

# DePaul Migration Collaborative

Advocating for Justice,  
Educating for the Future

Monthly Newsletter





Image "Last Call for Boarding" by Rob Paral

**WHO WE ARE:** The DePaul Migration Collaborative engages scholars, practitioners, students and alumni to find solutions to society's most pressing problems in the areas of migration, mobility and human rights.

**Subscribe to continue to receive our newsletter:** <https://forms.office.com/r/BL7Bcv9ag8>

## Events

### This Month with the DMC

*January 25, 2024- Country Conditions Expert Witness Training (Faculty Only).* Join the DMC's Practitioner in Residence [Dr. Elizabeth Kennedy](#) to learn how to become a Country Conditions expert witness. You must RSVP to Join. This event will be held virtually only for Chicago university faculty only.

**FACULTY RSVP:** [Here](#)

*January 30, 2024- Panel* The DMC is hosting a panel featuring our two Practitioners in Residence, Dr. Elizabeth Kennedy and political consultant Rob Paral alongside Chicago Tribune Reporter [Laura Rodriguez Presa](#) and ICIRR Senior Director of Programs [Breandán Magee](#). The Panel is entitled "Forced Migration to Chicago: What you should know." This event is hybrid from 1:30-3:00pm.

**RSVP:** [Here](#)

### Save the Date

*Feb 20, 2024- Seeking Asylum: Conditions of the Northern Triangle*  
*April 11, 2024-DMC Migration Conference (All-Day)*

### DMC Partner Events

*January 24, 2024- RFMS and DePaul Sanctuary Event: Johannes Favi, the Harms of Arbitrary Detention: Trauma and US Migration Policy* RFMS is hosting the event in LPSC Room 324 from 6pm to 7:30pm. Please join them for this important discussion.

*January 26, 2024 -DePaul Innovation Day* DePaul is hosting their annual Innovation Day on Friday, January 26. The DMC has been selected to participate in the closing showcase, where members of the DMC will highlight the intersection of migration and climate as well as provide information about our current projects.

**RSVP:** [Here](#)

*January 30, 2024- JustDePaul Winter Migration Network Weaving Event* Just DePaul is hosting

its next Network Weaving Event LPSC Room 314A 10am to 11:30am

RSVP: [Here](#)



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Migration  
Collaborative

## COUNTRY CONDITIONS EXPERT WITNESS TRAINING



**Date:** Thursday, January 25, 2024  
**Time:** 12-1:30pm  
**RSVP w/QR Code**  
**Contact us:** [migration@depaul.edu](mailto:migration@depaul.edu)

### Our Training:

Expand your professional profile and use your expertise to help those seeking asylum in the city of Chicago. In this training, you will learn about:

- The role of a country condition experts in asylum cases
- How to apply your expertise to witness reporting
- What to expect in court and attorney interactions
- How to prepare your testimony
- How to connect with attorneys and open cases



## New DMC Opportunities

Call for Applications coming soon for Practitioners in Residence and Solutions Lab grantees.

