

# 2025



**FREE MIGRATION  
PROJECT**

# Annual Report



Prepared  
December 2025

# Letter from the Staff



Photo credit: Josh Hild, Unsplash



**David Bennion**

*Executive Director*

**Adrianna Torres-García**

*Deputy Director*

Dear Supporters,

Thank you for another year of confidence in our work! These are difficult times for immigrants, their families, and those of us fighting for immigrant rights. We are grateful

to our colleagues and partners in Philadelphia and beyond. As an organization, we're committed to promoting freedom of movement as a basic human right, providing direct legal services, educating the public, litigating in the public interest, and confronting the systemic oppression that millions of non-citizens face under the constant threat of deportation. Our work is grounded in abolitionist values and led by the people most impacted by these systems. That's why we persevere even in the face of daily systemic challenges.

This year, together with our community, we stood fiercely against a wave of escalating attacks on immigrant lives, and we won meaningful victories. Our legal team continued defending more than 90 low-income clients navigating asylum, family petitions, DACA, and protection from violence, even as the Trump administration's renewed policies threatened detention and deportation on an unprecedented scale. We joined the Shut Down Detention Campaign to fight the ICE prison at Moshannon Valley, the largest in the Northeast, and we helped lead national litigation challenging the administration's revived civil-fines program—an abusive tactic we helped defeat once before.

Through the End Medical Deportation Campaign, we confronted hospitals attempting to illegally deport critically-ill patients instead of providing care, mobilizing families, advocates, and medical professionals nationwide. And with our long-standing partner VietLead, we continued working to reunite families torn apart by punitive immigration penalties. In every battle, our commitment remained unwavering: to fight alongside our communities until freedom of movement is a reality for all. We cannot do this work without your support! We hope you'll be inspired and perhaps become a supporter of our mission at [www.freemigrationproject.org/donate](http://www.freemigrationproject.org/donate).

In solidarity,  
Adrianna and Dave

# Summary



Throughout the year, Free Migration Project advanced a bold, abolitionist vision of immigrant justice through coordinated campaign work that challenged detention, deportation, and exclusion. As a core leader of the Shut Down Detention Campaign, FMP helped strengthen a growing coalition demanding the closure of the Moshannon Valley Processing Center, the largest ICE detention facility in the Northeast. Through persistent organizing, relationship-building, and political education, the Campaign shifted public awareness in Clearfield County and secured a major breakthrough when a County Commissioner publicly committed to voting against the next renewal of contracts that keep Moshannon operational. This work reflects FMP's belief that cages do not create safety and that true community well-being requires freedom, not incarceration.

The End Medical Deportation Campaign remained a cornerstone of FMP's work and a national model for confronting a largely hidden form of anti-immigrant violence. Building on Philadelphia's first-in-the-nation ordinance banning medical deportation, FMP continued to expose and challenge hospitals that charter private flights to expel undocumented patients instead of providing care. As anti-immigrant policies intensified in the U.S., the Campaign saw a sharp increase in complex cases, underscoring the deadly consequences of an unregulated system driven by secrecy and profit. Through education, organizing, research, and a dedicated hotline, FMP continued to assert a simple truth: healthcare is a human right, and no one should face deportation when seeking healthcare.

Alongside this campaign work, FMP provided direct legal services and community-supported deportation defense to more than 90 clients, including asylum seekers, unaccompanied minors, families, survivors of violence, and stateless community leaders. By pairing legal advocacy with organizing, media engagement, and partnerships with grassroots groups like VietLead, FMP supported families facing separation, challenged civil fines and detention, and defended leaders like Sereyrath "One" Van against exile. Across all areas of work, this year reaffirmed FMP's mission: to confront systemic oppression and move closer to a world where freedom of movement is recognized as a basic human right.

