



THE FLORENCE IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE RIGHTS PROJECT

FLORENCE | ELOY | PHOENIX | TUCSON



2014 ANNUAL REPORT

PROVIDING FREE LEGAL SERVICES TO IMMIGRANT AND
REFUGEE DETAINEES IN ARIZONA FOR 25 YEARS

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2014 was quite a year for the Florence Project! As the media reported, the number of children crossing the border seeking safety and refuge in the U.S. greatly increased. In response, the government expanded the amount of shelter beds in Arizona to detain immigrant children—children fleeing unimaginable situations of violence, abuse, or extreme poverty. The Florence Project has worked with unaccompanied minors since 2001, and we are a national leader in immigrant children defense. Our years of experience allowed us to quickly respond to this increase, and deliver our nationally recognized service model to all children detained in Phoenix and Tucson.

We also continued our important work with detained women and men in Florence and Eloy. We increased our representation of detained adults with serious mental health issues, becoming leaders once more in this challenging area. In addition to “Know Your Rights” presentations, our staff continues to craft group workshops on legal forms of relief that reflect the needs of our clients at the detention centers. Our ongoing translation of recent case law to popular education workshops ensures that detained individuals have the tools they need in their pursuit of justice. One such example is the creation of workshops for women in detention who are domestic violence survivors and have asylum claims, an evolving area of law. In addition, our Integrated Social Services Program expanded our family unity project, delivering numerous community-based trainings to provide families with information on protecting parental rights, so that they are prepared in case of detention or deportation.

At the beginning of 2014, we had 22 staff members, and 2 office locations. We ended the year with 31 staff members (with further growth on the horizon), and 3 offices: our main building in the remote prison town of Florence, a growing office in Phoenix, and a new office in Tucson. Because we are rooted in this work, we were ready to respond to the challenges and opportunities presented to us in 2014. We will start 2015 by reflecting on our 25 years of service and our recent growth. Your support allows us to do our cutting edge work, and thank you for accompanying us on this ever-changing journey for justice. Here’s to the next 25 years!



Florence Project client artwork.

Julia was 17 years old when she arrived in the U.S. from El Salvador. Her mother had migrated to California when Julia was a baby, leaving her daughter with family members and sending money home to her daughter when she could. Life for Julia was not safe in El Salvador, and she suffered repeated abuse at the hands of her family members. Julia’s mother died last year, and having never met her father, Julia decided to begin her journey to the U.S. in search of a new life. Upon arrival in the U.S., Julia was placed in a children’s shelter, and later reunited with her grandmother and uncle in California. Sadly, once in California, Julia’s uncle intended to traffic Julia as payment for her room and board. Julia fled back to Phoenix and sought the help of the Florence Project with her case. **“The Florence Project’s legal representation opens doors that are practically impossible to open without their help.”** The Florence Project Children’s Program took on Julia’s case and helped her apply for asylum. Our efforts were successful, and Julia recently won her case. Today, Julia is attending school, living in her own apartment, and enrolled in an employment program to assist her in finding a job. Above all, she has the opportunity for a better future.

OUR CLIENTS

The Florence Project provides free legal assistance and coordinates related social services to the over 3,500 immigrant and refugee women, men, and unaccompanied children in immigration detention on any given day in detention facilities in Florence, Eloy, Phoenix, and now Tucson, Arizona. The majority of our clients are monolingual Spanish speakers with limited educational background. Last year we served people from approximately 47 countries.



Florence Project client.

