

An aerial view of a city skyline at sunset, with a blue geometric overlay on the left side. The sky is a mix of orange, pink, and blue, with scattered clouds. The city features numerous skyscrapers, including the Willis Tower and the Trump Tower. The water is a deep blue. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

CITIES AND MIGRATION: PLANS, POLICIES AND ACTION

2024 Symposium Report

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OVERVIEW

The DePaul Migration Collaborative hosted the 2024 Symposium, Cities and Migration: Plans, Policies, and Action on April 11 which hosted over 130 professionals, students, attorneys, direct-service providers, and policy makers gathered to discuss the role of cities in migration.

Distinguished keynote speakers Jennifer Chacón, the Bruce Tyson Mitchell Professor of Law at Stanford Law School, and Beatriz Ponce De León, Deputy Mayor of Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights (IMRR) for the City of Chicago, enriched the symposium with their insights.

Throughout the day, guests picked between seven incredible panels that explored issues facing migrants in urban communities. These panel discussions offered perspectives on migration's complexities, spanning legal hurdles, access to shelter, educational challenges, healthcare access, data management, and workplace rights.

The message throughout the symposium was clear: Though we face many challenges, our city and country is full of dedicated people who are committed to welcoming and assisting our new neighbors.



Student Workers

The DMC would also like to acknowledge the student workers who kept the event running smoothly. DMC hired 22 student workers including the following:

Event Assistant: Deeksha Chitturi

Photographer: Kit Wiberg

Check-in: Dhruv Patel, Anusha Rupani, Esperanza Benavides, Gayathri Badugu, Safoora Farook, and Thusharika Peethala

Cleanup & Set Up: Abhigna Matam, Pranati Gedela, Obiamaka Okosieme, and Hariprasad Bolla

Zoom Support: Aroon Kumar, Sourabh Rodagi, Priyanka Laddipeerla, Trisha Gupta, Adnan Mohammed, Nishant Kashyap, and Rahul Singh

Notetakers: Rosbel Garza, Sridevi Pamarthi, Gabriela Cordova



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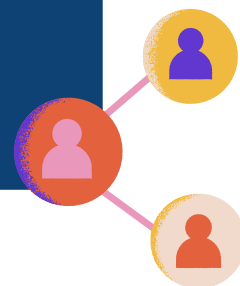
Speakers recorded in attendance at the DMC Symposium 2024

70

University-affiliated individuals including students, Faculty and Alumni in attendance

