

45TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE REPORT

Congratulations Ayuda on your 45th anniversary!



Welcome

Dear Ayuda Friends & Supporters,

For 45 years, Ayuda's dedication and expertise have helped vulnerable immigrants in our community overcome barriers and achieve their dreams. People like Danny.

Danny arrived in the United States with the promise of a good job and the dream for a better future. Instead, he became a victim of labor trafficking – forced to work 16 hours a day for almost no pay, sleeping on the floor of a crowded apartment, and terrified of deportation if he didn't obey his boss. Eventually, he found the courage to flee and made his way to Baltimore. He stayed with friends, and one of them told him about Ayuda. Today – ten years later – he has been promoted to a new job at a resort hotel and is happily living with his wife and two-year-old son.

Ayuda has stood with Danny and tens of thousands of immigrants in the Washington, D.C. area who need and deserve our care and support as they face an uncertain future. We stand with immigrants on the days when they are surrounded by turmoil: Discrimination and demeaning rhetoric. An abusive spouse. A terrifying raid. Families separated. And we stand with immigrants on the days when they are surrounded by hope: A green card arriving in the mail. A verdict that delivers justice. A job promotion. A new home.

In the pages that follow, you will learn more about Ayuda's 45 years. Our staff have protected women, men and children from abuse and helped broken families heal. Our interpreters have broken down the language barriers that kept people from the services they need. Our attorneys have helped refugees, unaccompanied children, "Dreamers" and so many others receive asylum, residency, and justice.

None of this would be possible without your support. Yet, there is much that keeps us awake at night. Today, the immigrant community is under intensified threat. Fear is palpable, misinformation is rampant, and the risk of exploitation is high. We are experiencing a record increase in requests for consultations and services.

Over the next five years, Ayuda is committed to growing our impact to respond to this growing demand. We solidified an ambitious five-year plan to:

- Provide services to 65% more immigrants.
- Offer more comprehensive legal, social, and language services in Virginia and Maryland
- Increase immigrants' access to effective services throughout the area by training and supporting partner organizations.
- Strengthen our connection to the community by increasing our volunteer opportunities and public relations activities.
- Elevate the unique voice of immigrants to broaden perspectives and inform policy.

We invite you to embrace these goals with us. Help us grow Ayuda and transform the lives of even greater numbers of immigrants in our region. Thank you for standing with Ayuda as we welcome our neighbors, care for each other, and help those in need. Thank you for making our community stronger.

Sincerely,

Christina Wilkes, Esq.
Chair, Board of Directors

Paula Fitzgerald, Esq.

Executive Director





Welcome



Dear Friends of Ayuda,

Welcome to Ayuda's 45th Anniversary Celebration and congratulations to all of tonight's honorees. Verizon is proud to serve as the presenting sponsor for this event, which recognizes the extraordinary impact that Ayuda has had on the lives of immigrants in Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia. Over its 45-year history, Ayuda has helped more than 100,000 immigrants and their families overcome obstacles to their success in the United States.

When Verizon created its pro bono program in 2009, Ayuda was one of our founding partners. Our work together initially focused on helping undocumented immigrant survivors of domestic violence gain legal status in the country. Recently, we expanded our partnership to support innovative legal clinics that help immigrants in times of uncertainty.

This work is profoundly meaningful for Verizon's volunteers. Ayuda has helped us make personal connections with people who have confronted significant challenges and who almost certainly would have been failed by our legal system without assistance. While we hope and believe that this work was valuable to our clients, we know that it helped us make deeper connections with our communities and take tangible personal steps toward addressing the polarization that divides our country.

I have had the privilege to work personally with Ayuda and its extraordinary staff through Verizon's pro bono program. I volunteered at one of our co-hosted U-Visa clinics and received expert training from Ayuda's attorneys. I also recently had the opportunity to visit Ayuda's Virginia office and meet with its leadership and staff. I left that meeting extraordinarily impressed with the scope, effectiveness, and sensitivity of Ayuda's work, as well as the passion and dedication of the Ayuda team.

Verizon has long been a supporter of immigration reform. In 2013, Verizon's CEO publicly called on Congress to pass Comprehensive Immigration Reform. More recently, we have actively advocated for Congress to develop a bi-partisan and permanent fix for the recipients of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. Verizon has also been a long-time supporter of Janet Murguia of Unidos.US, recipient of Ayuda's 2018 Impact Award. We recently partnered with Unidos.US to launch the Immigo app, a free resource that is helping local nonprofits and immigrant families access pro bono legal services and many other important resources.

But beyond policy and partnerships, we recognize that there are millions of personal stories that lie behind the rhetoric and the debate. I strongly believe that when any of us in our society is vulnerable, we are all diminished. We as citizens are diminished, our communities are diminished, and our country is diminished. We are proud to support Ayuda in its vital work to ensure that the people whose lives are impacted by this issue receive the support they need to prosper. And tonight, we are excited join Ayuda and its many supporters to celebrate the past 45 years and all the years to come.

Yours truly,

Craig L. Silliman

Executive Vice President and General Counsel

Verizon

DEDICATING 45 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY AND TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Ayuda traces its roots back to the 1960s with the creation of Ayuda Para El Consumidor, a George Washington Law School clinic that assisted immigrants specifically targeted and victimized by consumer fraud. Ayuda was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit in 1973 to provide general civil legal services to immigrants. Today, Ayuda realizes its mission of supporting low-income immigrants through direct legal, social, and language access services; training; and outreach in the Washington metropolitan region.

