

I am my family's  
wildest Dreams



# *2018 Annual Report*

Southeast Asia Resource  
Action Center



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## A Word From Our *Executive Director*



**2018** was an unprecedented year marked by fires on all fronts: from record-high detentions and deportations of Southeast Asian Americans, to attacks against our health system through the fight against the Affordable Care Act, to fears about the Census 2020 aimed to make immigrant and refugee communities invisible. But SEARAC together with Southeast Asian Americans nationwide responded with the fierceness to fight back, along with the resilience to join hands in demanding for an America that is truly free and just for all.

We replenished our fuel during the spaces we convened around our major policy areas, including education, immigration, and general national and California strategy, and we drew inspiration from the community members who joined us along our journey.

Perhaps nothing exemplified this more than the strong women — the majority graduates of our own advocacy training programs — who traveled to DC in fall 2018 to testify at a Congressional briefing with members of Congress about the emotional, physical, financial, and very personal costs of deportation and detention. We rally behind the call to action from Tina Meetran, SEARAC LAT

2017 alumnus, who was torn from her father as he was deported to Laos as an undocumented individual. Tina beautifully states, “I just see myself in whatever ways that I’m pulled to: dedicating my life and my work to elevating the stories and the narratives of my people, making sure that our culture is still here for our future generations to understand and witness and be a part of years from now.”

In that moment, I was so proud to be part of team SEARAC. During those two days of Congressional briefings, we witnessed the local leaders — whom SEARAC trained and nurtured — empowered to push for national change and never to back down in our fight for justice against deportation. This is an issue that so many have neglected, but not SEARAC. This is an issue that also speaks to our broken education and health systems that others silo, but not SEARAC. Ours is a community that many have ignored, but not SEARAC. Together, we are a force to be reckoned with in our communities and in DC — a fierce community of advocates charged to change laws despite some of the harshest political conditions we’ve ever seen.

# About Us

## Mission

SEARAC is a national civil rights organization that empowers Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese American communities to create a socially just and equitable society. As representatives of the largest refugee community ever resettled in the United States, SEARAC stands together with other refugee communities, communities of color, and social justice movements in pursuit of social equity.

## Our Strategies



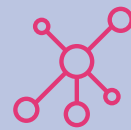
*Building Powerful  
Community  
Leaders &  
Advocates*



*Community  
Engagement &  
Mobilization*



*National & State  
Policy Advocacy*



*Internal  
Infrastructure  
Building*

## Our Major Focuses



*Aging with  
Dignity*



*Health  
Access*



*Boys & Men  
of Color*



*Immigrant  
Justice*



*Education  
Equity*



*2020  
Census*



# 2018

By the Numbers

**48**

LAT participants who went on 37 Congressional visits

**60**

minutes of community calls with 585 attendees

**838 + 50**

individual  
comments

organizational comments collected  
denouncing 2020 Census citizenship question







## Convener

### ● Southeast Asian Anti-Deportation Network

SEARAC and partners from the Southeast Asian Freedom Network (SEAFN) and the Vietnamese Anti-Deportation Network joined forces to host an anti-deportation convening in DC. The event brought together grassroots organizers, directly impacted people, and advocates from national networks and several community-based organizations across the country. Participants committed to working together to push one national policy agenda to end mandatory detention and deportation laws hurting Southeast Asian American communities and other immigrant and refugee families.

February 2018

### ● Data Disaggregation Collective

Eighteen organizations, representing SEARAC education partners, national and community-based AAPI organizations, and national ally organizations, came together in DC to strategize around federal and state efforts to support data equity for the nation's Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander students. Only through the collection and publication of disaggregated data, cross-tabulated by gender, language proficiency, and socioeconomic status, can we unmask the disparities our unique AANHPI communities experience.

April 2018

“

*It is so important to think about this work on a national scale. The workshop gave me the opportunity to meet and learn from others across the country on the strategies they used to tackle difficult situations. This experience gave me confidence to ensure that the work we're doing will allow those that have been silent, to be heard loud and clear.”*



— **Sovanna Pouy**, executive director of Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association

## • CA SEAA ED Collaborative

The executive directors of nine SEAA-led and -serving organizations throughout the state of California put their heads together to discuss pressing policy priorities. This convening allowed for information-sharing and strategy alignment for effective collective impact, as well as provided space for discussion around community-driven solutions to help inform SEARAC's California, as well as national, policy advocacy.

