application. This means that our clients have to appear before an IJ again and again as we await adjudication. Each hearing exposes children to the stress of an inhospitable place, and an IJ who could order them deported even while certain applications are still pending.

Average time from application to decision by United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS): 1-2 years



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SPECIAL IMMIGRANT JUVENILE STATUS (SIJS) PROCESS FLOWCHART



Please note that this is a simplified version of the SIJS process. Other factors are also relevant, including the important distinction between arriving “aliens” (who must adjust before USCIS) and those children present without inspection (who must adjust before the court unless the government counsel agrees to termination).



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Prior to filing a 601A, advocates and clients prepare and file and then wait months for the approval of the initial petition, the “I-130 Petition for Alien Relative.” Only after the I-130 is approved can the 601A process begin.

ASYLUM

Asylum is a form of protection available to anyone who meets the definition of a refugee but is already in the United States and seeking to remain here. Policy changes and decisions by the attorney general have made asylum an increasingly difficult fight. The current administration’s actions are resulting in vulnerable immigrants’ inability to remain in the country, even if they face certain death upon being returned to their countries of origin. These changes will especially endanger the lives of women and LGBTQIA+ people, people who are perhaps most likely to suffer violence by non-state actors, like gangs or violent family members.

Average time from application to work permit: 6 - 9 months
Average time from application to decision: 1-3 years

I-601A WAIVER OF UNLAWFUL PRESENCE

The 601A waiver is a boon to mixed status families all over the country. “Mixed status families” is a term that refers to families wherein some members are in the US legally while others are here without permission. With 601 waivers, we help ensure family unity for certain spouses and children of US citizens or lawful permanent residents.

The 601A process is arduous for the client and the advocate alike. It often takes clients months of preparation to file a 601A. They have to keep track of their expenses, undergo a psycho-social evaluation, and gather letters from family and friends that explain their extreme hardship. Finally, hundreds of pages are finally submitted to the government to show how family separation would result in extreme hardship to the US citizen or legal permanent resident. After the submission, more months pass as the client and representative wait for a decision. Over 90% of AJC’s waivers are approved, and after that, AJC refers the clients to CCIS to prepare for a consular interview in the undocumented family member’s home country. Assuming the interview goes well, the newly documented family member is able to return to their family as a legal permanent resident with access to a work permit, a driver’s license and new opportunities to advance the well-being of themselves and their family.