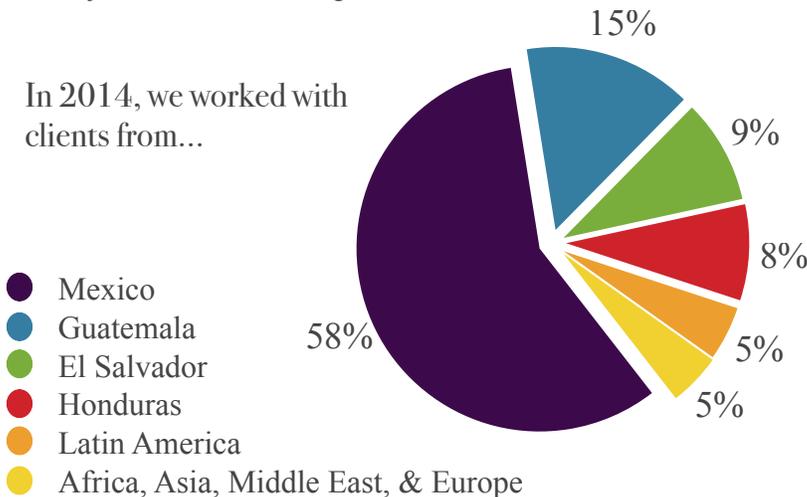


Florence Project client with her daughters.

Many of our clients are the primary breadwinners for their families and have lived in the United States for years. Others are fleeing persecution and violence. Some clients are children who have suffered severe abuse in their home countries or on the journey to the U.S., and many of the women we work with are domestic violence survivors.

We are honored to serve our clients -- resilient, strong, and courageous individuals, and they inspire us everyday.

In 2014, we worked with clients from...



4,036

Immigrant and refugee women and men received legal services and were connected to related social services in 2014.

4,367

Unaccompanied immigrant and refugee children received legal services and were connected to related social services in 2014.

OUR MISSION

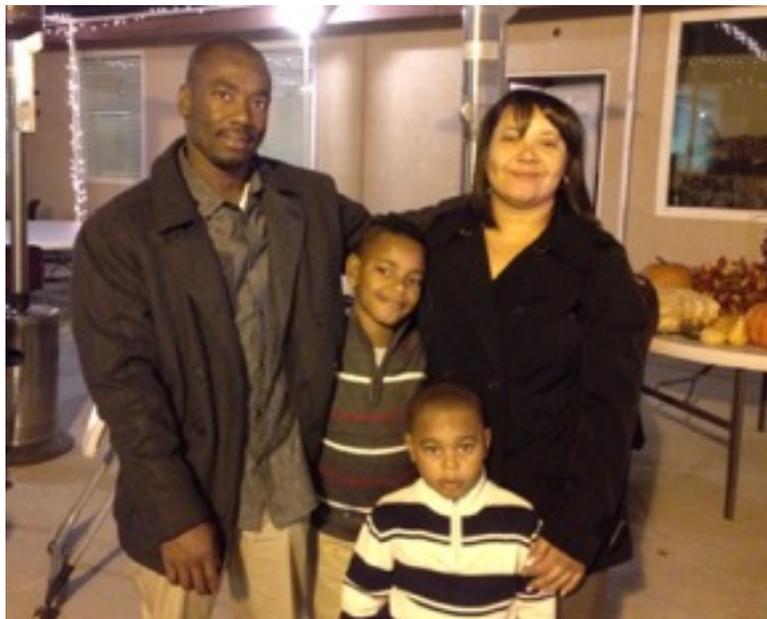
The Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project provides and coordinates free legal services and related social services to indigent women, men, and unaccompanied children detained in Arizona for immigration removal proceedings. The Florence Project strives to ensure that detained individuals have access to counsel, understand their rights under immigration law, and are treated fairly and humanely by our judicial system.

EDUCATE AND EMPOWER

Educating and empowering our clients is the cornerstone of our service model. Because people in immigration proceedings do not have the right to a court-appointed attorney, it is estimated that approximately 86% of people represent themselves, due to poverty. Our innovative approach allows us to use limited staff resources to reach thousands of detainees, through targeted assistance designed to educate individuals about the court process and immigration law, and empower individuals to represent themselves. In addition, our staff represents individuals in court and places cases with our extensive *pro bono* volunteer attorney program.

Florence and Eloy Programs

Based in our office in Florence, Arizona, the Florence and Eloy Programs serve adult women and men in ICE custody in both Florence and Eloy, Arizona, housed in a total of 4 facilities. Florence Project legal staff provide live “Know Your Rights” legal orientation presentations for all individuals who will be appearing before an Immigration Judge, individual case assessment for all who request it, and follow up *pro se* assistance for individuals fighting their removal cases.



Client reunited with his family after being released from detention with the help of the Florence Project.

