

# IMMIGRATION POLICY IN THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

## **Day 2, Session 1: Movement Lawyering During the Biden Administration**

### **Sameer Ashar – Moderator**

Sameer Ashar has worked with students to defend immigrants in deportation proceedings and low-wage workers in litigation against exploitative employers in clinics at five law schools. He has also worked with students on numerous policy advocacy and community education projects in collaboration with immigrant and labor organizations in California, New York, and Maryland. Ashar writes about law, lawyering, and social movements across multiple subject areas, including labor law, immigration law, and the legal profession. The focus of his scholarship is on how law and lawyering both inhibits and enables collective action against racial and economic subordination. Ashar has published most recently in *Clinical Law Review*, *Law & Contemporary Problems*, *Fordham Law Review*, *Daedalus*, and *UCLA Law Review* and is the inaugural recipient of the Stephen Ellmann Memorial Clinical Scholarship Award, given by the AALS Section on Clinical Education.

### **Jacinta Gonzalez – Panelist**

Jacinta González is a Senior Campaign Organizer with Mijente and is based in Phoenix, AZ. Previously, she worked at PODER in México, organizing the Río Sonora River Basin committees against water contamination by the mining industry. Jacinta was the lead organizer for the New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice Congress of Day Laborers (2007-2014). In Louisiana, González helped establish a base of day laborers and undocumented families dedicated to building worker power, advancing racial justice, and organizing against deportations in post-Katrina New Orleans.

### **Amaha Kassa – Panelist**

Amaha Kassa is founder and Executive Director of African Communities Together, a national membership organization of African immigrants and their families which he founded in 2012. Amaha has worked as a labor and community organizer for 25 years. Amaha is a licensed attorney who earned his law degree from UC Berkeley and his Master's in Public Policy from Harvard Kennedy School. He is an immigrant from Ethiopia.

African Communities Together (ACT) is an organization of immigrants from Africa and their families. ACT empowers African immigrants to integrate socially, get ahead economically, and engage civically. We connect African immigrants to critical services, help Africans develop as leaders, and organize our communities on the issues that matter. ACT was founded in 2012 by a first-generation Ethiopian immigrant organizer to address the “organizing gap” in African immigrant communities. Since launching as an organization, ACT has built a base of thousands of

African immigrants, connected thousands of community members to legal services, developed and engaged hundreds of grassroots leaders, and waged multiple successful policy campaigns.

### **Muneer Ahmad - Panelist**

Muneer Ahmad is Deputy Dean for Experiential Education, Sol Goldman Clinical Professor of Law, and Director of the Jerome N. Frank Legal Services Organization at Yale Law School. He co-teaches in the Worker and Immigrant Rights Advocacy Clinic (WIRAC). In WIRAC, he and his students represent individuals, groups and organizations in both litigation and non-litigation matters related to immigration, immigrants' rights, and labor, and intersections among them. He has represented immigrants in a range of labor, immigration, and trafficking cases, and for three years represented a prisoner at Guantanamo Bay; he has written on these and related topics. His scholarship examines the intersections of immigration, race, and citizenship in both legal theory and legal practice. Previously, he was Professor of Law at American University Washington College of Law. Prior to joining the faculty at American in 2001, he was a Skadden Fellow and staff attorney at the Asian Pacific American Legal Center in Los Angeles. He clerked for the Hon. William K. Sessions III in the U.S. District Court for the District of Vermont.

## **Day 2, Session 2: The Biden Administration's First 100 Days in Immigration: A Conversation with Secretary Mayorkas**

### **The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas**

Alejandro Mayorkas was sworn in as Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security by President Biden on February 2, 2021.

Mayorkas is the first Latino and immigrant confirmed to serve as Secretary of Homeland Security. He has led a distinguished 30-year career as a law enforcement official and a nationally-recognized lawyer in the private sector. Mayorkas served as the Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security from 2013 to 2016, and as the Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services from 2009 to 2013. During his tenure at DHS, he led the development and implementation of DACA, negotiated cybersecurity and homeland security agreements with foreign governments, led the Department's response to Ebola and Zika, helped build and administer the Blue Campaign to combat human trafficking, and developed an emergency relief program for orphaned youth following the tragic January 2010 earthquake in Haiti. Mayorkas also created the Fraud Detection and National Security Directorate to better ensure the integrity of the legal immigration system.

Mayorkas began his government service in the Department of Justice, where he served as an Assistant United States Attorney in the Central District of California, specializing in the prosecution of white-collar crime. After nearly nine years as a federal prosecutor, he became the youngest United States Attorney in the nation, overseeing prosecutions of national significance, including the investigation and prosecution of financial fraud, violations of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, public corruption, violent crime, cybercrime, environmental crime, international money laundering, and securities fraud.

Mayorkas received his bachelor's degree with distinction from the University of California at Berkeley and a law degree from Loyola Law School.

