



CALIFORNIA IMMIGRANT
INTEGRATION INITIATIVE

Legal Services During COVID-19

April 8, 2020

Meeting Notes

Participants:

- Anne Im, Silicon Valley Community Foundation
- Arlene Wong, Firedoll Foundation
- Bianca Sierra Wolff, California ChangeLaywers
- Gretchen Sandler, James and Gretchen Sandler Philanthropic Fund
- Mary Dolye, Y&H Soda Foundation
- Navin Moul, Zellerbach Family Foundation
- Nancy Wiltsek, van Löben Sels/Rembe Rock Foundation
- Patti D'Angelo Juachon, Marin Community Foundation
- Ralph Lewin, Peter E. Haas Jr Family Fund
- Rosie Arroyo, California Community Foundation
- Roxana Shirkhoda, Tides
- Sara Campos, Grove Foundation
- Stacie Ma'a, The Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation
- Mary Cruz, Durfee Foundation
- Viridiana Romero, Emerson Collective

GCIR Staff:

Aryah Somers Landsberger, Vice President of Programs

Stephanie Martinez, California Programs Associate

Updates:

- Bianca shared transition to Interim Executive Director at California Collaborative for Immigrant Justice. GCIR announced Sara Campos of Grove Foundation as new chair.
- Aryah invites for additional signatories for philanthropy sign on letter to State.

Key Issues Impacting Legal Services:

Legal Service Organizations

- Some organizations have indicated that they are staying open and are offering remote legal services but mostly addressing basic needs: dealing with wage loss, unemployment, food and housing assistance. Plus DACA application renewals
- Farmworker communities are usually the last to get assistance

- The technology needed is critical. At the same time, they're acknowledging that clients themselves don't have access to technology and this is especially true for the immigrant community.

Immigration Courts

- Closings information has been chaotic across the country; detained courts appearances still happening to currently be open.
- Immigration courts at ICE detentions are staying open and detainees are still requiring appearing in court.
- All non-detained hearings are postponed Until May 1st and petitions being filled to extend

Safety of Attorneys

- Safety of the front-line lawyers and paralegals who are providing ongoing services in age of covid-19. They don't have medical supplies because they're not considered essential workers. Attorneys are having to purchase their own safety equipment and usually is being taken away from them attorney when trying to visit clients.
- Immigrants detained are highly vulnerable to covid-19 – attorneys are filing petition for highly vulnerable detainees to be released
- Attorneys are petitioning for Bond hiring over video – lowest bond amount is \$1,500.
- Attorneys and witness are having to travel to court and risking themselves and the public
- Unaccompanied children are still having hearings via video
- But this has made it much more stressful for attorneys because they become a detainees only lifeline

Lack of Tech

- Detained Clients: Lawyers are not able to meet with clients that are detained and there is no way of virtually connecting with them. ICE is not providing option

Bonds

- National Bail Fund – Roxana, Tides Foundation

Gaps:

Organizational Survival

- California State Contracts: legal service providers who have funding from the state are bound to finish the cases in order to get their funding and if organizations are not able to do this, they won't be able to keep people on payroll
- We're thinking about work with the around changes to the contractual terms with DSS on payment structure
- Federal Stimulus Package:
 - very complex process to apply for the Paycheck Protection Program
 - money is limited, first come first serve, are legal services organizations getting their applications in? How are grantees being informed to complete this.

Advocacy:

Attorneys have been:

- Filing lawsuits against the courts
- Advocated internally with ICE and judges to close
- Petition to release detainees that are high risk for coronavirus
- Continue to advocate to keep them close past May 1st
- Immigrant organizations advocate in letter to Governor
- Philanthropy letter – this isn't out GCIR is still working on this Latino Caucus
 - coordination on the three letters. Field leader advocates are aware of the philanthropy letter, as is the Latino Caucus.

Funder Response:

Navin Moul, Zellerback Family Foundation

Suggested identifying a consultant to help fill out the paycheck application for nonprofits.

Worried about attorneys and how their fear of putting themselves and their families at risk. Supporting healing group for the past year, Genesis Healing Institute and their weekly Soul Refugee gathering.

