

2024 IMPACT REPORT



SD VOICES
FOR PEACE



OUR MISSION:

SOUTH DAKOTA
VOICES FOR PEACE
BUILDS POWER AND
ENABLES HEALING IN
IMMIGRANT, REFUGEE,
AND MUSLIM
COMMUNITIES BY
AMPLIFYING THEIR
VOICES AND WORKING
IN SOLIDARITY WITH
ALL WHO DISMANTLE
BIGOTRY AND RACISM.

OUR VISION:

WE IMAGINE A SOUTH
DAKOTA THAT IS
DIVERSE, INCLUSIVE,
AND ANTI-RACIST.



LETTER FROM THE CEO

When we started in 2017, I did not think an organization in South Dakota who provides immigration advocacy, education, civic engagement, rapid response and legal services would survive in our state's anti-immigrant political climate. Seven years later, SD Voices for Peace is flourishing because of local, regional, and national supporters like you. Thank you.

Our work is driven by each staff and board member's passion to lift our communities' voices and build power. We share our own stories amongst staff strategy sessions, as many of us are immigrants or first-generation Americans and all of us are allies to the communities we lift. Through sharing our stories, we asked ourselves a question – instead of talking about discrimination and anti-immigrant sentiments, could we highlight the resiliency and power our communities embody as they must navigate these spaces daily?

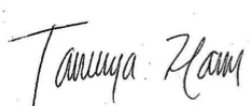
So, we embarked on a journey to create a way of sharing our multilingual communities' stories through Portraits for Courage. We identified three elders in our community who have and will continue to navigate racism throughout their lives. In speaking with them we discovered something unexpected but obvious – their individual coping mechanisms of humor, service, and achievement is what moves them forward. All who navigate these spaces, where we are either confronted with blatant discrimination or unconscious bias, also use our own coping mechanisms to find joy and celebrate life.

Their stories gave us hope, in a time when hope is hard to find. By highlighting our elders' tenacity, we think about our youth and how they can be inspired to see their own resilience and understand these experiences continue to build the tools in their toolbox to thrive.

I share this process to show that our team is always thinking about, what's next; how can we inspire; how can we advocate; how can we change hearts and minds. You can count on us to be innovative, uplifting and tenacious in achieving our vision for a South Dakota that is diverse, inclusive, and anti-racist.

“The beauty of anti-racism is that you don't have to pretend to be free of racism to be anti-racist. Anti-racism is the commitment to fight racism wherever you find it, including in yourself. And it's the only way forward.” – Ijoema Oluo

Sincerely,



Taneeza Islam, CEO



PORTRAITS OF COURAGE

On June 4th, we debuted our original documentary series, Portraits of Courage, at the State Theatre in downtown Sioux Falls. This series spotlights three community elders: Chandradhar Dwivedi, Nieema Thasing, and Nitza Rubenstein.

Portraits of Courage highlights these elders' unique experiences with bigotry and discrimination and their journeys toward resilience and healing. Since the debut, we have been able to share these stories with hundreds of people by holding screenings and panel discussions in Sioux Falls and Yankton.



EDUCATION AND TRAINING

With our educational trainings, we move people from thought into action. For example, our bystander to UPSTANDER training equips listeners with tools to effectively intervene during incidents of discrimination. This year, we gave this training in multiple South Dakota communities, in-person and virtually!



B2U

bystander to UPSTANDER
Intervention Training

SD VOICES
FOR PEACE



RAPID RESPONSE

NO HUMAN IS ILLEGAL

In January, a group of us went to Pierre to listen to Kristi Noem's joint address regarding her visit to the Southern border. We spoke out against Noem's speech through media interviews and social media advocacy with a focus on the facts about the Southern border, as well as the positive contributions of immigrants in South Dakota.



HATE HAS NO HOME IN SOUTH DAKOTA



Together with a coalition of local organizations and community leaders, we released a joint statement denouncing the return of an Islamophobic speaker hosted by the SD Military Heritage Alliance. We condemned the dangerous rhetoric meant to create fear in our community and will continue to work to create a South Dakota where all are welcomed, included, and able to live without fear.

OUTREACH AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

We have always believed in meeting communities where they are. This year, that included tabling at community events and going door-to-door to thousands of Sioux Falls households. Through this work, we were able to directly target communities who need our resources the most, providing them with information on Medicaid Expansion and voter registration.

