Dear Friends of National Justice for Our Neighbors,

It is with great pleasure that I share with you highlights of National Justice for Our Neighbors from the past year. In 2015, our ministry has focused on serving as a refuge to immigrants from around the world who seek safety and protection. This sense of responsibility drives us forward as we support a network that provides free or low-cost, high-quality immigration legal services to low-income immigrants, engages in advocacy for immigrant rights, and offers immigration-related education.

We defend unaccompanied migrant children who are in danger of being deported to violence and possibly death. We enable those seeking asylum to remain here, safely and permanently, without the threat of persecution in their home country. We aid refugees who have endured unimaginable hardship by assisting them with applications for lawful permanent residence. We also help victims of domestic violence and other crimes come out of the shadows and provide for themselves and their families.

Your support enables our staff attorneys and volunteers around the country to engage in this life-changing justice ministry every day.

Thank you for your help!

Sincerely,

Rob Rutland-Brown
Executive Director
Immigration Legal Services

Case Data

In 2015, 14 JFON sites operate 40 clinics around the country and, from January through September, have handled 6,124 immigration legal service cases for 2,685 low-income immigrants including:

- **Advice and Counsel**: 2,538 cases of advice and counsel, allowing immigrants to learn their options under the law through a trusted, high-quality, and compassionate team of staff attorneys and volunteers.

- **Work Authorization**: 1,143 cases that enable eligible immigrants to receive authorization to work in the U.S. by obtaining a work permit, including “DREAMers” who arrived here as children.

- **Family Reunification**: 1,023 cases to allow families to reunite after long separations, or to stay united. This includes helping refugees apply for their green cards as well as enabling spouses, parents, children, and siblings to live in the United States together, permanently and lawfully.

- **Escape Violence**: 1,159 cases that enable individuals to escape from violence, including those seeking asylum in the U.S. due to a fear of persecution in their home country, unaccompanied migrant children, and immigrants (usually women) who experience domestic violence and who can apply to remain in the U.S. without dependence on their abusers.

- **Citizenship**: 261 naturalization cases to guide immigrants through the naturalization process and help them realize their dreams of becoming citizens of the United States of America.
Pictured here are the top 10 countries of origin for new JFON clients from October 2014 - September 2015.
New Immigration Legal Clinics

Justice For Our Neighbors successfully launched five new clinics in 2015: one each in Traverse City and Kalamazoo, Western Michigan, one in Fort Worth, Texas, and two in Houston, Texas.

Each of these clinics advances our central mission: to offer our low-income immigrant neighbors safety and refuge and to provide them with free or low-cost, high-quality immigration legal services.

We now have more than 40 clinics around the country in communities where there is a high unmet need for affordable immigration legal services.

All of our JFON clinics are located in United Methodist Churches or trusted community centers, where staff and volunteers welcome our immigrant neighbors with dignity, respect, and compassion.
This year, NJFON expanded its work on behalf of unaccompanied migrant children (UACs) who have fled the pervasive violence of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

These children are in desperate need of immigration attorneys to help them petition for relief, usually by obtaining Special Immigrant Juvenile (SIJ) status due to abuse, abandonment, or neglect, or by seeking asylum.

Their ability to remain in this country where they are safe and have the opportunity for a better quality of life hinges on the outcome of their legal case.

This year, the United Methodist Committee for Relief (UMCOR) provided a $100,000 grant to support JFON’s work with UACs in Texas, and they have committed an additional $100,000 for 2016.

In addition, NJFON received $50,000 from the Sisters of Mercy West-Midwest Community to expand our work in South Florida and Nebraska with unaccompanied migrant children.

NJFON has created an in-depth handbook for JFON attorneys and other nonprofits detailing how to conduct SIJ cases and has led a webinar and in-person training on the topic as well.
Ending Family Detention

The practice of detaining mothers and children for extended periods of time at detention facilities in Texas and Pennsylvania is expensive, unnecessary, and immoral. Studies have shown that the vast majority of these families have valid asylum claims and that they attend their court hearings as directed.

Rather than pouring money into detaining mothers and children who have fled for their safety, the administration should facilitate access to legal support that can allow for the families to be represented competently and fairly in court.