May 2018



## • Asian American + Pacific Islander Coalition Helping Achieve Racial & Gender Equity

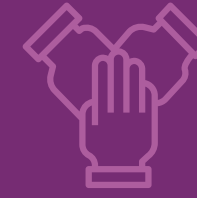
SEARAC coordinates the Asian American and Pacific Islander Coalition Helping Achieve Racial and Gender Equity (AAPI CHARGE), a statewide youth and community-centered movement that works toward building the advocacy capacity of AAPI youth, empowering them to seek equitable policy change and shift narratives on AAPI communities.

August 2018

“

*The convening was important because it brought together community leaders and advocates who are passionate about their communities. This was a great way to strengthen our coalition and bring more visibility in the work that we all do. The ideas, stories, and facts that were shared, brought a connection amongst us all, and I am proud and honored to be part of a wonderful team that continues to uplift their community. Lastly, I was able to gain a lot of insight and implement some key ideas that would strengthen FIRM and better serve the refugee community.”*

— **Lucky Siphongsay**, program manager of Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries (FIRM)



# Advocacy



## Congressional Briefing

SEARAC partnered with the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF) to host two briefings and subsequent advocacy visits on Capitol Hill to help educate and inform elected officials and their staff about the impact of immigration policy on Southeast Asian American communities. During the sessions, the groups discussed findings from their joint immigration report, *Dreams Detained, In Her Words*, which includes interviews with women whose SEAA family members were detained or deported. Five of the speakers at the briefing were graduates of SEARAC's Leadership and Advocacy Training (LAT) and Leadership, Empowerment, and Advocacy Fellowship (LEAF) programs.



“

*Since the age of 16, I've had to do a lot. Until today, I have to do a lot. I don't blame anyone for that besides immigration. I think it's tough that I had to grow up so fast. I have to take care of my mom and make sure she's mentally and physically and emotionally okay. I have to take care of my dad to make sure he's mentally and physically and emotionally okay. And I have to take care of my sister because she's my baby sister and make sure she's okay.”*

— Tina

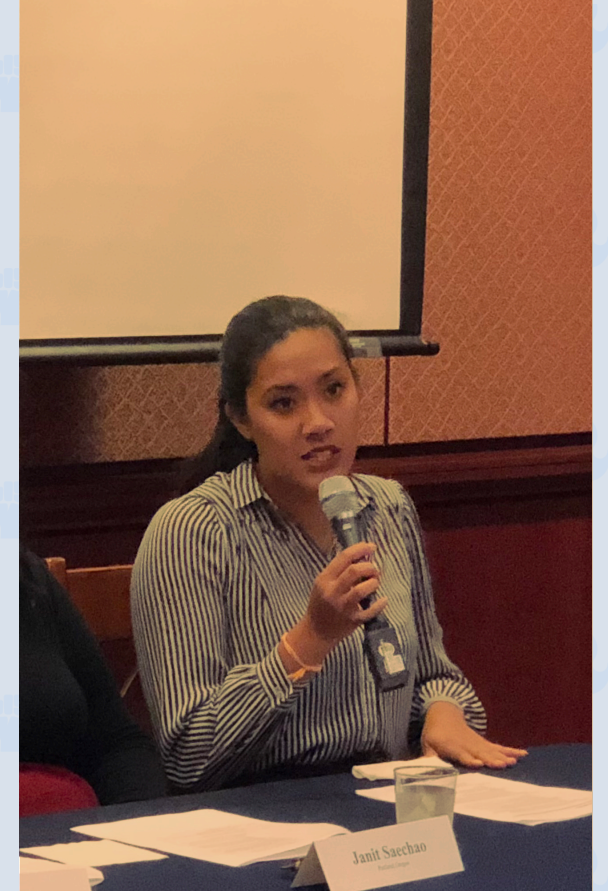


Photo credit: Dorothy He, NAPAWF



“

*Well, one thing that keeps me going is my kids of course. I think about their state, their future, and what I live by, is what I tell myself every day. I should not live in fear because if I do, I will lose out on every opportunity given to me. I learned that the hard way, I gave up opportunities that both my husband and I had, and it led us to nowhere. So I try to live by faith, not by fear. And I try to be strong for my kids because we are their future as well. Without us they wouldn't have any future. ... So that's how I get past my day. It's looking at my kids. I have to try. I can't give up. I'm not going to let that fear get to me. That's how I live—hope—every day.”*