Ayuda's 45 years of serving immigrants have been stewarded by the following executive directors.

2016 - present	Paula Fitzgerald
2015 - 2016	Ryan Dowd
2012 - 2014	Jaime Farrant
2008	Rocio Velez
2004 - 2008	Mauricio Vivero
1984 - 2004	Yvonne Martinez Vega
1983 - 1984	Gilberto Mario Moreno
1980 - 1983	Sharon Armuelles
1978 - 1980	Luis Rumbaut
1973 - 1978	Richard Gutierrez

Ayuda thanks Barbara Laur, Jean Bruggeman, and Christina Wilkes for serving as interim executive directors during moments of transition.

The following pages chronicle Ayuda's remarkable journey as a pioneer in supporting low-income immigrants in the Washington metropolitan region, and a glimpse of Ayuda's future.

Ayuda's reputation as a pioneering organization that provides holistic, linguistically and culturally appropriate, and client-centered programs for immigrants is galvanized by pivotal achievements and programs and services it has launched over the years, including the following milestones:



There is urgent sense of assisting others with their problems.

Richard Gutierrez was selected as Ayuda's first executive director by the newly formed Ayuda Board of Directors in 1973. Visiting with staff at Ayuda's Takoma Park office recently, he noted, "I am in awe as to how far Ayuda has come," Gutierrez said.

It was the time of the Nixon years. Gutierrez was a civil servant working at the Department of Agriculture. Unable to endure the harsh policies the Administration prescribed with regard to minorities and immigrants, Gutierrez left without a clue where he would land his next job. He interviewed for the Ayuda executive director position because his sense of assisting immigrants with their problems called powerfully.

The first Ayuda office was located in Adams Morgan on Columbia Road and 18th Street, NW, along with several other Latino organizations designed to meet the needs of Latinos and other immigrants in the District. Clients came from Maryland and Virginia as well. He worked closely with Centro Catolico, Andromeda, the Spanish Education Development Center, the District of Columbia Bilingual Center and the Woodrow Wilson Center.

"For a time, it was just me at Ayuda. Thank goodness for the \$10,000 operation grant from the Eugene and Agnes Meyer Foundation," recalled Gutierrez. Thereafter, Ayuda received funding from various sources including several grants from the Campaign for Human Development of the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops, leading to permanent funding from the United Way of Washington Metropolitan area. Solid funding allowed Ayuda to go forward with a sense of tomorrow.

Serving five years as Ayuda's executive director, Gutierrez built a legacy that included a 10×30 feet office about the size of half a bowling alley, repeat funding sources, and a staff of attorneys and operational staff who, along with a large group of law student volunteers, were able to provide services to more than 300 clients each month. "There was this karma of friendship and urgent sense of assisting others with their problems," he said.

In 1978, Gutierrez was offered a position with the Carter Administration at the Communication Relations Service of the Department of Justice created by Title 10 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to provide mediation and conciliation to communities experiencing racial conflict. He rose in rank at the Department with responsibilities that allowed him to work with immigrants and refugees, particularly from Cuba and Haiti.

Richard Gutierrez ended his visit with present day Ayuda staff noting that those five years with Ayuda were some of the most fulfilling years of his 40 years in private and public services. "I was doing something to help people in need!" he reminisced. He was so pleased to have played a role, along with the Board of Directors and volunteers and staff, dedicated to serving immigrants.



1970s

With a \$10,000 start-up fund from Meyer Foundation, Ayuda incorporated in 1973. Richard Gutierrez served as the first executive director of the organization. He served until 1978 when he became a presidential appointee at the U.S. Department of Justice.

Yvonne Martinez Vega didn't aspire to the role of executive director of Ayuda, but neither did she shy away from the opportunity when the Board asked her take Ayuda's reins.

It was 1984. Vega had worked in various roles at Ayuda since 1980. She understood the challenges the organization faced and had a passionate commitment to mission. "This country is formed by immigrants. Period," she said. "Immigration is the fulfillment of America's purpose. Just look at the Statue of Liberty. What does it tell you?"

Vega, who was executive director for the next 20 years, is Ayuda's longest-serving leader – a progressive and positive force that transformed the organization. When she began her tenure, Ayuda was struggling financially. "100 percent of our revenue came from the United Way Campaign," she said. "We had four full-time staff members, and we were doing mostly consumer protection work."

attorney to build programs for low-income immigrants who were victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The organization's reach and impact grew.

Throughout her tenure as executive director, Vega worked ceaselessly. "I loved the staff and the dedication that everyone had. I loved my community. I felt like I was serving family."



Just look at the Statue of Liberty. What does it tell you?

Immediately, Vega extended her passion and entrepreneurial spirit into Ayuda. She launched a groundbreaking collaboration with the National Council of La Raza (now UnidosUS), which provided her with training in proposal writing. That led to a new grant from the U.S. Justice Department that expanded programming, and one from the District's Department of Employment Services, which Vega used to start a paralegal training program.

She explored creative revenue streams. After the passage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act in 1986, Vega "stunned" the Board by spending \$300 on a camera to take passport pictures for a fee and sending Ayuda staff to the FBI to learn fingerprinting. She smiled, "I figured everyone needed passport pictures and fingerprints for their immigration forms." The initiatives generated \$6,000 the first year.

