

# Illinois Immigrants' Rights Groups: A Journalist's Guide

As part of a new collaboration funding additional journalistic coverage of immigration, Press Forward Chicago commissioned Public Narrative to create this toolkit for reporters covering these issues.

What follows is a thorough—but by no means all-inclusive—resource directory of immigrant rights' organizations in the Chicago area, with information on how to reach them. There are also some relevant national organizations listed as well.

The inclusion of these organizations does not imply endorsement or support for their work or mission; the purpose is to offer a guide for journalists seeking sources of information for their reporting.

Lastly, we have compiled a short list of safety and legal resources for journalists covering immigration issues on the ground.

## ALIANZA AMERICAS

**Website:** [alianzaamericas.org/es](http://alianzaamericas.org/es)

**Contact Information:**

[info@alianzaamericas.org](mailto:info@alianzaamericas.org)

**Mission & Description:** The Chicago-based Alianza Americas has a stated mission “to create an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable way of life for migrant communities living in the United States and across the Americas.” The group brings together and empowers community leaders, government agencies, labor organizers, and faith-based communities to address inequities, defend and promote democracy, defend human rights—including the right to mobility—and co-create narrative with migrants willing to tell their stories and advance Alianza’s vision for a better future. Alianza’s immigrant justice work involves educating the public on “the challenges, triumphs, and needs of migrants” and advocating for policies that enable them to “establish deep roots in a safe and dignified manner.”

## ARISE CHICAGO

**Website:** [arisechicago.org](http://arisechicago.org)

**Contact Information:** Shelly Ruzicka  
Communications Director

[shelly@arisechicago.org](mailto:shelly@arisechicago.org)

**Mission & Description:** Founded in 1991 by a diverse group of religious leaders, Arise Chicago focuses on workers' rights and has periodically published a Workers Rights Manual in Spanish, Polish and English that covers laws specific to Illinois. The organization has also provided worker leadership development and partnered with workers to recover more than \$9 million in withheld wages and compensation. Arise Chicago published a toolkit for immigrant workers that provides information and resources—although not specific legal advice—to enable them to know their rights.

## CENTER FOR IMMIGRANT PROGRESS

**Website:** [centerforimmigrantprogress.org](http://centerforimmigrantprogress.org)

**Contact Information:** Carmen Patlan  
Executive Director  
[cpatlan@centerforimmigrantprogress.org](mailto:cpatlan@centerforimmigrantprogress.org)

**Mission & Description:** A grassroots organization helmed by young leaders, the Center for Immigrant Progress has a mission “to build communities that provide protection, education, and social and economic opportunity for immigrant children and families,” and a vision for “an immigrant community that is self-empowered and civically engaged to transform social structures that benefit all people.” The Center advocates for policies to increase resources, protection and opportunity for immigrants, provides community members with a platform to inform decision-makers how anti-immigrant policies impact them and their families, conducts community education sessions to bring awareness to current issues, and provides leadership training to youth and young adults on how they can change the system through civic engagement, policy and organizing.

## CENTRO ROMERO

**Website:** [centroromero.org](http://centroromero.org)

**Contact Information:** Daysi Funes  
Executive Director

[d.funes@centroromero.org](mailto:d.funes@centroromero.org)

**Mission & Description:** Centro Romero's mission "is to empower those with the fewest options in the immigrant and refugee community by developing and strengthening the family unit, fostering community leadership, and providing quality social and adjustment services." The organization's Latin American Legal Assistance Services Program helps clients, their families and the wider community with direct service representation, immigration education and advocacy services. The program has served more than 10,000 clients in the past five years, mostly lower-income and Spanish-speaking immigrants. The program assists with those seeking Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status, Legal Permanent Residency and Temporary Protected Status.

## CHICAGO COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS

**Website:** [chicagohomeless.org](http://chicagohomeless.org)

**Contact Information:** Claire Sloss, Director of Strategic and Policy Communications

[csloss@chicagohomeless.org](mailto:csloss@chicagohomeless.org)

**Mission & Description:** The Chicago Coalition to End Homelessness, founded in 1980, has a stated mission to build "community power and advance racial equity through organizing, advocacy, legal assistance, and education to prevent and end homelessness because housing is a human right." The group believes homelessness is a solvable problem and advocates for policies and funding to address its root causes, including systemic racism.

## CHICAGO CULTURAL ALLIANCE

**Website:** [chicagoculturalalliance.org](http://chicagoculturalalliance.org)

**Contact Information:** Mónica Félix, Executive Director

[mfelix@chicagoculturalalliance.org](mailto:mfelix@chicagoculturalalliance.org)

**Mission & Description:** The Chicago Cultural Alliance has a simple but broad mission: "To connect, promote and support centers for cultural heritage." They accomplish this through capacity building opportunities, helping the approximately 50 cultural heritage museums and centers who comprise its membership to determine how to improve their operations, including their grant-writing function. The Alliance builds community and networks so that cultural centers are less siloed, through activities such as an annual conference held every March and monthly virtual "town hall" Zoom sessions to share ideas and announcements and ask for support from each

other. About 60% of the Alliance's members are from communities of color, many of which work directly with immigrants and refugees.

