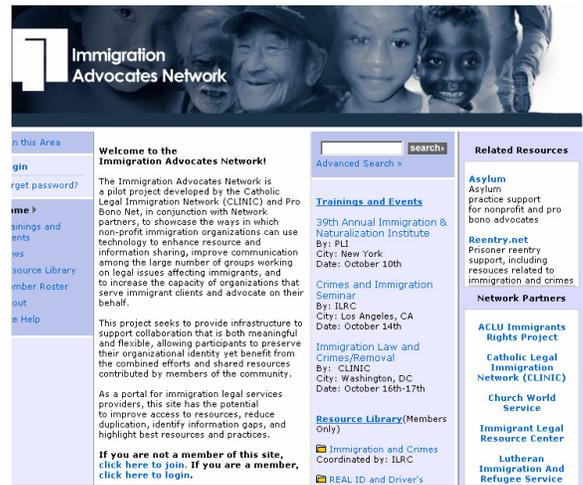


IMMIGRATION ADVOCATES NETWORK: AN OVERVIEW

The Immigration Advocates Network (www.immigrationadvocates.org) is a pilot project developed by the Catholic Legal Immigration Network (CLINIC) and Pro Bono Net (PBN), in conjunction with their eight Network partners. Its goals are to enhance resource and information sharing, to improve communication among diverse groups working on legal issues affecting immigrants, and to increase the capacity of organizations that serve immigrant clients and advocate on their behalf. Funding for the planning and piloting of this project has been provided by the Carnegie Corporation and the JEHT Foundation. In the fall of 2006, extensive evaluation of the pilot was undertaken. One hundred testers representing a cross-section of potential users of IAN were surveyed. The results were extremely positive and confirmed the need for a collaborative undertaking such as IAN.



IMMIGRATION ADVOCATES NETWORK PARTNERS

The Immigration Advocates Network represents an unprecedented collaboration of the nation's leading immigration policy, advocacy and legal support organizations, whose representatives have served as its steering committee for the past two years.

American Bar Association, Immigration Commission
American Civil Liberties Union, Immigrants' Rights Project
Catholic Legal Immigration Network Inc.
Immigrant Legal Resource Center
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights
National Immigration Law Center
National Immigration Project, National Lawyers Guild
National Network for Arab-American Communities
Pro Bono Net

VISION

The Immigration Advocates Network's overarching goal is to create an integrated national legal and advocacy network to increase access to justice for disadvantaged immigrants and the effectiveness of the sector that delivers legal services to them. IAN proposes to achieve this goal by pursuing three strategic objectives: (i) supporting the immigration legal services infrastructure in the field, (ii) promoting better communication between existing immigration support networks and the field to improve immigration policy and the administration of immigration laws, and (iii) improving coordination and communication within the immigrant legal services/immigrants' rights sector.

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IAN will strengthen the immigration legal services infrastructure through information, training, and communication tools. It will support national advocacy efforts by serving as a vehicle to identify problematic government policies and practices throughout the country. It will also improve communication and coordination within the legal service provider and advocate communities, and support efforts to recruit and support pro bono volunteers on cases and issues impacting immigrants.

IMPLEMENTATION

IAN will achieve these strategic objectives through the following activities:

- Leveraging the web-based publication and communication tools developed by Pro Bono Net and now in use to support more than 35,000 civil legal aid and pro bono advocates.
- Providing accessible, accurate, and comprehensive resources for legal service providers, pro bono attorneys, and advocates online on a number of topics.
- Promoting immigration legal training by creating a national calendar of trainings searchable by location and topic and providing support for online trainings and webinars on various immigration law, policy, and program management topics
- Facilitating more effective recruitment of volunteer attorneys by pro bono programs by providing resources to support pro bono attorneys, including a guide to pro bono opportunities, library support materials and access to substantive listservs
- Serving as a key communications hub to solicit examples of disturbing government agency trends and policies and important local case developments from the field, and identify and post problematic trends in local case adjudications and administrative interpretation and practice.
- Enabling local immigration service providers, particularly those in remote and underserved areas, to share best practices and practice tips on a nationwide distribution mechanism.
- If funding is available, creating a national online immigration legal services directory that would be searchable and easy to update online.

NEXT STEPS

To achieve its goals and objectives, IAN will need dedicated staff. In its first year of operation, IAN expects to hire two staff members, a Project Director and a Program Coordinator. In year two, IAN expects to hire a Program Associate and, later in the year, a Public Interest Law Fellow. IAN staff members will be housed with different steering committee members on a rotating basis.

IAN envisions adding as many as three new substantive legal topic areas to its library for each of the next two to three years, with a focus on areas of emergent need where IAN's collaborative tools and resources would have maximum impact. Of course, if comprehensive immigration reform legislation passes, then supporting the legal services providers in responding to such legislation would become a top IAN priority. Whenever possible, IAN will link to resources available on existing websites and form partnerships with other organizations and collaboratives to host their sites on Pro Bono Net's platform in order to take advantage of the content sharing and communications tools available.

IAN is currently seeking funding to support its expansion in 2007.

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