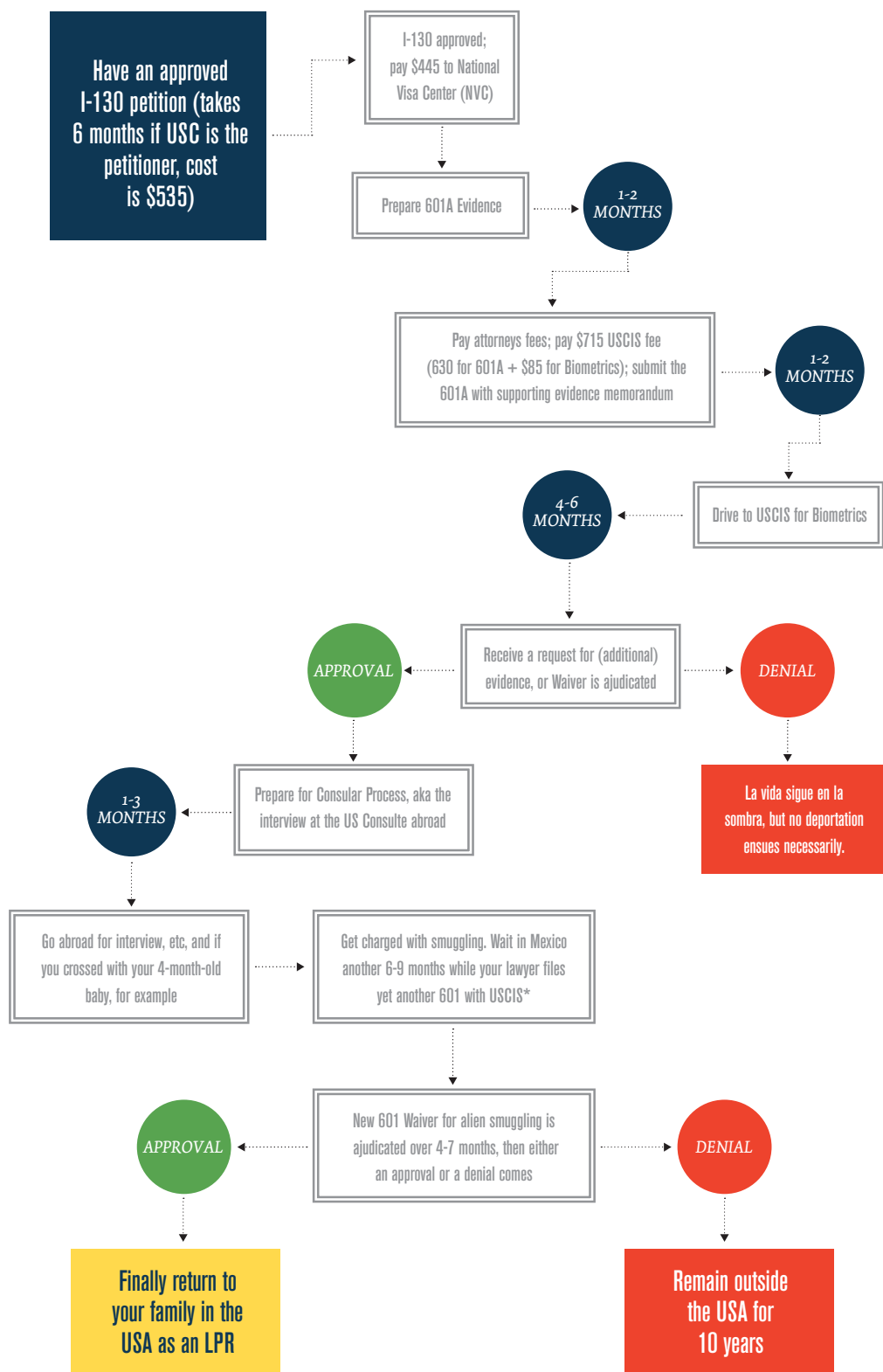
Average time from application to decision: 4-7 months





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I-601A WAIVER OF UNLAWFUL PRESENCE PROCESS FLOWCHART



* Note: revocations of a 601A often occur when a parent brought their child across the border. We argue that bringing one's baby is not smuggling, but some consular officials disagree.



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U-VISA & T-VISA

U-Visas provide certain undocumented survivors of violent crime with a path to citizenship for themselves and often for certain family members. T-Visas are similar in that they can benefit multiple members of an undocumented person’s family. T-Visas are for survivors of severe human trafficking.

Average time from application to decision: varies greatly, it can take years

ACADEMIC ACCESS PROGRAM

AJC’s Academic Access Program (AAP) has proven increasingly relevant in the lives of young people as the current sociopolitical climate in the state turns more anti-immigrant. Specifically, the AAP has helped six immigrant and refugee high school students when they faced discrimination at their public schools. Whether students have been illegally denied admission or expelled without reason, AJC has worked with school administrators and attorneys to ensure equitable access to education and due process for our clients. We also drafted a two-page guide for our staff to help walk us through these issues when they arise.

At times the AAP’s work has been as simple as sending a single text message to a superintendent’s spouse requesting help, and, at other times, as complex and time consuming as working with schools’ attorneys in preparation for litigation.



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RELATIONSHIP SKILLS CLASS

The Relationship Skills Class is based on a curriculum designed by lesbian survivors of violence in Seattle. Their ideas and role play scenarios made a huge impression on Stephen who now co-facilitates the class with Patrick Yang, a queer social worker living in Northwest Arkansas.