## CHICAGO REFUGEE COALITION

**Website:** [chicagorefugee.org](http://chicagorefugee.org)

**Contact Information:** Alisa Bhachu  
Executive Director  
Press & Media Request Form:  
[chicagorefugee.org](http://chicagorefugee.org)  
(select the 'Media & Press Inquiries' option)

**Mission & Description:** The Chicago Refugee Coalition provides a wide range of services to meet the specific needs of refugees as they restart their lives in a new country. The group's approach "is guided by respect, dignity, and inclusivity, ensuring that all refugees are empowered to succeed." The coalition's services include food security and resource distribution, financial literacy training, and a childcare center called Little Harbor Academy.

## CHINESE MUTUAL AID ASSOCIATION

**Website:** [chinesemutualaid.org](http://chinesemutualaid.org)

**Contact Information:**  
[info@chinesemutualaid.org](mailto:info@chinesemutualaid.org)

**Mission & Description:** The Chinese Mutual Aid Association has a mission "to serve the needs, promote the interests, and enhance the well-being of low-income, diverse immigrant and refugee communities across metropolitan Chicago." People from more than 70 countries, including immigrants and refugees from Vietnam, to Venezuela, to Bosnia & Herzegovina, have received support services in areas such as adult education, social services, employment, youth programs, and citizenship and immigration. The latter has included legal services, naturalization applications and fee waivers through USCIS.

## COALITION FOR A BETTER CHINESE

### AMERICAN COMMUNITY

**Website:** [cbcachicago.org](http://cbcachicago.org)

**Contact Information:** Grace Chan McKibben  
Executive Director

[info@cbcachicago.org](mailto:info@cbcachicago.org)

**Mission & Description:** The Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community (CBCAC) aims to improve residents' lives and empower them to advocate for themselves and for others, while standing as a bulwark against gentrification and displacement in the Chinatown neighborhood. The group has a vision "that no matter your income, socioeconomic background or immigration status, you should have a voice in the future of your community," and wants to bring about "a thriving, equitable and sustainable Chinatown." To achieve this, CBCAC undertakes civic education, civic leadership and community planning.

## THE COALITION OF HAITIAN AMERICAN ORGANIZATIONS IN THE CHICAGOLAND AREA

**Website:** [haitianamericancoalition-chicago.org](http://haitianamericancoalition-chicago.org)

**Contact Information:**

[haitianamericancoalition.chi@gmail.com](mailto:haitianamericancoalition.chi@gmail.com)

**Mission & Description:** The Coalition of Haitian American Organizations has a mission “to empower the Haitian community one organization at a time,” as well as a vision “to serve as a centralized location and voice for all participating Haitian organizations in the Chicagoland area.” A voluntary partnership of more than 20 Haitian American organizations, businesses and professionals, the Coalition works to promote social and economic growth, as well as the success of its members. The organization provides shared resources such as legal, medical, educational and social services consultation.

## DEPAUL MIGRATION COLLABORATIVE

**Website:** [law.depaul.edu/academics/centers-institutes-initiatives/depaul-migration-collaborative](http://law.depaul.edu/academics/centers-institutes-initiatives/depaul-migration-collaborative)

**Contact Information:** Aneesh Clinton Dsouza  
Communications Coordinator, migration

**Mission & Description:** Located at the university’s College of Law, the DePaul Migration Collaborative has a mission “to advocate for better public policy, foster cutting-edge research and publications, train the next generation of advocates, and provide transformative learning experiences for our students and community members alike. We seek to harness the power of interdisciplinary scholarly collaboration to pursue dynamic, community-engaged projects, advocacy, and research.”

## ENLACE CHICAGO

**Website:** [enlacechicago.org](http://enlacechicago.org)

**Contact Information:** Cesar Nuñez and  
Marcela Rodriguez  
Co-Executive Directors

[cnunez@enlacechicago.org](mailto:cnunez@enlacechicago.org)

[merodriguez@enlacechicago.org](mailto:merodriguez@enlacechicago.org)

**Mission & Description:** Enlace Chicago undertakes organizing and advocacy, program implementation and service delivery, convening and community planning and individual and community capacity building across four areas of focus: education, community health, immigration and violence prevention. Within immigration, Enlace Chicago provides community-based workshops, free legal services and policy advocacy. The organization’s mission states that it “convenes, organizes and builds the capacity of Little Village stakeholders to confront systemic inequities and barriers to economic and social success.” In its vision, Enlace Chicago expresses a dedication “to making a positive difference in the lives of Little Village

residents by fostering a safe and healthy environment and by championing opportunities for educational advancement and economic development.”