Rosie Arroyo, California Community Foundation

Attorneys are in fear. They exhausted, physically, mentally and emotionally and one thing that we are trying to do while we look at helping sustainability of the nonprofit sector is how do we take care of the leaders? With all these different programs and roles that they are now having to play, we asked what the resources are they need now are and some said they need spaces to have peer support, coaching, two to three-week sabbatical. This is an opportunity to take care of our leaders. Because work needs to continue, LA Justice Fund is having country support the legal defense program. CDSS is going through a process later this year where they will be looking at their funding model. Because there are so many similar processes, how do we coordinate with all programs to have a stronger approach to supporting the emerging need and for us to provide the support so they can do the work they need to be doing.

Ralph Lewin, Peter E. Haas Jr. Family Fund

Speaking to folks in Sonoma County who shared concerns about supreme court decision on DACA in a few months and trying to figure how this will impact their legal services knowing they have over 3k DACA recipients. Communications, for not only around legal services but also mental health issues. Looking at text platforms like Hustle. What other platforms are other orgs using?

Anne Im, Silicon Valley Community Foundation

Hearing that grantees are having to operate in a new virtual world and the lack of basic tech and resources needed to work with clients. Been thinking about federal stimulus package as well as the variety of funds. How do we ensure that undocumented have resources, they know it's available to them, and they have access to the funds and to coronavirus testing? These are questions that have also come up within the local government, how we can support undocumented families. Wonderful to hear that GCIR is also starting a statewide fund.

Nancy Wiltsek, van Löben Sels/Rembe Rock Foundation

Hearing concerns about funding in general. Fundraising events that take place annually and are significant source of income are being canceled indefinitely. Also concerned with funding and deliverables regarding census and how they will be able to meet these in a short period of time. Is there a tally where we can see what funds are being raising?

Gretchen Sandler, James and Gretchen Sandler Foundation

Immediate need is cash assistance for rent and food. Many of the members are undocumented and won't be able to access any of the federal aid. We've been in been investing in the UndocuFunds. A lot of the organizations where clients are mostly women, are seeing a trend in violence and dealing with phone counseling with people who are experiencing this. Mostly interested in knowing the resources I can direct organizations too.

Patti D'Angelo Juachon, Marin Community Foundation

Offering all grantees, the option of switching to general operating grants. Have received the main request from our main grantee, Canal Alliance, expressing flexibility around outcomes. Can share verbiage around how to communicate this.

Public charge – grantees have requested guidance from local representative in consideration during COVID-19. Can share staff response around this as well.

Stacie Ma'a, The Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation

SFF – have been receiving application for funds. An entire department is working on emergency response funds. EBCF has five people dealing with the applications and they're looking to current grantees to be the conduit to the community. This will hopefully streamline their process. Regarding to the list of funds, I am also interested in what private foundations are doing. Spoke with NCG about a site of where this is being tracked.

To Nancy's point on tracking funds that are being raised, I think it's to early to track. Also, the webinars and information is really overwhelming.

Patti: Private foundations are leveraging internal resources like offering employee benefits to grantees, coaching, HR consulting etc.

Viry Romero, Emerson Collective

In recent conversations with partners many are concerned about long term funding and sustainability. They are worried that funding will go towards COVID. Grantees are worried many applications they have submitted will be denied because of current COVID needs with cases being delayed 1-2 years concerned they will have staff and resources to support those cases.

Navin: Small organizations are starting local funds that would be hard to track. For example, high schools are starting the local funds that may not end up on this list.

Mary Doyle, Y&H Soda Foundation

I think the need for general operating support is critical now. I also wanted to mention on a positive note, the grantees who can pivot and persist and step up again. It's one more thing in a lot of other things that have happened in the last few years. Seeing IRLC and Ready Bay Area responding to a lot of the critical things, public charge and public health and really doing great work. Finally seeing the capacity that people have built in the last few years seems to be holding the legal services people together with other community organizing groups. The strength in these relations is so positive.