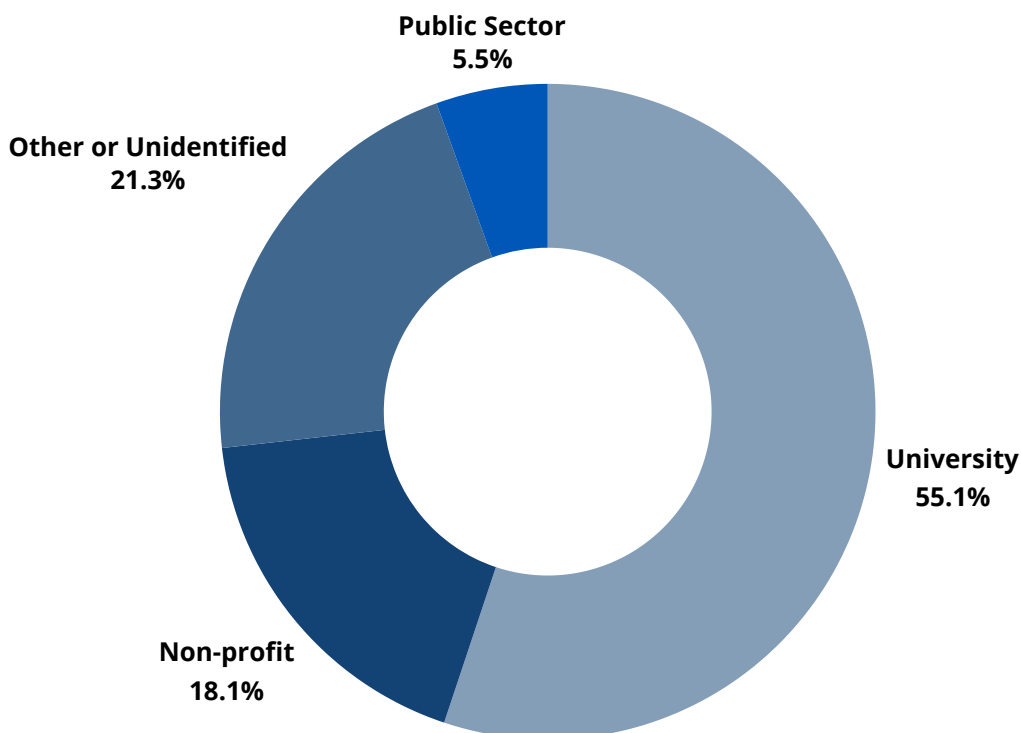
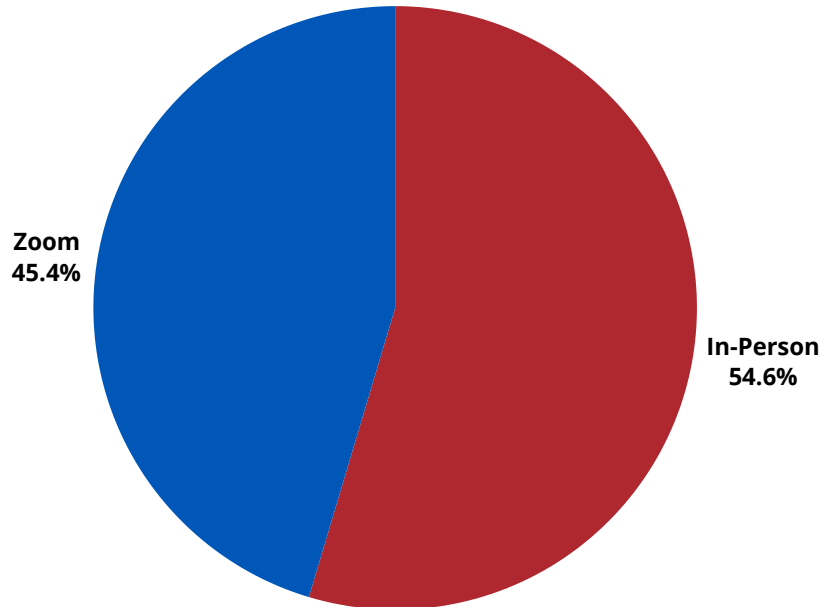
100%

Of Symposium attendees stated they formed new and helpful connections related to their work



Engagement Overview

The symposium attracted a diverse attendance, with **59** participants engaging virtually via Zoom and **71** individuals joining in person. This amalgamation of remote and in-person presence facilitated a robust exchange of ideas and enabled connections among attendees from various backgrounds and locations.



The varied attendance spanning universities, nonprofits, public sectors, and other sectors significantly enriches the symposium's impact. We had participants bringing insights from academia, real-world practice, public policy, and diverse organizational contexts, thereby, encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration and innovative problem-solving.

AGENDA

8:00 am

Check-in and Breakfast

8:30 am

Welcoming Remarks by Dean,
Jennifer Rosato Perea and
Guillermo Vásquez de Velasco.

9:00 - 10:00 am

Opening Plenary by Jennifer
Chacón

10:15 - 11:45 am (Morning Panels)

- Labor & Mobility: Migrant Labor, Economics, Innovation, Remittances, and Worker's Rights
- Numbers Matter: Getting Data Right
- Models of Care: Mental and Physical Health and Migration

12:00 - 1:20 pm

Lunch and Plenary Address by
Beatriz Ponce De León

1:35 - 3:00 pm (Afternoon Panels)

- Whose Space is it, Anyway?: Challenges in Housing & Shelter
- Youth and Access to Education
- Temporary Solutions for Intractable Issues

3:15 - 4:15 pm

Closing Plenary Panel by Emily
Wheeler, Bitta Mostofi, Kristin
Bronson and Craig Mousin

Reception

4:15 - 5:00 pm



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Welcoming Remarks with Dean Jennifer Rosato Perea and Dean Guillermo Vásquez de Velasco and DMC Directors Professor Sioban Albiol and Dr. Shailja Sharma.



OPENING PLENARY BY JENNIFER CHACÓN

Jennifer Chacón, the Bruce Tyson Mitchell Professor of Law at Stanford Law School, delivered the opening plenary speech at the 2024 DMC Symposium, where she expressed gratitude for the collective efforts focused on migration and integration despite prevailing challenges and opposition. Her speech centered on her recent research project, which explored local policies' impact on communities, particularly in Southern California. Jennifer painted a very vivid picture of the region, highlighting the contrasting experiences between counties, notably Los Angeles and Orange County. She underscored the significant undocumented population in Southern California and explored the challenges they face, shedding light on the complexities of immigration dynamics at the very local level.