## ETHIOPIAN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF CHICAGO

**Website:** [ecachicago.org](http://ecachicago.org)

**Contact Information:** Aklilu Adeye  
Executive Director

[info@ecachicago.org](mailto:info@ecachicago.org)

**Mission & Description:** The Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago (ECAC) has a mission to serve “the core needs of Ethiopians and other refugees and immigrants as well as promoting Ethiopia’s rich culture and values in Chicagoland and beyond,” along with a vision “to build a thriving, empowered and fully integrated community that practices and shares its culture and values.” In addition to Ethiopians, the ECAC serves a range of peoples from Africa, Asia, South America and the Middle East. The group aims to provide supportive services to refugees and immigrants, like resettlement adjustment, community integration, legal services, educational activities, social and cultural activities and referrals to education, employment, healthcare and housing.

## FARMWORKER & LANDSCAPER ADVOCACY PROJECT (FLAP)

**Website:** [flapillinois.org](http://flapillinois.org)

**Contact Information:** Alexandra Sossa  
CEO

[asossa@flapillinois.org](mailto:asossa@flapillinois.org)

Arely Anaya  
Director of Development and Communications

(630) 877-8381

[lanaya@flapillinois.org](mailto:lanaya@flapillinois.org)

**Mission & Description:** FLAP advocates for legal rights and social services of low-income workers who can’t afford an attorney and aren’t available for federally funded legal aid—no matter what their immigration status—in industries like cannery, farming, greenhouse, landscaping, meat and poultry, nursery, packinghouse, restaurants and snowplowing. FLAP has recovered nearly \$5 million in back wages and illegal deductions from employers on behalf of workers and their households. In addition to direct advocacy for immigrants’ legal rights, the group offers community outreach and education, including legal education, as well as information and referrals. The organization “envision a future where low-wage immigrant workers and their families can thrive in Illinois—living, working, paying local taxes, attending local schools, and contributing to their communities without fear of displacement.”

## HANA CENTER

**Website:** [hanacenter.org](http://hanacenter.org)

**Contact Information:** Annie Choi  
Communications Manager  
[press@hanacenter.org](mailto:press@hanacenter.org)

[g](#)

**Mission & Description:** HANA Center builds the power of Korean, Asian American and multiethnic immigrant communities in Chicagoland through social services, education, culture and community organizing to advance human rights. The Center engages in an inter-generational, intersectional and community-rooted approach to both meet critical needs and to organize to achieve systemic change, equity and justice for all. HANA's citizenship and immigration services include citizenship applications, adjustments of status, consular processing, family petition, re-entry permits, and the smaller steps in between all of these. The group offers a portal for those who feel like they receive little to no help in completing the citizenship application.

## ILLINOIS COALITION FOR IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE RIGHTS (ICIRR)

**Website:** [icirr.org](http://icirr.org)

**Contact Information:** Brandon Lee  
Communications Director  
[blee@icirr.org](mailto:blee@icirr.org)

**Mission & Description:** Founded in 1986 after President Ronald Reagan signed the Immigration Reform and Control Act, ICIRR "is dedicated to promoting the rights of immigrants and refugees to full and equal participation in the civic, cultural, social, and political life of our diverse society." The group has successfully lobbied for state funding for immigrant services, the creation of offices at the state and city level to serve immigrants, and pro-immigrant legislation ranging from in-state tuition for undocumented students to bans on law enforcement making arrests based on immigration status. ICIRR has helped more than 500,000 people gain access to citizenship, more than 100,000 prepare applications for citizenship, and registered more than 250,000 new immigrant voters.

## ILLINOIS IMMIGRATION FUNDER

### COLLABORATIVE

**Website:** [cct.org/stories/  
the-illinois-immigration-funders-collaborative-ifc/](http://cct.org/stories/the-illinois-immigration-funders-collaborative-ifc/)

**Contact Information:** Alice Cottingham  
IFC Consultant  
[alicecottingham@gmail.com](mailto:alicecottingham@gmail.com)  
[info@cct.org](mailto:info@cct.org)

**Mission & Description:** The Illinois Immigration Funder Collaborative (IFC) is a grantmakers collaborative that awards funds to nonprofit organizations serving

immigrants and refugees. IFC funding prioritizes three areas: urgent immediate needs, legal assistance for individuals, and advocacy and organizing that advance immigrant human rights. IFC has directed more than \$25 million to Illinois immigrant and refugee-serving community organizations since its inception in 2012. IFC has been responding to changes in federal immigration policies, including the raids and threats of mass deportation that have spiked fears and instability in immigrant communities with funding to nonprofits serving impacted communities.