12,500

households reached
through door-to-door
canvassing



Building a South Dakota that is inclusive means helping everyone be informed on what's on the ballot. This election cycle, we distributed translated sample ballots available in English and Spanish, with Amharic, Arabic, and Nepali translations available on our website.

25,000

translated sample ballots
distributed via mail and
at community events



IMMIGRANT ALLIES FORUM

In December, we hosted an immigrant allies forum in collaboration with the SD DREAM Coalition, with over 100 people in attendance online and in person. At this forum, we educated people on their rights, how to effectively be allies, and established six action teams to help support, educate, and advocate for immigrants in our community.



2024 GALA

Our Gala was at the end of a divisive and stressful election cycle. Advocating for the dignity and value of immigrants, refugees, and Muslims, who were particularly targeted this cycle, is the core to who we are as an organization.

The Gala brought together our friends and supporters to highlight our work and accomplishments. We celebrated with music, dance and food. Remembering we are stronger together in community during uncertain times brought all of us hope.

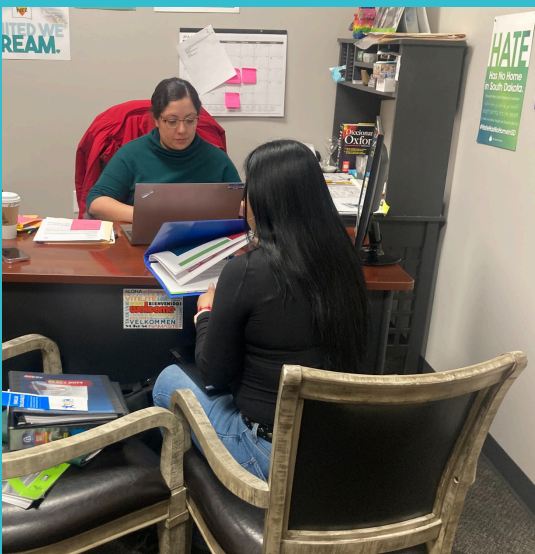


Thank you to the Perks with the Pros fundraiser participants:

- Brienne Maner
- Taneeza Islam
- Nikki Gronli
- Vaney Hariri
- Julian Beaudion
- Benson Lagat
- Kimberly Munoz
- Zack Dresch
- Jennifer Weiss
- Mato Wayuhi

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

Our Community Health Workers use their bilingual skills to advocate for clients and help them access essential social and medical resources. Each client gets referred to other services in the area including Medicaid, SNAP, WIC, and Immigration Services, so they can build their lives in South Dakota.



480 clients served in 2024

106 Medicaid assistance

80 SNAP assistance

40 WIC assistance

LEGAL SERVICES

South Dakota Voices for Peace is the only organization in the state providing free immigration legal services and representation to children in immigration court and immigrant survivors of crime. At the end of 2024, we had **80** active immigration cases, with **50** more on our waitlist.

This year our clients included:



30

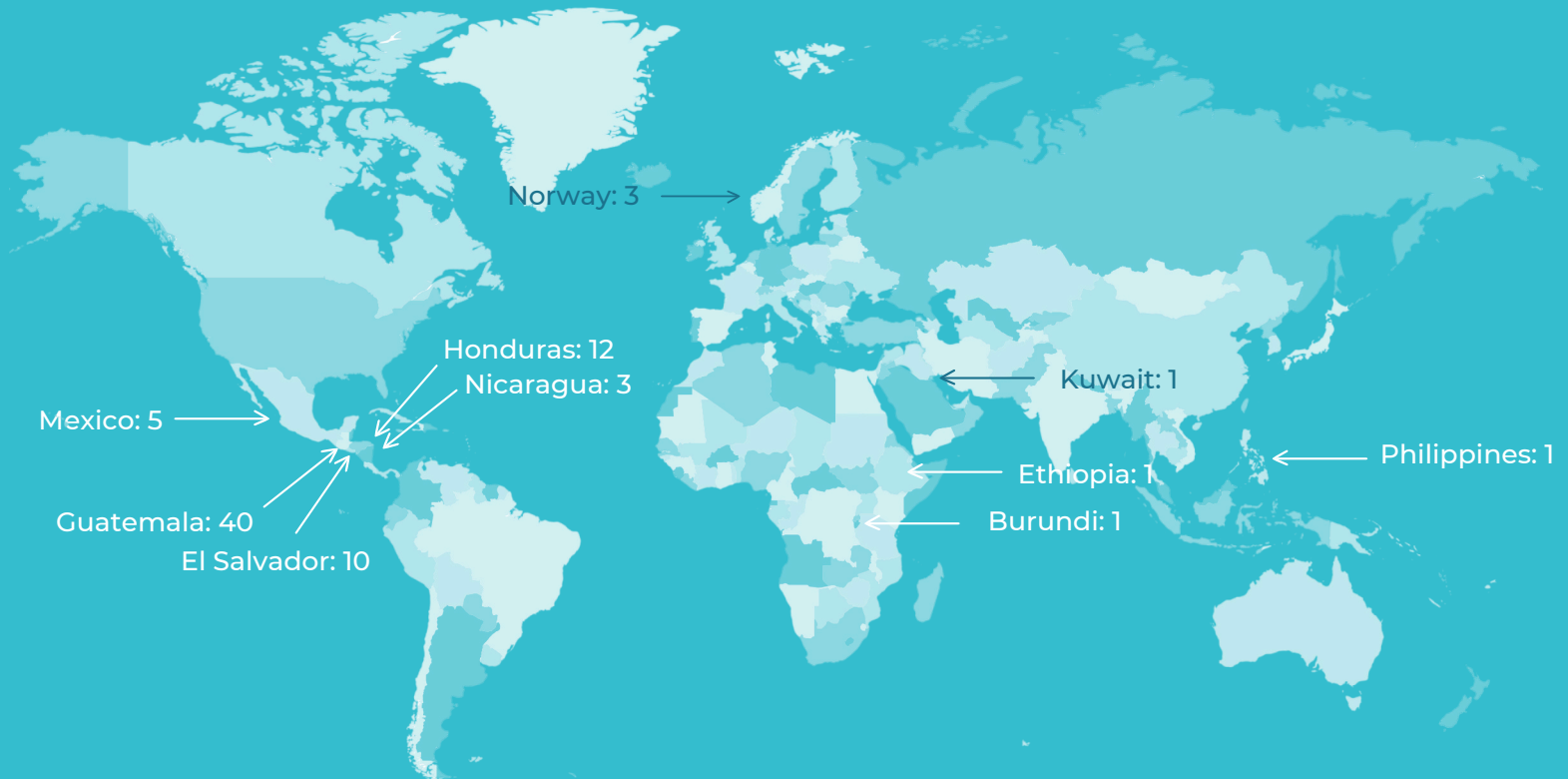
adult immigrant
survivors of crime.

47

children, ranging
in age from
8 to 24 years old.



WHERE ARE OUR CLIENTS FROM?



PATHWAYS TO CITIZENSHIP

17

clients eligible for Asylum

prove past persecution of well founded fear of future persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or "particular social group."

20

clients eligible for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status

Special Immigrant Juvenile status is granted to children under 21 who prove they have been abused, neglected or abandoned by one parent and it is not in the child's best interest to return to home country.

15

clients eligible for U-Visas

must suffer from mental or physical abuse from qualified crime and are helpful to law enforcement in investigation or prosecution.

6

clients eligible for VAWA

victim is an abused spouse, parent or child of a U.S. Citizen or LPR abuser.

2024 LEGAL SUCCESSES

75

applications and motions filed to the court so clients can get on a pathway to citizenship.

6

motions filed to administratively close immigration court cases.

Applied for

20

work permits

9

state court guardianships and custody orders

Filed successful applications for pathways to U.S. citizenship, including:

6

U Visa cases

5

SIJ cases

4

T Visa cases

Over **7,000** hours invested in legal advocacy.



476 email inquiries



2092 calls received

MEDIA MENTIONS

We raise awareness, educate, and advocate through our appearances in the local media. This year, we appeared on news outlets to educate about Ramadan, raise awareness about our translated sample ballots, and promote Portraits of Courage, along with many other appearances Our CEO, Taneeza Islam, has become a trusted resource on immigration for both local and national journalists.

33

Media Mentions

KELOLAND LIVING

The courage of storytelling

Posted: May 29, 2024 / 03:02 PM CDT

Updated: May 29, 2024 / 03:37 PM CDT

HEAR THEIR STORIES.

LEARN FROM THEIR WISDOM.

