



2024 Symposium Speakers

Plenary Speaker



Jennifer M Chacón

Jennifer M. Chacón is the Bruce Tyson Mitchell Professor of Law at Stanford Law School. Her research focuses on the nexus of immigration law, constitutional law, and criminal law and procedure. She is a co-author of the recently published *Legal Phantoms: Executive Action and The Haunting Failures of Immigration Law* (Stanford University Press 2024) which traces the impact of shifting immigration policies on immigrant communities and organizations in Southern California from 2012 through 2022. She is also a co-author on the immigration law textbook *Immigration Law and Social Justice*, now in its second edition. She has written numerous articles, book chapters, and essays exploring how legal frameworks on immigration and law enforcement shape individual and collective understandings of racial and ethnic identity, citizenship, civic engagement, and social belonging. Her research has been funded by the Russell Sage Foundation, the National Science Foundation, and the University of California.

Professor Chacón is a past Chair of the American Association of Law School's Section on Immigration, and of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Rules Committee. She is a member of the American Law Institute and a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation (ABF). She served on the ABF Board of Directors, and serves on the board of the National Immigration Law Center. She has served on the Advisory Board of the ABF's "Future of Latinos in the U.S." project, the Advisory Group for the University of Oxford Border Criminologies network, and the Advisory Board of the Latina Lawyers Bar Association.

Professor Chacón was previously an associate at Davis Polk and Wardwell, and a law clerk for the Honorable Sidney R. Thomas of the Ninth Circuit. Prior to joining the Stanford faculty, she held appointments as a Professor of Law at the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law, the UCLA School of Law, and the UC Davis King Hall School of Law, and as a Chancellor's Professor of Law and Senior Associate Dean for Administration at the University of California, Irvine, School of Law. She holds a J.D. from Yale Law School and an A.B. in International Relations from Stanford University.



Plenary Speaker



Beatriz Ponce de León

Beatriz Ponce de León serves as Deputy Mayor of Immigrant, Migrant, and Refugee Rights (IMRR) for the City of Chicago. As the first person to hold this newly created position, Ms. Ponce de León works with the IMRR team to advocate for and to promote the advancement and integration of immigrant, migrants and refugees into the life and vitality of communities across Chicago.

Born and raised in Chicago, Beatriz Ponce de León is the eldest daughter of immigrants from Michoacán, México. Growing up in a working class neighborhood, she often saw her parents connect family members and neighbors to helpful people or resources. This inspired Beatriz to dedicate her career to working for the public good, expanding opportunities and resources that improve quality of life for individuals and strengthen our communities.

For over 30 years, Beatriz has advocated for and helped create policies and programs that promote equity and racial justice and address the marginalization of people of color and low-income communities. She has built multi-sector coalitions, led community and organizational planning processes, implemented communications campaigns, operationalized new initiatives and authored or contributed to numerous action plans and reports. These include “Language Education: Preparing Chicago’s Public School Students for a Global Community” as Director of the Bilingual Education and World Language Initiative for the Chicago Public Schools, “Strong Neighborhood High Schools for a Stronger Chicago” as executive director of the Generation All initiative at The Chicago Community Trust, “A Shared Future: The Economic Engagement of Greater Chicago and its Mexican Community” for the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, and several quality of life community plans for the LISC New Communities initiative.

For much of her career, Beatriz worked as a consultant in the public sector. This provided opportunities to develop expertise on a wide range of issues including immigrant rights and integration, education equity, bilingual education and language diversity, adolescent rights, health care access, voter engagement, and community development.

Most recently, Beatriz worked for the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) where she held several roles including Assistant Director of the Division of Family and Community Services and Chief of Staff for the Division of Mental Health.

Beatriz has always aimed to engage the people most impacted by a new program or policy in the decision-making and has an especially strong commitment to partnering with young people and their allies in creating the opportunities and resources youth need to thrive.

Beatriz holds a BA in Sociology with a concentration in race, class, and gender from Yale University and has served on numerous boards throughout her careers including as an elected Local School Council member.



