LETTER FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Immigrant Justice Idaho is just over three years old. It was November 2018, when the IJI Board of Directors, staff, and I asked you to join us in working toward the big, bold goal of ensuring that nobody must defend themselves in immigration court without legal help. IJI launched during an exciting, but onerous time for immigrants. Attacks on immigrants were relentless and policy conversation waded in the muck of disinformation.

In the pages that follow, you will learn about the numbers of families IJI has helped, how IJI’s work has affected our clients’ daily lives and the types of cases we have handled. You will also read about our fast-growing educational programs, recognition as a quality legal services provider by national colleagues, our amazing staff, and how we confronted challenges imposed by COVID-19.

I am thankful that you have chosen to spend your time, energy and resources with IJI, and ask for your renewed commitment to the call for humane immigration policy.

In solidarity, Maria E. Andrade

OUR MISSION

IJI provides free and below market immigration services and educates lawyers, the public and vulnerable communities about immigration law and policy and working towards universal representation for non-citizens appearing in Idaho’s immigration court.
The U.S. Department of Justice has implemented an accreditation program that permits non-attorneys to become qualified to represent non-citizens in immigration matters under attorney supervision. Three IJI staff members have received this accreditation. IJI envisions a certification program where long-term, non-attorney volunteers are trained by UI to represent non-citizens in court.

As part of its education mission, UIJ brings together nationally-renowned speakers and immigration lawyers for its annual Immigration Skills Conference. For the last three years, UIJ welcomed attendees from across the country to join in-person or virtually. On average, over 100 people from 20 states attend.

The agenda included topics of interest to lawyers and non-attorney legal staff, teachers, social workers, and other members of the public. The conferences and UIJ's new 2021 Technical Skills Training Series provided over 35 hours of legal education. UIJ offers high-quality legal education and provides Idaho lawyers a rare opportunity for local immigration law training.

In 99% of deportation cases, the government does not provide a defense lawyer. In 2013, advocates won a class-action lawsuit, bringing enhanced protections for individuals detained in immigration detention facilities with severe mental health issues. As a result, the Dept. of Homeland Security created a program to provide legal representation to individuals deemed incompetent to proceed without counsel. In 2021, IJI became a NQR Provider after a comprehensive review of UIJ's staff's skills, experience and holistic approach to representing vulnerable clients. UIJ is honored to be included among the 50 providers throughout the United States.

**According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s America’s Families and Living Arrangements: 2019, households of Hispanic origin have an average family size of 3.72 people. Using those numbers, UIJ impacted the lives of 893 people in 2019, 1019 people in 2020, and we are on track to impact more than 1400 people in 2021.**