

Community Immigration Law Center: Celebrates 10-year anniversary, highlights successes of first year of pioneering deportation defense work

Posted on Friday, Jun 14, 2019

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

Contact: Grant Sovern at 608-354-3223

Madison – At a reception and event held Wednesday evening in Madison, the Community Immigration Law Center (CILC) celebrated the 10-year anniversary of CILC and reflected on the newest phase of our work – the first year of our publicly-funded legal defense work for Madison/Dane County community members facing the threat of deportation.

Throughout the past decade, CILC has served the community by providing bi-weekly free legal clinics to provide immigration advice and referral services through local volunteer immigration lawyers. Starting in 2017, CILC and Dane County and the city of Madison helped to launch a pioneering legal defense initiative, which is part of the Vera Institute of Justice’s SAFE Network of more than a dozen cities and counties across the country dedicated to providing publicly-funded representation for people facing deportation.

At last night’s anniversary event, CILC Board President Grant Sovern explained that, “in the face of increased threats from ICE to deport community members, our government and neighbors have stepped up to ensure due process for anyone who can’t afford an adequate defense in this complicated area of law. No one should be forced to defend themselves in court alone.”

Additionally, Anne Ocando Rincon spoke and shared her personal experiences as a client of CILC who relied on the new Madison/Dane County legal defense initiative. She explained the hardships being detained brought to her and her family after

applying for asylum. She kept in touch with other women who she was detained with, all of whom didn't have attorneys and were ultimately deported. She said, "I am so lucky to have the support of CILC. I would have been deported just because I didn't know the law."

CILC also released several statistics about the first year of the new legal defense program that underscore the timeliness, early successes, and incredible potential of the initiative:

- 56 percent of all detained clients served by the Dane County legal defense fund have been released from detention, given the ability to reunite with families as their case proceeds
- 64 percent of represented clients whose cases have concluded have achieved a successful outcome in immigration court – compared to just 3 percent of detained persons nationwide who achieve a successful case outcome without legal representation. While based on only 11 cases fully concluded thus far, the statistic shows the importance of representation.

CILC Managing Attorney Aissa Olivarez, said, "After a year of representing people in immigration court we are seeing that our community can stand up and make a difference – it is changing lives."

Concluded Sovern, "The early successes of our community's legal representation efforts are a testament to the leadership of Dane County and the city of Madison and a reminder why this new phase of CILC's work is so important and beneficial to all of our community. No local resident to be deported away from their family and our community just because they don't have access to an attorney."

- To learn more about CILC, visit <https://cilcmadison.org/>
- To request a copy of a 2-page summary highlighting details about the first year of the legal defense partnership, or to access photos and additional details about CILC's 10-year anniversary event, please contact Grant Sovern at 608-354-3223 or e-mail him at grant.sovern@quarles.com.