

ACT FOR RELIEF



BISHOP MINERVA G. CARCAÑO

Bishop Minerva G. Carcaño is a native of Edinburg, Texas. A third generation Methodist she experienced the call to ordained ministry as a child though at that moment in her life she only knew that she felt called to live in the church. The church has been her home throughout her life.

She continues to help lead the the Interagency Task Force on Immigration for the United Methodist Church, and is a lead spokesperson on matters of immigration reform for the Council of Bishops. In 2013, she was one among 14 religious leaders who were invited to the White House by President Barack Obama to consult with him about immigration reform.

Bishop Carcaño, who has been a leader in advocating for immigration reform, said that she chose to be arrested because some undocumented immigrants were doing so as a form of protest.

“We have come to Washington, DC to tell to President Obama and Congress that kicking out suffering immigrant families and unaccompanied children is not the answer. Immediately stopping the deportations and extending due process to children escaping the violence of drug cartels, gangs and poverty is the just way to respond,” said Bishop Minerva Carcaño, the United Methodist Bishop in Los Angeles.

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REV. JOHN L. MCCULLOUGH

The Rev. John L. McCullough is President and CEO of global humanitarian agency Church World Service.

For more than 67 years CWS has worked to end hunger and poverty among the world's most vulnerable. The agency responds to disasters; helps people recover and rebuild in ways that reduce the impacts of future disasters; supports sustainable food security and economic development programs; provides refugee assistance and immigration services; and advocates for social justice on national and international fronts.

Finding the bold voice is at the very heart of CWS's work. Says McCullough, "Whether the challenge is chronic or in crisis, we dedicate ourselves to working with affected people to hear their needs, then help them access the necessary resources to address those needs and build a foundation for their future."

Within the United States, McCullough and CWS have been outspoken in support of comprehensive immigration reform since 2005.

McCullough has joined forces with some of the nation's most diverse and high profile immigration advocates to speak out for just reform that creates a path to citizenship and ensures family unity for America's 11 million undocumented immigrants.

"As someone who has benefited from the courage and civil disobedience of the leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, I cannot stand idly by as I see unjust immigration laws damage our communities and our nation. It is a moral imperative that we take action now, particularly after the House Republican leadership has miserably failed to enact immigration reform that the majority of Americans roundly support."

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REV. KATHLEEN MCTIGUE

Rev. Kathleen McTigue is the director of the UU College of Social Justice (UUCSJ). Before joining the staff of UUCSJ in 2012, McTigue served for 25 years as a UU parish minister, including 21 years as senior minister to the Unitarian Society of New Haven, Conn.

A core part of her ministries has been public advocacy and faith-based organizing for marriage equality, immigrant rights, economic justice, and peace. Her previous experience

also includes multiple roles with Witness for Peace and a yearlong economic study in Tanzania. McTigue earned a master of divinity degree from Starr King School for Ministry and a bachelor's degree in economics from Stanford University.

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SISTER EILEEN CAMPBELL

Sister Eileen Campbell is vice president on the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas.

She is serving her second term on the team.

Prior to joining the Institute leadership team, Eileen served for ten years as executive director of Mercy Volunteer Corps, an international volunteer program sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas.

For the previous six years, Eileen was administrator of Mercy Hospice in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She also served as administrator for Women of Hope in Philadelphia which consists of two boarding home facilities for chronically mentally ill homeless women.

Eileen serves on the Cranaleith Spiritual Center advisory board. She served in an ex officio capacity on the Mercy Hospice/St. John Hospice Board of Managers and on the Hall-

Mercer Health/Mental Retardation Center -Community Council.

“The Sisters of Mercy stand in solidarity with our immigrant brothers and sisters seeking safety and peace within U.S. borders. We strongly support executive action that would eliminate mass deportations, which obstruct the development of children, and further jeopardize vulnerable populations,” shared Sister Eileen Campbell, Vice President of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy. “We urge the President to renew Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status for those who have it, to extend the application timeline, and to implement a similar process of relief for all undocumented immigrants who make contributions to their communities.”