She also presented figures to illustrate the demographic composition of these counties, revealing that approximately 1,000,000 people in Los Angeles County and nearly 10% of Orange County's population were estimated to be undocumented. She emphasized how these demographic realities shape the social and political landscape of the region as well as the impact this would have on the livelihood of the migrants.

Furthermore, Jennifer analyzed the historical context of immigration narratives, tracing the evolution of rhetoric and policies over time. Drawing parallels between past and present immigration debates, she emphasized the need to understand migration as a global phenomenon influenced by geopolitical and economic factors. Jennifer Chacón speech offered a nuanced perspective on immigration issues, urging policymakers to adopt informed and compassionate approaches. She emphasized the importance of recognizing the realities of migration and integrating marginalized communities into policy discussions. Overall, her address underscored the critical role of collaborative efforts and evidence-based policymaking in addressing the multifaceted challenges of migration and integration.



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Photography by Kit Wiberg



LUNCH PLENARY BY BEATRIZ PONCE DE LEÓN

Beatriz Ponce de León, Deputy Mayor of Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights for the City of Chicago delivered the lunch plenary speech at the 2024 DMC Symposium outlining her personal journey and the city's response to the influx of migrants and refugees. She began by recounting her family's immigration story, highlighting the support they received from the community upon arriving in Chicago. Her upbringing instilled in her a commitment to advocacy for immigrants and refugees. Despite initial hesitation, she accepted the role of Deputy Mayor, recognizing the importance of the position during a very challenging time. Beatriz highlighted the city's strategic priorities, including advocacy, operationalizing the welcoming city ordinance, promoting long-term integration and inclusion, and developing resources for immigrant communities. She introduced her team, emphasizing their commitment to community engagement and collaboration. Chicago's history as a city of immigrants was emphasized, tracing back to its founding by an immigrant entrepreneur. She highlighted past efforts by Chicago mayors to protect undocumented immigrants and reaffirmed the city's commitment to being a sanctuary. The speech emphasized the challenges posed by the recent influx of migrants and refugees, detailing the city's efforts to provide shelter, support services, and advocacy. Beatriz also discussed the need for collaboration with state and federal partners to address the humanitarian crisis effectively. She shared insights into the city's "New Arrivals Mission," focusing on welcoming newcomers with dignity and connecting them to resources for resettlement and self-sufficiency. She provided an overview of the city's response, including the establishment of landing zones, intake centers, temporary shelters, and resettlement programs. Despite the challenges, Beatriz emphasized the positive impact of immigration on Chicago's vitality and highlighted opportunities for community involvement, volunteering, and support. She urged advocacy for immigrant rights at the federal level and emphasized the importance of collaboration with state and local partners. In conclusion, Beatriz expressed gratitude for the city's support and encouraged continued engagement through social media channels.



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Labor Panel

Christian Arizmendi
Dr. Lamont Black
Jorge Mújica
Moderator: Dr. Shailja
Sharma

Health Panel

Dr. Aimee Hilado
Dr. Minal Giri
Malena Luzuriaga
Veronica Saldaña
Moderator: Dr. Maria
Ferrera

Data Panel

Dr. Elizabeth Kennedy
Rob Paral
Pooja Ravindran
Moderator Dr. Tracey-
Lewis Elligan

