

PAIFUP

News from the fight for freedom, safety and dignity for all immigrants detained in Pennsylvania.

October 2020 | Issue 5

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1 NEW CLIENT
1 CLIENT RELEASED
3 HEARINGS

SEPTEMBER RECAP

September brought longer delays in the courts. This was due to cellblocks being quarantined and a decreased availability of judges. Many clients are in limbo as we continue to witness their hearings being postponed, some by over six weeks. The already long and grueling process for our clients is getting drawn-out.

In brighter news, four of our partner organizations (VietLead, MILPA, Casa San Jose, and Juntos) received community grants through the Vera Institute of Justice's SAFE Initiative. We are thrilled to work alongside our partners to increase PAIFUP's outreach and mobilize our communities towards universal representation. [Read more on this news here.](#)

Client Success: Meet Juan

Juan is a lawful permanent resident from the Dominican Republic who has lived in the United States for thirty years. He has six U.S. citizen children and has worked in the United States to support his family and his elderly mother. Juan was detained by ICE in September 2019 and charged with deportability grounds. He applied for relief, but the Judge denied his case. Juan appealed, but couldn't afford an attorney, so he went forth pro se. During this time, the coronavirus broke out, and Juan became worried about what might happen to him due to the underlying health conditions that placed him at high risk. He tried to give up his right to appeal so that he could get out of detention because he was afraid he would die in prison if he got coronavirus, but then was connected to PAIFUP through **MILPA** and decided to keep fighting.



[Edel Rodriguez's "Strangers," 2018](#)

PAIFUP attorneys quickly reviewed his case and determined that Juan should have never been placed in removal proceedings because he was not deportable as charged. PAIFUP attorneys asked the BIA to terminate his case. Seven long months after his appeal, the BIA agreed, and his case was terminated in September 2020. He was released one year after he was originally detained and had a joyful reunion with his family in Pennsylvania. Juan is grateful for the work of PAIFUP attorneys, writing that he is thankful that God put us in his path because we were able to save his life and allow his children to grow up with a father.

*Client's name has been changed to protect anonymity.

Staff Highlight

Ben joined PAIFUP in April 2020 as a supervising attorney.

Why PAIFUP?

In addition to all the challenges that people without lawyers face in the legal system, immigrants placed in detention are unable to access phones, medical assistance, or their own property. Many of our clients are further burdened by language barriers, and the continuing harmful impacts from traumatic experiences. Despite all this, time and again, I come away struck by the courage of the clients I meet through PAIFUP. This is the hardest, and also the most rewarding work I have ever done.



We Are Stronger Together: Meet Our Affiliates



VietLead is a grassroots community organization in Philadelphia and South Jersey that is creating a vision and strategy for community self-determination, social justice, and cultural resilience. Their community programs include intergenerational farming, youth organizing, health navigation & healing, civic engagement, and community defense. VietLead does this through a Heal.Resist.Grow. framework that focuses a pathway to healing trauma in their communities, contesting for power to make systemic change, policy advocacy/campaign, and growing community-based solutions. [Learn about their programs here.](#)

In Other News





Undocumented immigrants and sanctuaries face breaking point

Call it sanctuary fatigue: Desperate migrants, churches, and supporters joyfully join in protective alliance, only to find a year or so later that all are tired, stressed, and frustrated.

[Read more](#)

www.inquirer.com

ICE put up billboards with the mugshots of immigrants

ICE launched billboards in Pennsylvania that display mugshots of immigrants. There are six billboards that feature immigrants who were released from custody but were not handed over to ICE.

[Read more](#)

www.businessinsider.com



New Bill Would Allow Farmworkers to Drive in Pennsylvania

Undocumented immigrants, including farmworkers, have been gaining driving privileges in states across the Northeast. Immigrant-rights groups are pushing for Pennsylvania to join the club.

[Read more](#)

www.lancasterfarming.com

Catch up on the previous issue here

[The Pennsylvania Family Unity Project \(PAIFUP\)](#) is a collaborative of nonprofit organizations in Pennsylvania formed in order to achieve universal representation for detained immigrants in removal proceedings in PA.