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REV. LINDA JARAMILLO

The Rev. M. Linda Jaramillo is a national officer of the United Church of Christ, the 1-million-member Protestant denomination headquartered in Cleveland, and executive minister of the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries, responsible for the church's work on human rights and social, racial and economic justice. Fluent in both English and Spanish, she is the first Hispanic to serve as a national officer of the church, and is also a former president and vice-president of the UCC's Council for Hispanic Ministries and former co-convenor of the Council of Racial and Ethnic Ministries.

"I am an immigrant."

"My grandfather, many generations removed, was born in 1601 in the New Mexico Territory. It was more than 400 years ago when the land inhabited by our Native American ancestors was part of Mexico before being claimed by the United States. The truth is that my grandparents and much of my family did not

cross the border – the border crossed us. I am proud to claim this family ancestry and refuse to be accused of being a problem to American society."

"For these reasons, on Thursday, July 31, I will stand with my brothers and sisters from the faith community at the doors of the White House and risk arrest in order to call on President Obama to stop the deportations that are breaking our families apart. As a national officer of the United Church of Christ, this action aligns not only with my personal history and beliefs, but also with the beliefs of my denomination, which advocates that no human being is illegal. Since 1995, the UCC has publically called for a fair and just immigration system, and that fight only continues today. Our elected leaders must stop deporting children, mothers, fathers, grandparents, workers, and the members of our congregations. It defies human dignity and denies our rich history as a nation of immigrants."

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RABBI JASON KIMELMAN-BLOCK

Rabbi Jason Kimelman-Block is Rabbi-in-Residence and Deputy Director of Bend the Arc Jewish Action, where he focuses on bringing a Jewish ethical voice to the halls of power in Washington DC. Previously, as Bend the Arc's Senior Director of Leadership Initiatives, he directed the Selah Leadership Program, where he continues to work on training, curriculum design and strategic direction.

He is the co-editor and co-author of *Just: Judaism. Action. Social Change* and served as the Director of the PANIM Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values. He received his rabbinic ordination from The Jewish Theological Seminary of America and his B.A. in Political Science from Grinnell College. Rabbi

Kimelman-Block is also a founding member of Eastern Village Cohousing, where he lives with his wife Devora and their four children.

"In each generation, America must choose what kind of country we want to be. Will we remain true to our values as a nation of immigrants, a nation with its doors open, that says in the words of the American Jewish poet Emma Lazarus "Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free?" Or...will we take a narrow path? The American Jewish community calls upon President Obama to take a strong stand on the side of humanity and go big on administrative relief."

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GUSTAVO TORRES

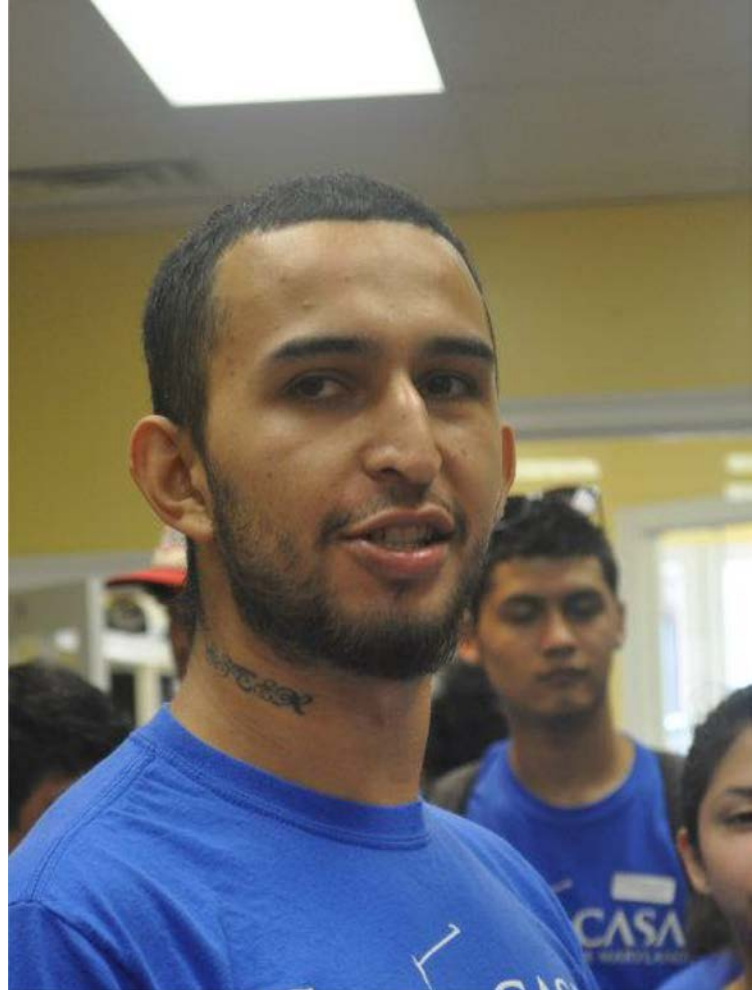
A native of Colombia, Gustavo moved to the United States in 1991 to the sanctuary city of Takoma Park, Maryland. First hired at CASA as a day laborer organizer, Gustavo has built the largest immigrant services and advocacy organization in the DC metropolitan region.