— Linda



## Action Alerts

Throughout the year, SEARAC took a firm stance against proposed legislation and policies that would separate Southeast Asian American families and communities. Key alerts issued for the community included calls to oppose:

- The Secure and Succeed Act and the Securing America's Future Act, which would eliminate the ability of immigrants and US citizens to sponsor family members for green cards, and make it nearly impossible for U.S. citizens to sponsor their parents
- The suspension of visas from Laos and Myanmar, a tactic the Trump Administration has used to pressure the countries into accepting individuals with removal orders
- The Community Safety and Security Act, a bill that would drastically expand mass incarceration and increase deportation numbers

We also supported policies at the national and local levels that would help Southeast Asian Americans overcome institutional barriers, such as the Health Equity and Accountability Act, which would help broaden access to culturally and linguistically appropriate health and mental health services, as well as improve the collection and reporting of data to better understand health disparities; the College for All Act, which eliminates tuition and fees and expands avenues to higher education for low-income students and families; and California Senate Bill 895, which would require the state's Instructional Quality Commission to develop a model curriculum incorporating Cambodian, Hmong, and Vietnamese American refugee histories.

Furthermore, in preparation for a critical 2020, SEARAC advocated to secure state funding for census outreach and education in California, which is home to the country's largest Southeast Asian American population at roughly 1 million.

## Building Leaders





## 19<sup>th</sup> annual Leadership & Advocacy Training

Forty-four participants representing 14 states and 33 congressional districts celebrated their refugee legacy by sharing personal stories of discovery, adversity, loss, hope, and resilience. Advocates used their newly developed skills in 40 meetings on Capitol Hill, where they sat down with their elected officials and congressional staffers to discuss issues affecting their local communities.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> biennial Leadership, Empowerment, & Advocacy Fellowship (LEAF) convening

Sixteen community leaders from Southeast Asian American-led and -serving organizations across the country came together for our newly revamped LEAF convening. Pivoting from past years, our 2018 program had three objectives: to connect with others in order to feel less isolated, to acknowledge and heal from the burnout that often accompanies the fight for social justice, and to strategize on national issues affecting the Southeast Asian American community.



# Building Capacity





In partnership with ReleaseMN8, along with the National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild and the University of Minnesota James H. Binger Center of New Americans, we launched the Southeast Asian American Solidarity Toolkit: A Guide to Resisting Detentions and Deportations from the #ReleaseMN8 Campaign. The one-of-a-kind resource provides organizing, advocacy, and legal tools, tips, and resources to support families whose loved ones are facing detention and removal. Authored by impacted family members, campaign organizers, lawyers, and advocates, the toolkit offers insight into how a small Minnesota community inspired a nationwide movement to save its loved ones from deportation to Cambodia.

“*Our campaign was founded by the love we had for our families and for our community. We believe all families have the right to be together, and we want to remain engaged in this movement to support other families who are at risk of being ripped apart. Impacted families often want to fight for their loved ones but are overwhelmed and don't know where to begin. We hope this guide helps families see that they have the power to organize and to fight for change*”

— **Jenny Srey**, #ReleaseMN8  
Campaign Organizer



## *Building a Movement*



# Creating a Roadmap to 2020

With the launch of our National Southeast Asian American Equity Agenda, we announced our priorities leading to a pivotal 2020. Our equity agenda reflects a community-centered process that included interviews with more than 30 partner organizations that serve, empower, educate, and advocate on behalf of SEAA communities nationwide.



