ICARE: Immigrant Children Advocates’ Relief Effort - Attorney

About the project

In August 2014, in response to the growing number of unaccompanied minors crossing the U.S.’s southern border, seven non-profit legal service organizations formed the ICARE Coalition. This coalition provides legal representation to the unaccompanied minors who are in removal proceedings before the New York Immigration Court. The coalition includes The Legal Aid Society, The Door, Catholic Charities, Central American Legal Assistance, Make the Road New York, Safe Passage, and Kids in Need of Defense. Of these seven, three –The Legal Aid Society, Make the Road New York, and The Door– rely on volunteers to ensure that there are sufficient resources at Court to assist all children in need. Specifically, these three organizations staff the unaccompanied minors’ priority docket on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and, on those days, screen unrepresented unaccompanied minors for immigration relief.

How to volunteer

Individuals can volunteer with the nonprofit legal service providers working at the NYC Immigration Court, at 26 Federal Plaza. Attorney and non-attorney volunteers are welcome.

Opportunities include:

**Welcome & Runners**
Description: Greet all unaccompanied minors and their families and escort them to the various court rooms.
Experience required: Comfortable working with children. Spanish speaking ability a plus, but not required.

**Spanish Interpreters**
Description: Assist with interpreting during intake interviews.
Experience required: Spanish speaking. Immigration experience a plus, but not required.

**Initial Screeners**
Description: Work with unaccompanied minors to complete the initial screening questionnaire; this includes background and contact information.
Experience required: Comfortable working with children & victims of trauma. Spanish speaking ability required.

**Legal Screeners**
Description: Interview children & screen their case for legal merit & eligibility for relief.
Experience required: Comfortable working with children & victims of trauma. Immigration knowledge (specifically SIJS and/or Asylum experience) or the ability to commit to at least 4 volunteer shifts required. Spanish speaking ability a plus.

To volunteer, contact Cynthia Hackett at CMHackett@legal-aid.org. Your email must include the following:

1. “UAM Volunteer Inquiry” in the Subject line
2. The Volunteer Role (from chart above) you are seeking to fill
3. The date you would like to volunteer
4. The firm, law school, or organization you are affiliated with, if any