# Campaign Work

## *Shut Down Detention Campaign*



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*You can follow the campaign's work and stay connected at [@shutdowndetentioncampaign](#) on Instagram.*

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This year, Adrianna stepped into the role of Co-Coordinator of the Shut Down Detention Campaign alongside Zeynep Emanet of CAIR–Pennsylvania, marking a powerful new chapter in the fight against immigrant detention in Pennsylvania. Since then, the Campaign deepened its structure and momentum, establishing regular meetings, activating subcommittees, and expanding collaboration with organizations and directly impacted community members across Clearfield County, the state, and the tristate region. Together, we are building a broad coalition, centering impacted people and committed to shutting down the Moshannon Valley Processing Center, the largest privately-run ICE detention site in the Northeast.

As a Campaign, our demands are clear: we call on the Clearfield County Commissioners to end their contract with ICE and close the Moshannon Detention Center. We demand freedom, not transfers, for every person imprisoned in this facility. And we refuse to allow Moshannon or any other detention center to be replaced by another prison. Our vision is rooted in community safety, dignity, and the unwavering belief that cages do not make our communities stronger or safer.

This summer, our organizing began to shift the political landscape. Democratic Commissioner David Glass publicly committed to voting “no” when the contract renewal comes up next year. This is a major breakthrough made possible by persistent communication, education, and community mobilization. People living around Moshannon, many of whom had been kept in the dark, are now increasingly aware of and opposed to the violence happening in their backyard.

The year ahead will be decisive. With the contract vote approaching, we are entering a pivotal moment in the fight to close Moshannon once and for all. We remain committed, energized, and deeply proud to stand with the people detained inside Moshannon and with the communities rising up to demand justice.

# *End Medical Deportation Campaign*



Photo credit: Jessica Sachs / Carnegie-Knight News21

The End Medical Deportation Campaign continues to be a cornerstone of our work and remains the only initiative in the United States to win a law against the practice of medical deportation, with Philadelphia's first-in-the-nation ordinance. This campaign confronts a violent and largely hidden practice in which hospitals charter private flights to expel undocumented patients instead of providing care. These deportations are often carried out through coercion disguised as "informed consent," using misinformation, manipulation, and the denial of language access. Because hospitals conceal these actions and no federal oversight exists, the true scope is unknown, but our research with national scholars makes clear that hundreds, if not thousands, of medical deportations occur every year across the country.

This year, as the new administration escalated its attacks on immigrant communities, we saw twice as many medical deportation cases in the first five months as we received during the entire previous year. The cases reaching us are more urgent, the harm more severe, and families more afraid to speak publicly, an outcome of intensified repression and hospital systems emboldened by anti-immigrant policies. Still, our commitment has not wavered. We continue to lead the national movement to expose and end medical deportation by educating communities, training advocates, organizing with families, and serving as a lifeline through our medical deportation hotline. As hospitals attempt to expand this deadly practice in the shadows, we remain grounded in the belief that access to care is a human right and that no one should ever face deportation, especially during a vulnerable moment like chronic healthcare needs.

# Legal Services & Community-Supported Deportation Defense Campaigns



Free Migration Project provides immigration legal representation to low-income clients, focusing on asylum seekers, unaccompanied minors, DACA recipients, families fighting to reunite, and survivors of trafficking and domestic violence. Today we stand alongside more than 90 clients navigating an immigration system designed to criminalize, destabilize, and disappear our communities. Under the renewed threats of the Trump administration, where detention and deportation are wielded as tools of repression, our work has required a fierce legal defense strategy, and at times a community-rooted organizing strategy.

Our casework this year reminds us exactly why our mission exists: to confront the systemic violence that millions of non-citizens face simply for trying to survive, care for their families, and move freely in the world. Every motion we file, every family we support, and every court date we prepare for is part of a broader fight to assert what should be undeniable, that freedom of movement is a basic human right. As we defend our clients against detention and deportation, we are also advancing the world we envision: one where borders no longer divide families, migration is treated as a natural and vital part of human life, and no one lives under the threat of exile. This year reaffirmed that the law alone is not enough, but when paired with community power, courage, and collective action, together we can achieve liberation.

