



# FREEDOM FOR IMMIGRANTS

TOGETHER WE WILL END IMMIGRATION DETENTION



2017-2018

## ANNUAL REPORT

# LETTER FROM THE FOUNDERS

Dear Friends,

*This year tested our resolve, and we learned that joy can be found in the midst of pain and laughter can be found in the midst of tears. It is at the intersection of these seemingly contrary realities that we find hope and extraordinary strength. Thank you for walking along this journey with us toward a country and a world where there is freedom for all immigrants.*

*Freedom for Immigrants had some exciting moments this year — passing the first law in the country to put a moratorium on immigration detention expansion, introducing two federal bills to reunite separated families and implement community-based alternatives, hosting a concert featured in Rolling Stone Magazine with Grammy-winning artists to raise the profile of the immigration detention crisis, and building power with over 16,500 immigrants in detention and their families. There were plenty of wins — and I hope you'll read about them in this report.*

*But we cannot deny how heartbreaking this year was for all of us in the movement for the liberation of our communities. Over 8,000 families were separated at the border, and we estimate that at least another 180,000 parents were separated from their children in the interior of the country. Our immigration detention system led to the deaths of at least 10 people this year in custody, including Roxsana Hernandez, a trans woman who died in a New Mexico detention facility due to medical neglect.*

*Yet even with the Trump administration's constant attacks on immigrants, we stayed strong and proved that our theory of change can withstand drastic political changes.*

*We continued to visit people in 55 of the largest immigration detention facilities and run a national hotline that allows people in all 211 detention facilities to call us for free. Through these two windows into the detention system, we tracked human and civil rights violations, including hate crimes.*



*We then used the data and stories to educate municipal, state, and federal legislators on how our tax dollars are funding a system that perpetrates human and civil rights violations.*

*And we won with the passage of the Dignity Not Detention Act in California. We also continued to advance our community-based alternatives to detention in the form of a Revolving Immigration Detention Bond Fund and Sponsorship Program. Just this year, we bonded out over 100 people from immigration detention, and recruited over 800 community members to host people eligible for release from detention.*

*We are proving that it costs only about \$17 a day to support someone in our program compared to about \$145 per person per day to keep them locked up. We also are showing that the majority of the people in our program show up to their hearings, which calls into question the need to detain people in the first place.*

*Our momentum hasn't diminished under the Trump administration.*

*If anything, our call for #FreedomForImmigrants has become a national rallying call. Thank you for your generous support, your time, and your passion.*

*With hope and strength,*

**Christina Mansfield & Christina Fialho**

**Co-Founders/Executive Directors**



## FROM OUR LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

### Gretta Soto Moreno



As a person directly affected by the immigration detention system in the United States, I had the opportunity to be able to make my story known to members of Congress in Washington, D.C., this past April. During these meetings, lawmakers and their staff were able to listen to and be moved by sad stories like mine and those of many others. Previously, I had been able to share my story with the California Attorney General and the California State Governor in Los Angeles thanks to Freedom for Immigrants' help.

I want to profoundly thank Christina Fialho and Christina Mansfield and all of the other warriors who are part of Freedom for Immigrants for having invited me to participate in last year's concert in Adelanto, CA. There, I also shared my experience in front of many people and I was able to express my support for those, who like me, have been deprived of their liberty. Thanks to Freedom for Immigrants for granting me this opportunity to use my voice through their platform as a way to serve others.

I am very grateful to and thankful for Freedom for Immigrants for fighting to end aggravated sexual assaults and other physical abuses in immigrant detention centers in the United States.

I am a victim of aggravated sexual assault, and Freedom for Immigrants provided the opportunity and means for me to travel to Washington, D.C., to meet with congressional aides to tell them about my horrible experience in the private detention centers. Freedom for Immigrants provided the platform for my story to be told and voice to be heard. I thank them for standing up for immigrants and for protecting the human rights of all people, no matter what their nationality may be.

Equally important, I thank them for making American citizens aware that ICE wants to destroy the records of detainees in their detention centers as a way of silencing immigrants and their advocates.