While the family of CASA organizations has provided critical services over 29 years of existence, the immigration crisis continues to impact its more than 50,000 members on a daily basis.

According to Gustavo, "I am here today because my members are suffering and my community is devastated. President Obama, I supported you, we supported you, and we know you can eradicate the crisis that immigrant communities are confronting. President Obama, I believe in a United States where CASA Members can live and raise their family and I am asking you to do the same."

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MISA GARCIA

Misa Garcia gives new meaning to the word “ambition.” Having come to the United States six years ago with his brothers and sister, Misa originally had difficulty finishing high school. Misa, however, realized that in order to achieve his goals, he had to get an education.

Upon returning to high school, Misa worked diligently. He is now in his second semester studying business administration at Baltimore City Community College. Throughout his studies, Misa has held a restaurant job and he plans to open his own someday. He also wants to own a Latino grocery that sells products from all over the Spanish-speaking world. Misa hopes to travel widely to expose himself to foreign cultures, and to select the best international foods for his restaurant and store.

Unfortunately, his immigration status makes it difficult for him to leave the United States. Worse is the feeling that he is somehow less than others because he lacks a certain piece of paper.

Misa is well aware that he is not alone--in fact, it is the widespread suffering that the broken immigration system causes his community that most motivates him to fight for “Justice and equality, for all.” He says, “We are all equal. We all deserve justice. That is why we must fight.”

Misa Garcia will do his part in making Washington understand the importance of this fight by performing an act of civil disobedience in front of the White House on July 31st. He will be arrested, but he understands that is the price of fighting for justice.

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ENRIQUETA JUAREZ

Enriqueta is a worker - restaurant cook, office cleaner, mother of two daughters, and an indefatigable community leader and volunteer. Much of her life has been caught up in her many jobs and her role in the immigrant experience. Enriqueta's husband, Oscar, was traveling through Mexico from Honduras when, looking for a place to stay, he knocked on Enriqueta's door. They instantly fell in love, and together they came to D.C. in 2002. They have been doing everything they can to provide a prosperous, secure life for their daughters ever since.

Yellin, 15, wants to be a doctor. Yaquelin, 5, hasn't quite decided yet. But both would be devastated if their parents were suddenly deported and their family torn apart; a crisis faced by too many of the eleven million undocumented immigrants in the United States.

An active member of the Latino community, Mrs. Juarez is too well acquainted with this injustice, and she wants it to end, "I don't just fight for my cause, but for the cause of the eleven million. We work hard. We contribute to the economy. But often we don't get jobs because we don't have papers. I have been discriminated against. I have been sick, with a note from a doctor, but my boss threatened to fire me if I took time off work even though he gave time off to non-Latino workers in the same situation."

"We just want the right to work freely." In the fight for this right, Mrs. Juarez will engage in an act of civil disobedience on Thursday, July 31st. This is just one of the many ways she is committed to ending injustice in the Latino community.

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ÁLIDA ALBA

The oldest of six, Álima Alba has played the role of ultimate big sister. In 2003, her family needed money, but she could not find a job in her home country of Guatemala. In January of 2004, she took the courageous journey to the United States to find work and help support her family. Here she has remained working diligently for the past decade.

