



# ROOTED IN JUSTICE — *FIGHTING* *FOR FAMILIES*

THE 23RD  
ANNUAL CFR BENEFIT  
2025

Tuesday, September 16

**JULISSA  
REYNOSO**

Keynote Honoree

**MR. AMINULLAH  
HUSSAIN**

The Sabra Jackson Client Award

**CAROLYN  
KUBITSCHEK**

Pro Bono Partner

**DAVID  
J. LANSNER**

Pro Bono Partner

# EVENING PROGRAM

## DINNER & COCKTAILS

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### WORDS OF WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

**Tehra Coles,**  
Executive Director

### VIDEO

**CFR's Impact**

### VIDEO TRIBUTE

**Honoring Carolyn Kubitschek & David J. Lansner**

### INTRODUCTION OF PRO BONO PARTNER HONOREES

**Martin Guggenheim**  
CFR Founder & Former Board Member

### PRO BONO PARTNER HONOREES

**Carolyn Kubitschek & David J. Lansner**

### SPECIAL PERFORMANCE

**Cassandra Gonzalez**  
Impacted Parent

### VIDEO TRIBUTE

**Honoring Mr. Aminullah Hussain**

### INTRODUCTION OF SABRA JACKSON HONOREE

**Zoe Schonfeld, Esq.**  
Attorney-in-Charge, Immigration

### SABRA JACKSON HONOREE

**Mr. Aminullah Hussain**  
Joined by Shkula Zadran

### YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO SUPPORT CFR

**Robbie Gordy**  
Auctioneer

### VIDEO TRIBUTE

**Honoring Julissa Reynoso**

### INTRODUCTION OF JUSTICE IN ACTION HONOREE

**Jeffrey L. Kessler, Esq.**  
CFR Board Member and Partner, Winston & Strawn LLP

### JUSTICE IN ACTION HONOREE

**Julissa Reynoso**  
Partner, Winston & Strawn LLP

### CLOSING REMARKS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

**Tehra Coles**  
Executive Director



# DEAR FRIENDS,

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This evening, I am excited to connect and celebrate with you all as we unite to support the Center for Family Representation's (CFR) work. For over two decades, CFR has been defending the rights of Black and Brown parents and youth targeted by racist and punitive systems of family policing through free, holistic interdisciplinary legal and social work representation.

Every day, CFR staff fiercely defend the families we serve with the ultimate goal of keeping them together. In this increasingly hostile political climate - which is particularly punitive to newly-arrived asylum seekers, families of color, and those living in poverty - our work has become more critical than ever before.

This year's Justice In Action Honoree, Julissa Reynoso, embodies CFR's mission and values. Julissa, an immigrant from the Dominican Republic who arrived in New York as a child, has spent her life and career advancing human rights both domestically and abroad. In addition to co-founding a legal clinic and being named President of the Board for the Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights, she also served under the Biden Administration as Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff to the First Lady. Julissa is currently a Partner at Winston & Strawn, where she focuses on complex commercial litigation, regulatory enforcement, international arbitration, and cross-border disputes.

We are also thrilled to recognize our Pro-Bono Honorees, Carolyn A. Kubitschek and David J. Lansner, Founding Partners of Lansner & Kubitschek. In addition to training generations of public defenders in the family policing space, Carolyn and David have argued landmark legal cases regarding limits to emergency removals, standards for interviewing children, and the right of children in the foster system to be free from harm. Their work has laid the foundation for advocacy models like CFR's - grounded in legal excellence, compassion, and a deep belief in keeping families together.

This year, we celebrate the courage and resilience of former CFR client Aminullah Hussain with the Sabra Jackson Client Award, named after the late Sabra Jackson, a tireless community leader and activist whose family was directly impacted by the family policing system. After surviving assassination attempts by Taliban insurgents, Aminullah and his family fled their home in Afghanistan to seek asylum in the U.S. Aminullah was then separated from his two daughters due to family conflicts related to the trauma of their journey and his grueling work schedule. After months of CFR staff's advocacy and Aminullah's own powerful testimony, Aminullah was granted both asylum and unsupervised visits with his daughters.

As you will hear this evening, CFR's work is continuously growing: we have hired dozens of new staff members and have expanded our practice to serve families in Staten Island, where resources for parents living in poverty are desperately needed. We have also increased our outreach to the communities we serve through public events, Know Your Rights trainings, and tabling at shelters and schools - all with the goal of putting vital resources and information directly into the hands of low-income families.

CFR continues to advocate for systems change through our policy work. This past April, we returned to Albany to fight alongside advocates and impacted parents to demand that the legislature pass four pieces of priority legislation to protect the rights of families.

I am thrilled to continue leading CFR's fight to defend the rights of families through our interdisciplinary legal and social work, community outreach, and policy advocacy. And finally, I would like to extend a special thank you to our dedicated Board members, our new Associate Board, CFR staff, and tonight's honorees. Thank you all for being here this evening and for sharing in our vision of justice and self-determination for every family.