### Douglas Menjivar



## FROM OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



### Grisel Ruiz

Board Chair & Staff Attorney at the Immigrant Legal Resource Center

This year, Freedom for Immigrants – supported by a record number of donors and thousands of volunteers – achieved groundbreaking policy wins and was on the front lines of the family separation crisis at the border. I have been the chair of the Board of Directors since Freedom for Immigrants was established six years ago, and it's incredible to see how such a young and nimble organization has been able to achieve such widespread change. I have no doubt that one day, together, we will be able to end immigration detention and achieve freedom for all immigrants in the United States.

# RESPONDING TO THE FAMILY SEPARATION CRISIS

The Trump administration's brutal zero-tolerance policy along the border wreaked havoc on immigrant families by tearing them apart.

Freedom for Immigrants responded to the crisis by connecting impacted families, sponsoring legislation to reunite them, empowering people across the country to open up their homes to them and educating lawmakers and the public through targeted media.

John Moore/Getty images

## REUNITE Act

The Reunite Act was introduced by Senators Kamala Harris, Jeff Merkley and Catherine Cortez Masto. Among the provisions is requiring the Department of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services to immediately reunite children who remain separated from a parent or legal guardian.

## REUNITE Tool

The REUNITE tool facilitates collaboration between advocacy and legal groups to assist in locating adults or children who have been disappeared into the U.S. immigration detention system.

## Sponsor Freedom

The pledge initiative was designed to show that there are viable alternatives to detention. More than 800 people signed up across the country pledging to host or sponsor an asylum seeker.

## Los Angeles Times

Don't stop with family separation. End the whole immigration prison system

By CHRISTINA FIALHO  
JUN 20, 2018 | 3:30 PM

## InStyle

Here's One Solution to Keep Families Together — And We Know It Works

Christina Fialho | Jun 20, 2018 @ 4:45 pm



# FROM CIVIC

to

# FREEDOM FOR IMMIGRANTS

## Why we changed our name

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In 2018, Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement (CIVIC) changed its name to Freedom for Immigrants.

We wanted a name that aligned with our mission to free all immigrants from the bonds of immigration detention. We chose the word “freedom” because it has never been a fixed concept in U.S. history.

Although the U.S. Constitution lists liberty among our inalienable rights, the U.S. government for centuries has deprived many people of it, from Native Americans to people stolen from Africa and enslaved for profit, to the Japanese who were sent to internment camps in the U.S. during World War II.

History has taught us that freedom is something worth fighting for, and we believe that no individual should be imprisoned for crossing a border. That's why we're advocating for freedom for immigrants.







**October 20, 2017.** It was a blustery day. Outside of the Adelanto Processing Center, dozens of formerly detained individuals, directly impacted family members and activists braved the desert winds to speak out against the inhumane conditions inside all U.S. immigrant prisons and jails. Sylvester Owino, a Kenyan asylum seeker, described his experience spending nearly a decade inside these human cages. Carlos Hidalgo shared the challenges he faced while detained twice at the prison across from him.

Freedom for Immigrants Co-founder Christina Fialho explained why Adelanto, the largest adult detention facility in the country, and GEO Group, the private prison company that operates it, must be abolished. Musicians and artists, including Grammy-winning R&B singer Miguel, expressed their outrage and vowed to stand up for immigrant rights.

Soon after, everyone gathered at the Adelanto Stadium for a free #SchoolsNotPrisons concert put together by the California Endowment and Revolve Impact and hosted by Freedom for Immigrants and partners. It featured Miguel, los Rakaz, Cristela, Ceci Bastida and Buyepongo, among other artists. Directly impacted people like Gretta Soto Moreno also got onstage and shared their own harrowing stories in between the musical acts. Miguel then debuted his song "Now," which touches on all the injustices faced by marginalized communities. Later, he released the music video for the song featuring the concert and Freedom for Immigrants.

"Is that the look of Freedom? Is that the sound of freedom?" Miguel asks throughout the song.

We believe his song is an anthem for this generation. Our country has forgotten the meaning of the word "freedom." But imprisoning people for profit is not "the look of freedom."







The **James Irvine**  
Foundation

In February 2018, the James Irvine Foundation awarded Christina Fialho and Christina Mansfield a 2018 Leadership Award for their work in developing innovative solutions to abolish immigration detention in the state of California. The award consisted of \$200,000 to advance these efforts. Fialho and Mansfield were also honored with a special California State Senate Resolution in recognition of their significant contributions to the state.