Housing Panel

Johannes Favi
Charlotte Long
Lydia Stazen
Moderator: Dr. Ramya
Ramanath

Youth Panel

Anna Cirilli
Dr. Kate Cooper
Raia Stoicheva
Moderator: Lien Tran

Legal Panel

Daniel Morales
Elissa Steglich
Moderator: James R.
Fujimoto

LABOR & MOBILITY: MIGRANT LABOR, ECONOMICS, INNOVATION, REMITTANCES, AND WORKER'S RIGHTS

The “Labor and Mobility: Migrant Labor, Economics, Innovation, Remittances, and Worker’s Rights” panel moderated by Dr. Shailja Sharma focused on protections of workplace rights, impact of remittances, and the role of financial advocacy. Senior Assistant Attorney General for the Office of the Illinois Attorney General’s Workplace Rights Bureau, Christian Arizmendi explained how his office serves as a staunch advocate for creation and amendment of laws, while safeguarding the rights of workers. Through its Workplace Rights Bureau, it tirelessly protects and advances employment rights, particularly for vulnerable workers, investigating persistent violations by employers including lack of breaks and failure to pay the minimum wage. He shared how the office also addresses financial concerns, particularly regarding remittances, by advocating for cheaper pathways for migrants to send money home. Professor Dr. Lamont Black focused on the role of remittances. He expressed how remittances act as vital lifelines for many families and communities abroad, representing a significant aspect of global migration and he explained the technologies in which remittances are sent. These funds, typically sent by migrants to their home countries, serve as essential financial support, often covering basic needs such as food, education, and healthcare. Strategic Campaigns Organizer, Jorge Mújica spoke about a pilot program in Mexico that focused on different banking methods for sending remittances that eliminates that third party system and restores autonomy to the migrant. These efforts to advocate for cheaper pathways for migrants to send money home highlight the critical role these funds play in sustaining livelihoods and fostering economic stability in regions of origin. The panel summarized by acknowledging the significance of remittances, and if policymakers can work towards ensuring fair and accessible financial services for migrant workers, this action would contribute to both local and global economic resilience.



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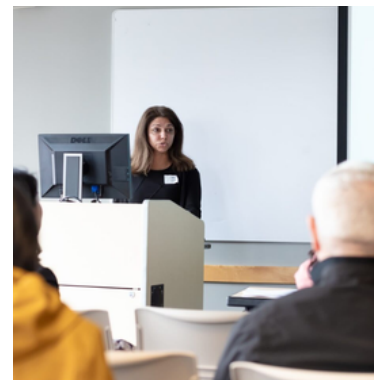
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Jonathan Michael
Castillo

MODELS OF CARE: MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH AND MIGRATION

The panel “Models of Care: Mental and Physical Health and Migration,” moderated by Dr. Maria Ferrera focused on the difficulties of the individual migration to the United States alongside the traumatic difficulties this journey brings to one’s mental and personal health. They expressed that the United State’s structures for reception exacerbate mental and physical health concerns, such as the policy of separating children, expedited removal, and the asymmetrical funding for deterrence *vis-a-vis* acceptance. These obstacles have culminated in the death of migrants of all ages, including children, who often die of preventable disease.

Clinical Social Worker Dr. Aimee Hilado discussed how restrictive arrival policies public debate, and asylum protocols have had a large impact on migrant health including stress. Yet, there is a shortage of mental health providers and culturally relevant services. Pediatrician Dr. Minal Giri broke down the impact of a migrants journey to the U.S. which can include but is not limited to malnutrition, injury, trauma, violence, and physical exhaustion. Children are especially vulnerable to the journey. Dr. Giri also discussed the health risks of congregate settings such as shelters. National Community Engagement Manager, Malena Luzuriaga, spoke about health impacts on unaccompanied children who are detained by border patrol and whose mental health concerns have been untreated. Lack of treatment and preparedness from schools can further isolate children. Veronica Saldaña shared antidotes amongst discussing the ways in which the Pilsen Food Pantry is working to address migrant health needs.

Overall, the speakers recommended that the U.S. should look to implement locally designed and operated solutions. These solutions should draw from the local community and seek to maintain cultural and linguistic relevance to new arrivals. Further, these solutions should seek to include non-healthcare professionals to reduce the distance between the patient and provider. To address health concerns, migrant wellness entails care of the individual during travel, at arrival, and post-arrival.



NUMBERS MATTER: GETTING DATA RIGHT



**Photography
by Kit Wiberg**



**Photography by
Jonathan
Michael Castillo**



**Photography
by Kit Wiberg**

The panel "Numbers Matter: Getting Data Right" moderated by Dr. Tracey Lewis-Elligan featured discussions on the importance of accurate, engaging data representation in migration issues, with a focus on cross-methodology and the reliability of data. Social Scientist and DMC Practitioner, Dr. Elizabeth Kennedy, discussed her fieldwork in Central America, highlighting the challenges in documenting forced migration due to crimes often going unreported and the lack of state support for citizens. Demographic and Public Policy Consultant and DMC Practitioner, Rob Paral addressed the difficulties in tracking migrant populations in Illinois, critiquing the gaps and inconsistencies in data collection and emphasizing the potential of new data sources like immigration court records. City of Chicago Committee for Immigrant and Refugee Right's Chief of Staff, Pooja Ravindran informed the audience of Chicago's handling of new migrant arrivals and underlined the importance and unique challenges of collecting and distributing accurate data in this context. The panelists collectively stressed the need for improved data governance, the role of academic partnerships, and the criticality of qualitative data in understanding and addressing migration challenges.