## INSTITUTO DEL PROGRESO LATINO

**Website:** [institutochicago.org](http://institutochicago.org)

**Contact Information:** Karina Ayala-Bermejo  
President and CEO

[k.ayala-bermejo@idpl.org](mailto:k.ayala-bermejo@idpl.org)

**Mission & Description:** Instituto del Progreso Latino has a stated mission "to contribute to the fullest development of Latino immigrants and their families through education, training, and employment that fosters full participation in the changing U.S. society while preserving cultural identity and dignity." Their "Every Person, Every Family, Every Community" credo creates education pathways for everyone, engages the entire family and builds partnerships with like-minded organizations and state and national policymakers. The organization's immigration legal aid clinic provides such services as naturalization, DACA, family-based immigrant petitions, green card renewals, asylum, visas for crime and domestic violence victims, and cannabis expungement.

## LA CASA NORTE

**Website:** [lacasanorte.org](http://lacasanorte.org)

**Contact Information:** Andrea Magaña  
Associate Director of Communications &  
External Affairs

[media@lacasanorte.org](mailto:media@lacasanorte.org)

**Mission & Description:** La Casa Norte has a mission to serve youth and families facing homelessness and housing insecurity through access to stable housing and comprehensive wraparound services that transform lives and communities. The organization provides emergency shelter, drop-in centers, permanent supportive housing, outreach community assistance, workforce development training, and case management. La Casa Norte is an Illinois Welcoming Center, acting as a resource to new Illinoisans building lives for themselves but oftentimes struggling with language barriers and needing legal support and support services. La Casa Norte's scope bloomed from 5,000 clients in 2019 to nearly 25,000 in 2024.

## LATINO POLICY FORUM

**Website:** [latinopolicyforum.org](http://latinopolicyforum.org)

**Contact Information:** Graciela Gonzalez  
Director of Communications

[ggonzalez@latinopolicyforum.org](mailto:ggonzalez@latinopolicyforum.org)

**Mission & Description:** The Latino Policy Forum's mission is to build the power, influence, and leadership of the Latino community through collective action to transform public policies. Through advocacy and analysis, the Forum builds a foundation for equity, justice and economic prosperity for the Latino community. By catalyzing policy change, the Forum works to improve education outcomes, advocate for affordable housing, promote just immigration policies and strengthen community leadership. Recent publications include "Safe and Healthy Living: A Resource Guide for Immigrant Families, Providers & Advocates."

## MARJORIE KOVLER CENTER

**Website:** [healtorture.org/healing-centers/  
marjorie-kovler-center-a-program-of-heartland-alliance-international/](http://healtorture.org/healing-centers/marjorie-kovler-center-a-program-of-heartland-alliance-international/)

**Contact Information:**  
[kovler@hainternational.org](mailto:kovler@hainternational.org)

**Mission & Description:** The Marjorie Kovler Center of the Treatment of Survivors of Torture, a program of the Chicago-based Heartland Alliance, offers integrated mental health, medical and social services to those who have survived state-sponsored torture as well as their families. The Kovler Center Child Trauma Program additionally serves immigrant and refugee children who have lived through not only politically sanctioned torture but also war, terrorism, family separation and resettlement.

## MIDDLE EASTERN IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE ALLIANCE (MIRA)

**Website:** [mirachicago.org](http://mirachicago.org)

**Contact Information:** Othman Al Ani  
Director of Operations  
[info@mirachicago.org](mailto:info@mirachicago.org)

**Mission & Description:** MIRA has a mission "to foster well-being and self-sufficiency for resettled refugees and immigrants from across the Middle East and beyond." The group offers a case management program, community engagement programs and immigration legal services (for naturalization petitions and green card applications). MIRA also provides refugee women with economic empowerment, mental health and community support programs.

## NATIONAL IMMIGRANT JUSTICE CENTER

**Website:** [immigrantjustice.org](http://immigrantjustice.org)

**Contact Information:** Tara Tidwell Cullen  
Director of Communications

[ttidwellcullen@immigrantjustice.org](mailto:ttidwellcullen@immigrantjustice.org)

**Mission & Description:** The National Immigrant Justice Center has a mission "to establish and defend the legal rights of immigrants regardless of background and transform the immigration system to one that affords equal opportunity for all." The advocacy and legal services teams defend the rights of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers by working to keep families together, free immigrants from dangerous and inhumane detention centers, and protect both long-time community members and recent asylum seekers from deportation. NJIC provides legal services for citizenship, permanent residence and visa applicants; DACA recipients and Dreamers; as well as asylum seekers, immigrants who have been detained, unaccompanied immigrant children, LGBTQ immigrants, and victims of human trafficking. NJIC also offers an immigration court helpdesk.