Vega also expanded partnerships with area universities and law firms to increase the pipeline of intern and pro bono talent. She oversaw the expansion of the kinds of cases the organization took on and, "slowly we began doing more and more immigration work." Vega hired a talented, young

Vega recalls the face of a teenage girl who had been train-raped by soldiers in El Salvador and was seeking asylum. "It could have been my 16-year-old daughter...It could have been me." She shudders still. Vega vividly remembers a man who paid a "cayote" (middleman) to help his family cross the border, and then left the man's wife and children asleep on railroad tracks. They were killed. "I have never stopped seeing that face," said Vega. "The deepest human sadness. "That's why I stayed...The cases always were in my heart."

For her leadership of Ayuda, Vega was named "Washingtonian of the Year" in 1988 by Washingtonian Magazine, and hers remains one of the most recognized names in the Ayuda family.

Now deputy director of the Criminal Division in D.C.'s Superior Court, Vega continues to be an energetic advocate. "I'm proud that Ayuda has survived and thrived for 45 years," she said. "I am confident it will continue to do great things in the next 45."

1980s

In 1980, the U.S. Congress passed the Refugee Act. Ayuda helped many individuals fleeing violence in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua and who feared persecution. Ayuda defended them from the U.S. government's attempts to remove them. Ayuda's attorneys also worked on hundreds of political asylum cases throughout this period.

Congress passed the landmark legislation, Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), offering a path to legal residency to millions of undocumented individuals. Ayuda forged its first pro bono partnership with Arnold & Porter and began assisting hundreds of applicants to file for benefits under IRCA.

We have always maintained very high ethical and professional standards.

When **Anya Sykes** arrived in the U.S., she had two law degrees and was married to a U.S. citizen. She has always recognized that she had some clear advantages as an immigrant and felt compassion toward other immigrants not as fortunate as she.

It is this, in part, that attracted Sykes to Ayuda more than 30 years ago. She joined the organization as one of its first immigration lawyers. As the office grew, Sykes became managing attorney of Ayuda's immigration section and served in that capacity for 15 years. "My work gave me the opportunity not only to help people rebuild their lives, but also to mentor young immigration attorneys who continue to have an impact in this field," she said.

Today, the legal services program Sykes helped launch serves nearly 2,100 clients annually, runs 12 legal clinics around the region, and taps the expertise of 22 legal staff members and 16 attorneys. Sykes, who left her full-time position a decade ago, is still among them. "Ayuda has become my second family," she said. "I have been lucky to work with such a talented group of dedicated women and men."

Over the decades, Sykes has watched with satisfaction as clients and their families integrated socially and economically into American life. She remembers the details of many cases. Among them was a refugee from The Republic of the Congo. The woman had been tortured, raped, and jailed. When she arrived in the U.S., she was HIV positive and pregnant as a result of the rapes, emotionally traumatized, and did not speak English. She tried on her own to apply for political asylum, was rejected, placed in removal proceedings, and came to Ayuda looking for legal representation in the Immigration Court.

Sykes – who is fluent in four languages – talked to her in French, the refugee's native language, and agreed to represent her. The case was complicated, and after a long

court battle, the client was granted political asylum. Sykes found her a French-speaking therapist, a place to live, and held a community appeal to raise money to help the woman take care of her newborn daughter. "Last year, I watched this woman become a U.S. citizen, and her young daughter was there with her," said Sykes, her eyes twinkling with joy. "I'm so proud of them."

Reflecting on the wave of immigration over the past few decades, Sykes noted, "The climate for immigrants is not as welcoming as it was when I started...Immigration laws are complex and changing. It's much harder to get relief for even very deserving people, and today there is great fear in the immigrant community."

These changes, along with language and cultural barriers, make the immigrant population especially vulnerable, she said, and many fall victim to costly "notarios" and "consultants" masquerading as legitimate providers of immigration services. "Ayuda's work is more important than ever," said Sykes. "We provide low-cost or free services, but we have always maintained very high ethical and professional standards. Our purpose is not taking money from clients but rather, getting help for them, and telling them the truth about their situations."

The work is hard, and the cases often heart-wrenching. But even after three decades, Sykes persists. "I feel privileged to be able to do work that is so fulfilling and meaningful."



1980s

Leslie Orloff, formerly managing attorney of The George Washington University's legal clinic, established Ayuda's Clinica Legal Latina to support landlord and tenant work for immigrants. Attorneys helped tenants from various apartment buildings on Columbia Road. After political and strategy differences with tenant groups, Clinica began focusing on family law and representing immigrant victims of domestic violence.

Danny's Story

In 2008, Danny arrived in the U.S. from the Philippines with the dream of starting a new life in "the land of opportunity." Under the H-2B program, he received a temporary work visa provided by a private agency that promised him a job in the hotel industry. Instead he was put to work at a factory in Jacksonville, Florida.

After a few months, the agency moved the workers to Alabama. While there, Danny worked 16-hour days, earning only \$150 a week. Forced to sleep on the floor in a small room with six other workers, Danny was scared and alone. After months of tireless work for little pay, he decided he had to escape. He knew he would lose his visa and could therefore be deported, but his conditions were unbearable – nothing like what had been promised. He fled to Baltimore, where he stayed with friends. One suggested he speak with Ayuda.