BE INSPIRED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

KELOLAND LIVING

PORTRAITS OF COURAGE

KELOLAND LIVING

SF

SIMPLIFIED

SUPPORT OUR WORK

ABOUT US

NEWS

WELCOME GUIDE

SIMPLIFIED PRESENTS

COMMUNITY

This nonprofit is helping get out the vote in multilingual communities

South Dakota Voices for Peace has translated and distributed more than 25,000 sample ballots to help multilingual communities prepare for Election Day.

MEGAN RAPOSA

25 OCT 2024 • 2 MIN READ

News

Local and National News Stories

LOCAL NEWS

Ramadan and giving back

by: Lauren Soulek

Posted: Mar 22, 2024 / 04:56 PM CDT

Updated: Mar 22, 2024 / 05:22 PM CDT

Taneeza Islam

KELOLAND LIVING

SOCIAL MEDIA

This year, we were able to educate thousands through our presence across social media. We use our platforms to inform, connect with community, and educate.

One of our educational social media campaigns is Fraud Friday. This series provides multilingual tips about avoiding immigration fraud.



151,700 views
12,800 interactions
+450 followers



65,600 views
3,200 interactions
+223 followers



114 messages

FRAUD FRIDAY

TIP: Be sure to check that your immigration attorneys are qualified by the SD Bar Association.



VIERNES DE FRAUDE

TIP: Asegúrese que sus abogados de inmigración estén en regla con la Asociación de la Barra de abogados de SD.



FINANCIAL REPORT

| INCOME | 2024 | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 | 2020 | 2019 | 2018 |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Grants & Contributions | \$642,791 | \$657,845 | \$510,480.17 | \$537,048.88 | \$300,662.16 | \$157,933.62 | \$117,407.86 |
| Other - PPP Loan | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$27,809.67 | \$80.00 | \$0.00 |
| TOTAL INCOME | \$642,791 | \$657,845 | \$510,480.17 | \$537,048.88 | \$328,471.83 | \$158,013.62 | \$117,407.86 |

| NET ASSETS | 2024 | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 | 2020 | 2019 | 2018 |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Assets | \$309,310 | \$319,786 | \$405,579 | \$462,296.67 | \$400,265.96 | \$230,691.91 | \$129,933.60 |
| Liabilities | \$3,809 | \$0.00 | \$2,385.69 | \$11,479.11 | \$3,861.08 | \$1,126.45 | \$0.00 |
| NET ASSETS | \$305,442 | \$403,193 | \$403,193.34 | \$450,817.56 | \$396,404.88 | \$229,565.46 | \$129,933.60 |

| EXPENSES | 2024 | DISTRI-BUTION | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 | 2020 | 2019 | 2018 |
|----------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| Program | \$583,463 | 79% | \$590,024 | \$370,489.65 | \$529,327.62 | \$116,935.49 | \$50,595.60 | \$7,406.67 |
| Support | \$153,216 | 21% | \$150,806 | \$187,614.74 | \$82,322.83 | \$22,505.62 | \$7,786.16 | \$3,574.67 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | \$736,779 | | \$746,252 | \$558,104.39 | \$611,650.45 | \$139,441.11 | \$58,381.76 | \$10,981.34 |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In-Kind Donors

DJ Frank Fuego

Megan Grode Wolters

Bravely Made Media and Daniel Bergeson

ELBO Computing Resources

Mexlcan Catering

First Congregational Church, Sioux Falls

Minuteman Press

First Interstate Bank

Gala Sponsors

Anonymous

Ann Waltner and Rolf Olson

Eide Bailey

Southwestern Dental

Sanford

Julie Kelley and the Kelley Family

AARP South Dakota

Murphy Business Sales

First Premier Bank Premier Bankcard

First Congregational United Church of Christ, Sioux Falls

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grantors

Acacia Center for Justice

Amalgamated Fund

Bush Foundation

Community Health Association of the Dakotas

Community Catalyst

Immigrant Justice Corps

Improving Criminal Justice Response (SD Attorney General)

JM Kaplan

Ms. Foundation

Northwest Area Community Foundation

Rise Together Fund/Proteus

RWN Foundation

Sanford Foundation

SD Department of Health

SD Department of Public Safety

SD Humanities Council

Sioux Falls Community Foundation

SD Network Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault - Legal Assistance
for Victims Grant

Yankton United Way

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