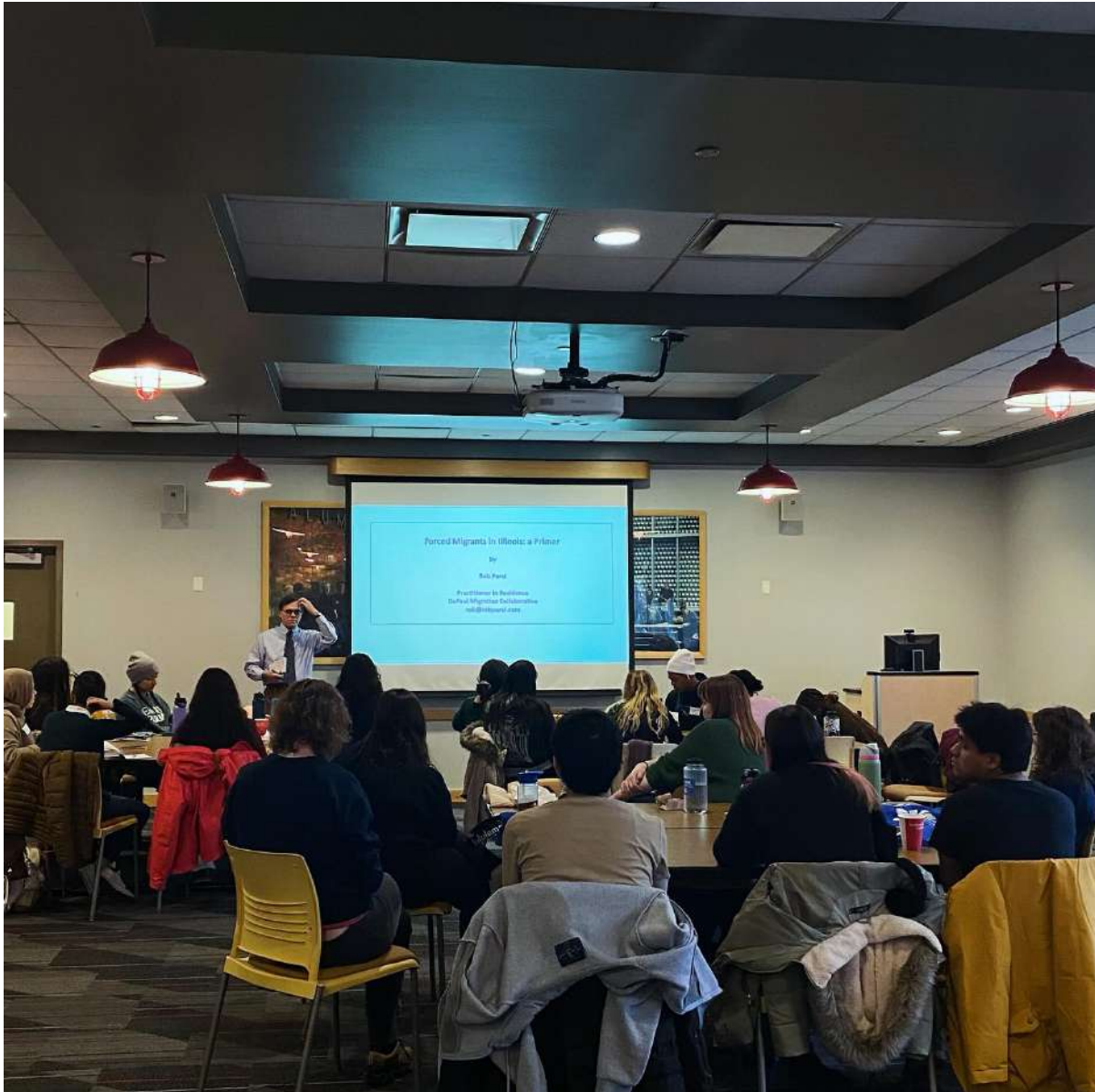
- [Reframing Refugees Project – DePaul Migration Collaborative](#)
- [Solutions Lab – DePaul Migration Collaborative](#)

## News

**DMC Practitioner Speaks with Students at Service Immersion**

DMC Practitioner in Residence (PIR) [Rob Paral](#) was invited to speak at DePaul Mission and Ministry 1-Day Service Immersion event about the current migrants in DePaul, the challenges they are facing, and the city's response.

"It is a special opportunity to talk with university students, who are in a unique time of their lives with a lot of curiosity and energy. In talking with the group, I felt they wanted to learn and do something for other people. This came out of our back-and-forth discussion, where they had questions and opinions about the migrants coming to Chicago. I thought it was perfect that they were going to the Brighton Park neighborhood, a normal Chicago neighborhood in all the senses of working-class people and former industrial landscapes, and a place where immigrants/migrants are trying to make their way."- Rob Paral



## DePaul Migration Advocates Video Series Highlights Alumni Impact

If you have not checked out the DMA Video Series, we highly recommend. Hear the stories of DePaul Alumni/advocates as they share the work, they are doing to support migrants throughout the world.

We would like to thank all of our wonderful interns who have worked on this project and all of the alumni who participated. The work on this series was funded by the Vincentian Endowment Fund. We would also like to extend our gratitude to the VEF for allowing us to pursue this project. Stay tuned to see what happens next!