"When I first arrived at Ayuda, they were concerned with my well-being." From the start, Ayuda made sure Danny had food and clothing, and even helped him find an apartment. They informed him that he was a victim of labor trafficking, as he had been lured with false promises into working against his will. He then met with his attorney who helped him apply for a work permit, which he received within three or four months. Two years later, while visiting the Philippines, he received a phone call from his attorney that he had been granted a green card.

"Ayuda is there, not just to only help and guide you, but is there to help you achieve your dreams."

Today, Danny is living his dream. He was recently promoted to manager at a resort hotel. He lives in Baltimore with his wife and their two-year-old son. He never imagined that the most powerful country in the world could have human trafficking and now he wants others to hear his story so that he can help other people in similar situations. Danny shares his story with other trafficking victims in various support groups. He wants to convey to others that there is always hope and that there is always somebody there to help.



"Ayuda is a part of my life.
They guided me and they
helped me... Ayuda is there...
they follow up. They call just
to make sure I'm okay."

"Ayuda, thank you. You changed my life. You have inspired me to help other people like me. And that is what I'm doing."

1990s

Ayuda expanded services to victims of domestic violence after receiving a federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grant. Ayuda attorney Stacy Brustin launched Hermanas Unidas, a support group for survivors of domestic violence. Ayuda established its' Social Services Program.

Leslye Orloff remembers clearly one of her first days at Ayuda. "It was 1985, and I walked into the waiting room. It was full of men," she said. "The services were mostly focused on immigration options for the male head of households." Little attention had been paid to the thousands of immigrant women and children who needed access to legal immigration status independent of their abusive spouse, parent, or partner so they could flee abusive homes, receive protection from deportation, gain economic independence and rebuild their lives.

Orloff would change all that. In the next few years, she founded and directed Ayuda's Clinica Legal Latina – a comprehensive legal and social services program for low-income immigrant women and children who are victims of domestic and sexual violence.

Orloff, a family law attorney, recruited "lots of interns," and other volunteers and worked with Ayuda's expert immigration attorneys. "Back in the '80s, there we no interpreters in the D.C. court system. Our clients couldn't call the police for help because there were no Spanish speakers there either," she said.

Instead, clients would call Orloff directly. Orloff, who is bilingual, called the police, picked up an interpreter, and arrived at their homes to meet the officers, translate the circumstances, advocate for the clients, then help get protective orders, child custody, housing, food, clothing – whatever was needed.

"Ayuda was one of the few organizations in the country representing battered immigrant women," Orloff said. "There simply weren't any other resources." Through Clinica, Ayuda offered a range of social services along with legal help, which became the model for the holistic programming that makes Ayuda unique today.

Ayuda was one of the few organizations in the country representing battered immigrant women.

1990s

Ayuda was one of the named plaintiffs suing the Department of Justice for improper interpretations of the IRCA provisions. After the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) was enacted, Ayuda assisted more than a thousand clients applying for the benefits under the Act.



Orloff worked tirelessly. In her 14 years at Ayuda, she also served as director of the national policy program and director of program development. All told, she litigated some 800 cases and settled thousands more, impacting tens of thousands of lives.

"The names fade," Orloff said, but the images are vivid. She cites one especially memorable case in which an abusive husband had taken the couple's child. Orloff arrived at his residence along with the police, served the husband papers, and carried the six-month-old out of the house in her arms to return the baby to her mother. Years later, Orloff ran into the mother, who introduced "abogada (lawyer) Leslye" to her now 26-year-old daughter – the child Orloff had carried to safety decades before. "It was just beautiful. Just amazing," she said.

In addition to programing, Orloff helped shape national domestic violence policy – raising Ayuda's profile around the country. Her engagement gave the organization a seat at the table in developing the National Network to End Violence Against Immigrant Women, in writing battered spouse legislation in 1990 and the Violence Against Women Act in 1994. This year, because of Orloff's seminal work more than two decades ago, Ayuda provided services and therapy to 149 domestic violence survivors and won approval for 158 Special Immigrant Juvenile Status cases for abandoned, abused, or neglected children.

Providing these victims the support they need to rebuild their lives makes the work worthwhile, Orloff said. "Ayuda's services make the difference between lives that are in tatters and successful lives in which people become active, successful members of our community. I'm proud to have been part of it."

I saw an institution that stands for the value of our common humanity.

During the 21 years that **Claudio Grossman** served as dean of American University Washington College of Law, immigration and human rights were always at the forefront of study and discussion.

Grossman, now Dean Emeritus, was a political refugee from Chile who came to the U.S. 36 years ago. Forced to cross national boundaries for his safety, he faced the challenges of learning a new language and culture and the trauma of political oppression. "I knew very well the importance of institutions that represent the rule of law and the value of human dignity," he said. Indeed, Grossman has dedicated his life to it.

An internationally renowned advocate of law and human rights, Grossman has served on the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and two United Nation commissions in these areas. He currently is president of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights. A conference hall at WCL is named in his honor. This global champion for human dignity is also one of Ayuda's strongest advocates.

"When I discovered Ayuda, I saw an institution that stands for the value of our common humanity," he said. "It is an organization that defends and creates opportunity for people who need it – the disenfranchised and the poor, battered women, and the elderly. I met people there who put time, effort, and thinking into creating opportunity for others without discrimination," he said. "This is an important component of the American experience."