**WITH GRATITUDE,**  
**Tehra Coles**  
Executive Director, CFR





# ABOUT

## THE CENTER FOR FAMILY REPRESENTATION (CFR)

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CFR has a unique, interdisciplinary model, where every parent we represent has a team of an attorney, a social worker, and the support of a parent or family advocate. This helps parents raise their children with self-determination, reduces reliance on the foster system and youth incarceration, and addresses the underlying causes of family instability. In addition to family defense, we offer services in collateral areas including immigration, housing, and public benefits. CFR also provides training and technical assistance to more than 500 practitioners annually; and we work to promote policy changes that dignify and benefit youth and families.





## CLIENTS WE SERVED IN 2024:

- 100% LIVE IN POVERTY
- 94% ARE PEOPLE OF COLOR
- 64% ARE WOMEN
- 34% ARE SINGLE PARENTS
- 25% ARE SURVIVORS OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE
- 29% ARE IMMIGRANTS
- 31% ARE OR WERE UNHOUSED
- 20% HAVE A MENTAL HEALTH DIAGNOSIS
- 15% WERE IN THE FOSTER SYSTEM THEMSELVES
- 32% HAVE A COMPANION CRIMINAL CASE, USUALLY GROWING OUT OF THE SAME SET OF EVENTS THAT LEAD TO THE FAMILY COURT CASE



## JUSTICE IN ACTION HONOREE

### JULISSA REYNOSO

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Julissa Reynoso, a multilingual partner at Winston & Strawn and a member of the firm's Executive Committee, focuses on complex commercial litigation, regulatory enforcement, international arbitration, and cross-border disputes. She advises U.S. and international clients across sectors on strategic risk and transnational legal matters.

Her extensive experience includes analyzing and advising on complex cross-border litigation, investigations, and disputes before U.S. courts and federal agencies. She has conducted arbitrations under major international rules, including the ICC and UNCITRAL, and has managed bilateral investment treaty disputes. She has also been admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court. Julissa served as U.S. Ambassador to Spain and Andorra, where she led a major diplomatic mission involving multiple federal agencies and championed U.S. business interests during a pivotal period that included the 2022 NATO Summit and Spain's presidency of the Council of the European Union.

During the Biden administration, she served as Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff to the First Lady, where she managed a wide range of domestic and international initiatives and co-chaired the White House Gender Policy Council, the first of its kind. Under the Obama administration, she served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, where she developed comprehensive security and rule-of-law strategies for Central America and the Caribbean and was later appointed U.S. Ambassador to Uruguay.

Julissa received her B.A. from Harvard University and her J.D. from Columbia Law School and currently lives in New York City with her family.



# PRO BONO HONOREE

## DAVID J. LANSNER

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David Lansner worked for legal services programs and the Legal Aid Society Juvenile Rights Division in New York City until 1979. Since then, he has been in private practice in New York. In 1991, David and his wife, Carolyn A. Kubitschek, formed the law firm of Lansner & Kubitschek, focusing on civil rights, child welfare law, social security disability, and divorce.

David also served part-time as Counsel to the New York State Assembly Committee on Children and Families from 1987 to 2000. Since 2001, David has been Co-Chair of the NYS Citizen Review panel for New York City. He has chaired numerous other committees and programs, written extensively, and provided training to many attorneys and others. He has been Chair of the NYSBA Committee on Children and the Law and is currently Chair of the NYCLA Committee on the Family Court.

David received his B.A. from the University of Rochester and his J.D. from NYU School of Law.



# PRO BONO HONOREE

## CAROLYN A. KUBITSCHEK

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From 1973 to 1985, Carolyn Kubitschek was an attorney with MFY Legal Services, representing indigent New Yorkers in Family Court and public benefits cases. In 1983, she became the first managing attorney of the first disability advocacy program. From 1985 to 1990, Carolyn was on the clinical faculty of Hofstra Law School. She also worked as coordinator of family law at Legal Services for New York. While working at Lansner & Kubitschek, Carolyn taught child welfare law as an adjunct at Cardozo Law School for six years.

Carolyn serves as vice president of the National Coalition for Child Protection Reform. She is also a member of the amicus committee of the National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives, and of the pro bono committee, appellate courts committee, and federal courts committee of the New York County Lawyers Association.

Carolyn has lectured and written extensively on child welfare and domestic violence, on child abuse in foster care, and on Social Security law throughout the United States, England and Germany. Carolyn graduated from Oberlin College and received her law degree from the University of Chicago.



# ABOUT

## LANSNER & KUBITSCHKEK

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In the landmark case *Doe v. Department of Social Services*, 649 F.2d (2d Cir. 1981), Lansner & Kubitschek established that a foster child has a constitutional right to a safe foster home, and can sue the foster care agency if it fails to protect them from abuse. All of the federal circuits which have considered that issue have adopted the ruling in *Doe*, including the Ninth Circuit in *Miller v. Gammie*, 335 F.3d 889 (9th Cir. 2003), also argued by Lansner & Kubitschek.