Alumni Featured: Giovanna Valdez (DePaul Law '12), Melissa Untereker (DePaul Law '06), Hillary Richardson (DePaul Law '11), Jeffrey Cohn (DePaul Law '16), Ashley Whetham (DePaul LAS RFMS '21), Claudia Valenzuela (DePaul Law '02), Christian Jorgensen (DePaul LAS RFMS '17), Michelle Rivero (DePaul Law '98)

Link to the series: [DePaul Migration Advocates \(DMA\) – DePaul Migration Collaborative](#)

### DMC Team Spotlight



To read more about Dr. Ferrera visit: [Maria Ferrera – DePaul Migration Collaborative](#) and [RFMS Newsletter](#)



DePaul Migration Advocate: Melissa Untereker, DePaul Law '06  
46 views • 6 months ago



DePaul Migration Advocate: Hillary Richardson, DePaul Law '11  
42 views • 7 months ago



DePaul Migration Advocate: Jeffrey Cohn, DePaul Law '16  
116 views • 10 months ago



DePaul Migration Advocate: Ashley Whetham, DePaul LAS '21  
162 views • 11 months ago



DePaul Migration Advocate: Claudia Valenzuela, DePaul Law '02  
36 views • 1 year ago



DePaul Migration Advocate: Christian Jorgensen, DePaul LAS '17  
26 views • 1 year ago

*Steering Committee Member: Dr. Maria Joy Ferrera*

Maria Joy Ferrera has joined the DePaul Migration Collaborative Steering Committee. She is dedicated to promoting the health of all individuals regardless of status and will be supporting the DMC through our conference planning amongst other tasks. Dr. Ferrera works in the school of Social Work and focuses on mental health and migration. She is also the Co-Director for the Center for Community Health Equity and Co-Chair of the Coalition for Immigrant Mental health (CIMH)

"The people who are involved with the DMC are remarkable individuals who are doing impactful work that directly benefits immigrants, refugees, and asylees. I learn so much from them, and I am inspired by the many faculty, staff, and students at DePaul who are dedicated to the human rights and wellbeing of the immigrant community. The DMC serves as a place to bring us all together and forge avenues for much needed collaboration that engages the community. I am honored to be part of this network. All of the projects that the DMC is engaged in are impactful. I love that DePaul alumni from diverse disciplines who are doing meaningful work with immigrants can stay connected through the DMC and are engaged in our overall efforts. Their expertise and dedication enrich our work. The Solutions Lab supports interdisciplinary, collaborative research that is community engaged and action oriented. There are many researchers and scholars who can identify the factors that impact immigrants in a detrimental way. However, more efforts are needed to outline effective responses to their critical needs and service gap areas. The DMC Solutions Lab has become a place to do this and address real challenges faced by immigrant communities."- Dr. Ferrera

## **Rob Paral's Research Trip U.S.-Mexico Border**



Photo "Bussing Migrants from El Paso, Texas" by Rob Paral

DMC Practitioner in Residence (PIR) Rob Paral, flew to El Paso, Texas to continue research regarding bussing migrants to the Chicago Area.

"There are large numbers of migrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border into Texas, but it is striking how the vast majority move through the area fairly soon towards other parts of the U.S. There is not a particularly substantial local economy at the border, and family connections and jobs are far away in the north for many migrants. The federal government's policies and practices and those of the non-profit organizations and local governments are geared toward moving people into the interior. But the interior destinations are not random or in line with what the migrants might want, because the system that exists across these different organizations funnels migrants to just a few cities like New York, Chicago, Denver and others, because the Texas state government provides funds to reach those cities. The non-profit, non-government organizations to some extents are forced to be complicit with this situation, as there aren't other options for free travel away from the border.

Another topic that becomes clear when talking to people at the border is the chaotic nature of how the migrants are processed. Whether someone is detained or not or given what's called "parole" or not to travel north can depend on which border crossing, which governmental agency, which time of year, etc. happens to be the case. My trip to El Paso made it clear that helping migrants with, for example, their legal situation here in Illinois is complicated by the chaotic nature of how people enter the U.S.

There are many things that these migrants need, and that people can do for them in organized ways and also in a one-on-one personal way. But some things that have not happened enough is simply talking with the migrants and interacting with them to understand who they are and what they need most. We need to find ways to get to know the migrants. One example would be efforts by the city or state to convene some migrants and listen to them. It would save a lot of money and time because we would not be guessing at what they need or where they are at in terms of their plans." - Rob Paral



### **DePaul's Dr. Cooper featured in Chicago Tribune**

Solutions Lab Awardee, Dr. Cooper was interviewed by the Chicago Tribune for her Solutions Lab Project with community partner FORA (Forging Opportunities for Refugees in America). Check it out! Also catch her feature in [Newsline](#)

[Read the story](#)



*Elizabeth Kennedy (Photo by Jeff Carrion/DePaul University)*

### **DMC's Elizabeth Kennedy and Asylum Claims**

Check out Dr. Kennedy's feature on Newsline: "Social Scientist Uses Data to Help Migrants, Asylum Seekers" written by Rachel Wojnicki

[Read the story](#)





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