## 2020 Census

- Opposing census suppression
- Expanding disaggregated data
- Resourcing communities for an accurate count



## Education

- Data equity
- Culturally relevant K-12 support to increase high school completion
- College access, affordability, and completion
- College Success



## Health

- Data equity
- Mental health
- Culturally and linguistically appropriate care
- Access and affordability



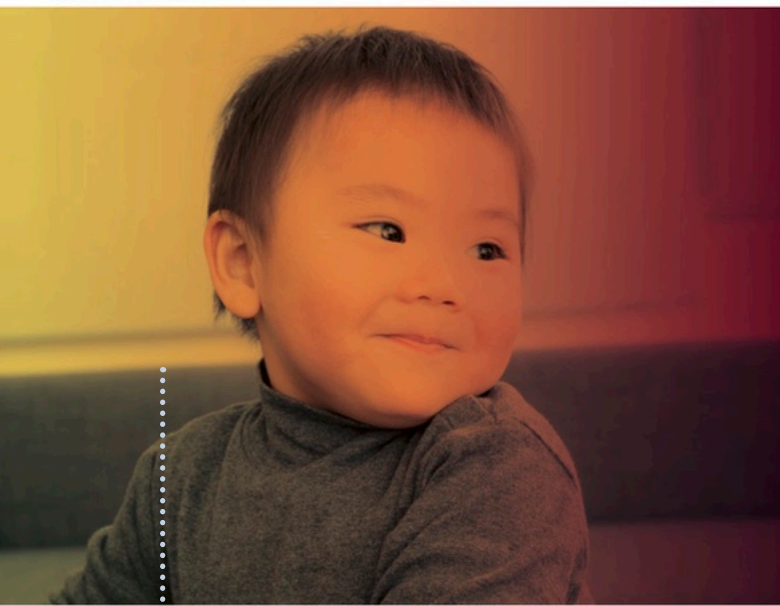
## Immigration

- Ending unjust mandatory detention and deportation laws
- Strengthening naturalization programs
- Protecting family immigration



# Mobilizing the Community

## Intergenerational Trauma and Southeast Asian American Youth in California



NKAUJ IAB YANG AND QUYEN DINH,  
Southeast Asia Refugee Action Center



In 2018, we released our full report, “Southeast Asian Americans Speak Out to Protect the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid Expansion,” the culmination of our Protect Our Health Care comment card campaign to fight for our right to healthy lives. More than 350 community members used their voices to demand that their policymakers protect health care access and affordability.

We also published a policy brief that retraced how the unique historical war trauma in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam and growing up in low-income neighborhoods contribute to ongoing trauma for California’s Southeast Asian American youth. Intergenerational trauma and Southeast Asian American Youth in California examines key traumatic pre- and post-migration experiences, the community’s current socioeconomic distress, and today’s youth experiences, ultimately offering policy recommendations to address intergenerational trauma. It also serves as a stepping stone to acknowledge the glaring health and mental health disparities that SEAA youth and their families are forced to endure.

## Other comment collection campaigns included:

- **Saying YES to expanded race and ethnicity categories**

### Why?

The systemic barriers that SEAs face are only made known through the collection and reporting of disaggregated data through the census. Without this data, the most underserved and marginalized communities in the United States remain invisible, and community needs are unmet. Expansion of race and ethnicity categories allows SEAA groups to be listed separately so that our diverse community does not become absorbed under the broader Asian American umbrella.

- **Saying NO to a citizenship question on the 2020 Census**

### Why?

The inclusion of this question undermines the accuracy of the 2020 Census and jeopardizes a full, fair, and accurate count of our communities. When communities are underrepresented, it negatively impacts their voices in government, as well as critical funding for education, healthcare, housing, and other essential programs.

- **Saying No to public charge**

### Why?

The Department of Homeland Security proposed regulations that will penalize immigrants for using a wide array of health and education benefits by denying them entry into the country or access to a green card. As the largest refugee community ever resettled into the United States, many Southeast Asian Americans have benefitted from government programs that have helped their families grow and thrive. The SEAA community responded by fighting for the ability of newer family and community members to access the same programs and benefits that have been critical to their own survival.







# Financial Statements

<b>Revenue</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
Grants - Foundations/Nonprofits	1,388,480	1,424,995
Grants - Corporate/Business	12,025	53,333
Individual Contribution	25,404	23,504
Fundraising Income	—	—
Other Income	75,994	6,162
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>1,502,903</b>	<b>1,507,994</b>

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
Program Expenses	1,252,872	1,248,942
Administrative Expenses	125,309	145,329
Fundraising Expenses	41,018	30,542
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,418,199</b>	<b>1,424,813</b>

<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
Net Assets at the Beginning of the Year	781,428	1,205,719
Release from Restriction	-529,547	-507,472
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>1,394,679</b>	<b>781,428</b>

