

NEW YORK IMMIGRATION COALITION

**2023 – 2024
Report**

OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS

The New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC) has made significant progress related to the administration of justice through its generous IOLA funding over the past year. During this grant year, we convened 220 organizations to coordinate service delivery and strategize on access to justice issues, served 6,865 people through in-person presentations to community groups, provided interactive online trainings to 3,314 individuals, and reached 11,833 people through online resources. In addition, we recruited a total 237 volunteers and benefited from 1,146.5 volunteer hours of service to community members through casework or other related services.

Additionally, this year we launched our legal service referral program, and provided 803 people with referrals to providers and other resources. Major accomplishments, described below and in more detail throughout this narrative report, include the expansion of our training program and our work to coordinate legal service delivery for recently arrived migrants who were bused to various regions of New York state.



Service Area: New York State

Population Served: Legal Service Providers of Immigrants and Refugees

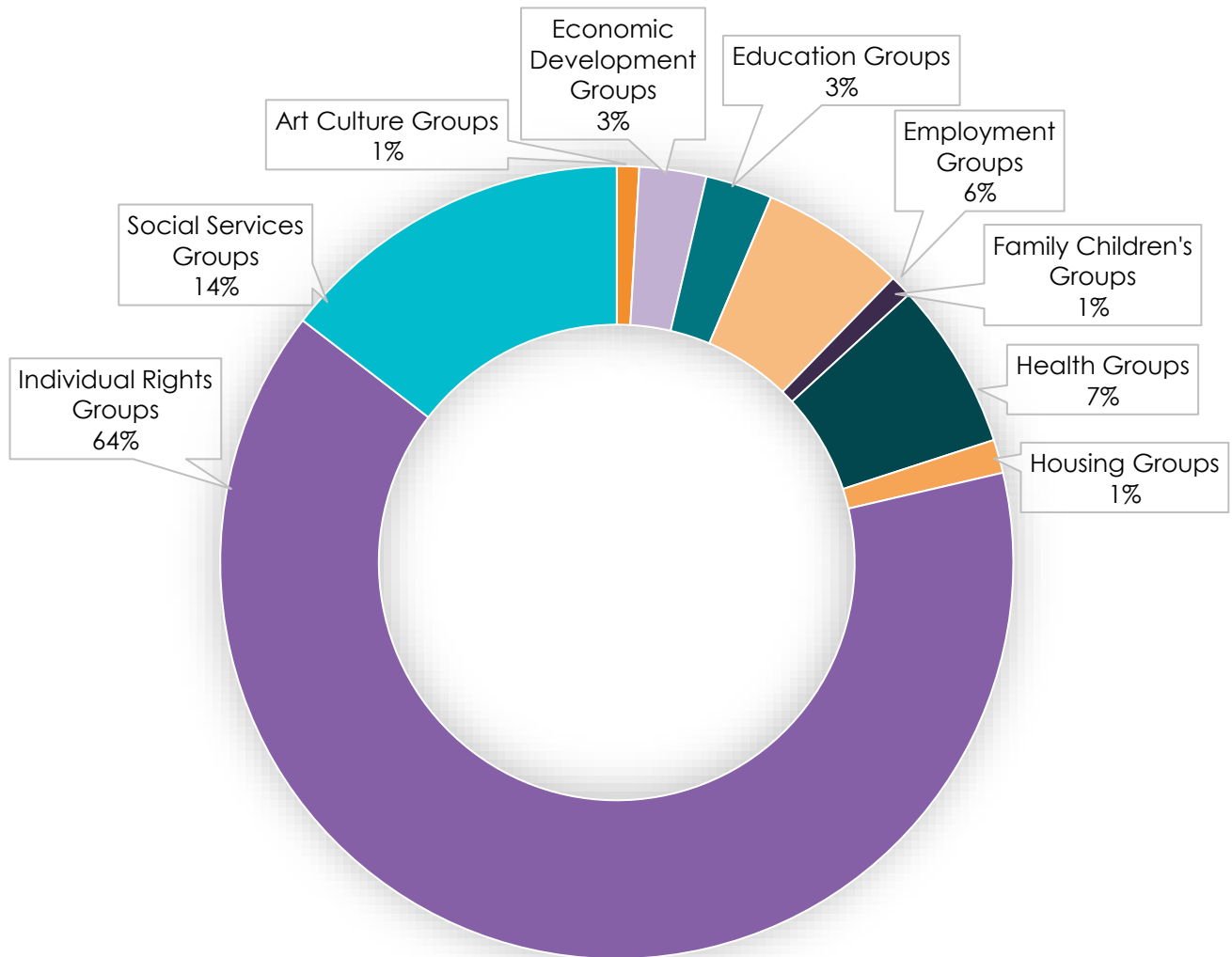
Staffing Full Time Equivalents:

