

# PAIR PROJECT



**FOUNDED:** 1989  
**CURRENT ORGANIZATION BUDGET:** \$1,044,000  
**CONTACT:** Anita P. Sharma, Executive Director  
**PHONE:** 617.742.9296 x2  
**EMAIL:** asharma@pairproject.org  
**WEB:** www.pairproject.org

Massachusetts' immigrant community is full of courageous individuals who have fled trauma and persecution with the vision of a fresh start. However, the resources required to navigate complex U.S. immigration law and secure asylum are expensive and hard to access. Free legal representation can mean the difference between a positive future and a return to danger.

Since 1989, PAIR (Political Asylum/Immigrant Representation) Project has provided legal services to over 12,000 clients in their search for justice, hope, and safety. PAIR's clients live below 125% of the Federal Poverty Level. 98% of them are people of color from over 90 countries.

## Investment Opportunity

PAIR seeks a \$1.8MM investment over the next two years to sustain critical community engagement work and increase its legal staff and pro bono attorney team. PAIR will also expand its community education portfolio to help families prepare for interactions with ICE (Immigrations and Customs Enforcement) and develop new ways to support clients with asylee benefits.

- Each year, PAIR recruits, trains, and mentors a network of over 1,200 volunteer lawyers to support 1,500 clients.
- Asylum seekers with legal representation are five times more likely to win their cases. In 2017, only 24% of asylum cases filed with the Boston Asylum Office were approved; PAIR's success rate has stayed at 95% for over 10 years.
- While PAIR serves many immigrant clients in need, roughly 50% of the cases screened for asylum are turned away due to lack of staff and financial resources.

## Two-Year Goals

- Hire legal staff, including attorneys with specializations in asylum law and other humanitarian forms of relief.
- Grow network of volunteer attorneys by 15% to 1,300.
- Expand community education efforts through "Know Your Rights" presentations across Massachusetts.
- Increase client acceptance rate from 50% to 75% while growing client base.

## Ways to Invest

### FINANCIAL

- \$75,000 supports a staff attorney position.
- \$25,000 funds 100 "Know Your Rights" community presentations.
- \$10,000 helps train 100 pro bono attorneys.
- \$5,000 supports one family's efforts to reunite in the United States.

### IN-KIND

- Pro bono attorney time.
- Community Outreach.
- Laptops and iPads.
- Client Support Services: language interpretation and local transportation.
- Consultant: fundraising, IT, Marketing

## Leadership & Governance

Executive Director Anita P. Sharma has two decades of experience advocating for immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers. She co-chairs the Liaison Committee on Asylum for New England's chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and is a steering committee member of Boston Bar Association's Delivery of Legal Services section. In 2016, Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly honored Anita with its Top Women of Law Award. Anita holds degrees in law and international legal studies and worked to support women's rights in India before joining PAIR in 2002.

PAIR is governed by a Board of Directors that includes former PAIR clients alongside experts in law and financial services.

“

Because of you, I can write poems of freedom. I can believe in a future. An asylee is someone who can be born twice, like me; all thanks to you.

NANCY S.,  
PAIR Client from Colombia

”



## PAIR'S MODEL



## OUR WORK

PAIR envisions a world where all asylum seekers have a right to legal counsel and can find justice, hope and safety for themselves and their families in the United States.

Unmet legal needs are the primary reasons asylum seekers are denied protection in the United States. However, our immigration system is too complex, expensive, and intimidating for the increasing number of vulnerable immigrants. There is no legal right to free counsel for immigration proceedings. PAIR partners with 1,200 active volunteer attorneys from over 50 of Boston's major law firms. PAIR recruits, trains and mentors these corporate attorneys, most of whom do not have expertise in immigration. These volunteers help PAIR maximize scarce internal legal resources while serving a substantial client base. In FY 17-18, PAIR's network of pro bono lawyers provided over 21,000 hours of donated legal services, worth a total of \$9.5 million dollars of in-kind donations.

**Pro Bono Asylum:** PAIR serves asylum seekers who have overcome unspeakable horrors to forge new lives in safety and freedom. PAIR's asylum program has assisted thousands of immigrants and has an astonishing success rate of over 95%.

**Detention Center Initiative:** PAIR is the only nonprofit in Massachusetts with negotiated access to provide legal orientation to immigrants detained by ICE. Detained immigrants are one of the most underserved populations, hidden from view with no right to free legal counsel. Detained immigrants are twice as likely to win relief with representation, making access to counsel vital.

**Community Outreach:** PAIR partners with fellow nonprofits, schools, and healthcare providers to bring "Know Your Rights" presentations to the public, including the immigrant community and greater Boston social service organizations. These presentations empower immigrants to understand and use their constitutional rights. Since November 2016, PAIR has reached over 12,000 community members.



The diversity of our country is one of its greatest strengths. As lawyers, we have a unique ability to help individuals from other countries, who, often at great risk and sacrifice, make the commitment to live in the United States. PAIR provides the opportunity for us to provide that help.

**ELIZABETH BURNETT**  
Partner, Mintz Levin Cohn, Ferris Glovsky and Popeo PC



### Key Investors

- BARR FOUNDATION
- BOSTON BAR FOUNDATION
- CUMMINGS FOUNDATION
- MASSACHUSETTS BAR FOUNDATION
- THE BOSTON FOUNDATION
- THE SHAPIRO FOUNDATION
- UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTARY FUND FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE

### Partners

- BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER'S CENTER FOR REFUGEE HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS
- CAMBRIDGE HEALTH ALLIANCE'S VIOLENCE RECOVERY PROGRAM
- FOLEY HOAG, LLP
- MINTZ LEVIN COHN FERRIS GLOVSKY AND POPEO PC
- ROPES & GRAY, LLP
- WILMERHALE

## A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO JUSTICE, HOPE AND SAFETY

Asylees face uncertain futures, even after obtaining their status. Lack of access to housing, transportation, employment, education, healthcare and childcare are significant barriers to ensuring a fresh start in the United States. PAIR's holistic and empowering approach ensures that all clients have access to the services needed to support their next journey.