Plenary Speakers



Kristin M. Bronson

Kristin M. Bronson is a civic leader, community advocate and trial attorney with over twenty-five years of experience. She currently serves as the Executive Director of the Colorado Lawyers Committee (CLC), a nonpartisan consortium of over 70 Colorado law firms dedicated to creating and increasing opportunities for children, the poor and other disadvantaged communities through pro bono legal advocacy, negotiation and litigation. CLC has partnered with the City of Denver and the State of Colorado in developing response plans to the surge in new immigrants, including legal clinics for TPS and work authorization.

Prior to joining the Lawyers Committee in May 2023, she served as the City Attorney for the City and County of Denver, Colorado for six years. As the City's Chief Legal Officer, she provided legal and policy advice to elected officials, appointees, and senior managers while managing a large legal department. Ms. Bronson also led a number of key initiatives including the formation of the Denver Immigrant Legal Services Fund.



Emily Wheeler

Emily Wheeler is the program manager for the Faith Community Initiative (FCI) in Chicago. FCI is an organization that empowers migrant families and individuals to stabilize, acclimate, learn, earn, heal, and then thrive. This initiative creates partnerships across and within faith traditions to optimize support. Emily works with over a dozen faith communities across Chicagoland who are hosting, sponsoring, and accompanying over 75 migrant families through FCI. She does a little bit of everything to keep things running smoothly while supporting these communities. Raised in the bay area of California, Emily's lesbian mom and Columbian-born dad acted as Presbyterian pastors in their community. Although Emily is not a pastor, she is an advocate of immigration reform and still engages with communities of faith through her work. Emily speaks fluent Spanish and loves the days when she gets to spend time with families participating in FCI's program.



Plenary Speakers



Bitta Mostofi

Bitta Mostofi was appointed senior advisor to the Director of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services on August 29, 2022. In this capacity she helps drive USCIS' efforts to enhance the experience of the agency's diverse applicants and immigration beneficiaries by reducing burdens in their immigration benefit seeking process. Additionally, Bitta has led the agency's efforts to improve access to work authorization for newly arrived individuals in partnership with cities, states, and community organizations across the country.

Prior to joining USCIS, Bitta began her public service in New York City in 2014 and served as Commissioner of the New York City Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) from 2018 to 2021. She successfully led the agency during a time of notable growth in programs and services. Under her leadership, the Office worked to ensure accessibility of city services such as healthcare, expansion of legal services initiatives, and increased civic education, for all immigrant New Yorkers.

Prior to her role as Commissioner, Mostofi worked to advance the rights and well-being of immigrant New Yorkers as the Assistant Commissioner of MOIA. She led outreach and engagement efforts to bring the City's municipal ID card and legal services programs to New Yorkers among other achievements. Upon graduation from law school, Bitta practiced civil rights law with a particular focus on the discriminatory impact of immigration practices on Muslim or Middle Eastern immigrants. She has also worked with Safe Horizon Immigration Law Project in New York representing immigrant crime victims, asylees, as well as those seeking other forms of immigration relief. Bitta holds a juris doctor from DePaul University in Chicago.



Craig B. Mousin- Moderator

Craig B. Mousin served as the University Ombuds at DePaul University from 2001—2023. He is a graduate of Johns Hopkins University, the University of Illinois College of Law, and the Chicago Theological Seminary. He previously served as the Executive Director of DePaul's Center for Church/State Studies and has taught Immigration, Asylum, and Refugee Law and family mediation law. He co-founded the Center's Interfaith Family Mediation Program and co-founded DePaul's Asylum and Immigration Law Clinic. He is a founding member of the DePaul Migration Collaborative. He also teaches international mediation and negotiation at DePaul's Grace School for Applied Diplomacy. Reverend Mousin was ordained at Wellington United Church of Christ where he serves as Associate Pastor for Immigrant Justice.



“Labor & Mobility: Migrant Labor, Economics Innovation, Remittances, and Worker’s Rights” Panelists



Jorge Mújica

Jorge Mújica Murias joined Arise as a Strategic Campaigns Organizer in 2012. Born in Mexico, Jorge participated in labor and popular movements until he emigrated to the United States in 1987. Has worked as a journalist for several newspapers, Univision and Telemundo, and twice won the First Place award for Investigative Reporting from the Association of Hispanic Publicists. He is one of the main organizers of the 2006 immigrant rights marches, and co-author of “Voces Migrantes, Movimiento 10 de Marzo”, a book about the immigration movement. Jorge has worked for several labor unions, is a member of the National Council of the National Union of Writers, and several community organizations that have fought for the interests of the Mexican community abroad. He was elected as a Congressman in the Mexican Federal Congress in 2021, representing the Mexican diaspora.