## NATIONAL KOREAN AMERICAN SERVICE & EDUCATION CONSORTIUM (NAKASEC)

**Website:** [nakasec.org](http://nakasec.org)

**Contact Information:** Rachel Koelzer  
Communications Director  
[rachel@nakasec.org](mailto:rachel@nakasec.org)

**Mission & Description:** NAKASEC's mission is to organize Korean and Asian Americans towards social, racial and economic justice. Founded in 1994, NAKASEC is a network of locally based grassroots immigrant justice organizations that engage the most marginalized community members through social services, education, community organizing, advocacy and civic engagement. Coming together through NAKASEC provides a voice on national issues that impact local community members. Included in NAKASEC's efforts on the immigrant legal rights front is Adoptees of Justice, which among other projects is educating, organizing and advocating for an Adoptee Citizenship Act; and #Citizenship4All, which advocates for a pathway to citizenship for all 11 million undocumented immigrants. Illinois is one of six states in which the network has a grassroots community-based organization, the HANA Center.

## NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR NEW AMERICANS (NPNA)

**Website:** [partnershipfornewamericans.org](http://partnershipfornewamericans.org)

**Contact Information:** Sarah Mesick

Senior Director of Programs

[sarah@partnershipfornewamericans.org](mailto:sarah@partnershipfornewamericans.org)

**Mission & Description:** NPNA has a mission “to advance an immigrant equity and inclusion agenda at the state, local and federal level through policy, advocacy and service programs that create vast opportunities for immigrant and refugee communities to achieve full civic, social and economic justice.” The group’s programs include the NPNA Legal Services Collective, a network of immigration legal services groups; and Cities & Counties for Citizenship, which includes 117 jurisdictions aiming to increase citizenship. NPNA also participates in the We Are All America campaign, which works to boost the country’s commitment to welcoming refugees; and the Universal Representation Fairness to Freedom campaign, a partnership with the Vera Institute of Justice to guarantee a federal right to legal representation for those in the immigration system.

## NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY PRITZKER SCHOOL OF LAW SEIGLE CLINIC FOR IMMIGRANT YOUTH AND FAMILIES

**Website:** [law.northwestern.edu/legalclinic/cfjc/projects/asylum](http://law.northwestern.edu/legalclinic/cfjc/projects/asylum)

**Contact Information:** Alison Flaum

Legal Director, Bluhm Legal Clinic Children and Family Justice Center

[a-flaum@law.northwestern.edu](mailto:a-flaum@law.northwestern.edu)

**Mission & Description:** Part of the Bluhm Legal Clinic’s Children and Family Justice Center, the Seigle Clinic represents low-income immigrants in removal proceedings. Mostly this involves youth and parents, including unaccompanied minors looking to get away from neglect and abuse, state-sponsored violence or gang threats, as well as fighting family separation. The clinic has successfully advocated for clients from numerous countries in gaining asylum, special immigrant juvenile status, nonimmigrant classification, cancellation of removal, and other forms of relief.

## ORGANIZED COMMUNITIES AGAINST DEPORTATIONS

**Website:** [organizedcommunities.org](http://organizedcommunities.org)

**Contact Information:** Antonio Gutierrez

Strategic Coordinator

[agutierrez@ocadchi.org](mailto:agutierrez@ocadchi.org)

**Mission & Description:** This group organizes and builds “a resistance movement against deportations and the criminalization of immigrants and people of color in Chicago and surrounding communities.” Organized Communities Against Deportation (OCAD) has a mission “to make sure that our people can thrive,” defending those communities, challenging institutions that target them, and building collective power fighting alongside families and individuals. OCAD has a vision of “a future where we can live with dignity,” where people can freely choose to stay or migrate without fear of displacement, incarceration or deportation.

## PALENQUE LSNA (LIBERATING SPACES THROUGH NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION)

**Website:** [palenquelsna.org](http://palenquelsna.org)

**Contact Information:** Juliet de Jesus Alejandre

Executive Director

[jalejandre@palenquelsna.org](mailto:jalejandre@palenquelsna.org)

**Mission & Description:** Palenque LSNA serves more than 6,500 residents in three Chicago neighborhoods—Logan Square, Hermosa and Avondale—while impacting tens of thousands of others nationally through campaigns and programs on immigration and numerous other issues. The organization has a mission to be “a catalyst for Black, Brown, Indigenous and Immigrant communities and allies to take care of one another, take strategic action for systemic change and a just, resilient and joyful future.” Palenque LSNA’s immigration work focuses on protecting vulnerable neighbors, decreasing people’s sense of isolation and raising awareness of immigrant justice issues.

## POLISH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION

**Website:** [polish.org/en/](http://polish.org/en/)

**Contact Information:** Maria Flis

Immigration Senior Counselor

[paa@polish.org](mailto:paa@polish.org)

**Mission & Description:** The Polish American Association has provided programs and services for immigrants for more than a century, such as education, employment, immigration, social and supportive services, aimed at improving their lives and their ability to contribute to the community. The association has handled immigration services for 40 years and serves

about 400 clients per month with assistance such as information and outreach, citizenship applications, photographs, document translations, and petitions for relatives in Poland who are applying for permanent residency or student visas.