In 1994, the firm established that parents listed in the State Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment have a constitutional right to hearings to clear their names prior to being denied jobs or licenses because of their placement on the Register, and that the agency must prove child neglect or maltreatment by a preponderance of the evidence (not merely "some credible evidence"). *Valmonte v. Bane*, 18 F.3d 992 (2d Cir. 1994).

In 1999, they obtained an appellate ruling that child protective services cannot remove children from their parents without first obtaining court orders, except in emergencies that are so immediate that there is not enough time to seek court orders. *Tenenbaum v. Williams*, 193 F.3d 581 (2d Cir. 1999), cert. den. 529 U.S. 1098 (2000).

In 2002, in a class action on behalf of mothers who are victims of domestic violence, the United States District Court ruled that New York City's practice of charging victims of domestic violence with child neglect and removing their children was unconstitutional and issued an injunction barring that practice. *Nicholson v. Williams*, 203 F.Supp.2d 153 (E.D.N.Y. 2002). The Second Circuit upheld the injunction, *Nicholson v. Scoppetta*, 344 F.3d 154 (2d Cir. 2003), and referred the matter to the New York Court of Appeals. That Court issued a sweeping decision on child welfare law, upholding family rights, sharply limiting state intervention, and delineating the requirements of due process hearings. *Nicholson v. Scoppetta*, 3 N.Y.3d 357 (2004). Also, the District Court issued the first ruling that required the hourly rates for assigned counsel in the Family Court be raised, which made it economical for the City to contract with institutional providers such as the Center for Family Representation.

Lansner & Kubitschek have litigated numerous civil rights damage actions for children and families, winning millions of dollars for separated families and abused foster children, as well as hundreds of cases in the Family Court.



# SABRA JACKSON CLIENT HONOREE

## AMINULLAH HUSSAIN

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In Afghanistan, Aminullah Hussain worked for a U.S. company and was outspoken about his support for Western values and the rights of women. Because of this, Taliban insurgents ambushed and attacked him and his wife while they were driving. In August 2021, when Kabul fell to the Taliban, Aminullah feared further for his and family's safety and fled their home to seek asylum in the U.S. Attempting to stabilize his family in New York City, Aminullah worked long hours as an Uber driver.

One evening, in a moment of extreme exhaustion, he lost his temper and accidentally slapped his daughter. Aminullah's wife reported him to the police and a family court order of protection was issued against him. During this time, he lived in his car while completing court-ordered services, taking vocational courses to broaden his job opportunities, and working at Popeyes six days a week. CFR represented Aminullah in his family court and criminal cases, and the immigration team applied for asylum for him. After months of advocating for Aminullah in family and criminal court, his legal teams succeeded in getting his criminal cases dismissed and the family court order of protection against him modified so that he could have unsupervised visits with his daughters.

In November 2021, after Aminullah testified powerfully about the persecution he faced in Afghanistan and the likelihood that he would be harmed if deported, the asylum office granted him asylum.

# SABRA JACKSON CLIENT HONOREE

AMINULLAH HUSSAIN WITH HIS DAUGHTERS

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# ABOUT

## THE SABRA JACKSON AWARD

CFR is proud to name our client award after the late Sabra Jackson to honor the resiliency and perseverance of our clients when facing the threat of family separation.

Sabra Jackson, who passed away on June 18, 2024, was a trailblazing, fierce, and unwavering parent advocate who brought her own lived experience ensnared in the family polling system to any and all roles she held. In addition to serving as a parent advocate at CFR for seven years, she was a parent advocate at the Child Welfare Organizing Project (CWOP) and later became the founding coordinator of its New York City Parent Advocate Network. Sabra also served as an executive member of ACS's Parent Advisory Work Group (PAWG).

In 2019, Sabra was appointed as the inaugural and only on-staff parent engagement specialist at ACS. In this role, and in all of her professional roles, she strengthened the power of parent advocates working within and against the system. While at ACS, Sabra led the formation of the Parent Advocacy Council (PAC), which brings together impacted parents to inform ACS's work and improve child and family outcomes.



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**"EVERY DAY AT CFR, I SEE HOW SYSTEMS MEANT TO PROTECT CAN ALSO OVERWHELM FAMILIES— ESPECIALLY THOSE NAVIGATING IMMIGRATION ISSUES OR FACING HOUSING INSTABILITY. OUR WORK ISN'T JUST ABOUT SHOWING UP IN COURT. IT'S ABOUT MAKING SURE FAMILIES AREN'T PUSHED FURTHER INTO CRISIS BECAUSE THEY'RE UNDOCUMENTED OR BECAUSE THEY CAN'T FIND A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE. WE'RE HERE TO MAKE SURE NO ONE FALLS THROUGH THE CRACKS."**

**EBONY ROSS**

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

# THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

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& STRAWN  
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REGINA  
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## ACTIVIST

MARGARET &  
JIM DALE

PEGGY &  
GORDON DAVIS

S. PENNY WINDLE &  
JOHN KLINE



Dunn Isaacson Rhee

## ADVOCATE

LAURA GORDON &  
MICHAEL MISHIK

NANCY & ROBERT  
WEINER



DORF NELSON & ZAUDERER LLP

Simpson  
Thacher

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Government Relations / Consulting