## **Day 2, Session 3: Asylum and Other Humanitarian Protections - The Short and Long Term**

### **Tendayi Achiume – Moderator**

E. Tendayi Achiume is Professor of Law at UCLA School of Law, and former Faculty Director of the UCLA Law Promise Institute for Human Rights. She is also a Research Associate with the African Centre for Migration and Society at the University of Witwatersrand, and the Refugee Studies Center at Oxford University. The current focus of her work is the global governance of racism and xenophobia; and the legal and ethical implications of colonialism for contemporary international migration. More generally, her research and teaching interests lie in international human rights law, international refugee law, international migration, and property.

In November 2017, the United Nations Human Rights Council appointed Professor Achiume the UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, making her the first woman to serve in this role since its creation in 1993. In 2016, she was appointed to co-chair the 2016 Annual Meeting of the American Society of International Law (ASIL), and she is currently the co-chair of the ASIL Migration Law Interest Group.

Achiume clerked for Deputy Chief Justice Dikgang Moseneke and Justice Yvonne Mokgoro on the Constitutional Court of South Africa. Following her clerkships, she was awarded the Bernstein International Human Rights Fellowship to work for the Refugee and Migrant Rights Project unit at Lawyers for Human Rights in Johannesburg. Professor Achiume also taught on the faculty of the International Human Rights Exchange Programme based at the University of the Witwatersrand. She then joined the New York office of Sullivan & Cromwell LLP as a litigation associate. Immediately prior to her current appointment she was the second recipient of Binder Clinical Teaching Fellowship at UCLA School of Law.

She earned her B.A. from Yale University and her J.D. from Yale Law School. She also earned a Graduate Certificate in Development Studies from Yale.

### **Guerline Jozef – Panelist**

Guerline M. Jozef is a woman on the move with a passion to serve her community. An activist, servant, mother, sister, niece, and wife, Ms. Jozef dedicates her life to bring awareness to issues that affect us all locally and globally, including immigration, socioeconomic and racial justice, domestic violence, and child sexual abuse.

Ms. Jozef is the co-founder and executive director of the Haitian Bridge Alliance, which assists thousands of Haitians and other migrants who have endured a dangerous journey from their native countries to the U.S.-Mexico border via South America, crossing as many as 10 countries in search of a better life in the United States.

Ms. Jozef created “Tales from the U.S.-MEXICO borderlands and Beyond,” an immigration information session focusing on Black immigrants at the borderlands and beyond. She is also a co-creator of "Faith in Action and Immigration Justice Movement" in Southern California, a four-part immigration program for both impacted communities and allies. Ms. Jozef uses her platform FYI (For Your Inspiration) Radio located in Mission Viejo with correspondents in Africa to give a voice to the voiceless coast to coast and around the world.

### Jaya Ramji-Nogales – Panelist

Jaya Ramji-Nogales is Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the I. Herman Stern Research Professor at Temple University’s Beasley School of Law, where she teaches Refugee Law and Policy and supervises the Temple Law Asylum Project. Her current works assess refugee law under the Trump administration, including THE END OF ASYLUM, co-authored with Georgetown Law Profs. Andrew I. Schoenholtz and Philip G. Schrag; a comparative look, with co-author Tally Kritzman-Amir, at nationality bans in Israel and the United States; and an evaluation of refugee rhetoric in the United States since the Refugee Act of 1980. Prof. Ramji-Nogales has also examined law and policy responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, including Freedom of Movement, Migration & Borders, comparing EU and US responses, co-authored with Prof. Iris Goldner Lang of the University of Zagreb, as well as an open-access volume with articles from authors throughout the Americas, Europe, and Israel entitled Migration in the Time of COVID-19: Comparative Law and Policy Responses, co-edited with Prof. Goldner Lang. A recent article, Cultivating Normative Authority: The Biden Administration, Migration, and the International Legal Order, in the *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW UNBOUND* explains how the Biden administration should address these challenges to the international refugee law regime.

### Erika Pinheiro – Panelist

As Litigation and Policy Director of the direct legal services non-profit Al Otro Lado, Erika Pinheiro leads her organization's efforts in filing class action lawsuits challenging policies that restrict access to the US asylum system. Al Otro Lado also litigates on behalf of disabled and medically vulnerable migrants in ICE detention and at the border. Her team has reunified dozens of separated families, including parents who were deported without their children, and provided legal and humanitarian support to thousands of migrants. Erika also provides on-the-ground context regarding US border policies to the White House, state Attorneys General, members of the US Congress and California elected officials. Before joining Al Otro Lado, Erika administered one of the largest DACA programs in California, as well as representation programs for Unaccompanied Children. She also oversaw high-volume Legal Orientation Programs at immigration detention facilities holding adults and unaccompanied children. Erika holds a JD and MPP from Georgetown University.