

SOCIAL JUSTICE COLLABORATIVE

OUR VICTORIES

*Acknowledge all of your small victories.
They will eventually add up to
something great.*

- Kara Goucher



VITAL INPUT

This family had been suffering death threats and attacks in their home country, but they couldn't report to the police because the men that were threatening them were probably the police themselves.

Their case took about 3 to 4 years to accomplish since there were many issues with the court Mam interpreter. Esmeralda Mendoza Ramírez, Legal Assistant, spent up to two days working to address dialectal differences on the recordings of the declarations. In Guatemala, there are many variations of the Mam language, which caused confusion in the record. The family had also suffered from a lot of trauma which led to memory loss and more confusion. The judge was concerned that they were lying, and if it wasn't for Esmeralda's input, this family may have been sent back to the place where they were already fleeing death.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN



A hard-working man with no work permit but with his daughter always in his mind, fought hard to make his own success.

While working in California, he was the victim of a felonious assault. A good friend gave him Gautam Jagannath's business card and he contacted a young company called Social Justice Collaborative. It was the beginning of an 8-year journey and today he is a Legal Permanent Resident of the United States.

"I was very lucky to be one of the first clients SJC helped, and I always felt privileged because I got to meet the heads of the organization personally, they really are good people. At the end of the process, as the company grew, I could not get in touch with them so often but I was well-treated and assisted all the way throughout the journey, their support meets very high expectations, SJC deserves all the growth it has had over the years.

My desire to become a Legal Permanent Resident arose because, like many of my colleagues, I lived in some kind of limbo, in this country it is difficult to get ahead if you don't have everything under the law. It was hard for me to leave my home country, my parents and my daughter are in Mexico so, for me, this represents something big because I will now be able to go to visit my family.

Although the lawyers warned me about it being a long process, something that you bet on without being 100% sure that you are going to win, and nobody is capable of giving you any kind of guarantee, I decided to trust them. Eventually, when they told me that my work permit had arrived it was December and I was one week away from being fired if I didn't get it, that felt like a Christmas present to me.

I want my family to be reunited, I have a son here and I want to bring my daughter with me because she deserves all the opportunities to succeed in this world. I didn't want to leave, my whole life is here."

DREAMS DENIED

A teacher in Guatemala that was beaten up, extorted, threatened, and discriminated against because he is indigenous and educated, apparently, for some people, those two things cannot coexist and are worth a life of mistreatment and poverty, our client was struggling to find safety and security.

His country denied him the opportunity to pursue his career and raise his family out of poverty. He says he came to the country of opportunities and was granted asylum.



GANG PERSECUTION

Did you ever have to hide your beliefs because your life was in danger? Many of us haven't, we are privileged; however, it shouldn't be a privilege!

"Now that I have a legal status in the US I can practice my religion without fear of getting hurt or threatened by gang members. I am scared to go back to my home country because I am afraid that I will be threatened and beaten again, and eventually killed by 18th street gang members. Thanks to the US and SJC, I got my peace and my rights back."



NEW BEGINNINGS

Our client was finally granted asylum after being persecuted for his religious beliefs in his home country by different groups at almost every stage of his life and growth. When he arrived in the United States, he fell into depression for a while because he had to leave his family behind.

His words on the occasion of his victory:

"My biggest fear was deportation, besides the fact that I was assaulted a couple of times. Now I have more chances to work and do things that I wanted to do for so long, like applying for credit, I want to have something of my own in the United States, like a house or a business. At SJC it was very easy for me to communicate because they have interpreters and almost all the staff is fully bilingual. I felt very comfortable working with SJC. Thank you so much for everything!"

FOR MY CHILDREN

Victim of violence in her country, she lost her husband to criminals, suffered from constant threats and extortion. Our client had to flee with her children to save them from a horrible future.

She has not yet been able to get a job so having obtained her asylee status with SJC at a very low cost has saved her many sleepless nights and anxiety.

That is why despite her difficult past, she has not lost her nerve; one of her plans is to give her children a safe future and to be able to work in a big corporation within the technology industry.





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FOR A MORE
INCLUSIVE SOCIETY