## 2018 Funders

### Foundations

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation  
 Borrealis Foundation  
 Four Freedoms Fund  
 RISE for Boys and Men of Color  
 Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors Inc  
 The California Endowment  
 Wallace H. Coulter Foundation

### Corporations

AT&T  
 Comcast NBCUniversal  
 NCheng LLP  
 State Farm

### Associations

Asian Americans Advancing Justice  
 Los Angeles  
 Chinese Progressive Association  
 Diverse Elders Coalition  
 National Education Association  
 Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance,  
 AFL-CIO

## 2018 Donors

### \$3,000+

Hengsum Heng

### \$1,000+

Anna (Hoa) Duong  
 Michael Peloquin

### \$500+

Hai Duong  
 Nerou Cheng  
 Nkauj lab Yang  
 Odell Ross  
 Sarah Kith  
 Sean Dinh  
 Sharon Stanley-Rea  
 Sophia Giddens

### \$200+

Aimee Nichols  
 Barry Cohen  
 Chaoya Yang  
 Christine Chang  
 Christine Kim-Tai Plautz  
 Cynthia Brothers  
 Dara Chan  
 Dido Nguyen  
 Doua Thor  
 Ed Lin  
 Elizabeth Wang  
 Fred Davie

Gregory Cendana  
 Hilary Binder-Aviles  
 Ivy Ngo  
 Jay Stansell  
 Jeeraporn Chaisri  
 Jenifer Chamreun  
 Julie Mao  
 Khanhphong Trinh  
 Loan Dao  
 Mai Vang  
 Michael Lai  
 Michael Stern  
 Monica Thammarath  
 Nam Phamdo  
 Paul Nguyen  
 Phitsamary Uy  
 Rhoda and Mike Lee  
 Samantha Dizon  
 Seng So  
 Sin Po  
 Stephanie Hoo  
 Stephane Tchang  
 Trinh Nguyen  
 Yen Le

### \$100+

Alex Toy  
 Alice Yang  
 Alissa Ko  
 Alvina Yeh  
 Amy Vue  
 Andrew Nguyen  
 Anh Nguyen  
 Bonna Weinstein  
 Boon Khang  
 Bruce Thao  
 Cara Priestley  
 Celeste Regan  
 Charles Bickford  
 Chong Lo  
 Christina Chung  
 Clair Lune  
 D Pheng  
 Daniel Duong  
 David Bouttavong  
 David Pritchard  
 Detention Watch  
 Network  
 Edgar and Ald Sanchez  
 Elaine Wilson  
 Elaine Abelaye-Mateo  
 Eliza Sanchez  
 Erin Cluney  
 Gie Vue  
 Gilles Hautefueille  
 Greg Baxter  
 Ha Tran  
 Hanhoan Dang  
 Huong Nguyen-Yap  
 Ike Mao  
 Jeannette Regan  
 Jim Tulabut  
 John Trinh  
 Jolyn Chinone  
 Jonathan de Jong

Jonathan Vorasane  
 Kannitha Than  
 Kathy Bach  
 Kathy Duong  
 Kenory You  
 Kent Laux  
 Kevin Le  
 Kevin Fong  
 Kevin Padilla  
 Kevin German  
 Kim Geron  
 Komal Sunak  
 Kristina, Dave & Ethan Henderson  
 Kunthary de Gaiffier  
 Kwabina Appiah  
 Laura Phonharath  
 Larkana Chong  
 MaiKa Yang  
 Marcia Withiam-Wilson  
 Mari Quenemoen  
 Maria Tran  
 Mark Franken  
 Mary Regan Wilson  
 Melissa Brown Hurley  
 Michael Dalton  
 Michael Benson  
 Mono Sotie  
 Nancy Xiong  
 Ngoc Estello  
 Nicitha You  
 Nicol U  
 Olary Yim  
 Oswaldo Ortega  
 Pekthov Tan  
 Pow Vang  
 Pysay Phinith  
 Quelani Penland  
 Ram Dolom  
 Rany Ath  
 Rattana Yeang