Dr. Lamont Black

Dr. Lamont Black is an Associate Professor of Finance at DePaul’s Driehaus College of Business. He is a recognized expert and speaker on the topics of cryptocurrency and blockchain and their relationship to financial services. His research and teaching focuses on the digital transformation of business with an emphasis on emerging technologies including AI and the metaverse. Dr. Black works at the intersection of innovation and social good to bring new ideas to challenging public issues. His project with the DMC Solutions Lab addresses migrant finances from the perspective of money, savings, and remittances. In an increasingly digital world, it can be difficult for migrants to access financial networks and the associated fees are often high. Working with community partners, Dr. Black will assess migrants’ financial hurdles and the potential for new technologies to provide better financial inclusion for this community. Dr. Black is also Director of DePaul’s Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA), Academic Director of DePaul’s Keeley Center for Financial Services, and Fellow of Filene Research Institute’s Center for the Credit Union of the Future. Prior to joining DePaul, Dr. Black was an economist at the Federal Reserve in Washington DC.



“Labor & Mobility: Migrant Labor, Economics Innovation, Remittances, and Worker’s Rights” Panelists



Christian Arizmendi

Christian Arizmendi is a Senior Assistant Attorney General in the Office of the Illinois Attorney General’s Workplace Rights Bureau. The Workplace Rights Bureau protects and advances the employment rights of Illinois residents, particularly and low and moderate-income residents and immigrant residents. The Bureau investigates and litigates cases involving serious or persistent violations of laws protecting workers or other significant labor and employment practices. The Bureau also monitors and proposes legislation concerning labor and employment issues, advocates for important labor and employment law matters by drafting amicus curiae briefs, and comments on proposed regulatory changes. Prior to joining the Office of the Illinois Attorney General, Mr. Arizmendi worked as a legal aid attorney in Chicago, serving low-income and Spanish-speaking clients, and also worked in private practice, representing clients in a variety of civil matters. He is a graduate of DePaul University’s School of Music and College of Law.



Shailja Sharma

Shailja Sharma is a Professor of International Studies, and the co-director of the DePaul Migration Collaborative. She was the founding Director of the program in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies (RFMS) at DePaul University. Her research focuses on different aspects of migration including refugees, diasporas, and citizenship. She is currently working on South Asian minorities and their experience of majoritarian violence. She is a TEDx speaker, frequently writes op-eds for publications like The Hill, Newsday, The Chicago Tribune, US News and World Report, and has talked about migration on outlets like NPR, ABC, NBC and Fox.



“Numbers Matter: Getting Data Right” Panelists



Dr. Elizabeth G. Kennedy

Elizabeth G. Kennedy, Ph.D., is a 2023-2024 DePaul Migration Collaborative (DMC) practitioner in residence, 2023-2024 Fulbright Scholar to El Salvador and LAPOP’s 2023-2024 Honduras expert. While in residence with DMC, Dr. Kennedy will produce country conditions reports and editorials, in addition to trainings with immigrant-serving organizations, university students and faculty, and hopefully, the broader community.

Dr. Kennedy is a social scientist researching human rights, gender, violence and migration primarily based from Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala or the US-Mexico border since 2011. In July 2023, she concluded work as the Central America Monitor research director for the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA). She also worked as a case worker and teacher for several years in low-income communities and holds an executive certificate in nonprofit management from Georgetown University.

For over a decade, Dr. Kennedy has led widely-cited, collaborative research with gendered analyses on complex humanitarian crises examining overlapping impunity, inequality, violence, climate change and other factors. Qualitatively, she has interviewed over 1,700 Central American migrants and 250 officials and service providers in aforementioned nations, in addition to compiling innovative and substantial quantitative databases to triangulate the information collected in these interviews. She has done the research independently and with WOLA, Human Rights Watch (HRW), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a Fulbright student fellowship, Tinker Grant, and others, including film makers, journalists, a playwright, and numerous immigration attorneys.

