

PAPA

Political Asylum Project of Austin

Noticerio PAPA

Number VIII I

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Happy Independence Day

Very soon, we will be celebrating Independence Day. July 4th marks the day when a new form of governance called representative democracy was formed. The foundations for a society grounded in self-rule and equal opportunity, rooted in a common commitment to what would come to be called the American Dream, had been laid.

As we approach July 4th, images of what it means to be a part of this great dream come to mind – the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, all of those hard-working immigrants that traveled to a new land and a new country and committed themselves to making a better life for their families.

Today, PAPA is still striving to help newcomers grasp that dream.

For many immigrants, the American Dream is simply out of reach, not because they do not have a legal reason to be in the U.S., but just because they cannot afford the legal advice they need to understand and comply with an oftentimes complex and daunting immigration legal system.

PAPA's fiscal year comes to a close shortly after July 4th. By the time that happens, we will have provided legal services and education to over 6,500 immigrants, helping them seek legal immigration status and to reach for all that America has to offer, allowing them to add their unique contributions to the Central Texas community.

Our clients say it best:

"I found my freedom."

"America for me is the opportunity to make our dreams come true."

"I am becoming a part of the greatest country in the world."

314 East Highland Mall Blvd., Suite 501 Austin, Texas 78752
512-478-0546 www.papaustin.org

We are proud to have helped so many new members of our society find the legal means to add their talents and aspirations to our collective dream and to make a better life for themselves. Still, even with a 30% increase in the number of people we were able to serve this year, far too many immigrants remain in a state of "legal limbo."

Many of these immigrants are unable to pursue their aspirations and hopes for becoming a part of the fabric of American society simply because they cannot find affordable legal representation that would allow them to do so.

This Independence day, will you please consider helping a newcomer to America find their independence, grasp that American Dream and become working, contributing members of our community? Your contribution can help in so many ways:

\$50 will educate 10 immigrants on their legal rights and responsibilities in the U.S.

\$100 will help one person who has immigrated legally to maintain a work permit, thereby allowing an already productive member of our community to continue to work and support that person's family.

\$250 will assist one immigrant victim of trafficking, sexual assault or other crimes escape the abuse and enable that person to work with authorities to investigate and prosecute the perpetrator.

\$500 will help an immigrant victim of domestic violence to escape the abuse and gain lawful work to make a new life for that person and his or her children.

\$1,000 will allow PAPA to assist an individual immigrant who is fleeing persecution in his or her home country.

\$2,500 will provide legal representation to 3 or more detained immigrants who are legally entitled to be in the U.S. and are facing deportation.

\$5,000 will assist an immigrant family that is fleeing persecution in their home country.

Simply visit <http://www.papais.org> and click the "Give Online" button to make a secure, online contribution.

Happy Independence Day

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As we close one year and launch into the next, I hope you will consider helping us make a real difference in keeping the spirit of Independence Day alive and well for those who are so desperately seeking it. As one new American said recently after being sworn in as a new U.S. Citizen, "This is my country now. I am this country now."

What better way to celebrate the principles so symbolized on July 4th!

PAPA Thanks All of Those Who Made Fire and Ice Such A Success

On June 12, 2008, PAPA's annual event known as Fire and Ice was held. The event was well-attended and was a fun-filled evening that raised over \$50,000 in support of PAPA's programs and services for clients.

PAPA wish to thank all of those who attended, contributed and worked to help make the event such a success!

We will update the current contributors listing at www.papais.org soon to reflect all of you who made Fire and Ice a great evening. In the meantime, again, thanks so much!

PAPA Staff

Chris Jimmerson, Executive Director

Edna Yang, General Counsel

Sharon Mims, Director of Development

Monica Cano Carroll, Staff Attorney

Carly Salazar, Staff Attorney

Benicio Diaz, Staff Attorney

Mercedes Cabrera-Cuaresma, Accredited Representative

Lora Llenado, Accredited Representative

Kendall Antonelli, Legal Case Worker for IVCP

Holly Miranda, Legal Case Worker for FBIACP

Ingrid Grobey, Legal Case Worker for PRISA

Raul Henriquez, Screening and Referral Specialist

Brenna Troncoso, Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator

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