Total Staff: 82 Lawyers: 8

Other Staff: 74

NON-PROFITS AND OTHER GROUP ENTITIES ASSISTED

220 non-profit or group entities participated in convenings, roundtables and strategy sessions



Types of Groups Assisted

OTHER LEGAL-RELATED SERVICES

Throughout the grant period, the NYCIC has continued to provide a number of other legal-related services to individuals. Primarily, these include community legal education and online outreach, facilitated through our Immigrant Concerns Training Institute, Community Engagement programs, and immigrant-serving workshops and events.

NYIC's Immigrant Concerns Training Institute: The NYCIC's Immigrant Concerns Training Institute offers free and low-cost trainings to attorneys, accredited representatives, and staff of community-based organizations serving New York State's immigrant community. We have three primary audiences: first, we provide high-quality Continuing Legal Education (CLE) trainings to attorneys, both new and experienced, to support immigration legal service providers and enhance the quality of representation available to immigrant New Yorkers. Second, we support the expansion of immigration legal capacity in New York State by training new and experienced Department of Justice (DOJ) accredited representatives, and supporting organizations that seek to become DOJ-recognized, allowing them to host DOJ accredited representatives.

Finally, we provide education on a broad range of legal and policy issues facing immigrant New Yorkers to non-legal service providers, such as case managers, health navigators, outreach staff, and social workers. Our main goal is to develop the skills and knowledge of professionals providing immigration legal services, and improve the quality and quantity of immigration legal services available to low-income New Yorkers across the state.

10,179

people
benefited from
**Community
Legal
Education**

11,833

people
benefited from
**Web-Based
Assistance**

During the grant year, a total of 3,314 individuals received training through the Immigrant Concerns Training Institute. We offered three 40-hour trainings (an increase from our typical two each year), which provide a comprehensive overview of immigration law, and several mini-series on topics including legal research and writing and immigration court practice. In addition, we covered topics such as screening young people for immigration relief, Temporary Protected Status, and asylum claims based on gender and gang violence.

One area of focus for us this year in our training program was building up the capacity of DOJ Accredited Representatives, given the fact that the vastly increased demand for immigration legal services in the state far outpaces the capacity of existing immigration lawyers. In addition to the third 40-hour training, we also began holding DOJ Recognition & Accreditation panel discussions, a new model that provided a platform for accredited representatives and organizational leaders who had successfully pursued DOJ Recognition to talk through their experiences, discuss challenges and learnings, and take questions from peers in an informal but informative environment. We feel these types of settings are critical to expanding the number of organizations who take advantage of this important federal program.

“Know Your Rights” Education & Community Events: The NYIC has a robust and extensive Know Your Rights (KYR) program, designed to serve as an education guide for immigrant New Yorkers and providing insight into their rights and available services. This program has been a long-standing pillar of our community engagement work. We aim to share timely and accurate information on federal and state policies impacting the daily lives of our communities, directing individuals to vetted partner organizations and agencies. Above all, we seek to empower community members, instilling confidence in their understanding and assertion of their rights. Topics covered include recent changes in federal immigration policy, immigrants' rights when interacting with immigration officials, and how to access legal services.