Bianca Sierra Wolff, California ChangeLaywers

Everything is consistent with what I've been hearing. Supporting UndocuFunds is so important. The undocumented community is so afraid to access in any support, so I think messaging and outreach is important to make it clear that exposing themselves won't get them detained by ICE. Around capacity needs, we can think of providing extra funding for grantees to have more support for Wi-Fi boosters, printers, agronomic chairs. Cancellations of large fundraisers, people are primed to buy sponsorships and tickets, some companies may use this time to get out of providing support. This will be very financially deinvesting for organizations.

Discussion:

How can we as a funding group respond to the crisis? Can we do anything together?

Rosie: Looking at sustainability of nonprofit legal service providers. I see a big gap in this space. There is a lot of fear across the board, it would be great to see how we can leverage the experience and expertise in this group to really think about how we can support sustainability efforts. Some organizations will shut down. Many of them don't have robust internal systems for fundraising and so on. We can have a collective effort around this.

Bianca: My understanding is that all the projects under CDSS is under review. A lot of organizations are holding their breath. Hopefully by the end of the month they will be able to make some decisions. It's not clear if some newer projects will move forward. As some of you know we have been working on a Rural Justice Fellowship, that would create ten new attorney jobs. Not sure if people will have to take pay cuts or even be able to rely on this funding.

Sara: Is there a possibility for this group to ask CDSS to change their requirements? As GCIR? As the LSWG?

Stephanie will keep the group posted on this.

Navin: Can we add it to the letter from philanthropy? It can be a simple sentence that we add as part of the ask.

Sara: I've also heard that the legislator is strict, and they can't really change that. CDSS is bound by what they give them. We maybe need to learn more about their process.

Bianca: Information sharing is very important. What's the best way for us to communicate with each other?

Patti: Some folks have trouble accessing and posting to the listserv. In the interest of sharing information quickly, it may be best to stay on an email thread.

Anne: Do we have a box folder where we can save information and reference back? That would be helpful if it's possible, but I have had issues with the google listserv.

Regarding the GCIR fund, is all that funding only going to UndocuFunds or is there other funds that will be able to apply?

Stephanie: Prioritizing UndocuFunds and we're still creating the criteria and requirements for funds to receive assistance. We will circle back and confirm all of this.

Roxana: Recommendation is to have a shared google doc and chat in real time. Happy to share tips.

Bianca: You can adjust your settings to get a weekly digest versus incoming emails nonstops.

Legal Scan Report Updates - Stephanie

- Report was announced in February through a CA funder list serve and is now on our website. The printed report was also shared at the convening.
- Given limitations to in-person mtgs, GCIR is revisiting the opportunities to uplift the report during our planned QI regional meetings. While we are prioritizing responding to DACA and COVID-19, our goal is to finish the regional infographics by end of April and start scheduling these meetings after our QII CIII meeting.
- Our team is also thinking of other opportunities to introduce the report during other programs. The technology recommendations in GCIR's COVID-19 were informed by the legal scan
- 3 new recommendations were adding in February to address the need invest in technology
- This group can consider hosting a webinar to share the report.

Discussion:

Navin: we'll need to wait until later on in the summer. Nobody will want to focus on these recommendations now, unless we couch these as these are the recommendation during a crisis. We need this to settle down before we don something like that.

Sara: Who is our audience? We can report to other legal service providers, but who else?

Stephanie: CIII table, funders that are not active at that table for a bigger reach in CA, sharing with the State, sharing with grantees, Aryah has been thinking of ways to get this on a national program.

Anne: Also interested in bringing these to local counties because their staff needs more data to justify the continuation of their investments. We need to make sure they're also invited. Agree to pushing this out to a later time as well.

Sara: Will you share the meeting notes from the last meeting?

Stephanie: Yes, I will include it in the follow-up.

Bianca: Agree with all the folks that were mentioned to share this with. Ideally, we can also get more corporate sponsors to support this type of work. This report is so important, we just need to find a good time to launch this. We can possibly build a campaign to go with the report.