# National visitation retreat

Freedom for Immigrants' National Visitation Retreat took place over three days in October 2017, with 89 participants from 16 states. Ten of the registrants were people who have been directly impacted by immigration detention. All of the sessions were bilingual, with simultaneous interpretation and individual headsets.







# Visitation program spotlight

Freedom for Immigrants' National Visitation Network has now grown from 43 to 55 affiliated visitation groups across the country. Here are two groups making their mark.

## Northeast Ohio Detention Support (NODS) Network

A collective of people in the greater Cleveland area has become a full-fledged activist group, supporting people in ICE detention in the Geauga County Jail in Chardon, OH. After the largest workplace raid under the Trump administration took place in Northeast Ohio in June, NODS held a concert to raise money for emergency funds, postage costs, family support, commissary donations, and outreach.



## Casa de Paz

Casa de Paz, run by Sarah Jackson, serves both as a post-release hospitality house and organizing hub for volunteers supporting people in ICE detention at the Denver Contract Detention Facility in Aurora, CO. Casa de Paz has been rapidly growing its local network, with over 300 participants at their July 2018 orientation.

# REUNITING

## Bay Area Families

Following the termination of the ICE contract at West County Detention Facility (WCDF) in Richmond, CA, Freedom for Immigrants and other partners quickly mobilized to bond out and assist as many detained individuals in the county jail through the WCDF Community Fund. Here is a snapshot of our efforts.

**TOTAL RAISED: \$224,687**

**38** people bonded out

**18** direct support grants for families with loved ones not eligible for bond

**18** flights and bus trips so people could reunite with their families after being released

“*Thank you so much! We are all together again and it wouldn't have been possible without your support.*”

-Almadelia, wife of Jasiel



Francisco was reunited with his partner and young son after being freed from WCDF.



Jasiel was the first individual to be bonded out through the WCDF Community Fund. Soon after, he was able to reunite with his wife Almadelia, daughter and son.



Mohammed, an asylum seeker from Ghana, was able to reunite with his sister and her son. A Freedom for Immigrants volunteer picked him up upon release and took him to San Francisco Airport so that he could join them in New Jersey via a flight also paid for by the fund.



The plight of ICE detainees, even as East Bay jail will stop holding them

# A NEW CHAPTER

Now that the ICE contract at West County Detention Facility has been terminated, [Freedom for Immigrants](#) is focusing on 3 major initiatives in the Bay Area.

- 1 Visiting and supporting people in ICE detention at Yuba County Jail and Mesa Verde Detention Center.
- 2 Building our local sponsorship, hosting, and accompaniment network for people post-release, most of whom are seeking asylum and had their cases transferred to San Francisco Immigration Court.
- 3 Empowering local leaders who were previously in ICE detention to help guide our Northern California strategy.



“

Answering calls on the hotline has been eye-opening, and it has given me insight into the side of U.S. immigration policy that the general public never sees. It is a great opportunity to help connect people to much-needed resources.

”

-Zoe Roller, Hotline volunteer

Freedom for Immigrants' free hotline and pen pal program are essential resources for people in detention. This year we received anywhere between 500 to 14,000 calls and over 70 pen pal letters per month from people in immigration detention. Here are a few stories that show why both are critical.

## National Immigration Detention Hotline

### A life-changing call

Upon being transferred to a privately-operated Southern California detention facility, a man was denied his mental health medicine and psychological support, despite them being prescribed to him. When he got in touch with Freedom for Immigrants through the hotline, he asked for help obtaining the proper medication. We then worked with him to obtain his medical records so we could advocate on his behalf. We wrote a declaration to his judge, presenting him with the issue. Not only did the judge order for him to receive the right medication, he also requested that he be evaluated for a *Franco* attorney. He now has free representation and is expected to be granted a bond.