4,036

Detained adults participated in “Know Your Rights” presentations in both Florence and Eloy in 2014.

1,934

Detained adults were provided intensive case assessment and *pro se* assistance in both Florence and Eloy in 2014.

Women and men with severe mental illness were represented by a Florence Project staff attorney in 2014.

34

Women and men were directly represented by a Florence Project staff attorney in 2014.

58

Women and men were provided *pro bono* attorneys in 2014.

Baashi is a Somali man who fled his country after his brother and father were murdered by members of a terrorist organization, Al-Shabaab. Fearing for his life, he travelled the globe for 10 months and finally arrived at the U.S.-Mexico border asking for asylum. The Florence Project met Baashi in Florence last year. For months, Florence Project attorneys worked closely with Baashi, preparing his case documents for his asylum hearing. Florence Project staff also helped Baashi prepare his testimony for his final hearing. With the hard work of the Florence Project, and particularly Baashi himself, Baashi was granted asylum in the U.S.

Children's Program

Founded in 2001, the Florence Project's Children's Program has worked with immigrant unaccompanied minors for the past 14 years. With offices in both Phoenix and Tucson, our Children's Program educates, empowers, and provides legal assistance to the more than 1,000 unaccompanied minors—children—who are detained in Arizona on any given day for immigration proceedings. Immigrant children are held in secure facilities, contract shelters, group homes, or foster care placements under the auspices of the Office of Refugee Resettlement. Like adults, children are not provided attorneys by the government and are expected to represent themselves in court, if they cannot hire legal counsel. The Children's Project legal staff provide age-appropriate "Know-Your-Rights" presentations to all detained children, individual legal consultations, and legal referrals. Our staff also represent children in court or refer cases to our vast network of Pro Bono attorneys.



Florence Project received a Justice Americorps Fellow, pictured here, with fellow inductees and U.S. Attorney General, Eric J. Holder, at induction ceremony.



Florence Project client.

Responding to

The increased number of children crossing the border was one of the top news stories of the year. The government increased the number of children detained in Phoenix, and began detaining children in Tucson. The Florence Project quickly responded to meet the growing need—we added more staff to our Phoenix office, and opened a small office in Tucson, to make sure that all children had access to legal information. We

were also able to increase our representation of children, due to increased staff, and we conducted outreach in the legal community to increase the network of *pro bono* volunteer attorneys representing children in our communities.

the

4,367

Unaccompanied immigrant and refugee children received legal services and were connected to related social services in 2014.

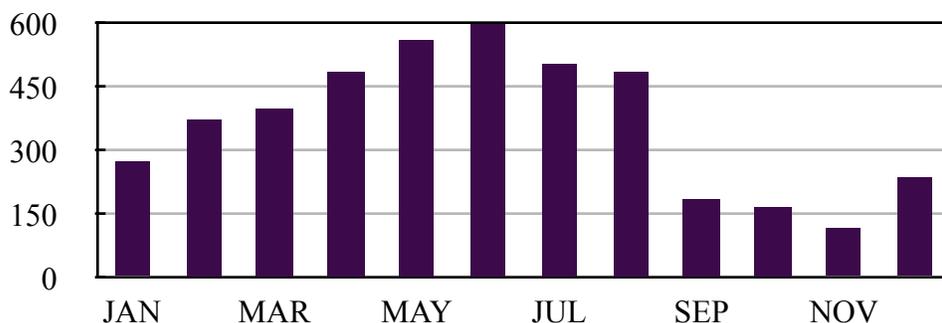
Unaccompanied immigrant and refugee children received individual legal consultations and case analysis in 2014.

21

Unaccompanied immigrant and refugee children provided Pro Bono attorneys in 2014.

89

Unaccompanied immigrant and refugee children directly represented by Florence Project staff attorneys in 2014.