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AWARENESS

In the current political and social climate, it is critical that decision makers, voters, legal practitioners, and communities are aware of policy changes and their implications. Furthermore, outreach is crucial to help the estimated 15% of undocumented immigrants who qualify for immigration relief and yet have not applied for it, whether for lack of resources or because they do not even know it exists. AJC has appeared in newspapers, on social media, and television and radio stations to ensure that information is spread to all these stakeholders. Beautiful fliers have been hung all over Arkansas and shared hundreds of times on Facebook, all to raise awareness about SIJS and to attract attention to our services. After a recent immigration raid in Alma, Arkansas, AJC paralegal Mayra Esquivel took to the airwaves on Univision to help inform the community about Cancellation of Removal and other forms of relief relevant to communities after such a raid.

In the current political and social climate, it is critical that decision makers, voters, legal practitioners, and communities are aware of policy changes and their implications.

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AJC HAS PRESENTED TO THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS

- ▶ AJC presented to both the Washington County Democrats and the Washington County Democratic Women on separate occasions regarding immigration and refugee issues in Washington County.
- ▶ AJC gave a “Know Your Rights” presentation to JO Kelly Middle School students, and works with schools and parent-focused ESL programs all over the state to help inform immigrants and refugees of their rights and our services.
- ▶ Tyson Foods Inc., in Dardanelle allowed us to give a presentation to its employees, specifically as regards [Temporary Protected Status \(TPS\)](#) and how AJC could help certain TPS holders to have a permanent and secure immigration status in the USA.
- ▶ AJC presented to and partnered with juvenile detention facilities to increase outreach to find more.
- ▶ AJC reached out to multiple catholic masses (600+ people) in Yell County and Benton County churches, in order to discuss DACA, SIJS, and more.

In addition to these talks, AJC disseminated an SIJS Eligibility Flier, which included application criteria in both Spanish and English, along with AJC’s contact information so that those who qualify can reach us for representation.



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LETTERS AND VOLUNTEER E-MOBILIZATION

To expand its impact and ensure that the message is heard by decision makers, AJC mobilized volunteers to write emails and letters as needed. Currently, 23 activists and organizers are ready and writing to decision makers on local justice issues like discriminatory policing and 287g.

AJC monitors these local issues by listening to community members who are living amid the intersections of marginalized identities, whether they be gay immigrants, poor white people, or black business owners in diverse neighborhoods.

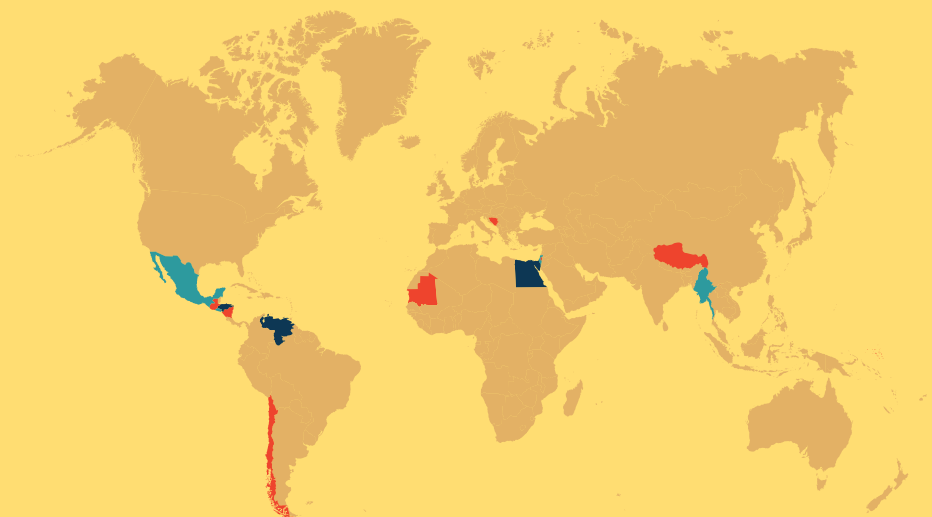
Currently, 23 activists and organizers are ready and writing to decision makers on local justice issues

Our letter writers have contacted city council members to speak against actions that criminalize racially diverse and economically disadvantaged parts of Fayetteville. We have also deployed our volunteers to write letters to the sheriff of Washington County and the quorum court members, advising them of the unconstitutional nature of their voluntary participation in 287g. AJC’s director also wrote to the Quorum Court and sheriff regarding 287g, as well as the importance of not expanding the Washington County jail.