## PROTECTING IMMIGRANT FAMILIES-ILLINOIS

**Website:** [protectingimmigrantfamiliesillinois.org](http://protectingimmigrantfamiliesillinois.org)

**Contact Information:** Andrea Kovach

Senior Attorney

Health Justice System

Shriver Center on Poverty Law

[andreakovach@povertylaw.org](mailto:andreakovach@povertylaw.org)

**Mission & Description:** A statewide coalition of advocates, service providers and community organizations, Protecting Immigrant Families-Illinois (PIF-IL) works to ensure that everyone can gain access to programs that provide essential human needs. Created by four statewide organizations—including ICIRR, The Latino Policy Forum and the Shriver Center on Poverty Law (all referenced elsewhere in this guide) as well as the Legal Council for Health Justice—PIF-IL is modeled after the national Protecting Immigrant Families campaign. The group works to build synergies that empower immigrant communities to both resist and make informed choices about their access to public benefits, including whether there are any negative immigration consequences to applying for and enrolling in benefits.

## REFUGEE ACTION NETWORK

**Website:** [refugeeactionnetwork.org](http://refugeeactionnetwork.org)

**Mission & Description:** The Refugee Action Network has a stated mission to be “a statewide advocacy group supporting the inclusive integration of refugees in Illinois through public policy and community education.” With more than two dozen member organizations, the Chicago-based group’s work focuses on building a network that lifts up the voices of all refugees, mobilizes people and groups to advocate for refugees, and educates civic leaders, communities and the media about refugees and their issues.

## REFUGEEONE

**Website:** [refugeeone.org](http://refugeeone.org)

**Contact Information:** Sally Schulze

Communications Manager

[sschulze@refugeeone.org](mailto:sschulze@refugeeone.org)

**Mission & Description:** RefugeeOne has a mission to create “opportunity for refugees fleeing war, terror and persecution to build new lives of safety, dignity and self-reliance.” Since 1982, the group has helped more than 22,000 refugees, asylum seekers and other immigrants become self-supporting members of the

Chicagoland community—providing a safe place to rebuild their lives—no matter what their age, ethnicity, faith or other background. The free, holistic services that RefugeeOne provides include housing, English language learning, mental health, dental care, employment coaching and youth programs.

## THE RESURRECTION PROJECT

**Website:** [resurrectionproject.org](http://resurrectionproject.org)

**Contact Information:** Sylvia Ortiz-Cooper

Director of Marketing & Communication

[sortizcooper@resurrectionproject.org](mailto:sortizcooper@resurrectionproject.org)

**Mission & Description:** Based in Pilsen, The Resurrection Project has a stated mission to build “trusting relationships to educate and propel individuals, immigrants and families to achieve their social and economic aspirations, stable homes and equitable participation in their community.” The organization puts forth a vision in which “[f]amilies and individuals have the increased capacity to reach their goals and improve their socio-economic status.” TRP’s Immigrant Justice Legal Clinic handles legal screenings for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) renewals, asylum and citizenship, and in 2023, TRP launched the Work Permits for All campaign to advocate for the expansion of permits to newly arrived immigrants.

## SHRIVER CENTER ON POVERTY LAW

**Website:** [povertylaw.org](http://povertylaw.org)

**Contact Information:** Tori Tulloch

Senior Manager of Marketing & Communications

[toritulloch@povertylaw.org](mailto:toritulloch@povertylaw.org)

**Mission & Description:** For more than 50 years, the Shriver Center on Poverty Law has fought for economic and racial justice, scoring hundreds of victories for people living in poverty statewide and nationwide. The Shriver Center undertakes litigation and policy advocacy while convening and training networks for attorneys, community leaders and activists. With a mission to provide “national leadership in advancing laws and policies that secure justice to improve the lives and opportunities of people living in poverty,” the Shriver Center vision “is a nation free from poverty with justice, equality, and opportunity for all.”

## SOUTHWEST ORGANIZING PROJECT

**Website:** [swopchicago.org](http://swopchicago.org)

**Contact Information:** Chris Brown

Director of Operations

[cbrown@swopchicago.org](mailto:cbrown@swopchicago.org)

**Mission & Description:** The Southwest Organizing Project (SWOP) has a stated mission “to build a broad-based organization of Christian, Muslim and

Jewish faith institutions, local schools and other institutions in Southwest Chicago.” With 45 member institutions across five Southwest Side communities, SWOP touches the lives of a population that is about three-quarters Latinx and heavily immigrant. The organization’s work spans community organizing, leadership development, and campaigns in areas like community safety, education, health, housing, immigration, and jobs and economic development. SWOP’s immigration-focused organizing includes “Know Your Rights” trainings, connections to legal and other services, and citizenship application and DACA renewal assistance.