Unfortunately, one of her younger brothers who joined her in the U.S. was not so lucky. He was deported back to Guatemala, leaving his four-year old daughter without a father. Alida laments, "It makes me sad that he can't see her. All he wants to do is be there for his daughter." With her brother out of the picture, the girl's mother has remarried, which has been emotionally devastating to Álima and her brother.

Álima demands, "Stop the deportations today! We just want to work and lead normal lives away from drug traffickers. All we ask for is some legal status and a path to citizenship." No matter how hard it may be, Álima has no intention of giving up on fighting for her family economically or politically.

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ANA GONZALEZ

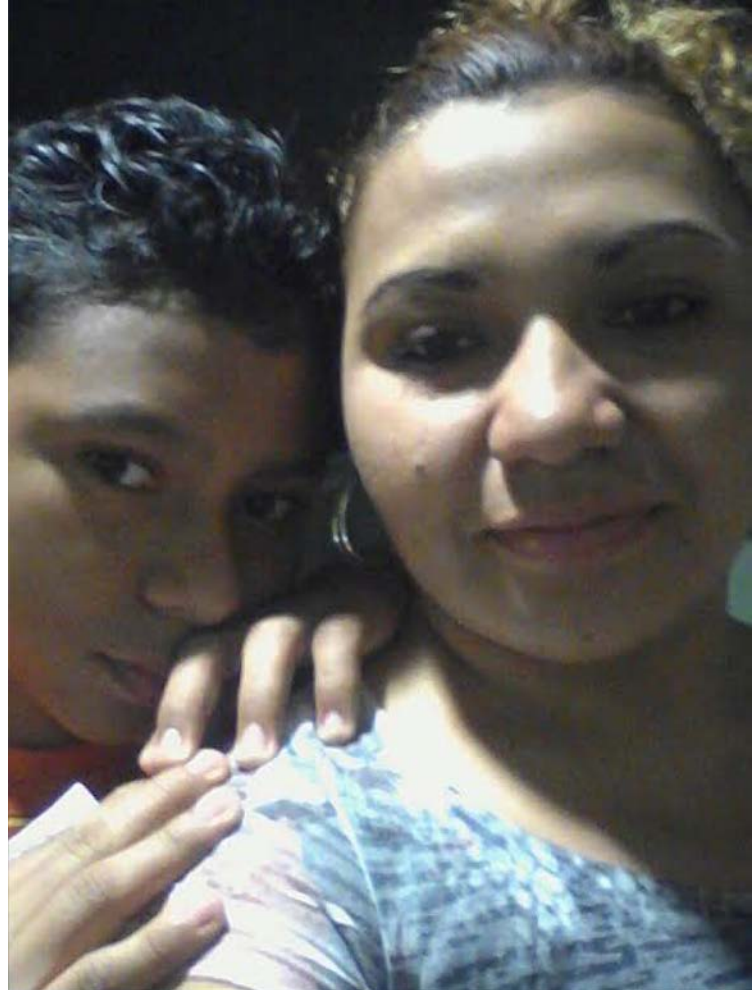
Living in Mexico in 2005, Ana Gonzalez and her husband Jose Antonio found themselves mired in a harsh economic climate that made it nearly impossible to provide for their two daughters, Valeria and Marysol.

They immigrated from Mexico to Virginia where Jose Antonio took up construction work and their son Antony was born. Antony is now eight years old. An active futbolista, he has dreams of playing for the United States in the World Cup.

His parents hope to watch him on television, from their home in Manassas, but the possibility of deportation threatens to disrupt this dream.

Ana has committed herself “to helping the eleven million other immigrants who have the same problem.” She says, “I don’t understand why they call us illegal if we are all equal. We are all equal!”

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ANA LAINEZ

Ana Lainez is embittered about the injustice that plagues her community. She has been unable to find work because of her undocumented status. Her motivations are beyond selfless: to pay for her mother's cancer medication and to provide for her thirteen-year-old son.

Ms. Lainez wants to become a productive member of American society and a positive role model for her son. Unfortunately, the broken immigration system has made it hard to achieve these goals.

he would enact immigration reform. He has not. I am tired of just hearing talk. We need change. We need to move forward."