Summer 2014 by the Numbers

Graph illustrating the increase in children served by the Florence Project in 2014. In 2013, the Florence Project served 3,064 unaccompanied minors, while in 2014, that number was surpassed in June—halfway through the year! While numbers decreased at the end of the year, further increases are expected.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Our Integrated Social Services Program coordinates supportive social services for some of the most vulnerable detained individuals, including the mentally ill, unaccompanied minors, survivors of torture, LGBT clients, asylum seekers, domestic violence survivors, people with significant medical issues, and parents at immediate risk of losing custody of their children because of detention or deportation. For clients in detention, the program seeks to address and alleviate individuals' psycho-social needs, medical needs, and parental custody issues. For clients transitioning out of detention, the program supports legal requests for release and relief from deportation, and fosters successful integration for individuals released from custody by connecting them to existing service providers and support networks in the community.

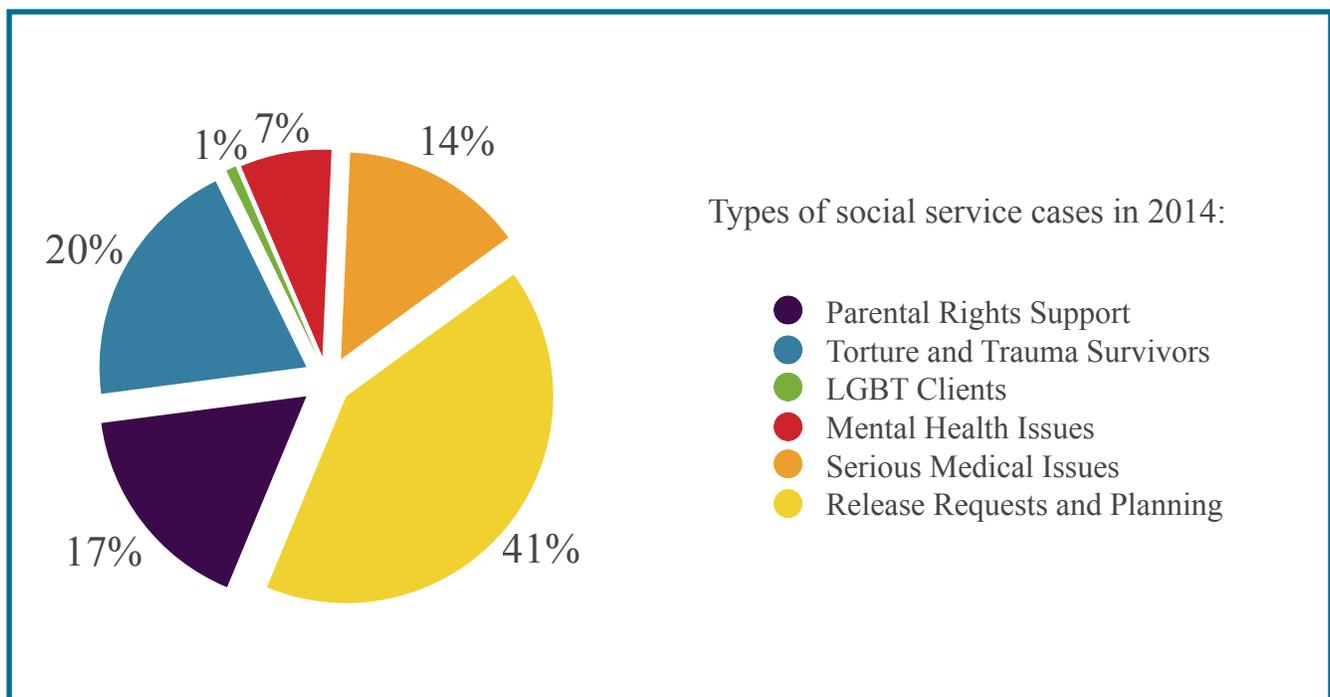


Children's Program staff attorneys celebrating a victory with a client.

Florence Project legal clients received integrated social services case management along with legal services in 2014.

A Holistic Approach

Detention can be an isolating and traumatizing experience. With the Integrated Social Services Program, the Florence Project sees our clients as more than just their legal case, but as the community members, mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers that they are. Working with legal staff, social services staff strive to address clients' non-legal needs while in detention or transitioning out of detention.



COMMUNITY Outreach, Collaboration, and Advocacy



Grammy Award winning La Santa Cecilia plays a benefit concert for the Florence Project in Tucson.