Dr. Kennedy has authored or co-authored peer-reviewed articles in high-impact academic journals, policy reports, book chapters, media articles, internal reports and blog entries, including regional and country reports for the Central America Monitor and *Deported to Danger: United States Deportation Policies Expose Salvadorans to Death and Abuse* (2020). She has further disseminated this research through frequent presentations to legal, medical and social service providers, government officials, immigration courts and print, radio and television outlets in various countries.



“Numbers Matter: Getting Data Right” Panelists



Rob Paral

Rob Paral is a demographic and public policy consultant with specialties in immigrant, Latino and Asian populations; community needs for health and human service programs; and Midwestern demographic change. He is also a DePaul Migration Collaborative 2023/2024 Practitioner in Residence. As Principal of Rob Paral and Associates, Rob has assisted more than 100 different human service, advocacy and philanthropic organizations in understanding the communities they are trying to serve. He works with large-scale data and geographic information systems to develop insight into community assets and needs.

Rob Paral is a Research Specialist with the Great Cities Institute of the University of Illinois at Chicago and a nonresident fellow in the Global Cities program of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. He was the Senior Research Associate of the Washington, DC office of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, and was Research Director of the Latino Institute of Chicago. He has been a fellow or adjunct of the Institute for Latino Studies at Notre Dame University, DePaul University Sociology Department, and the Latin American and Latino studies program at the University of Illinois-Chicago. More information may be found at <https://robparal.com/>



Pooja Ravindran

Pooja Ravindran (they/them/theirs) is the Chief of Staff for the City of Chicago Committee for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

Pooja was with the 40th Ward Office as Director of Constituent Services and then Chief of Staff. They are now Ald. Vasquez' Director of Policy and Chief of Staff for the Committee on Immigrant and Refugee Rights. They have a great interest in making sure government serves the interest of ALL people, especially those who have been minoritized and continue to face repression.

Pooja was in the solar industry for many years before pivoting into government, and has extensive experience with program development, management and strategic planning. Catch them farming, cooking or trying to start yet another book club or study group during non work hours!



“Numbers Matter: Getting Data Right” Panelists



Dr. Tracey Lewis-Elligan- Moderator

Tracey Lewis Elligan is an Associate Professor in the Sociology Department at DePaul University, and she currently serves as the Interim Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Programs in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences. Her scholarship is guided by community based participatory research with a focus on reproductive health and well-being. Her stance is critical with a gaze to disrupt structural inequalities related to race, class and gender.

With support from a university research grant at DePaul, she served as the co-principal investigator of the Chicago Donor Milk Equity Project, which aimed to promote first food equity by increasing access to human milk. Her most recent publication was an OpEd publication in The Hill, which continued the call for a reproductive revolution to end Black maternal health disparities.

Tracey teaches courses on family, health, and sociology of food. She was a W.K Kellogg Community Health Scholar at University of Michigan, School of Public Health, and she received a PhD in Child and Family Studies from Syracuse University, a MA in Psychology from the New School for Social Research and a BA in psychology from Hampton University.



“Models of Care: Mental and Physical Health and Migration” Panelists

This panel is co-sponsored by the Department of Social Work



Dr. Minal Giri

Dr. Minal Giri is a general pediatrician with over 20 years of experience. She was former medical director of Melrose Park Pediatrics, a practice she and her father started together, where she cares for a medically underserved largely immigrant community. She weaves together two decades of experience in direct clinical service and advocacy on behalf of disenfranchised children.

In 2017, Dr. Giri founded the Refugee Immigrant Child Health Initiative, an education and advocacy initiative through the Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. In addition to providing ongoing education and networking opportunities for pediatricians, through RICHI, she formed the Midwest Human Rights Consortium.

As founder and co-chair of the Midwest Human Rights Consortium, an interdisciplinary multi-institutional network of mental health and medical professionals, Dr. Giri works with academic medical centers, non-profit organizations and city-wide coalitions in service of unaccompanied children and families seeking immigration relief. In this capacity, she has trained and facilitated learning for over 100 practitioners on how to conduct forensic evaluations on behalf of asylum seekers.