CHERYL A.  
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## ALLY

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DENISE  
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JACOBS

GENEVIEVE  
CHRISTY

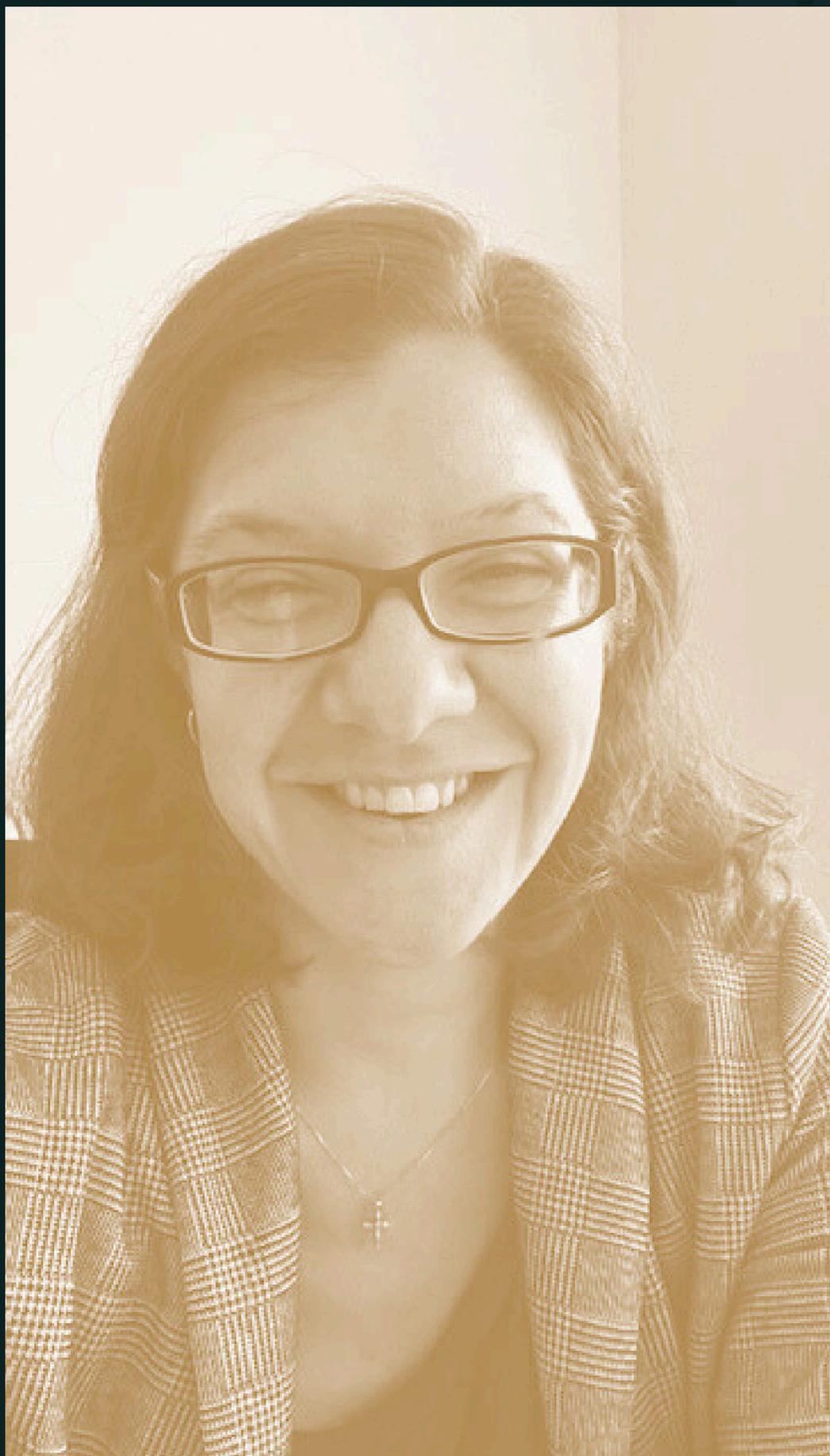
SUE PINCO

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**“ALTHOUGH THEY'RE  
ENSNARED IN THE  
OPPRESSIVE MACHINERY OF  
THE FAMILY POLICING  
SYSTEM, OUR CLIENTS'  
VOICES ARE POWERFUL AND  
CFR MUST RELENTLESSLY  
FIGHT FOR THEM TO BE  
HEARD.”**

**CHRISTINE BRUNO**  
LITIGATION DIRECTOR,  
STATEN ISLAND



# FEATURE STORY

## OUR ADVOCATES IN ACTION

In addition to providing parent and youth defense services to low-income New Yorkers, CFR works in collateral areas like immigration, advocates for policy reforms that uphold the dignity and well-being of families, and fights for systems change through the appeals process. Below, you'll learn about exciting accomplishments from CFR's immigration, policy, and appeals teams.