As dean, Grossman connected Ayuda with a network of thought leaders and talent to strengthen its work and raise awareness. He followed cases Ayuda took on to inspire topics for the law school's experiential learning and invited Ayuda experts to participate on panels and in discussions with students. He created opportunities for 70+ law students to do externships at Ayuda.

"The students not only got a chance see the law in action with real clients," Grossman said, but they also "were inspired by what they saw" – the faces and voices of immigrants seeking a better life and the power of the law to help them achieve their dreams. "There is something very important to learn about channeling demands through the law," Grossman said. "Sometimes I think they learned as much at Ayuda as here in school," he joked.

Today, the partnerships that Grossman built with Ayuda continue. "Ayuda is uniquely structured to address one of the key issues of our time," he said, noting the organization's focus on political inclusion, compassion, justice, and the expertise of its staff. "Ayuda provides the most committed professional legal support available. You know that if Ayuda is handling a case, the client is getting the best possible defense."

The services Ayuda offers are especially critical now, he said. "There is currently a general policy that portrays immigrants in a negative light. You can see it in lawmakers evading the issue of DACA, reducing the possibility of family reunification, or restricting the number of refugees. That kind of thinking doesn't do justice to the contributions immigrants have made to this country."

Despite this, Grossman is optimistic. "I continue to think there will be a resurgence of core values in the United States, and these values will be a powerful and inspiring force," he said. "Ayuda will continue to play an important role."



2000s I

Ayuda helped several hundred people from Honduras and El Salvador successfully register for Temporary Protect Status (TPS). Many return to Ayuda for their TPS renewal.

Ayuda received one of the first Department of Justice grants after the Trafficking Victims Protection Act was passed by Congress, and launched the Human Trafficking Program.

It's about saving lives.

When **Larry Schneider** was a law student, he decided that helping people who couldn't afford legal counsel was going to be part of his career path. Now senior counsel and head of the International Trade Practice at Arnold & Porter's Washington D.C. office, Schneider marks more than three decades leading the firm's pro bono immigration practice. Among his proudest achievements is a powerful partnership that has been critical to Ayuda's success.

Schneider's involvement with Ayuda was triggered by the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. At the time, he was chair of the D.C. Bar's Public Service Activities Committee and recognized that "thousands of people were eligible to apply for legalization under the new program, and local organizations would not be able to handle all of this on their own."

Schneider mobilized the Committee, matching local law firms and non-profit organizations serving immigrants. And Arnold & Porter officially "adopted" Ayuda. The firm's attorneys and legal assistants trained volunteers, staffed clinics to guide immigrants through the application process, and the two organizations worked together to develop a new immigration manual that was published for nonprofits nationwide.

Over the years – under Schneider's leadership – the partnership continued, with Arnold & Porter providing professional expertise, research, and hands-on work to support Ayuda's efforts as emerging legislation and demographic trends created new challenges for sanctuary and citizenship. The firm helped with asylum cases, with special visas for victims of crime, human trafficking, domestic violence, and with immigration policy matters. It even paid the salary of a legal fellow to work at Ayuda for two years on issues around deportation.

To date, more than 300 Arnold & Porter attorneys and legal assistants have donated over 22,000 hours of time to Ayuda – a value of more than \$6.5 million.

Ayuda has honored Schneider and Arnold & Porter many times over the years – in 2002, honoring its associates for

pro bono work helping abused immigrant women; in 2004 for its pro bono work on a precedent-setting immigration case, and inducting both Schneider and Arnold & Porter to Ayuda's Hall of Fame. But for Schneider it's not about the recognition. It's about what he calls "saving lives."

"In my international practice, I was working with clients from all over the world," he said. "I witnessed the difficulty immigrants had, both fleeing from very difficult situations and trying to deal with our not-so-simple immigration laws. Through pro-bono work, I've met some remarkable people who had the strength to overcome life-threatening situations, make their way to the U.S., and are now able to contribute. They are very, very grateful."

One of the mementos of his firm's engagement that inspires him most is a note from a pro bono client from Ethiopia:

For doing all the good things you do, For being all the good things, you are, For being one of those people.

Thank you.

Because of you my life is changed, and I am free.

Because of your help, I am safe, and my future is bright.

Thank you.

Schneider is moved by the woman's words even after all these years. "Ayuda is doing wonderful work," he said. "That impact of our partnership on individual lives has had a tremendous impact on me. It is some of the most meaningful work I've done as a lawyer."



2000s

Ayuda opened its Virginia office in Sterling and began to offer legal and social services to immigrants in Northern Virginia. Ayuda also launched the Children's Program.

Ayuda was chosen to develop and run the Community Legal Interpreter Bank, a shared interpreter bank that is required by D.C. law. The Bank provides attorney training, interpretation services, and document translations to entities that provide legal services. The Bank oversaw the creation of the "Language of Justice," the first of its kind interpreter training manual for working in legal settings outside of court.

We wish to multiply Ayuda's reach and impact.

Paula Fitzgerald sits at the small table in her office, reflecting on a decade of working at Ayuda – the last two years as executive director. Her long-time commitment to social justice and inclusion frames her assessment of Ayuda's effectiveness, and she takes pride in the organization's growth and impact. But her focus is squarely on the future.

A lawyer by training, Fitzgerald was initially attracted to Ayuda's mission-oriented programs and the opportunity to use her legal skills to help vulnerable clients rebuild their lives. "Ayuda was a good fit for me," she said. Ten years later, it still is.