## UNITED AFRICAN ORGANIZATION

**Website:** [uniteafricans.org](http://uniteafricans.org)

**Contact Information:** Nancy Asirifi-Otchere  
Executive Director

[services@uniteafricans.org](mailto:services@uniteafricans.org)

**Mission & Description:** United African Organization describes itself as “a dynamic coalition of African community-based organizations that promotes social and economic justice, civic participation, and empowerment of African immigrants and refugees in Illinois.” The group works to elevate leadership and boost organizational capacity of African community-based groups, build partnerships with other immigrants rights organizations, address discrimination, disseminate community development resources and job opportunities, and put forth a positive image of immigrants and refugees from Africa.

## UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LAW SCHOOL IMMIGRANTS’ RIGHTS CLINIC

**Website:** [law.uchicago.edu/clinics/immigrants](http://law.uchicago.edu/clinics/immigrants)

**Contact Information:** Nicole Hallett  
Director  
[nhallett@uchicago.edu](mailto:nhallett@uchicago.edu)

**Mission & Description:** The Clinic provides legal representation for immigrants in Chicago and across the nation. This ranges from representing individuals facing removal proceedings, to engaging in complex federal litigation related to immigration, to tackling projects for community-based groups on policy and community education.

## WORLD RELIEF

**Website:** [worldrelief.org/chicagoland](http://worldrelief.org/chicagoland)

**Contact Information:** Stephanie Clark  
Director of Strategic Engagement

[chicagoland@wr.org](mailto:chicagoland@wr.org)

[sclark@wr.org](mailto:sclark@wr.org)

**Mission & Description:** The Chicagoland outpost of this global Christian humanitarian organization, which has offices in DuPage County and Aurora in addition to the Albany Park neighborhood on the Northwest Side, for nearly a half-century has worked to empower churches, community groups and individuals to find ways to welcome refugees and other vulnerable immigrants. The group has impacted the lives of more than 20,000 refugees and 60,000 other immigrants in the Chicago area, among the more than 500,000 nationwide that it’s welcomed into the U.S. Among its services are legal representation, workforce development, refugee resettlement, case management, adult education, children and youth support, mental health support, and an array of support for those seeking asylum.

## YOUNG CENTER FOR IMMIGRANT CHILDREN’S RIGHTS

**Website:** [theyoungcenter.org](http://theyoungcenter.org)

**Contact Information:** Gladis Molina Alt  
Executive Director

[media@theyoungcenter.org](mailto:media@theyoungcenter.org)

**Mission & Description:** Chicago is one of 10 locations where the Young Center for Immigrant Children’s Rights, as its mission states, “protects and advances the rights and best interests of immigrant children according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and state and federal law.” The Center says it’s the only program in the country to provide independent Child Advocates to represent unaccompanied minors in government custody, including those forcibly separated from their parents, with mental or physical disabilities, who are victims of human trafficking, and/or who have witnessed or experienced violence. They seek to ensure immigration justice, asylum officers and other decision makers consider these children’s best interests.

## OTHER IMMIGRATION-RELATED RESOURCES

We also would like to share brief contact information about additional organizations.

### RAINBOW RAILROAD

**Website:** [rainbowrailroad.org](http://rainbowrailroad.org)

### WOMEN'S REFUGEE COMMISSION

**Website:** [womensrefugeecommission.org](http://womensrefugeecommission.org)

### MIGRATION POLICY INSTITUTE

**Website:** [migrationpolicy.org/about/about-migration-policy-institute](http://migrationpolicy.org/about/about-migration-policy-institute)

### PASO WEST SUBURBAN ACTION PROJECT

**Website:** [facebook.com/pasoaction](http://facebook.com/pasoaction)

### IMMIGRANT SOLIDARITY DUPAGE

**Website:** [isdupage.org](http://isdupage.org)

### COALITION FOR SPIRITUAL AND PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

**Website:** [csplaction.org](http://csplaction.org)

### SOUTHWEST SUBURBAN IMMIGRANT

### JUSTICE PROJECT

**Website:** [ssipchicago.org](http://ssipchicago.org)

### WAREHOUSE WORKERS FOR JUSTICE

**Website:** [ww4j.org](http://ww4j.org)

### FORA: FORGING OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFUGEES IN AMERICA

**Website:** [refugeefora.org](http://refugeefora.org)

## GOVERNMENTAL AND NONPROFIT RESOURCES

Finally, our research uncovered several other governmental and nonprofit resources related to immigration rights topics that might be useful and helpful to journalists:

### ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

### ILLINOIS WELCOMING CENTER

**Website:** [dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=146538](http://dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=146538)

### LIST OF COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCIES SERVING IMMIGRANTS

**Website:** [dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=117419](http://dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=117419)

### CITY OF CHICAGO MAYOR'S OFFICE COMMUNITY RESOURCES ON IMMIGRATION

**Website:** [chicago.gov/city/en/sites/office-of-immigrant-migrant-and-refugee-rights/home.html](http://chicago.gov/city/en/sites/office-of-immigrant-migrant-and-refugee-rights/home.html)