On July 31st, Ms. Lainez will show the President how strongly she holds these convictions by being arrested in an act of civil disobedience. Like everything else, she says it it will not be for herself, but "for my son, my mother, and the eleven million other undocumented immigrants."

"Mr. Obama has not kept his promises. He said

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PEDRO PALOMINO

The life of Pedro Palomino is proof that firm commitment to community is a source of success.

This commitment has its roots in Mr. Palomino's own experience of alienation as a recent immigrant from Peru. "When I came to Virginia with my son, I didn't know anyone. I didn't feel like part of the community."

As a result, Mr. Palomino and his son moved to Baltimore. Mr. Palomino worked as a journalist in Peru, founding the cycling magazine, "Full Speed," but in Baltimore Mr. Palomino worked in construction, washing plates, and cleaning houses in order to provide for his son.

A desire to return to journalism, and to create a source of information for the latino immigrant community led him to found SomosBaltimoreLatino.com in 2009. SomosBaltimore features articles about local businesses, community projects, and latino political issues. The site also provides

substantial information about crucial resources available to immigrants. SomosBaltimore functions with the support of local businesses and "is motivated by the desire to serve others through information and context that is useful, precise, and truthful, in a way that is simple, objective, and impartial."

An issue of grave concern for Mr. Palomino has been the stagnation of immigration reform in Congress and the suffering it has produced in the Latino community. This concern has motivated Mr. Palomino to commit civil disobedience in protest of conditions he encompassed in one word: "injustice."

"The politicians fill the air with debate and rhetoric but they accomplish nothing. They have a solution right in front of them, but they refuse to enact it."

Against this injustice, Mr. Palomino has resolved, "We must continue the fight!"

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MONICA CAMACHO

Monica Camacho is a remarkably hard-working young woman, bussing tables until midnight to pay for her college classes which start at 8 A.M.. She studies Humanities and Social Sciences, and hopes to learn Arabic (she is already fluent in English and Spanish) so she can work as an interpreter for the United States Government. She currently attends the Community College of Baltimore County and is looking forward to transferring to a 4-year university next year.

Monica wants to work for the United States Government despite the adversity its laws have caused her. Monica's parents brought her to the U.S. from México when she was seven years old and she lives with the constant fear that they will be deported. Monica herself qualified last year for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, but

her large and loving immediate family is still undocumented. Monica is equally committed to protesting injustice as she is to advancing her future. Her acts of civil disobedience on July 31st come from a deep need to make her story heard loud and clear.

She says, "America is built on immigrants. What would the U.S. be without us? It's hard growing up knowing your parents might get deported. That's why we need immigration reform."

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KAREN SALMERON

Karen Salmeron's decision to get arrested on the 31st of July reflects her fearless commitment to activism; a pattern of hers that's been motivated by the pain inflicted upon her family by America's broken immigration system.

Karen was born in Silver Spring, MD to parents who had recently migrated to the U.S. from San Miguel, El Salvador, making her a U.S. citizen while her parents remained undocumented. When Karen was 3 years old, her parents decided that they could no longer stand the constant fear of deportation that dictated their lives as undocumented people living in the U.S. They moved the family back to El Salvador, despite the lack of economic opportunity, knowing that in San Miguel they were at least afforded the promise of their family being kept together- a comfort that could potentially

be stripped at any moment by American immigration authorities.

In 2007, when Karen was 16, rising gang violence in San Miguel began to impact the family's lives. They moved back to Silver Spring, and since Karen was already a citizen, they applied and were thankfully granted permanent residency. Karen is now 23, and balances her time between being a student at UMBC, while also working in the Program Assistance and Community Organizing Department at CASA.

"I am doing this for all the kids being unlawfully turned away at the border," comments Karen, on her decision to be arrested on the 23rd, "And everyone else who, like my parents once did, live their lives in fear of deportation."

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JOVITA ROJAS

For Jovita Rojas, a 19-year old activist and student originally from Mexico, committing an act of civil disobedience on July 31st hits incredibly close to home. Her entire immediate family- mother, father, and two older brothers- are all undocumented residents of the United States.

