



Contigo Immigrant Justice

5 clients served: Very Low income, Latino, Survivors of violent crimes

Each individual served met with legal staff multiple times- to determine eligibility, arrange paperwork and evidence, submit materials to law enforcement to certify 'helpfulness' in a felonious assault case, gather and submit materials to apply for U-Visa and immigration benefits.

After 20 years of being in the US, one client and her family of 3 will finally be able to obtain work authorization and her daughter will be applying to colleges and will be able to apply for in-state tuition and student aid.

Successes

Contigo successfully represented 5 clients seeking U Visas after surviving felonious assaults, helping them access immigration protection rooted in their cooperation with law enforcement and the harm they experienced. These cases required careful, trauma-informed legal support, including gathering evidence, documenting the impact of the violence, and securing law enforcement certifications. Successful outcomes in these cases allows survivors to move forward with greater stability, safety, and the ability to plan for their futures.

Challenges

A major challenge in U Visa work continues to be delays in obtaining law enforcement certifications and the significant backlog at USCIS. Even when survivors are eligible and have cooperated with law enforcement, delays in certification can slow down the filing process and prolong uncertainty. Once USCIS grants deferred action, survivors may receive work authorization, which provides meaningful stability, but they must still wait years before a U Visa becomes available and they can move forward toward lawful permanent residence.