To conduct these KYR sessions, the NYIC partnered with libraries, shelters, local community-based organizations, and schools, offering online workshops to increase the accessibility of our workshops and the dissemination of critical information in both English and Spanish. As such, over the contract term, the NYIC reached 6,865 individuals through in-person Know Your Rights sessions. Through these various community events, we provided opportunities to share pressing information and for communities to ask topic experts how to access services and protect themselves.

The NYIC also has a number of existing materials that we share at community events, including a comprehensive toolkit for immigrants in New York, which is a resource guide created for immigrants and allies that covers education, health, democracy, hate crime prevention, and more. The funding supported regular updates of this toolkit on a bimonthly basis as well as the maintenance to upkeep translations in 13 languages: English, Spanish, Arabic, Bengali, Burmese, Simplified Chinese, French, Karen, Nepali, Somali, Creole, Polish, and Ukrainian, while also addressing ongoing community needs. The toolkit was shared at events directly with community members, as well as with our partner organizations and through email blasts for further outreach.

TECHNOLOGY

While the NYIC has mostly transitioned back to in-person services at this point in the pandemic, we continue to maintain a presence in the online space in much of our programming because we found it to be an effective way to reach certain populations, and to supplement our in-person work. The skills and systems we built during the pandemic have continued to serve us; the NYIC regularly uses Zoom, social media, video editing and subtitling, streaming tools like Streamyard, and online live interpretation.

Data has a wide range of utility and untapped potential at the NYIC. Key to our mission is data efficacy, which serves as the cornerstone of any good policy making. We believe good data is often the first step towards good policy. The NYIC uses Salesforce as an organization, and has continued to refine our use of the database to better serve our partners. Some examples of the ways that we use Salesforce are to create quick registration systems for in-person events, to build and manage referral tools for partner organizations, and to pull reports for deliverables and to view trends for the data we collect in order to better serve our communities. To help us better organize our data and the use of the database, the NYIC hired an outside consultant, who specializes in the CRM Salesforce software to create new workflows, tracking capacity and further develop our relational database so we can easily identify and analyze trends, impact, capacity, funding, and areas of improvement. The NYIC's ultimate goal is to organize and tidy up all of our streams of data into long-standing reports, so we're able to properly utilize the relevant information when planning and executing the next course of action. This Salesforce consultant was just one of our steps towards continuing to invest in better data efficacy and organization.

To be a more efficient and collaborative coalition, the NYC spent a significant amount of resources to build out an intranet system aimed to provide an easily accessible place for all of NYC's member organizations and support them in connecting to all the diverse programming and resources the NYC has to offer called the Member Portal. It is connected to our organization-wide Salesforce system and serve as a one-stop shop for all of the NYC's nonprofit members to use to access our resources/tools and manage their NYC membership/engagement. The ultimate goal is for every member organization to receive an individual account that they would use to manage their organization's NYC Membership renewals, contact information, and mailings lists. They would also use it to access resources, respond to internal Requests for Proposals, and obtain info on/register for different NYC campaigns, actions, trainings, and events. We launched this publicly in March 2024. We believe with the investment into an accessible and centralized infohub system for our membership, this will, in turn, enhance the NYC's ability to fully mobilize and provide the necessary support to the 200+ organizations that belong to its Membership each year.

IOLA TECHNOLOGY GRANT

Our organization directed the technology infrastructure grant towards funding outside consultants who specialize in enhancing Salesforce systems. These consultants helped us improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our Salesforce utilization, thereby enhancing our overall operational performance and output.

They were able to identify areas for optimization, and implement tailored solutions to address our specific needs. Their expertise facilitated the customization and integration of additional functionalities within our Salesforce ecosystem, empowering our team to streamline workflows, enhance data management capabilities, and ultimately, better serve our constituents.

