

ProBAR Bulletin

South Texas Pro Bono Asylum Representation Project

Volume 1 Summer 2021

A Message from the Director...



Welcome!

It is my pleasure to introduce the first edition of ProBAR's newsletter and to share with you some of the highlights of our incredible team's impact during the first half of 2021. At a time when the landscape of law and policy that shapes immigrants' experiences at the border

has both created new opportunities and perpetuated ongoing challenges, I take pride in knowing that the creativity and commitment of our staff have consistently contributed to the empowerment of immigrants.

Record numbers of unaccompanied children crossed the border in the last few months. Despite the logistical challenges experienced by government systems for children, the rights of unaccompanied children remain unchanged – including their rights to seek protection and to access compassionate legal services. In response, ProBAR expanded our legal education services to support children detained at a new Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) emergency intake site in our region, while continuing our work to provide children detained in existing Office of Refugee Resettlement facilities in our area with Know Your Rights presentations and legal screenings. Our Legal, Release Support, and Shelter Services teams have demonstrated immense dedication to serving immigrant children, going the extra mile to meet the increased demand for our services.

Meanwhile, our team has innovated to develop new ways to support asylum-seekers during the wind-down of the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) program. Since 2019, our team has provided legal information, assistance, and representation to asylum-seekers forced to remain in Mexico under MPP, including during the difficult period of indefinite court closures during the COVID-19 pandemic. As the government has implemented a plan to process asylum-seekers with pending cases

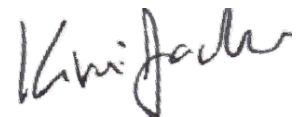
into the United States, our staff have collaborated with government officials and humanitarian and legal services organizations – including members of the RGV Welcoming Committee – to support individuals and families as they transition into the United States.

In addition to the above:

- Our staff have continued to forge ahead with crucial services for adults in ICE custody, including those processed into detention under the Title 42 policy which continues to restrict entry at the border for many. The legal education, representation, and pro se assistance offered by ProBAR remain a lifeline for many who otherwise would not have access to counsel as they move through the immigration process.
- ProBAR joined a lawsuit challenging federal government actions that effectively prevent many unaccompanied children previously subject to the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) or "Remain in Mexico" program from securing the legal protections available to them in the United States.

In these challenging times, ProBAR has maintained our tradition of high-quality services while also finding new ways to innovate and expand our impact. I remain energized by what we can accomplish together. Continue reading to learn about opportunities to join us in our mission to empower immigrants through [volunteer service](#), [financial contributions](#), or by [joining our team](#). I encourage you to stay in touch, because – even as we navigate these uncertain times – our team is sure to impress you.

Sincerely,



ProBAR Director

Law with Humanity | **Professionals with Purpose**



ProBAR's Release Support's Clinical Team applies compassion and a collaborative spirit to serve clients at the start of their next chapter.

It was around noon when Raul Martinez, a Clinical Counselor at ProBAR, pulled into the Walmart parking lot to meet a client. ProBAR Staff Attorney and HIAS Fellow Lindsey Schenk was standing with the client and briefed Raul on the challenges that would necessitate an alternative to oral communication. Perhaps Raul could draw to communicate with the client about their purpose at the superstore? Raul took the phone out of his pocket and typed out that they were going to buy a phone for the client. Once the phone was purchased, the client video called their dad, who was emotional at the sight of his adult child. Raul thought "that's what joy sounds like... it was the most rewarding experience I've had with ProBAR."

[Read More](#)

New & Notable



As the U.S. Government Finally Reunifies Some Families it Separated at the Border, We Must Carry Forth the Lessons Learned on Access to Counsel and Trauma-Informed Advocacy

An Era of Hope: The Wind-Down of the Migrant Protection Protocols

Blueprint for the Integration of Social Work Within Immigration Legal Services

[Visit our Website](#)

Get Involved!

Calling Pro Bono Attorneys

ProBAR seeks attorneys interested in providing pro bono representation to a client in removal proceedings, or who wish to represent an immigrant in ICE custody with their request for release or appeal.

[Sign up](#) to learn more!

Translation Volunteers Needed!

ProBAR is currently seeking volunteers to assist with various translation projects.

[Learn more and apply.](#)



Volunteer Spotlight

During 2021, ProBAR has welcomed law student volunteer groups from the University of Texas School of Law, Loyola University Chicago School of Law, DePaul University College of Law, and the University of Minnesota Law School. Students have engaged in a variety of research assignments in service to ProBAR's mission through a season of remote volunteer opportunities. Thank you so much for your support!

Questions? Contact volunteer@abaprobar.org.

[Learn more](#)

Join Our Team!

ProBAR is currently hiring for a number of positions in our Legal, Release Support, Shelter Services, and Outreach Departments.

[View current openings](#) and apply!

Support ProBAR

Show your support for ProBAR's work through a one-time or recurring gift.

[Make a donation](#) today.



ProBAR is a project of the American Bar Association.

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