### IMMIGRATION

CFR's immigration team has stepped up to meet the growing needs of our clients in a moment that is increasingly hostile to non-citizen families. The team has expanded to include four attorneys, a DOJ certified representative, a social worker, and a client coordinator.

Every day, CFR's immigration team supports non-citizen clients and their families facing removal proceedings by pursuing humanitarian relief for them through applications for asylum, U visas and Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS). Even when CFR is unable to provide full representation, our immigration team is committed to preventing unwarranted detention and other types of immigration enforcement whenever possible, through accompaniment of clients to court appearances and ICE check-ins, Know Your Rights trainings, and individual advocacy. Our immigration team also routinely conducts research and provides advisals to individual clients' family and criminal defense teams to ensure that non-citizen clients and their legal teams are informed of potential harmful consequences of judicial findings and/or convictions.

Finally, our immigration team is actively growing CFR's presence in the community and the public sphere through tabling at community events, highlighting relevant immigration news pieces on social media, and publishing op-eds that call attention to the way that the family policing and immigration systems cruelly disrupt New York City families and prevent parents and children from thriving.



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**“WE FIGHT TO END  
FAMILY SEPARATION  
IN EVERY FORM —  
THROUGH  
CULTURAL  
INCOMPETENCE,  
THROUGH RADICAL  
IMMIGRATION  
ENFORCEMENT, AND  
THROUGH POLICIES  
MEANT TO DIVIDE  
US.”**

**MEDHA VENUGOPAL**  
SENIOR STAFF ATTORNEY,  
IMMIGRATION



## POLICY

CFR's policy team has continued to focus on passing our priority legislation in collaboration with PLAN (Parent Legislative Action Network). While CFR will continue the fight to reduce the harms of family policing investigations through the Family Miranda Rights Act and the Maternal Health, Dignity, and Consent Act, the policy team was thrilled that for the first time this year, the Anti-Harassment In Reporting Act passed the state legislature. We hope that Governor Kathy Hochul will agree that family policing investigations are harmful and should never be weaponized against families.

As we continue to envision a world where families are not surveilled, prosecuted, and separated, CFR has deepened its work in shifting how helping professionals interact with families through co-facilitating the New York Mandated Reporting Working Group. We've also joined the New York State Cash Alliance, a growing coalition of community organizers, activists, artists, cash beneficiaries, and advocates who understand the power of cash to address economic inequities and are pushing forward legislation focused on making sure that all of New York's families have the resources that they need to thrive.



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**“AS PUBLIC DEFENDERS,  
CFR STAFF WORK  
TIRELESSLY TO PREVENT  
AND REDUCE THE HARM  
THAT SYSTEMS OF  
POLICING CAUSE OUR  
CLIENTS, THEIR FAMILIES,  
AND THEIR COMMUNITIES.  
BUT SEEING THAT HARM  
SURFACE AGAIN AND  
AGAIN REQUIRES THAT WE  
ALSO CHALLENGE THOSE  
SYSTEMS AND SEEK TO  
FUNDAMENTALLY  
TRANSFORM AND  
EVENTUALLY END THEM.”**

**HANNAH MERCURIS**  
SUPERVISING ATTORNEY OF  
POLICY AND EARLY DEFENSE,  
MANHATTAN



## APPEALS

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CFR's appeals team is currently working on a major case before the New York Court of Appeals. The court has agreed to hear the appeal of CFR client Mr. Z, whose parental rights to his son were terminated. Mr. Z is an immigrant who does not speak English. His son was removed from his care shortly after birth based on concerns that his wife had a mental illness and that Mr. Z did not understand how her mental illness might present a risk to their son. Over the next three years, the foster agency failed the family in a number of ways. It placed the child in foster homes that did not share the family's language, failed to provide interpreters for visits, and failed to refer Mr. Z to any services aimed at educating him about his wife's mental illness.

The agency then sought to terminate Mr. Z's parental rights. At the hearing, the agency was required to prove by clear and convincing evidence that it had made diligent efforts to reunify Mr. Z with his son before terminating his parental rights. The family court noted that agency efforts had been minimal and that it could have done more and should have done more, but at the same time found that the agency met this standard and the Appellate Division affirmed.

This case has the potential to not only help Mr. Z get another chance to reunite with his son, but can also improve the law for all families with children in the foster system. CFR is hopeful that the Court of Appeals will use this case to set clearer, higher standards for agency efforts, especially when working with families with limited English proficiency.