Roxana: On the corporate partners, thinking some folks can come together with their corporate clients to discuss their contributions across philanthropy or COVID-19 and we can share the recommendations. It's tricky because immigration does become a sensitive area for them, but we can slowly transition them into this conversation and they can slowly start pulling others in.

Bianca: I also think this is a good strategy for bringing in counties.

Video Conference Chat:

From viridiana to Everyone: 01:22 PM

my understanding is also that the pool has been depleted

From roxanas hirkhoda to Everyone: 01:29 PM

+1 to the continued need for mental health resources

From sara to Everyone: 01:36 PM

I heard that SF, San Jose, and Oakland have put together local funds available to people without regard to status.

From Stacie to Everyone: 01:45 PM

Patty - what's the name of the org/business again? HR...? Thanks!

From viridiana to Everyone: 01:46 PM

here you go: <https://givingcompass.org/coronavirus-covid19> (i accidentally got it in private msg)

From Patti Juachon to Everyone: 01:50 PM

I was referencing a call I was on that was hosted by Croner Consulting Group for HR professionals from private foundations that they work with--my HR VP shared it with me. Several funders spoke of leveraging their own internal resources for their own grantees such as consults on HR, online fundraising, legal counsel, tech support, and even utilizing their employee assistance programs for their grantees. Those were my gleanings from the call--if you want to talk with someone from Croner let me know and I'll connect you.

From gretchen sandler to Everyone: 01:50 PM

I have to call in to another meeting. It was so good to hear from everyone. I think these calls are so important to keep up with what's going on and learning about what the needs are that I haven't heard or thought of.

From Patti Juachon to Everyone: 01:52 PM

We're also offering expanded access to Catchafire, a national online volunteer matching platform. MCF and other CF's in Bay Area have paid the registration fee to access the portal. Might be another resource funders can offer to their grantees--I can share our staff contact @ Catchafire if anyone wants to learn more about their partnership with foundations.

From Anne Im to Everyone: 02:04 PM

Some links we are sharing with grantees: Via the Cares Act, the Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) provides potentially forgivable loans for 501(c)(3) nonprofits with 500 or fewer employees. Eligible nonprofits should have their materials ready very quickly since the first come-first served application process opens. See below for more details:

1. FMA's Payroll Protection Toolbox (<https://fmaonline.net/ppptoolbox/>) includes a PPP calculator, template for board resolution to authorize the loan, and a script for talking to you bank about PPP
2. Independent Sector's resources (<https://independentsector.org/resource/caresact/>) for organizations that want to apply for funds
3. National Council of Nonprofit's analysis of the CARES Act, including webinar recording (Mar. 31) "Federal Coronavirus Relief Bills: What Do They Mean for Nonprofits?"
<https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/nonprofits-and-coronavirus-covid-19>

From Arlene to Everyone: 02:05 PM

Are posting notes/summaries of this meeting on Listserve and GCIR website?

From Patti Juachon to Everyone: 02:06 PM

we couldn't hear you Ann!

From Arlene to Everyone: 02:06 PM

your good ann

From roxanas hirkhoda to Everyone: 02:08 PM

I recommend a shared Google doc in the interim where multiple folks can edit in real time, add links, add comments, chat with one another, etc

From Arlene to Everyone: 02:10 PM

The issue I have found with the listserv via google groups is that some people are having trouble with office firewalls.

From viridiana to Everyone: 02:20 PM

i didnt make it out to GCIR Conference, was the report highlighted at the conference?

From Anne Im to Everyone: 02:21 PM

For the legal scan, I think at our last meeting we also discussed picking 1-2 recommendations to focus on first as a group since there were so many good reccs.

From NavinMoul to Everyone: 02:21 PM

Viry, it wasn't.

From Patti Juachon to Everyone: 02:25 PM

Agreed!

From Arlene to Everyone: 02:26 PM

Does it make sense to create a smaller working group to focus on this effort or are you building from the existing report working group?

From roxanas hirkhoda to Everyone: 02:27 PM

Is it possible for anyone who is interested to blanket be added to calendar invites for all these events vs. needing to register individually in the portal?