Raymond Derrien  
 Richard Agag  
 Rosie Abriam  
 Samorn Selim  
 Sara Spizzirri  
 Schenley Herrera  
 Sean Iv  
 Serey Mao  
 Steven Williamson  
 Supharidh Hy  
 Ted Nguyen  
 Terry & Maryann Hendrixson  
 Tho Phimmason  
 Thuy Vi  
 Ti Duong  
 Van Pham  
 Vic Guru  
 Wendy Ho

### \$50+

Abigail Sanchez-Deonarine  
 Aida Samaniego  
 Allison Hickey  
 Anna Hyams  
 Anne Frank  
 Anoop Prasad  
 Ay Saechao  
 Berta Romero-Fonte  
 Channapha Khamvongsa  
 Danielle Ngo  
 Denly Ly  
 E Her  
 Elizabeth Herrera  
 Ellen Kemp  
 Hermine Higgins  
 Hugues O'csay  
 Irene Matz  
 Irene Khin Wong

Jade Wu  
James O'Connor  
Jeffrey Cunard  
Jenny Ho  
Jonathan Tran  
Joyce Yu  
Justin Barcenilla  
Kathy Tran  
Kenro Izu  
Khanh Dinh  
Larry Polokoff  
Linda Băi  
Marcella Willis  
Mark Beyersdorf  
Maryjane Moua  
Maurice Seaty  
Misee Lee  
Nettra Pan  
Norey Lee Navarro  
Pang Her  
Sarah Reeves  
Seth Hendrixson  
Sherilyn Tran  
Sokmala Chy  
Sony Stewart  
Stacy Dizon  
Synoukhom SaoLao  
Thana Nop  
Timothy Huey  
Trinh Tran  
Vanuyen Pham  
Watt Samakki  
William Ly

**\$25+**  
Allan Bagsic  
Amy Singharatsavong  
Angela Dorsey  
Anita Brady  
Anname Phann  
Annie Kim  
Arnel Agas  
Benjamin Wu  
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Cina Chang  
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Dashni Amin  
Denise Tan Agatep  
Diandra Tephabock  
Dorcas Wilson  
Eileen Morrison  
Elizabeth Sterba  
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Gina Masequesmay  
Harper Duong-Nguyen  
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Izzie V  
Jeff Sommer  
Jeniffer Huong  
Jessica Campomanes  
Joe Gueron  
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Kuong Lu  
Lan Nguyen

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Margaret Regan  
Megan May  
Melinda Chao  
Michael Lapuz  
Mos Xyooj  
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Pajouablaï Monica Lee  
Paul Crowley  
Paulina Dao  
Phung C  
Rhummanee Hang  
Ron Gillette  
Ryan Mariategue  
Sally Hang  
Sandra Duval  
Sandy Hang  
Seng Vang  
Shenwei Chang  
Soapy Duong  
Stacey Xiong  
Stefan Saing  
Steph Yaaj  
Suzanne Vue  
Tee Her  
Tony Vo  
Vina Alexander  
Vinh Hyunh  
Wanda Leboeuf  
Yayua Vang

## Under \$25

Dan Truong  
Dana Tran  
Eloise Needleman  
Emily Short  
Ithara Phlong  
James Bao  
Joy de Guzman  
Julie Le  
Justin Trinidad  
Kenny Kho  
Kim Ho  
Kiran Mansukhani  
Laura Tancredi Smith  
Lola Jusidman  
Matt Lapuz  
Melody Yang  
Moon Wong  
Priscilla Hoang  
Savary Chhem Kieth  
Sonia Steinmann  
Sophorn Nuon  
Souvan Lee

## Staff

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Elaine Sanchez Wilson, Director of Communications & Development  
Gabriel Garcia, Boys and Men of Color Coordinator  
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Kelsey Hendrixson, Operations Manager  
Kham Moua, Immigration Policy Advocate  
Lee Lo, Policy Associate  
Mari Quenemoen, Director of Communications and Development  
Monica Speight, Director of Field  
Nkauj Iab Yang, Director of California Policy and Programs  
Souvan Lee, Education Policy Advocate

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Public Interest for the Four Freedoms Fund*

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National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild*

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*Policy Consultant  
Everyday Impact Consulting*

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University of Massachusetts Lowell*

### Rev. Dr. Sharon Stanley-Rea

*Director of Refugee and Immigration Ministries*

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*Associate Professor, Diplomacy & World Affairs  
Occidental College*

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### Yen Le

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Long and Foster Real Estate*

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