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**“THROUGH OUR APPELLATE  
ADVOCACY, WE TELL OUR  
CLIENTS’ STORIES IN WAYS  
THAT HIGHLIGHT THE VALUE  
AND DIGNITY OF THEIR  
FAMILIES AND THE  
INJUSTICES THEY FACE. IN  
DOING SO, WE NOT ONLY  
PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF  
INDIVIDUAL CLIENTS BUT  
ALSO HELP SHAPE THE LAW  
TO BETTER SERVE THOSE  
IMPACTED BY  
THE FAMILY POLICING  
SYSTEM.”**

**EMILY WALL**  
ATTORNEY-IN-CHARGE OF  
APPEALS, MANHATTAN



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**“AN INDICATED REPORT IN THE STATE CENTRAL REGISTER (SCR) HAS LONG-TERM EMPLOYMENT CONSEQUENCES FOR PARENTS AND CARETAKERS, CLOSING DOORS TO AN EVER EXPANDING LIST OF JOBS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO CARE FOR THEIR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES. OUR MISSION IS TO AMEND OR SEAL SCR RECORDS FOR AS MANY CLIENTS AS WE CAN, SO OUR CLIENTS CAN SUPPORT THEIR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES AND GET OUT FROM UNDER SO MANY SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION.”**

**MELISSA  
LOMBREGLIA**  
ATTORNEY-IN-CHARGE OF  
THE SCR PRACTICE,  
MANHATTAN

# A NOTE ABOUT

## THE ART ON DISPLAY TONIGHT

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This year, CFR chose to forego elaborate centerpieces typical of annual benefits and instead invest in the visual art and poetry of impacted parents and youth. The pieces you'll see in this benefit journal and at your tables were created by people who have experienced surveillance, investigation, and separation by systems of family policing. This initiative is part of CFR's ongoing effort to center the voices of impacted parents and youth in everything we do.





# CASSANDRA

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Cassandra Gonzalez is a proud mother of an amazing four-year-old boy. She is a parent impacted by the family policing system. She uses her own lived experience to elevate other parents' voices and to use the perspective of parents to change conditions that harm families and their well-being.

## A TALE OF RESILIENCE BY CASSANDRA GONZALEZ

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In the depths of despair, my journey began,  
A troubled path through the child welfare land.  
Amidst domestic violence, my family turned away,  
Leaving me in anguish, searching for a way.

Inside the ACS building, my son held tight,  
Emergency removal, a devastating plight.  
My life shattered, a whirlwind of pain,  
Lost and confused, my heart filled with strain.

I fought with all my might, navigating unknown,  
In a system bewildering, I was not alone.  
Visits and plans, I tried to be strong,  
But at times, I felt like I'd done something wrong.

Yet through it all, I discovered my strength,  
A resilience within, a journey of great length.  
I embraced the healing, my wounds slowly mend,  
Knowing my lived experience could help others on the mend.

With advocacy and community organizing, I found my voice,  
A beacon of hope, a leader by choice.  
In my community, I stand tall and proud,  
Using my past to uplift, to inspire, to shroud.

The child welfare system may have brought me pain,  
But from that darkness, a new purpose I gained.  
For every struggle endured, every tear shed,  
I emerged stronger, with wisdom ahead.

My journey continues, a tale of resilience,  
A poem of hope, a testament to my brilliance.  
And as I share my story, others will find,  
That healing is possible, even after the darkest times.



# GREGORY

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Gregory Rivenburg was born in Binghamton, New York. He is a loving father of three, and developed a love for writing poetry during his five year incarceration from 2007 to 2012. He is a hardworking man who loves spending time with his kids. He believes that poetry and music can help bridge social divides and guide people to get through hard times.

## AS THE DOOR KEEPS TURNING BY GREGORY A. RIVENBURG (218156A)

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My father didn't teach me how to shave, someone in prison did  
Now I'm trying to teach someone else's kid  
How to shave on a prison bid  
When I should be home trying to raise 3 little kids

I miss the simple things—not the parties, not the drop top  
Helicopters and the submarine Ferraris  
Fabricated street stuff is getting a 'lil corny because I'm  
Still incarcerated and I'm almost 40  
But as The Door Keeps Turning

The court room is the slave auction and the time is the rope  
No rest for the wicked, stay woke  
OG's recruiting our kids with fake hope  
Just go in there and shoot anything OK Coach  
Kids killing kids what gang gang promotes  
Who care if they die, make jokes  
Roll 'em up in paper and grab and take tokes (seriously)

Force feeding us poison when we can heal each other spiritually  
He said F the world, good luck, she living bi-curiously  
Pay attention and detention centers Southwest with no ICE  
But ICE is sending people back with no rights

This is LIFE!  
As The Door Keeps Turning



# JOSHUA

Joshua Vaughn is from Binghamton, New York. Early on in life, Joshua developed a love for reading, and illustrated a knack for critical thinking. He developed his love for creative writing during his more than 12 years of incarceration (2012-2024). Joshua graduated from Bard College with an AA degree in 2021. He has a 13-year-old son, and strives to be the type of father he never had.

## MADE IN AMERICA BY JOSHUA VAUGHN

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Sixteen years of time and pain separated my father and me  
before we embraced outside the confines of a penitentiary

Twelve years, six months, and three days is the amount of pain  
and time that separated my son and I

Wondering if this generational curse will be broken with him

Your 'peculiar institution' scattered about my family tree long  
before it threatened to dissolve your precious Union

The Texas Rangers were formed to protect and serve white  
supremacy

Recapturing the black and brown bodies that dared to quest for  
freedom

Sound familiar?