Photography by Jonathan Michael Castillo



WHOSE SPACE IS IT, ANYWAY?: CHALLENGES IN HOUSING AND SHELTER

The panel "Whose Space is it, Anyway?: Challenges in Housing & Shelter," moderated by Dr. Ramya Ramanath, delved into the contradictions of cities as both sanctuaries and battlegrounds for migrants' right to shelter. Panelists Johannes Favi, Charlotte Long, and Lydia Stazen explored housing and shelter strategies for migrants and asylum seekers, highlighting the necessity for both immediate and enduring housing solutions. Housing Specialist, Charlotte Long discussed the Sanctuary Working Group's efforts in providing short-term housing amidst challenges such as inadequate infrastructure and a lack of willingness to share data. Deputy Executive Director of ICDI (Illinois Community for Displaced Immigrants) Johannes Favi described his organization's community-centered housing model which integrates substantial support systems to create community. Executive Director of the Ruff Institute, Lydia Stazen also emphasized the link between homelessness and migration at DePaul's Institute of Global Homelessness, advocating for enhanced case management and the replication of effective global strategies locally. A critical theme emerged around the need for government action to transition from current strategies to a more welcoming approach in dealing with migrants, stressing that supportive networks, accurate data, and comprehensive community engagement are essential for transforming urban areas into true refuges for those seeking asylum and shelter.



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YOUTH AND ACCESS TO EDUCATION

The “Youth and Access to Education Panel” moderated by Dr. Lien Tran explored the experiences of unaccompanied minors and other refugee youth alongside the response of local schools in supporting these students' education. Managing Attorney Raia Stoicheva discussed how The Young Center is dedicated to safeguarding the welfare and rights of these children, advocating for their best interests and ensuring they receive appropriate care and legal representation. Professor, Dr. Kate Cooper spoke about how tutoring programs are crucial to support students throughout their transition. Principal, Anna Cirilli talked about how initiatives like the one at SNCS (St. Nicolas Cathedral School) provide support and resources for Ukrainian refugee students, ensuring their safety and academic success despite the challenges they face. Principal Heather Yutzy spoke about how her school embraces a philosophy of acceptance and support for migrants and refugees, aiming to integrate them seamlessly into the educational system rather than viewing their presence as a problem. With a substantial percentage of students requiring intensive support through Tier 3 interventions, Haugan employs a range of resources, including retired teachers, mental health professionals, counselors, tutors, and community partnerships with local organizations and churches, to ensure these students receive the necessary assistance to thrive academically and emotionally. The panel concluded by expressing the importance of educational and community integration playing crucial roles in health and opportunities of young migrants.



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Youth and Access to Education





Photography by Jonathan Michael Castillo

TEMPORARY SOLUTIONS FOR INTRACTABLE ISSUES

The Panel “Temporary Solutions for Intractable Issues” moderated by retired immigration Judge, James Fujimoto, highlighted that the U.S. has consistently allowed for exceptions to the admission of migrants fleeing for their lives, typically through the attorney general or some other form of parole. Professor of Law for University of Houston, Daniel Morales talked about the relevance of a “politics of welcome” and the need for legal processes to reflect this. Professor Morales spoke of the how the current emphasis on the financial difficulty of facing large border arrivals privileges the federal government as the arbiter of justice. While the federal government may certainly provide relief to arrivals, the historic and contemporary action of the federal government often revolves around deterrence and restriction as opposed to acceptance and welcome. Therefore, the emphasis on federal funding, is ineffective toward producing a “politics of welcome.” Professor and Co-Director of the immigration clinic for the University of Texas at Austin School of Law, Elissa Steglich, contextualized the U.S.’s experience with large number of new arrivals with that of other countries and reframed the dialogue of crisis as more of an opportunity for local systems to be a part of solutions. Panelists described that a more effective solution would emphasize the local action as opposed to the federal. The panelists discuss the possibility of placing the power to provide status in the hands of local authorities instead of being dependent on federal government restrictions. Such an approach would produce a more amicable environment toward future amendments to the migration system.