Dr. Giri has provided guidance to the Department of Homeland Security on the treatment of unaccompanied children in government custody. She is nationally-recognized for her contribution to the fields of immigration and asylum medicine and currently serves as Member Engagement Chair on the executive committee of the American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Immigrant Child and Family Health.



“Models of Care: Mental and Physical Health and Migration” Panelists

This panel is co-sponsored by the Department of Social Work



Dr. Aimee Hilado

Aimee Hilado, Ph.D., LCSW is a community-engaged, mixed methods researcher and seasoned licensed clinical social worker specializing in immigration trauma and immigrant/refugee mental health with over 16 years in the field. Dr. Hilado is an Assistant Professor at the University of Chicago Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice where she teaches and conducts research on understudied pathways to promoting mental wellness and adjustment for newcomers. Her lab studies diverse communities across different immigration statuses – refugees, asylum-seekers, migrants, unaccompanied children – and across the lifespan from early childhood to older adults with a focus on mental health outcomes in the context of the organizations and health systems they interface. Dr. Hilado is also the Chair of the Coalition for Immigrant Mental Health (ourcimh.org) and co-developer of the CIMH "Reimagining Mental Health Supports for Migrant Arrivals" initiative training frontline emergency shelter staff on universal mental health strategies as part of the city/state Migrant Reception Plan.



Veronica Saldaña

Veronica Roman Saldaña, deeply rooted in Chicago's Pilsen Neighborhood, has dedicated herself to community service from an early age as a lifelong parishioner at St. Pius V church, where she's taught Sunday School for 20 years. Transitioning seamlessly into roles like Volunteer Coordinator at the Pilsen Food Pantry and Co-Lead of the District 12 Migrant Welcome initiative, Veronica blends her background in event planning and education with her passion for social justice. Previously orchestrating national medical education conferences at Northwestern University, Veronica's tireless dedication and wealth of experience uniquely equip her to address diverse community needs, from coordinating relief efforts to facilitating access to essential services.



“Models of Care: Mental and Physical Health and Migration” Panelists

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Malena Luzuriaga

Malena Luzuriaga is the National Community Engagement Manager, HSPRS (Home Study & Post Release Services) program at HHCS (Heartland Human Care Services). She was born in Queens, NYC, 1st generation daughter of Ecuadorean parents. At the start of her career, she conducted child abuse and neglect investigations with State of NJ, Dept. of Youth & Family Services. Her experience with Unaccompanied children began twelve years ago as a Family Reunification Specialist at HHCS shelter, ICRC. When the HSPRS program started in 2014, she was the 1st case manager for their nationwide program. Her current role provides support to the HSPRS & APOYAS (Alliance of Partners Offering Youth Advocacy & Support).

The APOYAS program was developed to build a continuum of care for UC children as they reconnect with family and sponsors in the US. Their team of human rights activists has developed a nation-wide coalition of service providers, providing a full suite of services enabling UC's and their families to thrive.

She is part of the Steering committee for CIMH, Co-Chairing the Education & Outreach workgroup.



Dr. Maria Joy Ferrera- Moderator

Maria Joy Ferrera is an Associate Professor within DePaul University's Department of Social Work and Co-Director of the Center for Community Health Equity (CCHE), a partnership between DePaul and Rush University to promote health equity. She is Co-Founder and interim Executive Director of the Coalition for Immigrant Mental Health (CIMH), a collaborative, community based and research informed initiative that is a partnership between immigrants regardless of status, mental health practitioners, community organizers, researchers, and allies. She is a Steering Committee Member of The Midwest Human Rights Consortium (MHRC) a referral network of multi-institutional and interdisciplinary professionals who perform trauma-informed forensic evaluations for individuals seeking asylum in the U.S. As a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, she conducts pro-bono mental health forensic asylum assessments for MHRC. Her community-based research and practice focuses on health equity within black and brown communities and centers the narratives of asylum seekers, immigrant youth and their families. Dr. Ferrera, has recently been awarded DePaul's Social Transformation and Research Collaborative Professional Development Fellowship funded by the Mellon Foundation. This fellowship allows her to employ documentary filmmaking within her research as a medium to promote immigrant rights.