WHERE WE WORK

AJC began its work in Northwest Arkansas, and has begun reaching clients all over the state. We are actively working to expand our operations in Arkansas, and have recently established an office in Little Rock. Our clients have come from:

PALESTINE / ISRAEL / MAURITANIA / EGYPT / EL SALVADOR / MEXICO / GUATEMALA
 THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS / TIBET / HONDURAS / CHILE / MYANMAR
 BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA / NICARAGUA / VENEZUELA





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WHY ARKANSAS?

Over 40,000 U.S. citizens in Arkansas live with at least one family member who is undocumented.

The 70,000 undocumented immigrants made up **48 percent of the immigrant population** and 2.4 percent of the total state population in 2014.

Roughly **85,888 people** in Arkansas, including 38,248 born in the United States, lived with at least one undocumented family member between 2010 and 2014.

33,354 children are living with at least one undocumented family member.

1 in 20 children in the state was a U.S. citizen living with at least one undocumented family member.

Between 2015 and 2018, **more than 900** unaccompanied alien children were released to sponsors in Arkansas.



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OUTPUTS

Outputs are the direct results of the activities AJC undertook under the Foundation grant. They are the products, goods, or services that AJC created or delivered during the course of the grant.

GOALS	RESULTS	GOAL ACHIEVED?
In FY 2017, AJC will facilitate at least 24 educational workshops, with at least 2,000 individuals attending annually, focusing on schools and other immigrant child-focused outreach.	49 events	Y
In FY 2017, AJC will annually provide 1500 screening sessions to individuals potentially eligible for T Visas, U Visas, Asylum, and Special Immigrant Juvenile status, among other forms of relief.	650-Increased resistance from Immigration Court and USCIS meant more time than anticipated was expended on provision of direct representation.	N
In FY 2017, AJC, in partnership with CCIS, will legally represent a minimum of 500 individual clients each year (work permits, legal residency and U.S. citizenship).	500	Y
In FY 2017, AJC will connect with at least 24 school counselors to arrange for sharing information about paths to citizenship for undocumented youth.	30	Y
In FY 2017, AJC will assist 30 juvenile immigrants by applying for Special Immigrant Status, file 30 state guardianship applications, 10 asylum cases, 5 T-Visas, and 5 U-visas.	50 SIJs, 50 guardianships, 12 asylum, 1 T-Visa (only one individual qualified), 5 U-Visas	Y&N



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OUTCOMES

Outcomes are the impacts or changes in the world that AJC intended to achieve through the outputs. These may, for example, be changes in policy, human behavior or activity, student achievement, or the state of an ecosystem or ecosystem component.

GOALS	RESULTS	GOAL ACHIEVED?
<p>Annually, AJC clients who secure documentation will ultimately have greater individual income earning potential. While many AJC clients are too young to work, of those that are old enough, AJC expects that male immigrants securing documentation during FY 2017 will earn an average hourly wage of \$15.15 as compared to the undocumented client average wage of \$10.95. AJC anticipates that female clients securing documentation during 2017 will earn an average hourly wage of \$11.85 as compared to the undocumented client average wage of \$7.20.</p>	<p>Documented male construction and healthcare workers in Northwest Arkansas earned a mean wage of \$15.50/hour last Fiscal Year. Documented female domestic and health care workers in NW Arkansas earned a mean wage of \$9.95/hour last Fiscal year. CCIS' undocumented male clients averaged \$10.75/hour and female undocumented clients averaged \$7.50/hour. AJC does not track this information.</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p>AJC will annually secure minimum documentation for at least 45 (90%) of its 50 immigrant child clients; including I-360 Special Immigrant Juvenile Status approvals.</p>	<p>25 of 50, 50%. USCIS is taking longer than their statutorily mandated allotted time to adjudicate SIJS applications and is issuing "Request for Additional Evidence" in every case. As a result, while all our SIJS apps have been approved, we received less than expected.</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>AJC will refer 450 clients to appropriate agencies (for mental health services, HIV-related care, and more), as well as appropriate attorneys.</p>	<p>500</p>	<p>Y</p>