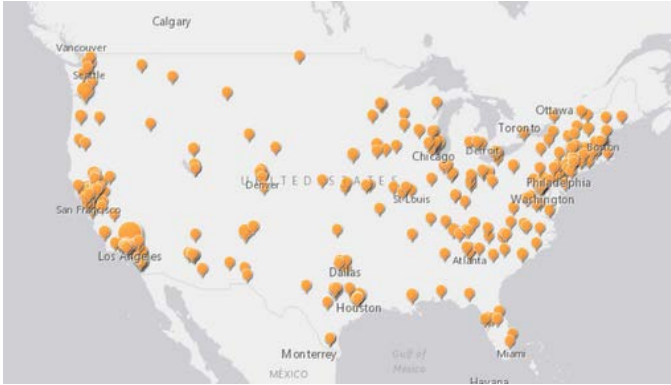
## Pen pal program

A man originally from a French-speaking country in Africa wrote us a letter asking for support. We paired him up with a French-speaking volunteer who found out that he needed clothes and supplies to use after he was removed from detention. He also needed help contacting his family to coordinate his arrival. We reached out to his local visitation program for supply support, which they provided. We also contacted his family via social media and coordinated with them.



Olympian Ibtihaj Muhammad writes a letter to a child separated from their family.





### Los Angeles Times

In response to Trump policies, some Californians open their homes to asylum seekers



Gary Coronado / Los Angeles Times

## A HAVEN FOR HOPE

Freedom for Immigrants launched “Sponsor Freedom,” a program encouraging people nationwide to pledge their support for community-based alternatives to detention to demonstrate that as a country we can build effective and humane pathways away from our punitive immigration detention system.

The initiative was introduced in response to the outpour of support following the family separation crisis. More than 800 people, from Boston to the Bay Area and everywhere in between, have signed up, pledging to become a host or a sponsor through donations.

Since 2014, through alternative accompaniment programs, dozens of volunteers have opened up their homes to those individuals who simply need a place to stay while they comply with their immigration cases.

The Los Angeles Times profiled two such hosts: Ann and Kent Moriarty, who hosted Veronica Aguilar, an asylum seeker from El Salvador who was detained for over half a year in Orange County.

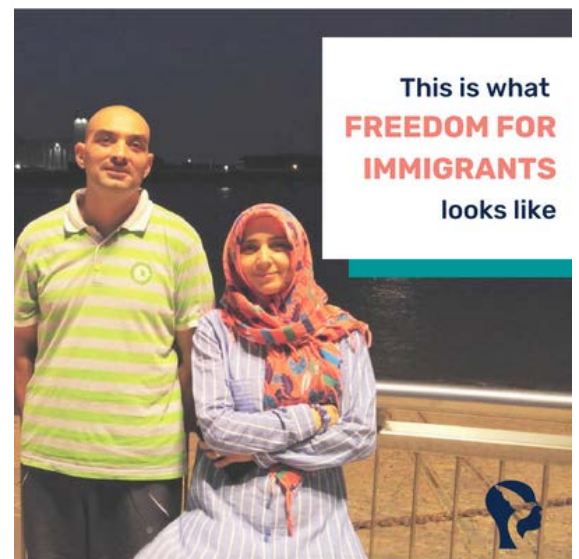
We hope people are empowered to work toward building a future that responds to migration not with cages but with compassion.

## NATIONAL BOND FUND

Freedom for Immigrants has operated a National Immigration Detention Bond Fund since 2010. We have raised over \$200,000 to secure the release of over 100 people from immigration detention in 2018.

So far our data shows that it only costs about \$17 per person per day to support individuals through our case management services versus \$145 per person per day to keep them locked up in detention.

We work with the families of people in detention to match funds they have raised or raise the entire bond amount through online community fundraisers. We then post the bonds with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and become what is called the obligor. If a person complies with all requirements of their immigration cases, the bond will be returned to Freedom for Immigrants and may be reused to assist another person in paying bond and winning their freedom.



Yasin and Serpil arrived to the U.S. seeking asylum from Turkey where they face persecution. They were separated at the border and sent to different detention facilities where they were detained for two months. They were freed through the National Bond Fund.

# MONITORING & INVESTIGATIONS

## ON HATE IN DETENTION

We released the report, "Persecuted in U.S. Immigration Detention: A National Report on Abuse Motivated by Hate," which is the first national study on abuse motivated by hate and bias in U.S. immigration detention.

Since January 20, 2017, when Donald Trump became the President of the United States, Freedom for Immigrants has documented at least 800 complaints of abuse motivated by hate or bias in 34 immigrant jails and prisons.