Community Events

- The Florence Project launched a speaker series to inform our supporters about our work. In September 2011 we hosted the Unaccompanied Immigrant Children speaker event in Phoenix, in collaboration with Tucson author, Todd Miller. In October we hosted a LGBT Detainee speaker event in Phoenix, in collaboration with the Arcoíris Liberation Team of Phoenix.
- Grammy Award winning band La Santa Cecilia played a special benefit concert for the Florence Project in Tucson in October of 2014.

Children's Program Expansion

- The Florence Project opened an office in Tucson, to serve children housed in shelters in Tucson and Oracle.
- The Children's Program received a Justice Americorps Fellow and funding through USCRI and the Vera Institute of Justice to increase legal representation of children in the Phoenix area.

Partnerships with Casa Mariposa, the Puente Movement, the Phoenix Restoration Project, and the Arcoíris Liberation Team strengthened community support for our clients through letter-writing, visitation, and post-release hospitality.

Participation in local and national **advocacy initiatives** on issues such as the use of solitary confinement in detention, LGBTQ asylum, comprehensive immigration reform, the growing use of family detention, the detention bed mandate, and Border Patrol abuse.

11 trainings were provided to **404** community members on family unity and parental rights

77 trainings to public defenders, community organizations, and immigration lawyers on topics such as the overlap of criminal and immigration law, basic deportation defense, representing unaccompanied immigrant children, asylum law, and the Florence Project's work.

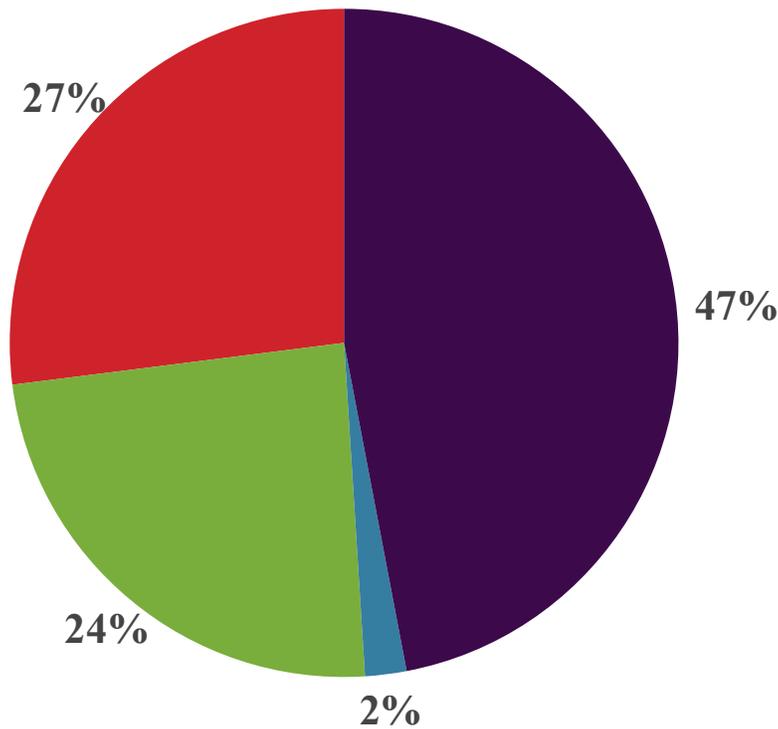
53 volunteers contributed their time and skills to the Florence Project in 2014, including attorneys, physicians, mental health professionals, interpreters, and country conditions researchers.



Florence Project attorneys hosted a Speakers Series on Unaccompanied Immigrant Children in Phoenix .

FINANCIALS

- Children's Program
- General
- Integrated Social Services
- Adult Program



Revenue

Federal Government Subcontracts	72%
Foundation Grants	15%
Individuals	10%
Law Firms	2%
Religious	0.5%
Corporations	0.5%
Total Revenue	\$1,491,129.82*

Expenses

Program Services	81%
Office Overhead	10%
Building Cost	5%
Management & Fundraising	4%
Total Expenses	\$1,336,264.74

* Accrual based budget / 2014 audit not yet completed

Our Major Donors*

- Adelante Foundation
- American Immigration Lawyers Association
- Anonymous Donors
- APS Foundation
- Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education
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