# Justice for Southeast Asian Refugees

We continued our partnership with VietLead, a grassroots organization serving the Southeast Asian community in Philadelphia, to address the devastating impacts of harsh immigration penalties on individuals and families. Together, we work to reunite families separated due to past criminal convictions and help deported Cambodian and Vietnamese community members return to their U.S. homes. Our efforts also include supporting individuals currently at risk of deportation, filing pardon applications, and exploring every possible legal avenue to safeguard their right to remain with their loved ones. By collaborating with peer organizations like VietLead, we have been able to approach these complex cases with creativity and resilience.



Photo credit: Long Luu

This year, our work has centered one of these leaders: Sereyrath “One” Van, a Philadelphia community member whose family fled the Cambodian genocide in the 1980s. Despite having lived nearly his entire life in the U.S., One now faces deportation to a country he has never set foot in, an act of profound violence that reveals the cruelty and absurdity of the U.S. deportation regime. In August 2024, One walked into the Philadelphia ICE office for a routine check-in, and like so many immigrants living under the threat of detention, was abducted instead. He was transferred to the Moshannon Valley Processing Center, where he has remained imprisoned for months. His case has grown into a public defense campaign for freedom from detention, and recognition of his statelessness.

This fall, in collaboration with nonprofit and pro bono legal partners, we achieved a critical victory: One’s federal habeas petition was granted. While the order did not secure his immediate release, the judge ruled that the immigration court must hold a bond hearing within two weeks or ICE must release him. This ruling represented a major step toward justice for One and a challenge to the deportation machine that treats human beings as disposable. In a setback, the immigration judge,

who according to publicly available data had a 100% asylum denial rate for detained immigrants so far in 2025, denied bond to One. But One is not done with his struggle and neither are we. We will continue fighting for freedom for One and all immigrants detained at Moshannon Valley.

By supporting One legally, politically, and in community we are fighting not only for his freedom, but for a world where no one is rendered rightless by borders, where stateless people are not punished for surviving war, displacement, and historical violence. His fight is our fight, and it reinforces our vision of a future grounded in dignity, safety, and freedom of movement for all.



## *Civil Immigration Fines*

In November, we and partner organizations represented immigrants suing the Trump administration to challenge ICE's policy of fining immigrants millions of dollars for pursuing legal remedies to stay in the U.S. after a judge had ordered them deported. We represented one of our clients in successfully fighting an unlawful fine that ICE had issued against them. We joined partner organizations in challenging new rules that DHS implemented in June that made it even harder to defend against immigration fines. We were part of a successful campaign to overturn the immigration fines policy in Trump's first term, and we hope we can help defeat this unjust and abusive program again. We are joined in this effort by Public Justice, Legal Aid Society of New York, the NYU Immigrant Rights Clinic, RAICES, and Covington & Burling.

# Education & Outreach

This year, Free Migration Project's work reached national audiences through powerful media coverage that helped expose the violence of the U.S. immigration system and amplify the voices of impacted communities. Journalists at major outlets engaged deeply with our analysis, our campaigns, and the people most directly affected by deportation and detention, helping bring hidden practices into public view.

Some highlights include coverage in *The Nation*, which examined how hospitals increasingly act as extensions of ICE, shedding light on the deadly practice of medical deportation and elevating FMP's role in leading the only successful campaign to ban it through local law. Reporting in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* further documented how uninsured immigrant patients are pushed toward deportation instead of care, grounding national policy debates in the lived realities of families in our region. Most recently, *The New York Times* highlighted our ongoing challenge to the Trump administration's revived civil fines program, which threatens immigrants with penalties of up to \$1.8 million for asserting their legal rights. Together, this coverage reflects the growing recognition of FMP as a trusted legal and organizing voice, one that confronts systemic injustice and connects individual harm to broader policy failures.