For example, an individual detained in Southern Texas was called a "monkey" before being thrown into solitary confinement. In Louisiana, a woman reported that she received poor medical care as a result of her hijab and practicing her faith. A man detained in California reported not being let out of his cell and forced to shower in front of male officers due to his sexual orientation. As these stories show, often hateful language is accompanied by physical abuse, sexual harassment and denial of access to vital resources.

We hope this report will be the beginning of a conversation among advocates, legislators, and officials within this administration to prevent incidents of hate and bias in U.S. immigration detention.

## DEMANDING AN END TO SEXUAL ASSAULT

In 2017, ICE petitioned the National Archives to trash its records of sexual assault. We worked with Representatives Judy Chu and Raul Grijalva and more than 70 lawmakers to send a letter to the Department of Homeland Security calling for transparency, accountability and an end to sexual assault in U.S. immigration detention.

## REPORTING ABUSE IN NEW MEXICO IMMIGRANT PRISON

The report "Why Doesn't Anyone Investigate this Place?" documents over 200 complaints of abuse made between 2015 and 2018 by migrants detained at the Otero County Processing Center (OCPC), an immigrant prison in Chaparral, NM, run by the for-profit private prison company Management and Training Corporation (MTC).

The report was authored by Nathan Craig and Margaret Brown Vega and supported by Detained Migrant Solidarity Committee and Freedom for Immigrants.

## REPURPOSING THE SANTA ANA CITY JAIL

On February 15, 2018, we released a 72-page report on how the City of Santa Ana can repurpose its jail. The report was done in partnership with Torti Gallas + Partners, the ACLU of Southern California, and Advancement Project California. It is designed to assist any community looking to repurpose a Clinton administration-era jail.





# BREAKING BARRIERS THROUGH STORYTELLING

## IMM Print

We continued uplifting the voices of folks directly impacted by immigration detention on our storytelling platform IMM Print. We featured people like Muniru, a Ghanaian asylum seeker whose grandmother died while he was detained, and Jordon Dyrdaahl-Roberts, a whistleblower who quit his job over ICE's role in separating families.

## Audio postcards

We partnered with law students from NYU's Immigrant Rights Clinic and radio producer Sylvia Ryerson to produce audio postcards connecting people on the inside with their loved ones on the outside as a way to end their isolation.

## Video campaign

We produced a video on the meaning of freedom for immigrants highlighting the voices of Gretta Soto Moreno, Carlos Hidalgo, Claudette Green and members from our team, board of directors and volunteer network.

# Legislating CHANGE

Freedom for Immigrants is advancing groundbreaking legislation to end immigration detention in California and nationwide.

## Freezing the growth of immigrant prisons and jails in California

On October 5, 2017, Gov. Jerry Brown signed into law SB 29, also known as the Dignity Not Detention Act. The law, along with budget amendment AB 103, put a moratorium on the construction and expansion of immigrant prisons and jails in the state of California.

Together, the measures subject private prison companies to open record laws and give the state attorney general the power and resources to monitor facilities. We hope this first-of-its-kind measure in the country can serve as a model for other states to bring about #DignityNotDetention.

## Detention Oversight Not Expansion Act

We led an effort to draft and obtain Congressional sponsorship for our Detention Oversight Not Expansion (DONE) Act, a bicameral bill introduced in May 2018 by California Sen. Kamala Harris and Rep. Pramila Jayapal of Washington. The proposed measure would prohibit the expansion of immigration detention nationwide and improve transparency and accountability by increasing funding for oversight in the facilities.



## REUNITE Act

Following the Trump administration's family separation policy at the U.S.-Mexico border, Senators Kamala Harris, Jeff Merkley, and Catherine Cortez Masto introduced the Reunite Every Unaccompanied Newborn Infant, Toddler and Other Children Expeditiously (REUNITE) Act with our support.

Freedom for Immigrants has been locating disappeared loved ones since 2010, but there is a solution to prevent family separation. The REUNITE Act would ensure parents and children are reunited and prevent future separations by establishing a community-based alternative to detention that is humane and does not include incarceration.





# THANK YOU

Freedom for Immigrants needs your partnership. Our work is made possible by the financial support of over 3,250 individual philanthropists across the country who stand for immigrant rights, freedom and equality. The median annual donation is \$50, which underscores the critical importance of each and every tax-deductible gift.