Photography by Jonathan Michael Castillo



CLOSING PLENARY

The closing plenary moderated by Craig Mousin, DMC's Co-Founder, featured speakers Emily Wheeler, Program Manager of the Faith Community Initiative, Kristin Bronson, Executive Director of the Colorado Lawyers Committee (CLC), and Bitta Mostofi, Senior Advisor for United States Citizenship and Immigration discussing various initiatives and challenges in response to immigration issues in cities like Chicago, Denver, and New York. Emily discussed the work of the Faith Community Initiative, a new interfaith organization in Chicago founded in June 2023. Their focus is on sustainable support for asylum seekers, partnering with faith communities for long-term housing solutions. They aim to provide resources and case management to facilitate independence and agencies for newcomers. She also highlighted the importance of community involvement and sustainable solutions for long-term change. Kristin Bronson provided insights into Denver's response to immigration challenges highlighting capacity difficulties in providing shelter and support. Bronson discussed initiatives to provide work permits and assistance to immigrants, including partnerships with faith-based organizations. She emphasized various challenges including political tensions and budget constraints, despite efforts to transition to more sustainable solutions like the Asylum Seeker Program. Bitta Mostofi highlighted several key achievements and reflections on immigration services and policies, particularly focusing on the context of New York City. She emphasized the importance of appreciating the progress made in immigration services over the past decade, particularly in ensuring access to services regardless of immigration status. Bitta reflected on the comprehensive health response in New York City, where newly arrived individuals were immediately enrolled in healthcare programs and vaccinated, highlighting the effectiveness of prior infrastructure-building efforts. Overall, the speakers addressed the need for sustainable, community-driven solutions to immigration challenges, the importance of collaboration across sectors, and the ongoing efforts to navigate political and budgetary constraints.



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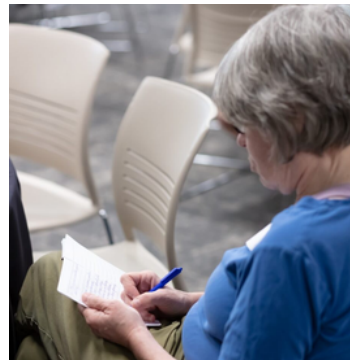
GALLERY

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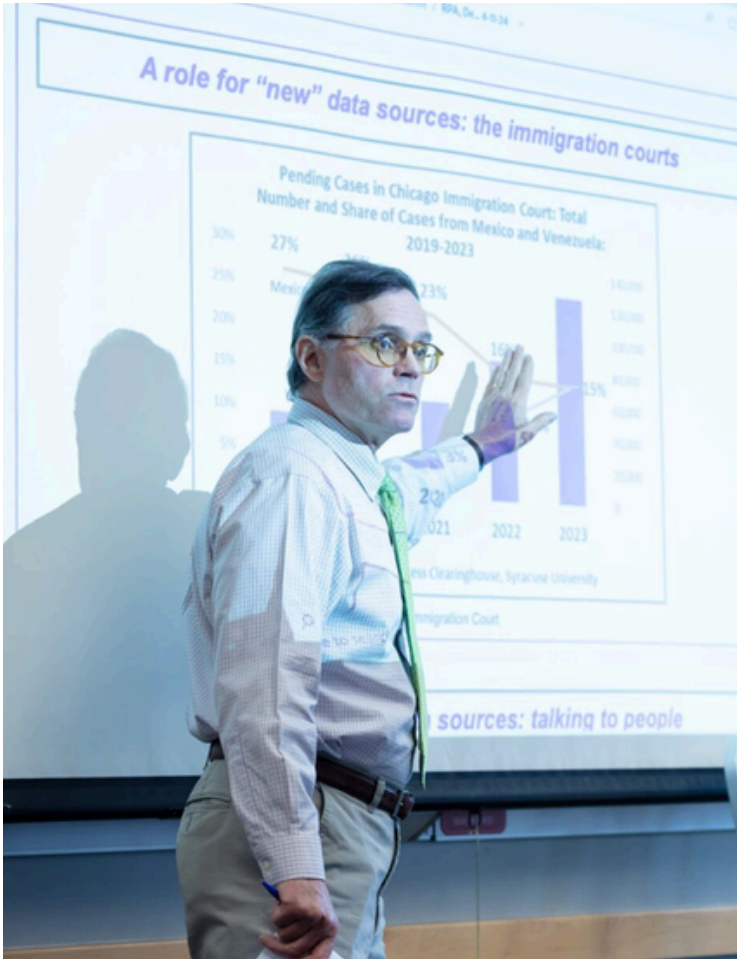
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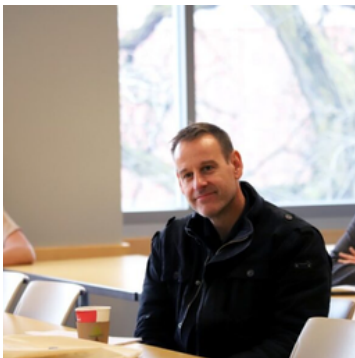
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