

CVIIC Reinforces Commitment to Ensure Access to Immigration Legal Services in the Central Valley of California

Fresno-Based Nonprofit Agency Has Served Thousands of Immigrant Families Since 2014

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA, USA, July 2, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A key reason for the creation of the [Central Valley Immigrant Integration Collaborative \(CVIIC\)](#) in 2014 was to help ensure that immigrant families in California's Central Valley would have access to trustworthy immigration legal services. Over the next ten years, CVIIC and a wide network of partner agencies developed a model of regional coordination and collaboration that has resulted in the organization of hundreds of free immigration legal services workshops, benefiting thousands of low-income families in the region.



In 2024, CVIIC, a Fresno-based nonprofit agency, continues to fulfill this commitment, thereby empowering immigrant families and strengthening their economic, social, and cultural contributions to our state and nation.

2014 was a pivotal year because it brought about the consolidation of a regional network of nonprofit, public, and private sector agencies that joined forces to serve the approximately 900,000 immigrants residing in a vast geographic region that includes eight Central Valley counties: Kern, Kings, Tulare, Fresno, Madera, Merced, Stanislaus, San Joaquin.

A barrier faced by a large number of these immigrant residents is that in the region as a whole, there was an extremely limited immigration legal capacity. Even the number of private

immigration law firms was inadequate and far below that found in the San Francisco Bay Area. Furthermore, the few nonprofit legal services providers in existence were located in the largest cities, making it challenging for families in smaller cities and rural communities to have local access to such services.

At this time, Californians in the Central Valley were also being impacted by a multi-year drought, which exacerbated the unemployment and poverty rates in this part of the state where agriculture is the predominant economic activity.

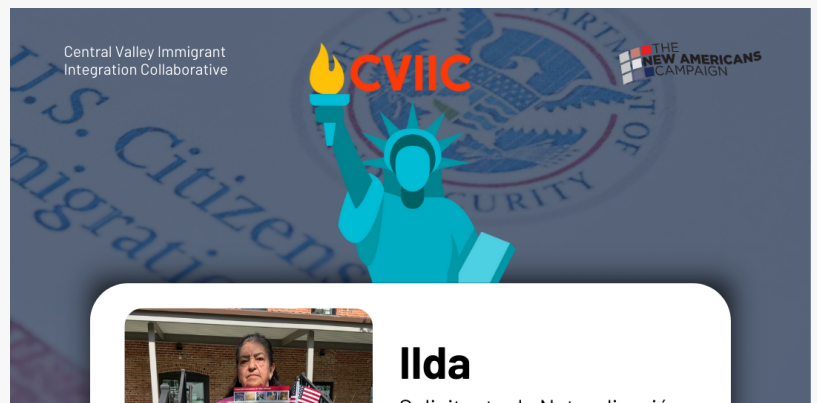
The model of regional coordination and collaboration that emerged under these conditions was based on the assumption that all immigrant families in the region deserved to have access to trustworthy legal advice. To this end, immigration legal services workshops were organized throughout the region, mobilizing human and material resources from the large cities to communities across the Central Valley. CVIIC and partner agencies were in charge of workshop logistics, outreach, and marketing campaigns, while nonprofit legal services providers and pro bono attorneys arrived at each workshop to deliver the legal assistance.

Other tools were also developed to exchange information, coordinate efforts, and avoid the organization of competing events.

By 2019, the year before the COVID-19 pandemic, the regional network was organizing over 100 free immigration legal services



CVIIC immigration team member, Norma Trinidad-Diaz, and naturalization client



Ilda

Solicitante de Naturalización



Me gustaría agradecerle muchísimo a Ingrid, abogado Ramón y al estupendo equipo de CVIIC. Me ayudaron muchísimo con mi proceso y tienen excelente servicio. Gracias.



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workshops in the Central Valley. The smaller and medium sized workshops provided attorney consultations, naturalization application assistance, and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) application assistance. In the case of larger workshops, service also included asylum assistance, U Visas, T Visas, VAWA, and other forms of existing relief.

The regional collaboration continues in the aftermath of the pandemic, and CVIIC's own dedication continues each year.

For example, over the past 12 months, from June 2023-May 2024, CVIIC staff have led the organization of 38 free immigration legal services workshops. These events have served close to 2,200 people.

CVIIC's own immigration legal services staff, which consists of only 5 people, has carried out 919 screenings for naturalization eligibility, completed 454 applications for naturalization, processed 352 applications for naturalization fee waivers, assisted with the completion of 219 DACA renewal applications, and enabled 258 immigrants to apply for legal permanent residency renewal. In addition, CVIIC's immigration team participated in 156 in-person community education/outreach events, scheduled 72 Facebook live events, and provided over 11,000 clients with telephonic assistance.

As the federal immigration policy scenario unfolds, CVIIC reinforces its commitment to ensure that immigrant families in the Central Valley of California have access to high-quality and trustworthy immigration legal services, and that the model of regional coordination and collaboration persists and is strengthened.

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