Without the support of this grant, it would have been challenging for our organization to allocate resources towards engaging external consultants for this purpose. The availability of the grant funds facilitated the implementation of crucial enhancements to our technology infrastructure, which might have otherwise been postponed due to budgetary constraints.

PRO BONO VOLUNTEERS

The NYCIC has a rich history of maintaining a strong volunteer program, relying on volunteers to support our in-person events. Since 2022, we've seen a huge resurgence in our need for and work with volunteers, after a slowdown brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. As we have returned full-force to our in-person services, and even expanded them in certain areas across the State, we've welcomed back previous volunteers and recruited many new ones.

Typically, we promote our volunteer program on our website, where interested volunteers can directly sign up for an orientation. We also add QR codes for volunteer recruitment to our event flyers and calendars, and conduct targeted outreach within specific communities for our cohort model, described above. We reach out to universities, houses of worship, rapid response groups, and other communities that are likely to include potential volunteers. In addition to the cohorts, we also continue to maintain a general mailing list of interested and trained volunteers, to which we send out upcoming volunteer opportunities when we need to supplement our cohorts or where there is an opportunity not tied to an existing program. On occasion, we may reach out to selected individuals based on their skills and experience. Potential volunteers are screened for language ability, tech literacy, and other skills, and volunteers are always provided with onsite training/orientation at the beginning of each service and, depending on the circumstances, may be required to attend a pre-service training as well. During the past fiscal year we recruited a total of 237 volunteers, of which 171 volunteers were active, and benefitted from 1,146.5 hours overall of volunteer service.

1attorney volunteered **13** hours**2**law students volunteered **23** hours**168**other volunteers volunteered **1,112** hours

SIGNIFICANT COLLABORATIONS

The strength of the NYCIC's work and role in increasing access to justice for immigrant New Yorkers lies in its partnerships and collaborations with its own member organizations and other partner organizations throughout the State. Through our organizing and strategy efforts and our issue-focused collaboratives, we are able to adapt and respond to policy changes and urgent service needs, as well as push for increased access to justice and critical benefits. The NYCIC engages its members in convenings and our annual goal-setting process through various avenues, including an annual member congress, roundtables, surveys, and monthly briefings. Through this close relationship with our members and our regional staff stationed around the State, we establish channels to hear the priorities, opportunities, and emerging needs that make us more effective and responsive in achieving our mission. These connections with our member organizations ensure that our campaigns are rooted in the needs of immigrant communities across the state. As we navigate this critical moment, the participation of the NYCIC membership and their networks is instrumental in determining the direction of our efforts. Moreover, bringing our members together strengthens the nationwide network of partners dedicated to facilitating access to care and coverage for New York's immigrant communities.

The NYCIC achieved several historic wins in 2023 — a testament to our strategy to advance immigrant rights and justice, and our ability to harness the collective strength of diverse partners in pursuit of justice. At the core of our organization is leadership development and organizational capacity building for our member agencies. To highlight:

- We won a huge victory in successfully expanding Medicaid coverage to all seniors 65 years and older, as well as eligible women, regardless of immigration status for up to 12 months post-pregnancy with the Coverage4All Coalition, which finally went into effect on January 1, 2024;
- We distributed over \$1.5 million dollars in regrants to our member organizations;
- We won a state-wide expansion of language access programs, allowing immigrant New Yorkers to receive essential services in their preferred languages.

The NYCIC will continue to focus on strengthening and building power statewide, while also deepening engagement in regions primed for impact.

Support to Immigrant Legal Services: Immigrant Advocates Response Collaborative: Previously, the NYCIC housed the Immigrant Advocates Response Collaborative (Immigrant ARC) which coordinated legal service provision for immigrants in