Johannes Favi

Johannes Favi is a community and human rights activist who received the 2021 Jeanne and Joseph Sullivan Human Rights Award from the National Immigrant Justice Center. He is a community organizer, leader and immigrant advocate who spent over 10 months detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in horrible conditions. Favi is an immigrant from Benin, a small country in West Africa. Upon release from detention, he started advocating for and providing support to other immigrants in ICE detention.

He educated students and congregations on the impact of immigrant detention and wrote several articles championing the abolition of immigrant detention centers in Illinois that ultimately led to the passage of the Illinois Way Forward Act, disrupting the pipeline to immigration detention and deportation. In addition to stronger protections for immigrants, the law also prohibits state and local governments from signing contracts with the federal government to detain immigrants.

Johannes Favi went to a Catholic boarding school in Benin where he learned very early in his life the balance between discipline, hard work, and religion. He is a pioneer member of the Rotary Club in Cotonou Citou, Benin. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science and worked at Etisalat Benin before emigrating to the United States in 2013.

Right after his release from detention, Johannes led and took part in different actions and meetings with politicians, local organizations, high-schools, universities, and churches. He shared his story widely to help build a country where there is a more humane immigration system, one where diverse immigrant communities will be safe. While he was detained, he missed the birth of his son, his daughter's first steps, and he couldn't afford to send them holiday gifts. His first year out of detention, he organized a Christmas toy drive in collaboration with The Illinois Community for Displaced Immigrants, Connect Kankakee, and the National Immigrant Justice Center. His experiences in detention inspired him to launch a campaign with the help of the Illinois Community for Displaced Immigrants raising several thousand dollars for people in immigration detention.

Favi has continued to be active in civil rights and social issues, particularly through the Illinois Community for Displaced Immigrants, a Chicago nonprofit organization where he is currently serving on the Board of Directors and as Deputy Executive Director. He recently became a Freedom Fellow with Detention Watch Network in Washington DC where he is continuing to learn how to abolish immigration detention and build a stronger and better community for immigrants nationwide. He has also worked with many other organizations: the Simmons Center for Global Chicago, the Midwestern Immigration Bond Fund, the Illinois Coalition for Immigrants and Refugees Rights, The Lewis University of Romeoville in Illinois, The Loyola School of New York, The Santa Clara University of San Francisco, The Darst Center of Chicago, Progressives for Change in Dupage County IL, 6000 Moms, The Chicago Religious Leadership Network, Save the Children, The Elmhurst Rotary Club, and The Chicago Refugee Coalition.



“Whose Space is it, anyway?: Challenges in Housing & Shelter ” Panelists



Lydia Stazen

Lydia Stazen is the Executive Director of the Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH), based at DePaul University in Chicago. In this role, she oversees global homeless policy development and advocacy, the Vanguard Cohort of international communities that have signed on to reduce homelessness in their contexts, and knowledge sharing activities that communicate what works (and what doesn't work) in ending homelessness in varying contexts around the world. Lydia is adept at translating evidence-based policy and programs across differing cultures and contexts to ensure that “no one is left behind” in the global movement to prevent, reduce, and end homelessness.

Lydia has worked at the intersections of housing, homelessness, employment, higher education, gender equity, and policy advocacy for nearly 20 years. Immediately prior to joining IGH, Lydia served as Vice Chancellor of Advancement and President of the City Colleges of Chicago Foundation. While there, she served on the internal research team team as part of Hope Lab's national #RealCollege Survey Report exploring basic needs insecurity among community college students. More than 60% of City College students who took the survey were experiencing food and housing insecurity. She used this learning to drive a college-system-wide response for students experiencing homelessness, including establishing an emergency financial assistance program.

Lydia also served for several years as Vice President of All Chicago Making Homelessness History, where she was instrumental in integrating homeless data with medical data to help patients experiencing homelessness access both housing and healthcare services.

Lydia is a founding editorial Board Member of the International Journal on Homelessness and an international speaker on housing and homelessness in global forums. She also currently serves as chair of the United Nations NGO Working Group to End Homelessness. She holds a Master's Degree in Public Policy.