I can hear the echoes of a distant summer when the GI Bill  
opened the door of ownership for my Pop-Pop long before the '95  
Crime Bill closed the door of a prison cell on my Pops

The Chinese Exclusion Act is inextricably linked to your attempts  
to end birthright citizenship

When I tell my mother that I'm writing an essay about the ways in  
which American Capitalism is linked to the pillaging of the black  
body, she responds "what is capitalism?"

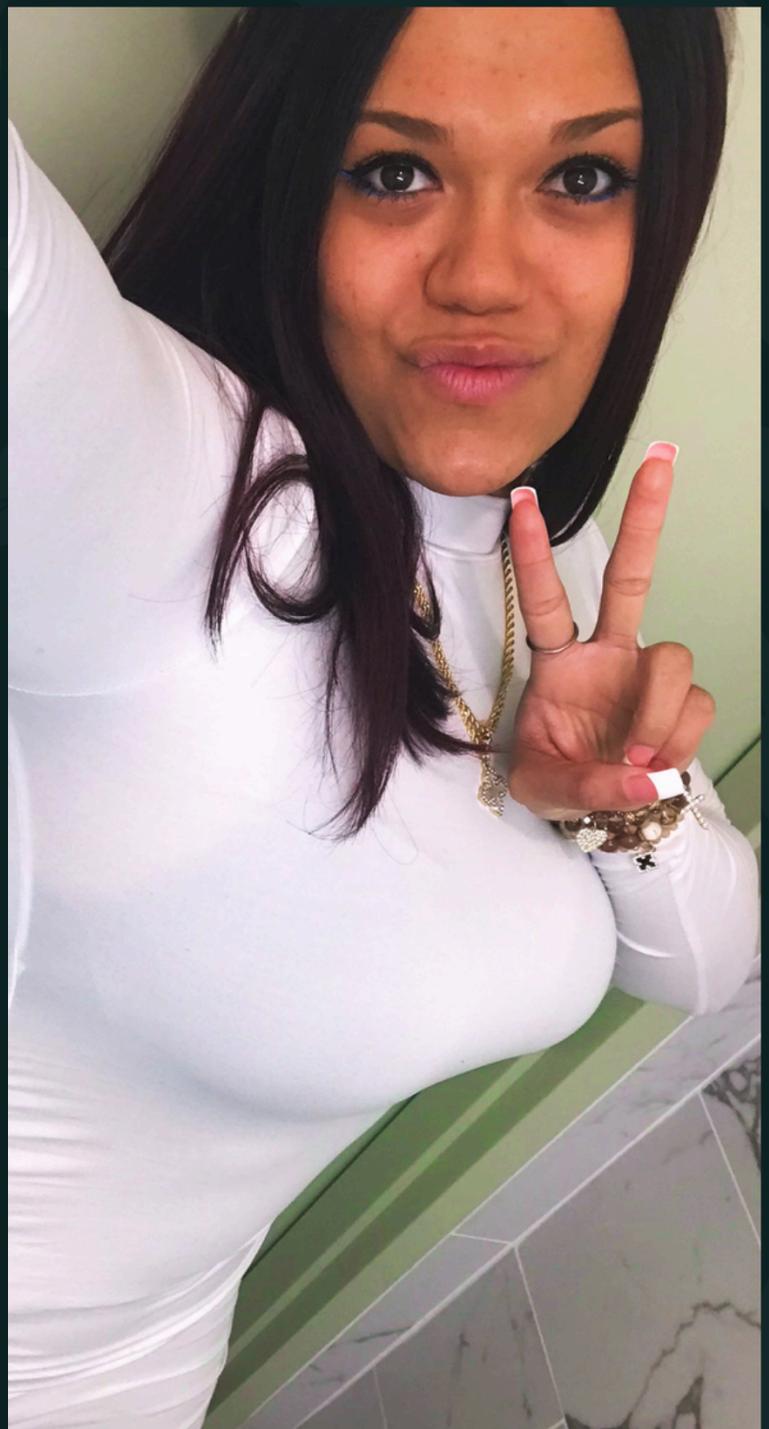
She must've skipped financial literacy class just to feed and  
clothe me

But then again, we were made in America.



# ANGELA

Angela Ferrini "aka" Eya Schuh is a 29-year-old multicultural woman from Hollywood, Florida, currently residing in Brooklyn, New York. Initially an abstract artist, Angela also expresses love freely as a singer, songwriter, and aspiring actress. Angela's motivation to continue her craft as an artist and a healer is heavily inspired by American rapper/singer Kevin Gates. Though life had challenging and painful experiences, through the strength of God, Angela turned her pain into passion and continues to choose love. Angela is currently working on a music album and actively expressing through painting.





