2021

Annual Report

CENTRAL AMERICAN REFUGEE CENTER

Hempstead
New York

Brentwood
New York
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For 38 years, CARECEN has served as a beacon of hope for immigrants across Long Island. It is an honor for us to be able to help thousands of immigrants each year, and nothing we do would be possible without the dedication of our donors, volunteers, staff, and board members, who work tirelessly to advance our mission. We are deeply grateful for your support.

2021 was a year of connecting to our roots.

CARECEN’s origins are in helping immigrants through moments of crisis, and 2021 reaffirmed our dedication to this mission. Whether providing life saving legal representation to hundreds of families and children facing deportation, helping undocumented workers receive $358,800 in financial support through the Excluded Workers Fund, or educating our community about the COVID-19 vaccine, in 2021 CARECEN was there for immigrants across Long Island - just as we have been for nearly four decades.

On behalf of everyone at CARECEN, thank you for your ongoing support and belief in our mission. Thank you for standing with us.

Blanca Villanueva, MPH
President of the Board

Elise de Castillo, Esq.
Executive Director
CARECEN empowers immigrants on Long Island through legal services, community education, and advocacy.

"Me and My Lawyer in Court" - Emilia, 7 years old
What We Believe

Without freedom from deportation, immigrants are continually at risk.

This means living in fear of families being separated and forced to return to lives marked by poverty and danger.

Legal status is just the beginning.

Without access to education and social services, immigrants are marginalized and cannot become fully engaged members of civic and economic life in the United States.

It is our duty to create a region, state, and nation that tells immigrants that home is here.

We advocate for just, equitable laws and policies that protect immigrants and reflect the value they add to our communities across Long Island, New York, and the entire country.
2021 at a Glance

- Immigrants received legal services: 1,352
- Immigrants received educational services: 4,676
- Immigrants received social services: 109
More than 500,000 immigrants call Long Island home.

Despite the fact that Long Island has one of the largest immigrant communities in the United States, immigrants have access to a fraction of the resources they need. This leaves them marginalized and at risk.

CARECEN’s mission is to change that.

Our legal team represented 1,352 immigrants during 2021 - from recently-arrived immigrants facing deportation, to DACA and TPS holders who have made Long Island their home for decades, to immigrants who have raised their right hand as newly-minted United States citizens.

- 26% of our clients applied for citizenship
- 13% of our clients have a temporary status, like DACA or TPS
- 35% of our clients are at risk for deportation
Empowerment through Education

Our community education team provides for our clients’ non-legal needs, and working in a remote world didn’t slow us down. During 2021, CARECEN provided critical social services to 109 immigrants and empowered 4,676 through community education classes and virtual events.

$106,000 in COVID-19 cash assistance has been distributed to immigrants since the beginning of the pandemic.

$358,800 secured for CARECEN clients from the New York State Excluded Workers Fund.

221 immigrant students from 91 families received support from our Students Rise fundraiser.

79 immigrant children received gifts through CARECEN’s holiday gift distribution.
Our advocacy takes many forms, and in 2021 we took it from the statehouse to the screen.

Through the participation of CARECEN's staff and clients in “Help Wanted”, we uplifted the voices of recently-arrived immigrants on Long Island. This film, which will be released in 2022, illustrates in vivid detail the challenges that the immigrants we represent face in their home countries and upon arrival to the United States, and underscores the transformative power of attorneys in securing their safety.
While our roots are in helping Central American immigrants, in 2021 our clients came from 38 countries around the world.
# Our Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title and Affiliation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Alevy</td>
<td>Thomson Reuters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abner Alvarenga</td>
<td>eXp Realty</td>
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<td>Jonathan Cantarero, Esq.</td>
<td>Herman Law</td>
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<td>Gabriela Castillo, Esq.</td>
<td>Freeport School District</td>
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<td>Amy Flores</td>
<td>JP Morgan Chase</td>
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<td>Bill O'Shea</td>
<td>SecurityScorecard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ruth Silverman, PhD</td>
<td>Nassau Community College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luís Vázquez</td>
<td>National Hispanic Chamber of Commerce on Health</td>
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<td>Blanca Villanueva, MPH</td>
<td>The Advocacy Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lauris Wren, Esq.</td>
<td>Hofstra Law School</td>
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## Doing the Work

### Our Staff

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Karla Alas Rivera</td>
<td>ONA Long Island Immigrant Community Navigator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beatríz Alemán Cisneros</td>
<td>Paralegal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emerson Argueta, Esq.</td>
<td>Supervising Attorney</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gabriela Calahorrano, Esq.</td>
<td>ONA Suffolk Legal Counsel</td>
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<td>Jenny Chévez Kessinger</td>
<td>Paralegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melanie Creps</td>
<td>Community Programs Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elise de Castillo, Esq.</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Márton Diószegi</td>
<td>AmeriCorps VISTA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Elman, Esq.</td>
<td>Staff Attorney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayra Interiano</td>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pablo Jiménez</td>
<td>Justice Fellow, Immigrant Justice Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roshii Jolly</td>
<td>ESOL Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin McCabe</td>
<td>ESOL Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vivian Morales, LMSW</td>
<td>Social Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca Reed</td>
<td>Chief Operations Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mónica Sánchez</td>
<td>Law Clerk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrés Santamaría, Esq.</td>
<td>Justice Fellow, Immigrant Justice Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steven Vivas</td>
<td>Community Fellow, Immigrant Justice Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma Winkley</td>
<td>Development &amp; Communications Coordinator</td>
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Graham Welch
Kieran Wohlfarth
Julius Wool
Lauris Wren
Jonelle Wuttke
Jeremy Yocum
Maria Zodiatis

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Ramiro Campos
Nicole Castellanos
Cristian Castillo
Anna Cruz
Andrew Dickerman
Haile Dono
Bruce Dunton
Sylvia Dunton
Andrea Garcia
Ashley Guaman
Rosa Gomez
Matt Gopaulchan
Alicia Henríquez
Meghan Kelly
Michelle Komare
Sara Lage
Shannalee Levy
Jaime Lopez
Jeimy Maravilla
Katelyn McKevitt
Jennifer Rodriguez
Julius Wool
Elaina Zodiatis
That's a wrap on one of the most pivotal years in CARECEN's history. In 2021, we strengthened our roots so that we could spread our branches. We grew our staff, we grew our programs, and we grew our impact.

And so we persevere.

This growth is just the beginning. Our team finds new ways to stand with immigrants every single day. We don't just believe in our mission, we live it. And we hope that you will continue to live it with us.