## The Nation

[When Hospitals Act Like ICE](#)

*August 14, 2025*



Photo credit: Claudia Martinez

## The Philadelphia Inquirer

[With limited avenues to health care, uninsured immigrant patients may face 'medical deportation'](#)

*September 13, 2025*



Photo credit: Jessica Sachs / Carnegie-Knight News21

## The New York Times

[Lawsuit Challenges Trump Administration Over \\$1.8 Million in Immigration Fines](#)

*November 20, 2025*



Photo credit: Victor J. Blue for The New York Times

# Infrastructure

## Board

### *The FMP Staff and Board are thrilled to welcome Michelangelo Landgrave!*

Dr. Landgrave has previously held research appointments at Princeton University (Postdoctoral Fellow), the U.S. Federal Government's Office of Evaluation Sciences (Associate Fellow), and the University of Missouri (Postdoctoral Fellow & Assistant Professor). He earned his PhD in Political Science from the University of California, Riverside, and a Master's degree in Economics from California State University, Long Beach. Michealangelo's research has been widely cited in popular media, including [John Oliver's Last Week Tonight](#). We are deeply grateful and honored to have him join the FMP Board and look forward to his contributions in the years ahead.

As we celebrate this addition, we also prepare to bid farewell to Fabio Rojas, our remarkable Board Treasurer, who will conclude his tenure at the end of the year. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Fabio for his years of support and wish him the best of luck in his new chapter as Director of the Department of Sociology at Indiana University, Bloomington. We are confident his work and contributions will continue to create positive ripples throughout our respective fields.

We are excited to continue the work with all of our Board members and supporters in 2026!



Dr. Michealngelo Landgrave



Dr. Fabio Rojas

# Strategic Plan

Guided by our vision, mission, and values, last year we developed a strategic plan for 2025–2027, focusing on program development, personnel, budget, and communications. This plan, created with input from staff and the Board, is being reviewed biannually to ensure progress toward our goals as we navigate the challenges ahead with determination and solidarity. We developed and articulated a detailed Theory of Change:

- **Structural Transformation:** We envision a world where free movement of people is the legal, social, and cultural norm. We call for a human right to migrate and the abolition of deportation. We endorse full political and economic inclusion for all community members regardless of place of birth or parentage.
- **Cases & Campaigns:** Utilizing our values and principles, and building towards our vision and mission, we work on specific deportation defense and issue campaigns. We integrate individual case campaigns into issue or policy campaigns to build awareness and power.
- **Solidarity & Community-Building:** Through program work, we work to build consensus among impacted community members, partners, and the general public that freedom of movement and democratic inclusion are worthy and viable goals. We begin this effort with impacted community members and close peer organizations and build outwards from there to other groups and audiences.
- **Policy & Public Opinion:** We strive for policy and legal reforms while promoting a narrative of freedom of movement and democratic inclusion, using each to reinforce progress toward the other.
- **Cumulative Progress:** We continue building power through discrete campaigns to challenge and deconstruct carceral systems of exclusion while mapping an alternative of freedom of movement and democratic inclusion.

You can read the highlights of our [Strategic Plan here](#).



# Intern Program

Since 2016, Free Migration Project has been intentionally building what is now a robust, values-driven internship program that reflects our abolitionist mission and commitment to political education. In 2025, we continued this work with a dynamic cohort of legal and communications interns—some new, some returning—who played an integral role in advancing our campaigns, research, and public education. Interns expand our organizational capacity while bringing fresh perspectives, curiosity, and creativity that strengthen our work. They engage directly in rallies, protests, and campaign strategy, gaining hands-on experience at the intersection of law, community organizing, and abolitionist practice. Our interns are supported through their institutions, with some receiving course credit or completing practicum requirements through their time with FMP.

Over the summer, we deepened this experience through our multi-week abolitionist curriculum, where staff and interns collectively grappled with abolitionist theory and its real-world application. Grounded primarily in the Abolitionist Futures curriculum, the program included a dedicated session examining what abolition means in the context of immigration legal services and advocacy. This year, we were especially excited to host Laine May, a summer intern from our partner organization, the Pennsylvania Immigration Coalition (PIC), further strengthening movement relationships and cross-organizational learning. We remain inspired by the next generation of advocates who are carrying forward the fight for freedom of movement and collective liberation.



Photo credit: John López

*“Free Migration Project showed me that immigration advocacy goes beyond knowing the law, it means confronting unjust policies in real time. Through FMP, I learned that **true advocacy requires pushing the system** toward what the law should be, not just what it is now. Their work reshaped how I understand responsibility to both individual clients and migrant communities as a whole.”*

**-Andrew Alcalá, FMP Law Intern**

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