NJFON has joined other faith groups at meetings with White House staff to urge the administration to end family detention, assisted with a multimedia #endfamilydetention “selfie” campaign (see above), created a petition to President Obama demanding the end of family detention which garnered signatures from many faith leaders, and took part in a march at the detention center in Dilley, Texas, to draw attention to this harmful practice.

As of October 2015, a federal judge has ruled this policy to be illegal and called for it to end. We will continue to engage in this issue to ensure the practice of family detention stops and that these families remain safe, with access to justice.
Noteworthy Events

Presidential Visit

When President Obama came to Nashville, Tennessee, in December 2014 to promote his plans for Immigration Reform, he chose a city with one of the fastest-growing immigrant populations in the United States.

Looking for a venue for his town hall meeting on immigration issues, he also chose Casa Azafrán, a local community center—and the home of Justice For Our Neighbors Tennessee!

JFON Tennessee is the only non-profit in the Nashville area which offers pro-bono legal immigration aid to low-income and vulnerable refugees and immigrants.

2015 Roundtable

In September, NJFON hosted the network’s annual gathering in Grapevine, Texas.

More than 70 JFON leaders convened to connect with one another, discuss new strategies for providing services, hear case studies in strategic planning, compare challenges in board development, learn best practices for fundraising, understand the national legislative immigration landscape, and much more.
The majority of NJFON's financial support in 2015 came from the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), which generously provides $700,000 annually toward our work. NJFON would also like to thank the following supporters from October 2014 - September 2015:

**Defender** ($25,000 and above)
- Sisters of Mercy - West Midwest Community
- United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)
- UMCOR Emergency Grant for Unaccompanied Migrant Children
- United Methodist Women

**Protector** ($1,000 - $24,999)
- Daniel Bahls
- Edith Bryan
- Kim Clarke
- Mary Lee Fitzsimmons
- Dave Franke
- Herb Block Foundation
- Jane Northern
- UMC of the Village, New York City
- Todd Willis

**Rescuer** ($500 - $999)
- Michael Bucek of Frank Law Firm
- Randy and Helen Casey-Rutland
- Christ UMC, Venice, FL
- College Heights UMC, Lakeland, FL
- Jackie Euper
- Kristin Fearnnow
- Mary Hoiles
- David Howe
- Oak Hill UMC, Austin, TX
- Oconee Street UMC, Athens, GA
- John Redmond
- Reisterstown UMC, Reisterstown, MD
- Jen Smyers

**Guardian** ($100 - $499)
- Bob Brown and Becky Rutland
- James and Dottie Dake
- Davis UMC, Davis, CA
- Robert Denend
- Jon Farber
- Roland Fernandes
- First UMC of Decorah, IA
- First UMC of Farmington, MI
- Kimberly Jutze
- Kathy Gilbert
- James Haslam
- Glenda Hill
- Alka Lyall
- Michael Markham
- Owosso First United Methodist Women
- Andrea Paret
- Joyce Rasmussen
- Gene and Martha Jane Rutland
- Rob Rutland-Brown and Grace Hipona
- Marie Shrum
- Helen Shum
- Barbra Snell
- Malissa Turner
- Kenneth and Sue Ward
- Whitefish UMC, Whitefish, MT
- Robert Williams
- Woodland Park UMC, Seattle, WA

**Advocate** (Up to $99)
- Nancy Boyd
- Celeste Caton
- Judith Church
- First UMC of Whitewater, WI
- Jeanette Grenz
- Edgar Heistand, Jr
- James and Lita Hipona
- Suzy Clarkson Holstein
- Janet James
- Nadia Kanhai
- Patricia Knebel
- Anne Ledyard
- Adrienne Lieu
- Tom Lombardi
- TJ Mills
- Amanda Nicol
- Oak Meadow UMC, San Antonio, TX
- Portage Chapel Hill UMC, Portage, MI
- Shelley Ramsey
- Martha Ross
- St. Luke UMC, Austin, TX
- John Thibodeaux
- Nadine Twagirayezu
- Mark Warner
- Yorktown UMC, Yorktown, TX