Inarguably, 2017 was the organization's most successful year, with direct services and programs delivered to more than 2,700 men, women, and children fleeing their countries for a new start. Ayuda received nearly \$2 million in government and private foundation grants and partnered with nonprofits and law enforcement agencies that referred hundreds of their clients, multiplying Ayuda's reach and impact.

Fitzgerald credits Ayuda's staff and its holistic program model. "Many of our clients come to the U.S. after having been traumatized in their home countries," she said. "They are victims of domestic violence, human trafficking, and other crimes. They are men, women, and children of all backgrounds, sexual orientations, and cultures. Many do not speak English. Ayuda's services are varied and designed to deal with the kinds of complexities many immigrants face."

Fitzgerald added that Ayuda's staff are "respected experts in the field whose dedication is amazing...We try to say 'yes' to clients, even when we're at capacity, because we all know that if you say 'yes' to just one more case, you can make an enormous difference."

Not surprisingly Fitzgerald's most vivid memories are of clients for whom Ayuda has made a difference. She particularly remembers a young girl who had been sexually abused in Central America and fled to the U.S. to reunify with her mother. Ayuda helped her obtain legal status. Today the



girl works full-time and attends college at night and has great ambitions for her future. Said Fitzgerald, "Her story always reminds me that our services are important for everyone, but especially for young people who have so much ahead."

While there have been many such victories for Ayuda throughout Fitzgerald's tenure, she does not take time to look back. There is an urgent and growing need. "Our work has become more challenging since the new administration began," Fitzgerald said. "There is more hateful rhetoric, which is some ways scapegoats the immigrant community. People are afraid and don't know what rumor or truth is. Immigrants are at tremendous risk."

This year, Fitzgerald worked with the Board, staff, and volunteers to develop a five-year strategic plan for Ayuda to help meet the need. It includes new technology and program infrastructure so that by 2023, Ayuda will deliver a consistent set of programs across all of its offices and serve hundreds more clients.

The goals are ambitious, and the path will be steep. But Fitzgerald is confident. "The strengths and values behind Ayuda's success will continue to guide us as we move forward," she said. "We will keep doing what we're doing, but bigger and better. We are determined to persist until we build a community where all immigrants can succeed and thrive."

2010s

Ayuda moved its Sterling office to Falls Church, Virginia to be more accessible to immigrants in Northern Virginia. The D.C. office relocated to the Takoma area, for closer proximity to immigrants residing in Maryland. Due to overcrowding in the Takoma and Falls Church offices Ayuda moved its management, operations, finance, fundraising and communication, and language access teams to downtown D.C.

Project END (End Notario Deceit) was launched as a direct legal services project aimed at remedying the harm caused by notario or immigration consultant fraud. Project END provides advice, counsel, and representation to victims in civil, criminal, and immigration proceedings. The fraudulent work of notarios can have life-devastating consequences on its victims, including financial ruin, damage to a legal case, deportation, and permanent family separation.

Today

Ayuda helps immigrants – who reside in the Washington metropolitan region and who earn incomes below 300% of the federal poverty level – overcome the adversities and vulnerabilities they face, through the following programs:

Immigration Legal Program. Ayuda's Immigration Program provides expert immigration legal services with attorneys who can help immigrants navigate a complex U.S. immigration system. Documented and undocumented immigrants have legal rights within existing law. Unaware of these remedies and overwhelmed by complex laws and language barriers, immigrant families need help to access justice. Ayuda has expertise in serving unaccompanied minors; survivors of human trafficking, domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking; and asylum seekers and refugees. Ayuda also recently launched a Pro Bono Program to provide comprehensive immigration consultations at community based locations, making these services more accessible to potential clients. Pro bono involvement allows Ayuda to harness additional capacity to serve more low-income immigrants, which is needed today more than ever.

Domestic Violence/Family Law Program. On average, 24 people per minute are victims of rape, physical violence or stalking by an intimate partner in the United States — more than 12 million women and men over the course of a year. Reporting rates of domestic violence are significantly lower for immigrant victims. Fears of immigration detention and deportation for themselves, their partner, or their family and the potential for losing custody of children all contribute to lower reporting rates. Victims may be unfamiliar with the U.S. legal system and often do not believe that it will protect them – their experience with justice systems often comes from their home countries, which may not recognize gender-based violence as serious crimes, and may lack civil remedies or immigration protections for victims. Community and family cultural norms often place the blame on victims, thus leaving

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Ayuda began forging grant partnerships with local governments (Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Fairfax County, and City of Fairfax) to diversify program funding. For example, funding from the Montgomery County government enables county residents and partner nonprofits to access Ayuda's Community Legal Interpreter Bank.

them more isolated. Because of these special legal and social service needs, it is difficult for immigrant survivors to navigate their options. Ayuda helps them obtain protective orders and secure custody of their children so that they can rebuild their lives safely. Ayuda's program is a national model for offering holistic legal and social services in a culturally sensitive environment to low-income immigrant victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. We serve both women and men from all over the world.

Social Service Program. Ayuda provide crisis intervention and comprehensive case management services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking. Our social workers work with community resources to assist clients in securing emergency and transitional shelter, food, clothing, and medical and mental health care for themselves and their children. We provide safety planning, crisis intervention, emotional support and trauma-informed individual and group therapy. While many of our domestic violence and sexual assault clients also receive legal assistance from us, it is not required to receive social services.