Jovita was able to acquire Deferred Immigration Status, or DACA, but continues to live in the constant fear that one of her family members could be deported.

The family migrated to the United States from Puebla, Mexico when Jovita was only 6 for economic opportunity and a better life for their family. They settled in Annapolis, and for 13 years have built a life of work and family but never know when they may be ripped apart.

Since a high school guidance counselor connected her with CASA, Jovita has been an active member of her community, attending rallies and volunteering as much as she can. Jovita has chosen to get arrested for the sake of her parents, brothers, and the millions of other undocumented immigrants who work hard each day to provide for their families, yet are plagued by the looming possibility of deportation.

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JOSE PORTILLO

When Jose Portillo, 52, witnessed the cartel violence threatening the lives of his two teenage sons in El Salvador, he did as any father would do: moved him and his family away from the perilous situation and into a safer environment. In 2008, they fled to what they believed would be a safe haven in the U.S., settling in Baltimore. The violence in their home country pushed them out, and the promise of security and economic opportunity in the United States landed them here. "I did what was best for my family," recalls Jose, "As any father would do."

Although the U.S. did offer a safer community environment for the family, as opposed to the gang ridden streets of San Salvador, they are now faced with a similarly threatening reality. Despite the fact that they all work diligently

and follow the law, they live their day to day lives haunted by the possibility of being deported because they are undocumented. This harsh reality has galvanized Jose's decision to be arrested on the 31st of July- as a way of standing up for his family's rights. Furthermore, Jose is committing this act of civil disobedience for what he refers to as, "an immigration reform that seems to be dying, but that must be revived."

Jose's action on the 31st is a continuation of his dedication to activism in the Latino community. He attends every rally and march related to immigration reform and immigrant rights, because he believes in the power and dignity of the growing immigrant community.

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IVANIA CASTILLO

Ivania Castillo, a fearless activist and champion of the immigrant community, will be arrested on the 31st of July in solidarity with and support of the 11 million undocumented immigrants who live their lives each day in fear of being unlawfully arrested, detained and deported. This sobering statistic hits close to home for Ivania when she thinks of her daughter in law, Gladys- a hard-working woman living in America without documents, who currently has four immediate family members with outstanding orders of deportation. Gladys's brother-in-law is currently being held as an innocent man in jail, while his 10-year old son wails each night for his father to return home. "I am doing this for them," Ivania proclaims, "for Gladys, and for the 11 million who are in similarly detrimental situations."

Ivania's dedication to community activism has been galvanized by her background as a war refugee from El Salvador. She fled the violence in the 1980's at age 13, obtaining amnesty in the United States and eventually becoming a U.S. citizen. She feels extremely fortunate to have the privilege of being a citizen, while so many of her Salvadoran and Central American peers remain undocumented- and living in a perpetual state of angst and limbo because of such. For 15 years, she's been active at every rally and initiative related to immigrant rights and immigration reform, along with her 3 children and husband. She even makes time to volunteer with the Red Cross in her home of Prince William County in Virginia. "I have so much to give back to the community," comments Ivania, "and being arrested on the 31st is another way of doing so."

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GUSTAVO RAMOS

Gustavo Ramos remembers--to the very minute--when he first came to the United States on a student visa: August 13th, 1980 at 3:30 pm. His studies in the ministry led to a twenty-year career as a pastor and a deep empathy for the stories of those in his community.

He recalls the story of a young girl born in the United States to an undocumented mother from Guatemala. The girl was born with a medical condition inhibiting her breathing, so that her health required daily medication and special care. When her mother was deported, she was left without anyone to administer her medicine or to coordinate her doctor's appointments.

Most importantly, she was left without the person on whom she'd come to rely on most for comfort and support. Thankfully, members of the community stepped up to take care of the girl's medical needs though there was little they could do to fill the hole in her heart.

