



## Immigrant Justice Network expands membership, ready to fight against criminalization in 2021

*The Immigrant Justice Network (IJN) welcomes five new members: Families for Freedom, Grassroots Leadership, Puente Human Rights Movement, Southeast Asia Resource Action Center and Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network.*

As President Biden begins his tenure, we know repairing the harm done by the Trump administration will be extremely difficult. However, we demand more than simply restoring the immigration policies that existed before Trump. Our communities need bolder action and systematic change from the Biden administration. The Immigrant Justice Network (IJN) is committed to ensure that all immigrants, including those who have been criminalized, and those who have had contact with the criminal legal system, or have criminal records - often left out of the conversation - are included in legislative and administrative solutions.

The Immigrant Justice Network was created in 2006 and has become a leading voice against the criminalization of immigrants in the United States. As our new members join the network, currently powered by the Immigrant Defense Project, Immigrant Legal Resource Center, Just Futures Law, and the National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild (NIPNLG), IJN will strengthen its advocacy for individuals, families and communities caught in the criminal legal and immigration systems, both at the federal and local level.

After a successful [reintroduction](#) of the New Way Forward Act this month, a bill that would address the criminalization of immigrants, restore due process, end mandatory detention and decriminalize migration, IJN is excited to grow the network and welcome our new members, who have been fighting for people impacted by the criminal legal and immigration systems for decades.

"We are thrilled to welcome five powerful and dynamic organizations to our network, all of them have organized and worked for years to make sure all immigrants, regardless of criminal record, can live with dignity and without fear of being separated from their families and communities. As the Biden administration takes office, we are ready to bring accountability and ensure no one is left behind," **said Oliver Merino, coordinator, Immigrant Justice Network**

"Families for Freedom is eager to join the Immigrant Justice Network in fighting against the war on immigrants, particularly the war against those that carry the stigma of criminality. It is of the essence that our members, families, and communities are not forgotten as we seek justice for all," **said Violeta Munera, Deputy Director, Families For Freedom**

"Grassroots Leadership is honored to be join the Immigrant Justice Network and continue our work to shut down cages, repeal harmful laws like SB4, divest from all forms of policing and incarceration, center community building, and most importantly, lay a collective groundwork for conditions that honor life, abundance, joy, and transformation in communities where death, scarcity, harm, and pain have been the systemic norm. Let's get to work." **Claudia Muñoz, Co-Executive Director, Grassroots Leadership**

"PUENTE has a long history of fighting abusive and discriminatory crimmigration policies, which have fundamentally sought to rob our people of their dignity and human value. As a community, we have witnessed, Arizona and the country commit countless injustices that have come from anti-immigrant legislation like SB1070;we refused to allow the inhumane practices of corrupt officials like the infamous Sheriff Joe Arpaio to persist and will continue to advocate for the decriminalization of our communities." **said Isis Gil, Development Director, Puente Human Rights Movement**

"SEARAC is excited to join IJN in the fight against the criminalization of immigrants in the United States. It is our hope that we can better connect our efforts to stop the deportations of over 15,000 Southeast Asian Americans with the broader movement to change our country's outdated and unjust criminal legal and immigration systems that have been used to deport and separate our communities. We are honored to be part of IJN as we move into the 117th Congress and look forward to working more closely with the network members to bring progressive and visionary changes to our country," **said Nary Rath, Immigration Policy Advocate, Southeast Asia Resource Action Center**

"Washington has become the leader in the nation with the boldest pro-immigrant policies that have terminated the collusion between state personnel and federal immigration agents, ensuring all regardless of immigration status have access to the halls of justice at our county courthouses, and most recently we have led to fruition the distribution of over \$40 million dollars in COVID19 relief for undocumented residents in our state. Our power comes from working in solidarity with community members persecuted and left vulnerable by the immigration system, being led by those directly impacted, and grounding ourselves in the community to confront power. We won't stop until freedom is won!" **said Monserrat Padilla, Co-Executive Director, Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network**

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