Project END (Eradicating Notario Deceit). Many immigrant consultants who call themselves notarios or casewriters pose illegally as licensed attorneys and charge immense fees for deceptive information that harms rather than helps their unsuspecting clients. Project END is a direct legal services project aimed at remedying the harm caused by notario or immigration consultant fraud through comprehensive legal representation in both immigration matters and in related civil and criminal complaints. Project END provides advice, counsel, and representation to victims in civil, criminal, and immigration proceedings.

Language Access Program. Immigrants and Deaf individuals can experience confusion and profound isolation due to language barriers. Without adequate communication, basic services are beyond reach. Long-term consequences of linguistic isolation include illness, homelessness, and poverty. Ayuda works to make sure that all of our neighbors can get help when they need it, regardless of the languages that they use to communicate. We provide language access (an interpreter or document translation) for any limited English proficient or Deaf client who needs it in order to access a public interest lawyer or a victim services provider. We train interpreters, lawyers, advocates, and the public about the importance of language access and how to provide it effectively. We advocate for the enforcement of local and federal laws that require interpretation and translation services.

Silvia's Story

Silvia Lopez moved to the United States from El Salvador more than 29 years ago, escaping the civil war that plagued the country from 1980 to 1992. When Silvia first arrived in 1989, she began the arduous process of applying for asylum and later for a green card under a special law called the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA).

"In my first year in the United States I felt bad. I missed my family – my parents and siblings. But I knew it was better here."

Slowly, things began to improve for Silvia. She started building a life and a family in Northern Virginia. In her heart, there was no better place to raise two daughters and a son than in the United States.

"When you have children, you start to think differently. I must keep going so that they can have a better life. They can be someone here. They have opportunity."

18 years after she arrived, immigration officials finally interviewed Silvia regarding her asylum and green card applications. Both applications were denied and deportation proceedings were initiated against her. Frantic, she consulted with a friend who had heard of Ayuda.

"Thanks be to God, I found Ayuda. And thanks to Ayuda for supporting me and helping me move forward."

Ayuda assisted Silvia in obtaining Temporary Protected Status (TPS). After Silvia obtained TPS, Ayuda represented her in immigration court and convinced the judge to close her deportation proceedings. From then on, Silvia worked exclusively with Ayuda on all her immigration matters, including multiple renewals of her TPS, an application to travel to see her elderly parents in El Salvador, and a family petition, filed for Silvia by her adult U.S. citizen daughter.

In December 2017, after 28 years, Silvia successfully obtain her green card and she is now a permanent resident.



"I've fought so hard to get here and Ayuda has helped me every step of the way. I now have my green card, which brings me so much joy. It was the happiest day of my life. I cried and cried, but they are tears of great happiness."

Silvia is proud to be a resident and carries her green card proudly. She continues to live and work in Northern Virginia. Both of her daughters are working full-time jobs. Her son plays on the soccer team at Marymount College. Her grandchildren are in school.

"None of this would be possible without Ayuda. My message to other immigrants [like me] is to trust in Ayuda. If you put your trust in anything, it should be in Ayuda. They change lives."

Funding from the D.C. Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants launched Ayuda's Victims Services Interpreter Bank, providing advocate training, interpretation services, and document translations to entities that serve victims of crime.

Ayuda partnered with the U.S. Committee on Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) to provide legal services to unaccompanied immigrant children, many from Central America who lived in violent neighborhoods that are overrun by gangs and organized crime.

We are humbled and grateful for your generosity over the years. Thank you.

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Ayuda oversaw the creation of "Breaking Silence," the first of its kind training manual for interpreters working in victim services, with funding from the D.C. Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants.

Ayuda launched a comprehensive Immigration Pro-Bono Program to build additional capacity to serve low income immigrants otherwise not seen by Ayuda attorneys. In addition, Ayuda has slowly built a network to place and mentor cases and is leveraging relationships with pro bono connections to increase financial donations from law firm partners.

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Ayuda launched Consults, Orientation, and Outreach Program (CO-OP) to provide critical information and legal consults to more immigrants. Through CO-OP, Ayuda assists more immigrants in their neighborhoods, complementing one-on-one client consult and representation work that limits staff capacity to serve clients all at once. Ayuda's Volunteer and Outreach Program allows for general community volunteers to engage with Ayuda's work that do not require legal or social work expertise.

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A Road to Ayuda's 50th Year – Ayuda's Strategic Goals

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Be the leading provider of holistic legal, social and language access services to low-income immigrants in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. To achieve this, Ayuda will add accessible service location in Maryland.

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Because of you, thousands of immigrant lives have been saved.

Provide low-income immigrants in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia with the full array of services that we offer – including immigration law, family law, immigration legal services, social services to immigrant survivors of crime and language access services. To achieve this, Ayuda will strengthen its programmatic infrastructure and shift from a "patchwork" of services across the region to a full array of programs and services provided consistently in each jurisdiction.

Elevate the unique voice of immigrants in the local dialogue in order to broaden perspectives of the wider community and inform local policy. To achieve this, Ayuda will build new capabilities in public relations, public awareness and education, and community engagement.

