

# PAIFUP

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

[View as Webpage](#)



As our first operating year comes to an end, we want to thank you for your continued support.

This unprecedented year forced us to adapt as we shifted to telephonic screenings and hearings and accepted only seeing our clients virtually. Through it all, we remained undeterred in our commitment to our clients and were fueled by their resilience.

You rallied around us and fought for universal representation for detainees across Pennsylvania. Thank you for the countless ways you showed up for us this year.

## Grace

Grace is a legal permanent resident that has been living in the U.S. for eight years. In August 2020, he was charged with removability based on simple assault charges. Without a lawyer, Grace was not aware that the crimes he had been convicted of very clearly did not make him removable under immigration law.

Despite this, the Immigration Judge sustained the charges of removability and ordered Grace removed to Congo. Grace accepted a removal order because he could not bear being in detention any longer.

This case came to PAIFUP only a few days before the appeal deadline. His PAIFUP attorney realized he was not removable, quickly submitted a motion to reconsider the prior Judge's decision, and asked for termination. The motion to reconsider was granted in December and Grace's case was terminated.



Grace is now home in Allentown and grateful to be reunited with his family, "I'll be able to see my kids again. If it weren't for you, I'd be on a plane out of the country!"

## Daniel



Daniel reunited with his partner!

Daniel is an asylum seeker from Venezuela who came to the United States in 2018 fleeing political persecution. He was detained by ICE in October 2020 and was placed into segregation for 30 days. His ability to speak to his family or seek counsel was extremely limited.

For over a month, Daniel tried to obtain a lawyer, but due to COVID-19 quarantine and his mandated segregation, he had difficulty communicating. His case was referred to PAIFUP by CWS Lancaster and PAIFUP lawyers quickly began working to secure his release on bond.

Daniel was granted bond by an Immigration Judge last week and was released to his family and community in time for the holidays. He will continue to fight his case out of detention with his PAIFUP lawyers with the hopes of remaining in the United States free from harm.

Client name has been changed to protect anonymity\*

## Michael

Michael became a PAIFUP client in June 2020. He was apprehended by ICE outside of his home during the COVID-19 pandemic nearly four years after USCIS denied his application for adjustment of status. Despite his numerous positive equities—30 years of residence in the U.S., 9 U.S. citizen children several of whom have disabilities, a U.S. citizen wife of 25 years, a U.S. citizen mother with severe health concerns, and many years of employment and community service in Pennsylvania—he was denied bond by the Immigration Judge for a minor criminal offense that took place in the 1990s.

PAIFUP counsel argued that Michael's convictions did not make him ineligible to adjust his status and the Immigration Judge agreed and recognized that USCIS had made a mistake in denying his application years before. Michael was given a new hearing on his application in September 2020, but his case was continued for additional testimony. However, because of an outbreak of COVID-19 at the detention center, Michael was placed in quarantine and prohibited from attending his hearing. He was ultimately given another hearing, and in December, after more than six months in detention, Michael was granted adjustment of status.



Michael plans to become a citizen at the first available opportunity and is thrilled to soon be able to return to his family. He plans to write a book about his challenges in the immigration system and the need for representation with the hope that it can help others better understand the immigrant experience.

Client name has been changed to protect anonymity\*

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

**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.