**Health and Well-Being:** PAIR's clients come to the U.S. having fled persecution and trauma. They lack basic resources, support systems, and access to the justice system. PAIR's holistic approach recognizes that clients need more than just asylum to ensure their health and well-being. PAIR partners with local health centers to provide counseling services and medical care for all family members.

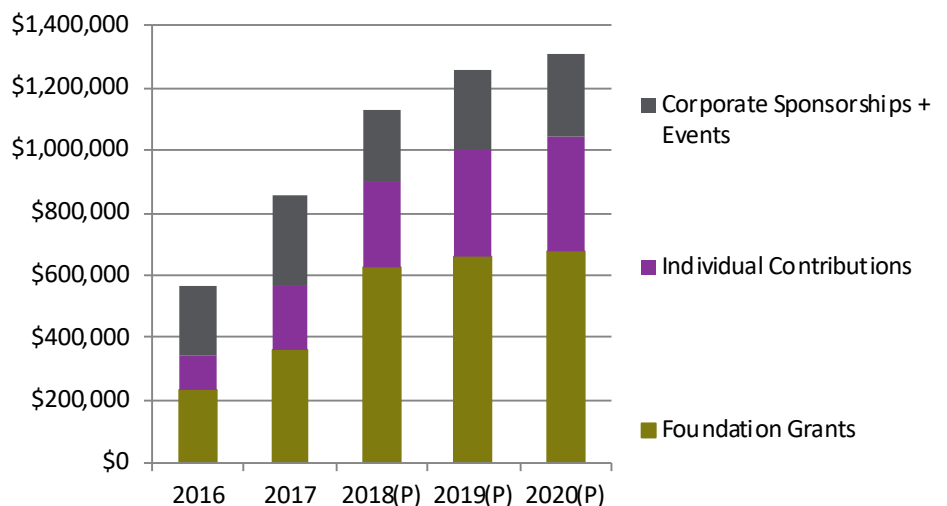
**Uniting Families:** Once they have been granted asylum, asylees can apply for derivative asylum for their spouse and children. This allows families to leave dangerous places and reunite with their loved ones in the United States. PAIR works with families to provide reunification support, including housing, transportation, and school enrollment.

**Path to Citizenship:** Research shows that a significant portion of individuals who receive asylum become naturalized as U.S. citizens. PAIR urges clients to pursue citizenship as the ultimate security in creating a safe and healthy future. PAIR provides referrals to local agencies that offer pro bono support for clients with the citizenship process.

## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

As a result of sudden and harsh changes to immigration law and policy, as well as a surge in client needs, PAIR has seen tremendous growth in the last several years, doubling its budget and staff size between 2015 and 2018. In 2016, PAIR completed its most recent strategic plan, which charts an ambitious course for its future.

### Revenue by Source



### Success Story: Octavio

Octavio fled Honduras because he was repeatedly harassed and physically assaulted due to his sexual orientation and his courageous work as a gay rights activist. He formed a nonprofit dedicated to documenting information related to rights abuses within the gay community such as police cruelty, maltreatment, and exploitation. Despite the risk, Octavio worked to protect the rights of the LGBT community. As a result, the police threatened physical harm if he didn't stop his activism. Scared for his life, Octavio came to the U.S. PAIR matched Octavio with volunteer attorney Orlando Lopez from Burns & Levinson. He won asylum in the U.S. and continues to advocate for LGBT rights. Octavio is now a U.S. citizen, a successful entrepreneur, member of the PAIR Board, and generous PAIR volunteer.



## PROGRAM PERFORMANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

Below is a summary of the key measures that PAIR will track to demonstrate progress, create internal accountability, incorporate lessons learned, and adjust strategy as necessary. Fiscal year is July-June.

	FY 2018	FY 2019 (P)	FY 2020 (P)
<b>PROGRAM PERFORMANCE</b>			
Number of active asylum cases	650	750	800
Number of pro bono attorneys	1,100	1,200	1,300
Percent of clients granted asylee status	95%	95%	95%
Percent of eligible clients matched with pro bono attorneys	50%	65%	75%
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH/CAPACITY-BUILDING</b>			
Expand number of staff	10	11	12
Build holistic services model, supporting clients and families with asylee benefits	Support 15 clients and families	Support 25 clients and families	Support 50 clients and families
Build long-term development and marketing plan	Plan	Develop	Implement
Partnership with Analysis Group to determine long-term social impact of PAIR's pro bono programs	Survey past and current clients	Develop data management system to track client services and progress	Implement data system

## SOCIAL IMPACT

Through its extensive partnerships with leading law firms to recruit, train and support pro bono attorneys, PAIR works to ensure that all eligible asylum seekers receive legal counsel and post-asylee supports. The Analysis Group will survey PAIR's past and current cases to analyze the success of PAIR's work with asylum seekers and detained immigrants, both in terms of legal representation and integration into society.

Below are key indicators that provide evidence of PAIR's success in ensuring justice, hope and safety for our most vulnerable immigrants.

INDICATOR	2017
Number of clients served	1,400
"Know Your Rights" community presentations	12,000 ATTENDEES 450 PRESENTATIONS
Number of pro bono hours donated by legal partners	19,000
Percent of asylees who gain lawful permanent resident status (LPR)	90%
Percent of individuals with LPR status who become U.S. Citizens	70%
Impact of asylum seekers on local and national economy	TBD