Mr. Ramos has frequently been that community member doing what he can to help immigrant families deal with the pain of being torn apart

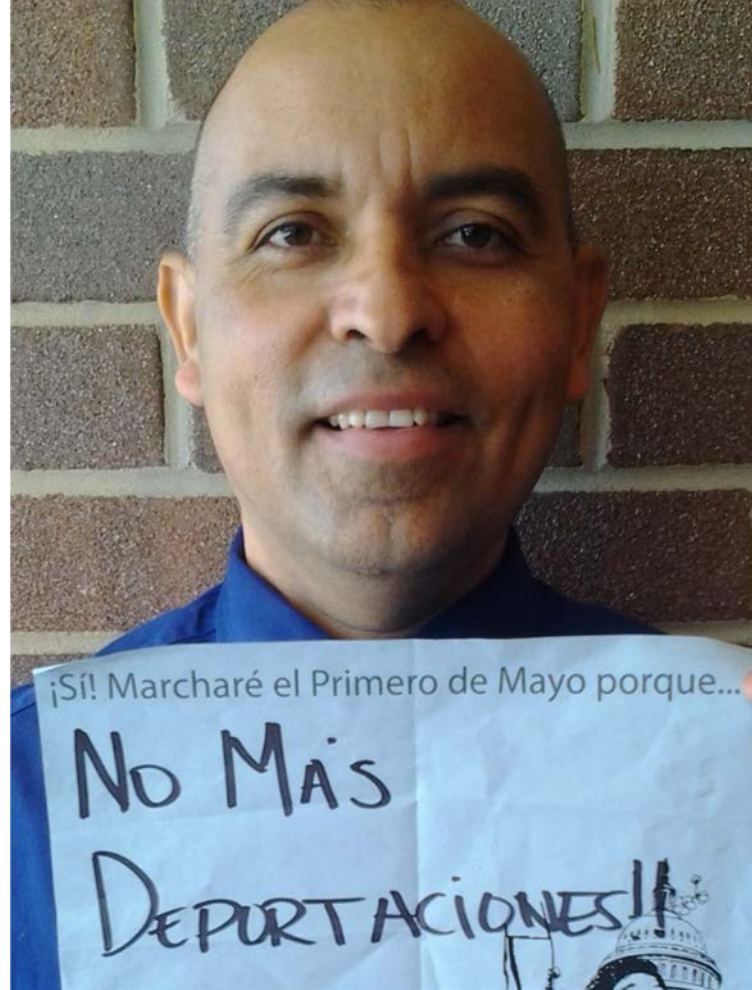
by large, impersonal societal forces. Just a few weeks ago, Mr. Ramos learned that a young Honduran man whom Mr. Ramos knew through the young man's pregnant wife was being detained at the detention center in Jessup, Maryland.

The young man's wife had recently given birth, and she desperately wanted her husband to see their beautiful newborn child. Mr. Ramos drove the woman to Jessup where he watched tears fall from the man's eyes, tears of joy at the miracle of life, but also tears of sadness that he could not hold his newborn child and would be deported without ever having done so.

Mr. Ramos is determined to continue doing what he can to alleviate the distress of those in his community, but he knows that families will continue to suffer as long as congress fails to stop inhumanely tearing loving mothers and fathers from their children. Mr. Ramos refuses to wait idly while politicians talk and families suffer. On July 31st, he will take part in civil disobedience in front of the White House to demonstrate the dire need for urgent and humane immigration reform.

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ANTONIO ALEMAN

"I think about my children. I want them to get ahead. I want them to have opportunity. That's why I came from El Salvador." Antonio Alemán came to the United States in 2003, and this has been his principal motivation ever since. Antonio and his wife have two kids, Eric, 17, and Beatriz, 24. He works hard to support them, but finds it hard to get beyond his job as a delivery driver because of his immigration status. He lives with the constant fear that he will be stopped and deported away from his family.

Antonio knows he is not alone. There are eleven million undocumented immigrants like him who are working hard to support their families, but must contend with severe obstacles in

their professional lives, and live with the constant fear that they may be separated from their families. That's why Antonio is a fighter. Although he himself can't vote, he has mobilized hundreds of Marylanders to fight for families like his. He brought an entire bus of children from southern Prince George's County to protest deportations. Antonio wants to stop the deportations. He wants to allow hard working individuals to fight for the future of their children. That is why he is engaging in civil disobedience on July 31st.

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