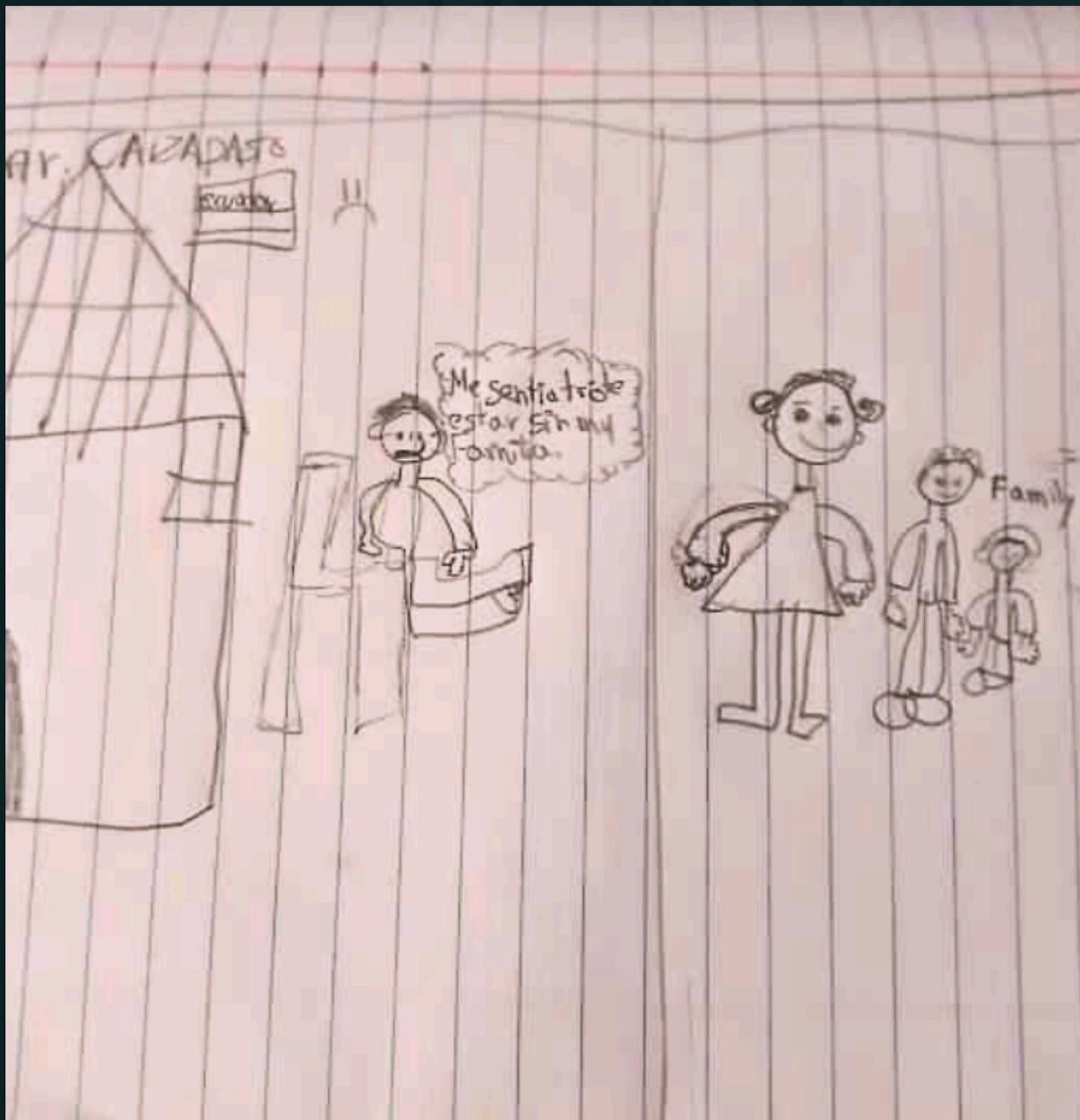
# EDGAR

Edgar Caizapasto, 17, is a citizen of Ecuador and a CFR Youth Defense Practice (YDP) client. When he was 15, Edgar was arrested and his YDP team represented him in his proceedings, successfully getting the case dismissed after being tried for a juvenile delinquency case rather than an adult criminal case. Edgar lives with his mother, step-father and half-brother. Now, Edgar is represented by CFR's immigration team in a Special Immigrant Juvenile case, which is for children who have been abused, abandoned or neglected by one or both of their parents. In Edgar's case, his father abandoned him a long time ago, which is why CFR is pursuing this option for him.

## EDGAR

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In this drawing, Edgar depicts a picture of himself in Ecuador, while his family continues to live in the United States. While his criminal case was pending, he was at risk of deportation and this picture represents his anxiety of that family separation. The little word bubble states, in Spanish, "I feel sad to not be with my family."



Kapri Henson



## KAPRI HENSON

Kapri Henson is a self-taught artist. Drawing has always been her interest. When ACS came into Kapri's life, she completely stopped drawing. Just recently she started to draw again, exploring new techniques, building her skills, and creating a portfolio. In Kapri's leisure time she likes to hang out with her pets and watch movies.



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## OUR MISSION IS TO KEEP FAMILIES TOGETHER.

We provide free legal representation and social work services to primarily Black and Brown families at risk of separation through the foster system or youth incarceration. At CFR we believe every family matters.

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