“Whose Space is it, anyway?: Challenges in Housing & Shelter ” Panelists



Charlotte Long

Charlotte Long is the Housing Specialist for Sanctuary Working Group under Wellington UCC, working to house migrants and asylum seekers in Chicago. She has also worked alongside SWG as lead researcher for their National Shelter Database project in 2021, as well as in a long-term home for displaced women. Ms. Long has been an interviewer for the Global Women's Narrative Project and associate for Religions For Peace. She is a recent graduate of the University of Chicago Master of Divinity program where she studied the intersection of religious authority, gender and faith-based grassroots community aid. Her research through UofC has included interview work with fringe female religious leaders in Mexico City, Maine and Los Angeles. Ms. Long is also an interfaith chaplain at Rush Hospital. She has a background in spiritual and social justice curriculum building for teenagers. In her previous career, Ms. Long was an internationally touring puppeteer, educator and actor, performing with the award-winning ensemble Manual Cinema in Saudi Arabia, Czechia, China, Taiwan, the Netherlands and more.



Dr. Ramya Ramanath

Dr. Ramya Ramanath is Associate Professor at DePaul University's School of Public Service where she chairs its International Public Service degree program. Her research— in India, East Africa and in the United States—draws on disciplinary perspectives in organizational behavior, urban sociology, planning, anthropology, and political science. Her projects are embedded in nongovernmental, governmental, and for-profit organizations, engaged in affordable housing, resettlement and rehabilitation, leadership development and gender-responsive policy and practice.



“Youth and Access to Education” Panelists



Raia Stoicheva

Raia Stoicheva is the Managing Attorney with the Young Center based in Chicago. She served as a Staff Attorney and Child Advocate Supervisor in the Chicago office for three years prior to her transition. Before joining the Young Center, she was a staff attorney and clinical instructor at the DePaul College of Law Asylum and Immigration Law Clinic. There she helped community-based organizations to provide legal representation to immigrants and taught a clinical course on immigration law. She graduated with honors from the Northwestern University Pritzker College of Law where she participated in the asylum law and the international human rights law clinics. Raia is originally from Bulgaria.



Heather Yutzy

Heather Yutzy is the proud co-principal of Haugan School. She has many years of experience as a school principal, assistant principal, coach and teacher. She is passionate about helping students and teachers to thrive, both academically and socially. Ms. Yutzy believes that the school and parents are most powerful when we work together as partners. Ms. Yutzy holds a B.A. degree in Elementary Education, and M.A. in Educational Administration and she worked as a teacher in CPS before becoming an administrator. She has now been an educational leader for more than 30 years. She worked as an instructional coach and consultant, and worked as an assistant principal and principal at several schools. Heather considers one of her key accomplishments as principal to be when her school twice achieved exemplary honors for social emotional learning. As a young adult, Ms. Yutzy lived and worked in Bolivia for one year and she is conversational in Spanish.

She finds great joy in coaching teachers and conferring with students about their personal and academic growth. Ms. Yutzy is the mother of teenager and you will often see her daughter coming to Haugan family events. When not at school, Ms. Yutzy is an avid reader and swimmer (both in pools and open water). She loves to travel, cook, and spend time with her friends and family.



“Youth and Access to Education” Panelists



Anna Cirilli

Ms. Anna Cirilli brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the field of education. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Education and Sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a Master's degree in Educational Leadership from Concordia University-River Forest.

Ms. Cirilli's career spans 14 years, encompassing both classroom instruction and leadership roles. For 12 years, she served as a dedicated educator at Marcus Garvey Elementary School (Chicago Public Schools), teaching Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grades. During this time, she spearheaded the development and implementation of the school's social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum, programming, and professional development initiatives. Her leadership in establishing the Second Step Program resulted in Marcus Garvey's local and national recognition as a leader in SEL excellence. Ms. Cirilli further broadened her horizons with a 2-year experience teaching English as a Foreign Language in Pescara, Italy.

Currently, Ms. Cirilli serves as the principal of St. Nicholas Cathedral School (SNCS) in Ukrainian Village. She has played a pivotal role in welcoming over 140 refugee children fleeing the war in Ukraine since February 2022. Under her leadership, SNCS has garnered local and national recognition for its success in implementing trauma-informed best practices to support these newly arrived students.