Ayuda Impact

Who We Help

- 6,500 Immigrant women, children and men annually
- 104 countries of origin across the continents
- 22 languages
- 100% low-Income
- Residents of the DC-metro region (DC-MD-VA)
- All immigrants regardless of country of origin, race/ ethnicity, sex and sexual orientation, gender, age, and/ or cultural, political, or religious backgrounds



How We Help

- 45 years of service
- 95% of cases successfully resolved
- Directly assists 2,700 clients annually
- Culturally and linguistically appropriate services
- · Holistic legal, social, and language access services
- Ayuda legal representation and pro bono work
- · Community outreach and education

Ayuda Community

- 13 Board of Directors members
- 18 Ayuda Advisory Council members
- 100 legal, civil, community, and student volunteers
- 40,000 hours volunteered
- 30 community partners
- 40 law firms and corporations
- 15 foundations
- \$5.3 million in grants, donation, and in-kind gifts from the public and private sectors



Immigration Legal Program

- 2,945 matters resolved
- 2,070 clients served
- 973 legal consultations provided
- 158 Special Immigrant Juvenile Status cases for abandoned, abused, or neglected children won
- 30 visas for survivors of human trafficking secured
- 250 work authorization application approvals obtained
- 58 DACA applications processed
- 57 TPS re-registrations processed

Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault and Family Law Program

- 52 temporary and civil protective orders for clients secured
- 47 children assisted in custody matters

Social Services Program

- Provided comprehensive case management and therapy to:
 - o 149 survivors of domestic violence
 - o 16 unaccompanied children
 - o 73 human trafficking survivors

Language Access Program

- 1,619 in-person translations facilitated
- 4,792 telephonic interpretations provided
- 457 document translations completed
- Trained 54 interpreters
- 70 nonprofit partnerships

Pro Bono Program

- 12 legal clinics conducted
- 7 Know Your Rights Presentations coordinated
- 2 Family Preparedness Clinics organized
- 15 law firms providing pro bono attorneys





Project END Program

- 37 victims of immigration services fraud counseled
- 11 outreach efforts conducted and 256 immigrant consumers reached
- 7 trainings to immigration advocates organized
- 3 commercial length videos produced with the Hispanic Bar Association

Volunteer and Outreach Program

- 4,125 hours of donated time from 50 general community volunteers
- 30,000 hours from immigration, DV/family law, social services, language access, development, and administrative interns
- More than 300 community members reached through 10 outreach events and presentations



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Without a Heart, it's just a machine.

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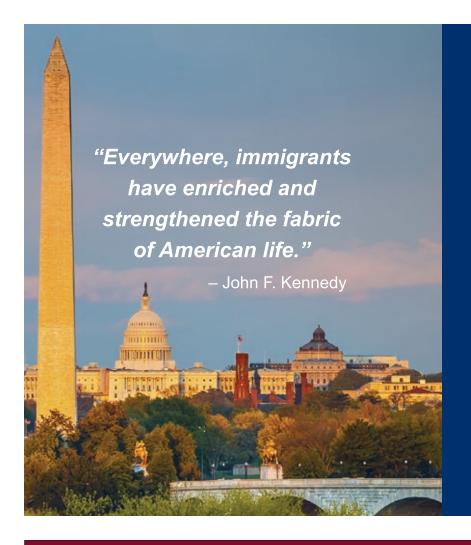
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and gratified to work with
its committed attorneys toward
achieving its goals.

WORKING TO SPREAD JUSTICE.

We are proud to work with Ayuda. We admire Ayuda's longstanding commitment to helping immigrants in our communities, and look forward to continuing our collaboration to expand access to justice.





Arnold & Porter applauds **Ayuda**

Thank you for 45 years of tireless efforts on behalf of those in need

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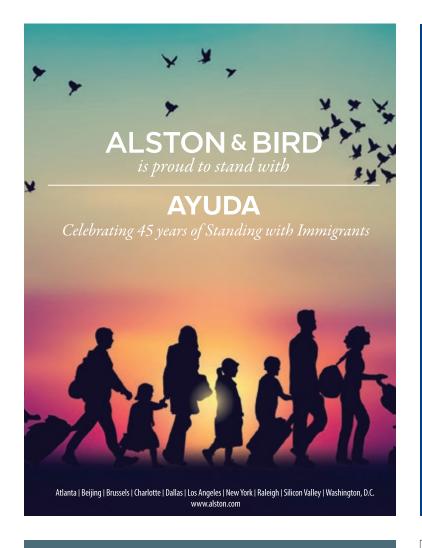
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"In diversity there is beauty and there is strength."

-Maya Angelou

WilmerHale is proud to support Ayuda's 45th Anniversary Celebration. We applaud Ayuda for helping low income immigrants in the Washington metropolitan region access justice, stop abuses, find safety, heal from trauma, overcome language isolation, and restore and rebuild their lives.





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AYUDA

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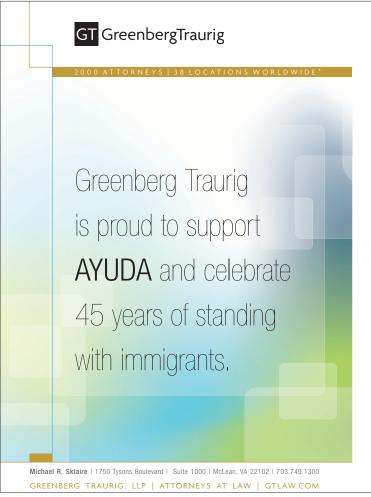
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