## CAIR CHICAGO REFUGEE & ASYLUM RESOURCES

**Website:** [cairchicago.org/asylum-resources](http://cairchicago.org/asylum-resources)

## NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Resources Related to Federal Action on Immigration and Travel

**Website:** [northwestern.edu/leadership-notes/2025/resources-related-to-federal-action-on-immigration-and-travel.html](http://northwestern.edu/leadership-notes/2025/resources-related-to-federal-action-on-immigration-and-travel.html)

## ACLU "KNOW YOUR RIGHTS" IMMIGRANTS' RIGHTS

**Website:** [aclu.org/know-your-rights/immigrants-rights](http://aclu.org/know-your-rights/immigrants-rights)

## THE CENTER FOR MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

**Website:** [mediaengagement.org/research/migration-narratives-in-chicago-media](http://mediaengagement.org/research/migration-narratives-in-chicago-media)

The Center for Media Engagement at the University of Texas did this investigation in 2021-22 of 23 local news outlets to see how their online articles and social media channels measured up in terms of accurately portraying the experience of immigrants. The Center found that immigrants' countries of origin and hardships in the U.S. were often mentioned, but their reasons for migration and positive contributions to Chicago less so.

## THE WALDER FOUNDATION

**Website:** [walderfoundation.org/lighting-the-way](http://walderfoundation.org/lighting-the-way)

The Walder Foundation has published "Lighting the Way," a guide for donors about "the many strategic and impactful ways to support migration for a welcoming Chicago." The resource provides a variety of approaches to build the immigration field, infuse strategies around immigration into a current issue-based portfolio, and invest in intermediaries.

## RETROREPORT

RetroReport has produced several documentary videos that track the history of U.S. immigration government policy and civic activism. These include:

["How Today's Debates on Immigration Were Shaped by a 1980s Church-Led Refugee Network."](#)

How the government convicted eight sanctuary activists who smuggled sheltered refugees from civil wars in Guatemala and El Salvador after refusing asylum to those fleeing violence lawsuits, sparking policy changes enabling thousands to reapply.

["What the World War II-Era Bracero Program Reveals About U.S. Immigration Debates."](#)

The historic tensions between desires for low-wage labor and the enforcement of immigration laws played out nearly a century ago when the mass deportation during the Great Depression gave way to the Bracero guest worker program during World War II.

### *“Lessons from California’s Prop 187.”*

Now one of the country’s most liberal and immigrant friendly states, California had a roiling debate over immigration three decades ago that changed the state’s politics in a sharply leftward direction—and has eerie echoes the national debates of today.

### *“How the U.S. has Treated Wartime Refugees.”*

As Ukrainian and Afghan refugees of current and recent wars settle in the United States, how does their treatment compare with that of migrants in past eras, such as the 130,000 South Vietnamese who came here during the fall of Saigon a half-century ago?

## **RESOURCES FOR JOURNALISTS**

[Reporters Committee for the Freedom of the Press](#)

[Immigration Reporting Legal Guide \(en Español\)](#)

[Legal Hotline](#)

[Guide: Police, Protesters, and the Press](#)

[Tipsheet: Immigration System Records Access \(en Español\)](#)

[ProJourn](#)

[Eligibility Criteria for Pro Bono Legal Support](#)

[Freedom of the Press Foundation](#)

[U.S. Press Freedom Tracker](#)

[Digital Security Resources](#)

[International Women’s Media Foundation](#)

[Emergency Grants for U.S. Women and Nonbinary Journalists](#)

[Tips for Covering Immigration](#)

[Online Violence and Harassment Resources](#)

[Journalists in Distress Network](#)

## **LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS OFFERING EMERGENCY SUPPORT TO JOURNALISTS**

[Committee to Protect Journalists](#)  
[Journalist Safety and Emergency Resources](#)  
[ACOS \(A Culture of Safety\) Alliance](#)  
[Safety Resources](#)

## **LEGAL HOTLINES**

### **ACLU ILLINOIS**

Kevin Fee (Legal Director, direct line): 847-687-1129  
[kfee@aclu-il.org](mailto:kfee@aclu-il.org)

## **REPORTERS COMMITTEE FOR FREEDOM OF THE PRESS (RCFP)**

Hotline (24/7): 1-800-336-4243 | [hotline@rcfp.org](mailto:hotline@rcfp.org)

## **NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD - CHICAGO CHAPTER**

Hotline 312-913-0039 | [nlgchicago@gmail.com](mailto:nlgchicago@gmail.com)

## **LOEJVY & LOEJVY (CIVIL RIGHTS & PRESS FREEDOM)**

Office: 312-243-5900 | [press@loevy.com](mailto:press@loevy.com)

## **SPJ LEGAL DEFENSE FUND**

No hotline (funding assistance, not immediate response) | [legaldefensefund@spj.org](mailto:legaldefensefund@spj.org)

## **CREDITS**

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