Dr. Kate Cooper

Kate Cooper (PhD, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign) is an assistant professor of communication studies in the College of Communication. Kate is primarily interested in nonprofit organizations and how they coordinate with other agencies in order to scale up their efforts. She has studied collaborative efforts in response to education, gender-based violence, refugees and migration, among other issues. She is the co-author of the book *Networks for Social Impact* (2022, Oxford University Press). Dr. Cooper's project, Building a Resilient Volunteer Tutor Program to Serve Refugees, partners with FORA (Forging Opportunities for Refugees in America) in order to create a mentorship and training program for volunteers.



“Youth and Access to Education” Panelists



Lien Tran

Lien Tran (she, her, hers) is an assistant professor of games and design at DePaul University's School of Design in the Jarvis College of Computing and Digital Media. She is a member of the DePaul Migration Collaborative advisory council and director of Matters at Play, a transdisciplinary design lab partnering in the creation of interactive advocacy solutions particularly in the areas of social justice, public health, and the environment. She is an award-winning designer who has serious fun teaching how to distill real-world complexity into interactive systems, including *Toma el Paso* (Make a Move), a board game about the shelter release process unaccompanied immigrant minors who are in removal proceedings must first navigate. Her design portfolio includes online and game-based tools for organizations such as Open Society Foundations, World Bank, and United Nations.

Professor Lien Tran received her M.F.A. in Design and Technology from Parsons School of Design at The New School in New York, NY, and her B.B.A. in Information Technology with a minor in Computer Science from The College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, VA. To find out more about Lien's work and activities please visit lienbtran.com.



“Temporary Solutions for Intractable Issues” Panelists



Elissa Steglich

Elissa Steglich is a Clinical Professor and Co-Director of the Immigration Clinic at the University of Texas School of Law. In over 20 years advocating for immigrant rights, she has provided direct representation to asylum seekers, immigrant children, and immigrant survivors of violence and human trafficking. She has participated in asylum and immigrant detention-related advocacy and litigation. Professor Steglich regularly presents at scholarly conferences, public events, and professional trainings.

Professor Steglich previously served as Legal Services Director at the American Friends Service Committee’s Immigrant Rights Program in Newark, New Jersey. She worked with the National Immigrant Justice Center and conducted extensive field research on trafficking in Latin America and the Caribbean for the International Human Rights Law Initiative of DePaul College of Law. She serves on the advisory committee of the ABA Children’s Immigration Law Academy and on the Amicus Committee of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. She is a board member of the Mabel Center for Immigrant Justice. She received a BA in English from Haverford College and was awarded a JD with Honors from the University of Texas School of Law.



Daniel I. Morales

Professor Daniel I. Morales is a scholar and theorist of immigration law known for his work problematizing the legal underpinnings of immigration control and for identifying the progressive possibilities of decentralization as an antidote to what ails immigration law. His scholarship has appeared in leading law reviews, including the N.Y.U. Law Review, U.C. Irvine Law Review, Indiana Law Journal, and Wake Forest Law Review. Professor Morales began his academic career as a William H. Hastie Fellow at the University of Wisconsin Law School and subsequently clerked for both the Hon. R. Guy Cole Jr., U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit, and the Hon. Joan B. Gottschall, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. He received his J.D. from Yale Law School and his B.A., magna cum laude, from Williams College, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. He has practiced law at Jenner & Block LLP and Kirkland & Ellis LLP. He teaches Constitutional Law, Immigration Law, and seminars on legal theory.



“Temporary Solutions for Intractable Issues” Panelists



James R. Fujimoto-Moderator

James R. Fujimoto is a graduate of the University of Chicago (AB) and DePaul College of Law (JD). He was a partner in the immigration and civil rights law firm of Alexander, Fennerty and Fujimoto before being appointed to the Chicago Immigration Court in 1990. While an immigration judge, he was an officer with the National Association of Immigration Judges and frequently spoke at local, national and regional conferences hosted by the American Immigration Lawyers Association, the Federal Bar Association and other professional organizations.

Since leaving the bench in May 2019, he has served as an adjunct professor and senior practitioner in residence with the Asylum & Immigration Law Clinic (AIRC). In the latter capacity, he provides substantive law and skills training to attorneys, Department of Justice accredited representatives and legal staff of immigrant-serving nonprofits with whom AIRC partners.