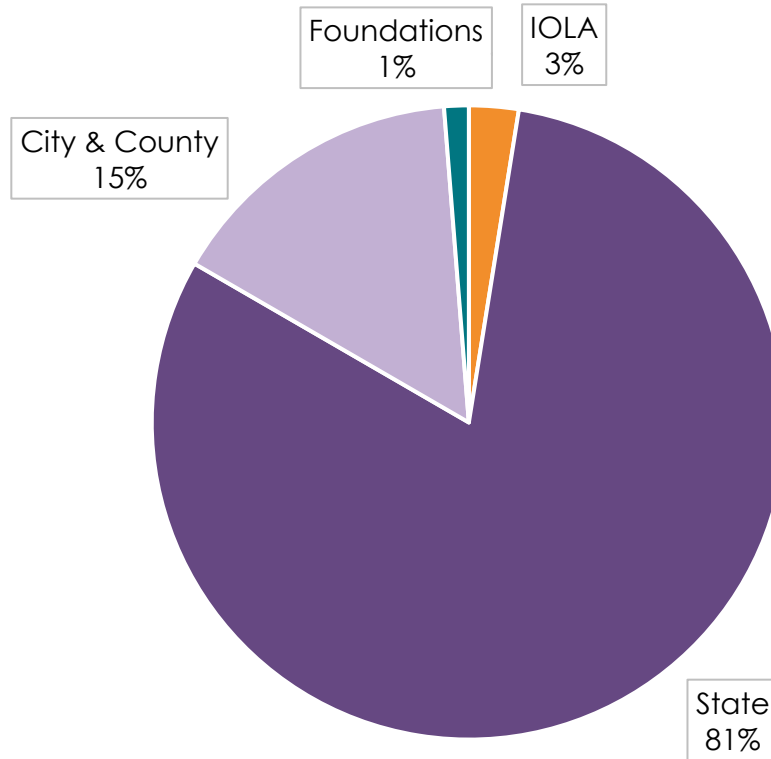
moments of rapid response in immigration law. The NYC's connections to legal service providers and role as a coordinator of organizations across the state allowed us to incubate this crucial program. Now that Immigrant ARC has become an independent organization, the NYC continues to be a partner, sitting on the steering committee and working closely and collaboratively during moments of rapid response. This relationship is of critical importance as thousands of asylum seekers arrive from the southern border and service providers work tirelessly to build new systems in order to reach these populations.

Rooted in the belief that New York has and will always welcome all immigrants and refugees, the NYC formalized a community-driven, targeted program called the Welcoming New York Campaign which focuses on ensuring proper community driven coordination and support to provide asylum seeker arrivals with emergency shelter, healthcare, legal assistance, and food; offering direct support to arriving individuals; regranting to our member organizations and equipping them with the tools and resources they need to continue this work as well as providing trainings to educate and increase the spreading of information to immigrant community leaders; and communicating with our state and federal partners to create a robust response to provide housing and the vital wraparound support to sustain and expand the humanitarian response. The NYC was central to these efforts, coordinating with the City and with Immigrant ARC to both manage arrivals on the ground, and push for stronger systems and information sharing across the board. The NYC took part in regular Immigrant ARC conversations as well as weekly rapid response meetings to track developments in the issue, share best practices and resources, and develop longer term plans for response.

DOJ Recognition and Accreditation: The Immigrant Concerns Training Institute, in addition to hosting trainings in support of organizations and staff seeking DOJ recognition and accreditation (DOJ R&A), also provides technical assistance to organizations and staff who are applying for the program. This includes application review, in-depth telephone consultations for agency staff, and advice on best practices, submission packets, and responses to issues like requests for evidence. This work is critical, as it is one of the most cost-effective ways to increase legal services capacity in New York State. Organizations that cannot easily bring on board additional attorneys are able to train and seek accreditation for their existing services staff to provide a wide array of immigration legal services to the communities they serve. Nearly every DOJ recognized organization in New York State either an NYC member organization, has attended our DOJ R&A trainings, or both. The NYC collaborates closely with New York based organizations in the process of applying to the DOJ - providing tools, templates and tips for successful applications.

CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES FUNDING

\$ 5,150,394



IOLA Funding	\$ 130,155
City & County Funding	\$ 792,960
State Funding	\$ 4,162,696
Foundations	\$ 64,583