Our Mission

The Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project (ASAP) sees a future where the United States welcomes individuals who come to our borders fleeing violence. We work alongside asylum seekers to make this vision a reality.
Dear friends,

The past year has been a period of tremendous growth and change as we continued to fight alongside asylum-seeking families. We are excited to share highlights from each area of our work.

ASAP connects more than 4,000 asylum seekers online, providing them with critical information and support. This year, we answered over 6,500 legal questions. We also began to serve new communities—including parents separated from their children and asylum seekers forced to fight their asylum cases from Mexico.

ASAP also provides emergency legal aid to hundreds of asylum seekers each year. This year we provided successful legal assistance in over 400 cases, helping families to reverse deportation orders, file asylum applications, and more.

Finally, ASAP works with asylum seekers to fight back and reshape the immigration system. In February, our client Suny Rodríguez secured a settlement of $125,000 from the government for abuses she and her son suffered in border detention centers. With Suny’s case as a blueprint, we are working to bring more federal lawsuits on behalf of asylum-seeking families separated at the border.

As we reflect on four years as ASAP, we cannot help but think back to when we started as an all-volunteer effort. Thanks to supporters like you, ASAP is now an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit! We spun off from our nonprofit incubator, the Urban Justice Center, in July 2019.

We are so grateful to you for joining us in this fight, and we hope you will continue to help us reach even more asylum-seeking families in the year to come.

Sincerely,

Conchita Cruz  Swapna Reddy  Dorothy Tegeler  Elizabeth Willis
“After I was separated from my son, I couldn’t think clearly. But ASAP kept fighting with me and they never stopped.”

*Luz*, ASAP Legal Emergency Room Client
ASAP has assisted over 4000 asylum seekers and prevented over 650 deportations.
“There are times that I don’t want to continue, but the support of the group, my attorney, and my own determination keep me going.”

Marisa, ASAP Online Community Member
Client Profile

Zulema’s Story

Last fall, Zulema realized she had an upcoming hearing scheduled in an immigration court over 1,000 miles away from where she lived. If she didn’t make it to court, she would likely receive an *in absentia* removal order — a deportation solely for being unable to attend a hearing.

Thankfully, Zulema reached out to ASAP through our online community, and within days, we mobilized to help her file an emergency motion to move her case to a nearby court. The motion was granted, and a couple of weeks later, ASAP helped Zulema file her asylum application just days before her deadline to apply. Because of ASAP’s support, Zulema can now continue fighting her asylum case close to home and will soon have the opportunity to apply for a work permit.

Every asylum seeker deserves an opportunity to present their claims in court. That’s why, last year, ASAP provided rapid-response legal aid to help dozens of asylum seekers like Zulema file emergency motions to move their cases closer to home. These motions were granted 100% of the time.
“What happened to my family should never happen to anyone. I hope that other families will see my lawsuit and no longer be scared to tell the truth about what happens at the border.”

Suny Rodríguez, Activist and ASAP Systemic Reform Client
ASAP is thankful to the following publications for featuring our work this year:

ABA™
abc NEWS
COLORLINES
DAILY KOS
The Guardian
InStyle
LAW360
The Marshall Project
THE NEW YORKER
The New York Times
SPRUDGE
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE
UNIVISION NOTICIAS
Vox
WOMEN’S MEDIA CENTER
Instead of receiving asylum seekers with open arms, the U.S. punishes them. I can’t imagine living my life in this country as a refugee from Bosnia without fighting every day to change that. I feel so grateful to get to work for asylum seekers and support their brave fight.”

Jasmina Nogo, ASAP Staff Attorney
Staff

Marilyn Alvarado, Litigation Paralegal
Conchita Cruz, Co-Executive Director
Janis Jin, Part-Time Project Associate
Zachary Manfredi, Staff Attorney
Dennise Moreno, Law Clerk
Jasmina Nogo, Staff Attorney
Evelyn Núñez, Immigration Paralegal
Swapna Reddy, Co-Executive Director
Daniela Rodriguez, Executive Assistant
Nicole Tan, Immigration Paralegal
Dorothy Tegeler, Co-Legal Director
Liz Willis, Co-Legal Director

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Michael Wishnie, Clinical Professor of Law and Counselor to the Dean, Yale Law School

Financials

During the 2018-19 fiscal year, ASAP was fiscally sponsored by the Urban Justice Center (UJC), a 501(c)(3) non-profit. For more information, please refer to UJC’s Annual Report at https://www.urbanjustice.org/our-work/annual-reports/ and UJC’s 990. (ASAP’s fiscal year runs from July 1 - June 30.)

ASAP became an independent organization on July 1, 2019, at the start of the 2019-20 fiscal year. We transferred our employees from UJC to ASAP, Inc. at this time and began accepting donations as an independent nonprofit. Our 990 for the 2018-19 fiscal year is available upon request at info@asylumadvocacy.org.