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BALANCE SHEET

(As of December 31, 2017)

	TOTAL
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
ARKANSAS JUSTICE (TICE)	117,423.31
Total Bank Accounts	\$117,423.31
Total Current Assets	\$117,423.31
TOTAL ASSETS	\$117,423.31
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Credit Cards	
Total Credit Cards	\$0.00
Other Current Liabilities	
Payroll Tax Payable	\$4,832.39
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$4,832.39
Total Current Liabilities	\$4,832.39
Total Liabilities	\$4,832.39
Equity	
Retained Earnings	\$0.00
Net Income	\$112,590.92
Total Equity	\$112,590.92
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$117,423.31



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PROFIT AND LOSS

(January - December 2017)

	TOTAL
INCOME	
Donations	\$140,811.76
TOTAL INCOME	\$140,811.76
GROSS PROFIT	\$140,811.76
Expenses	
Advertising & Marketing	\$100.00
Bank Charges & Fees	\$30.00
Filing Fees	\$1,493.00
Interest Paid	\$27.56
Legal & Professional Services	\$3,466.95
Meals & Entertainment	\$85.28
Office Supplies & Software	\$585.71
Postage	\$239.57
Salaries and Wages	\$19,819.88
Taxes & Licenses	\$2,088.16
Travel	\$212.93
Utilities	\$71.80
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$28,220.84
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$112,590.92
TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES	\$0.00
Net Other Income	\$0.00
NET INCOME	\$112,590.92



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ACRONYMS & DEFINITIONS:

I601A, APPLICATION FOR PROVISIONAL UNLAWFUL PRESENCE WAIVER

Certain immigrant visa applicants who are relatives of U.S. citizens or Legal Permanent Residents (LPRs) may use this form of relief to request a provisional waiver of the unlawful presence grounds of inadmissibility. In non legal terms, form 601A helps undocumented family members gain a path to citizenship and a new sense of security if they can prove to USCIS that their family member needs them here to avoid extreme hardship.

AILA

The American Immigration Lawyers Association provides resources and trainings which help AJC navigate the ever-shifting labyrinth of immigration law and policy.

ASYLUM

a path to citizenship for certain refugees who fear persecution.

DACA

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals provides work permits to certain young immigrants who meet various criteria.

ICE

Immigration & Customs Enforcement, law enforcement that conducts check-ins with immigrants and refugees, performs raids and facilitates the deportation of immigrants and refugees.

LGBTQIA+

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, plus other historically marginalized sexual orientations and gender identities.

NWA

Northwest Arkansas.

SIJS

Special Immigrant Juvenile Status.

TPS

Temporary Protected Status has helped many immigrants who have fled disastrous situations. While not a path to citizenship, it provided them work authorization and some protection from deportation. The new administration has, sadly, attempted to terminate TPS for many countries.

T-VISA

A form of immigration relief for certain survivors of severe human trafficking.

USCIS

US Citizenship & Immigration Services. USCIS is charged with adjudicating the applications we send in for many of our refugee and immigrant clients.

U-VISA

A form of immigration relief for certain survivors of violent crime.



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The Arkansas Justice Collective has received generous funding from all around the country. If you would like to support AJC, you can donate online via our [website](#). You can also donate when you shop via [Amazon smile](#), or donate on our [Facebook page](#).

While some of our funders require anonymity, others have allowed us to name them. The Fund for New Citizens in the New York Community Trust, The Arkansas Delivering on the Dream Fund in the Arkansas Community Foundation, The Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, and The Denver Foundation in particular have helped AJC serve immigrants and refugees all over the state.

We bow to all our donors not only for their gifts but also their logistical support as they have helped coach AJC into becoming a sustainable, more efficiently effective organization.

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