We want to especially thank our foundation partners this year:

The Antipode Foundation  
Ashoka  
The California Endowment  
California Health Care Foundation  
Critical Refugee Studies  
Firedoll Foundation  
HEKDESH  
The Herb Block Foundation  
ICE out of California Coalition  
The Jacob & Valeria Langeloth Foundation  
The James Irvine Foundation  
J.M. Kaplan Fund  
Orange County Opportunity Fund  
Peggy and Jack Baskin Foundation  
Rappaport Family Foundation  
Trinity Church Wall Street  
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee  
van Löben Sels/RembeRock Foundation  
Y & H Soda Foundation



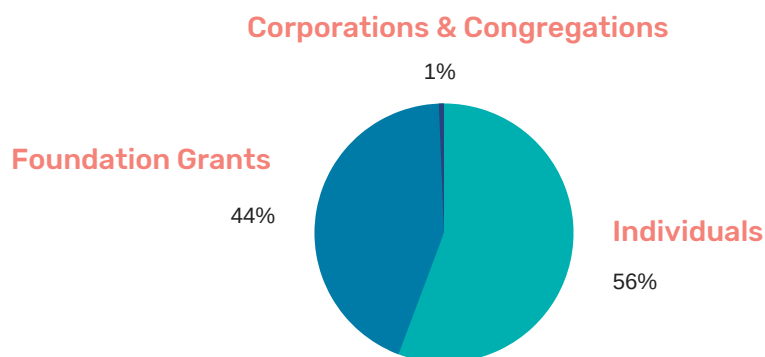
We also are grateful for the 22 actors, athletes, activists, organizers, writers and film makers such as Olympian Ibtihaj Muhammad and actors Kendrick Sampson and Sophia Bush who joined us on a trip to the border to learn more about the separation of families, immigrant prisons, and the injustices happening to immigrant communities. And we want to thank R&B artist Miguel and actress Diane Guerrero for supporting our mission. Special thanks to Revolve Impact for making these relationships possible!

Freedom for Immigrants' management practices ensure that operating funds raised in the current year are effectively put to use to support programs that further our mission of creating a world without immigration detention. The following figures represent sources and uses of operating funds for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2017 through June 31, 2018. Freedom for Immigrants publishes detailed financial information in the form of its annual report and IRS 990 tax returns.

## Sources of funds

**Individuals: \$547,073.42**  
**Foundation Grants: \$428,607.66**  
**Corporations & Congregations: \$6,285.31**

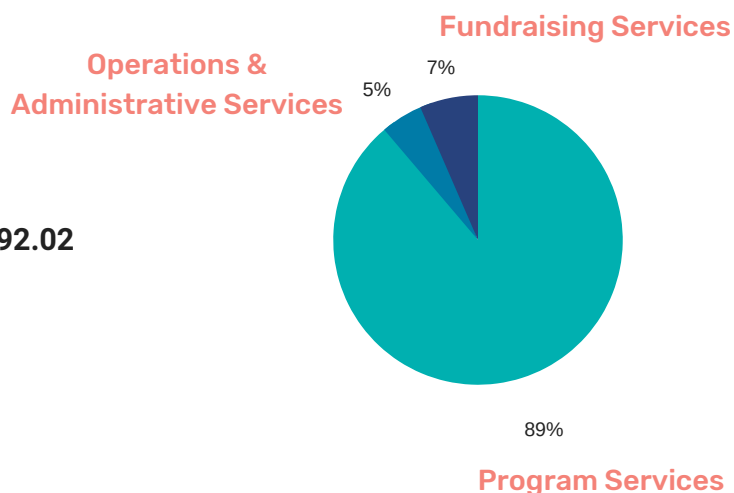
**Total: \$981,535.45**



## Uses of funds

**Program Services: \$680,037.75**  
**Operations & Administrative Services: \$35,892.02**  
**Fundraising Services: \$50,000**

**Total: \$765,929.77**



For more information or to make a tax-deductible gift, email Christina Fialho at [CFialho@freedomforimmigrants.org](mailto:CFialho@freedomforimmigrants.org) or visit <http://www.freedomforimmigrants.org/donate>.