

# PAIFUP

News from the fight for freedom, safety and dignity for all immigrants detained in Pennsylvania.

April 2021 | Issue 11

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2 CLIENTS RELEASED

8 NEW CLIENTS

10 HEARINGS

## March Recap

One of our client's stories was featured in the Philadelphia Inquirer highlighting the increase in deportations of Asian immigrants. [Read Saroun's story here.](#)

Three community organizations rallied around a client to pay for his \$10,000 bond. Our client is now reunited with his wife and children in Maryland!

Lastly, we met with public officials from Pittsburgh to discuss the possibility of securing local funding to support the legal representation of Allegheny residents.

## Client Success: Hawa

Like so many immigrants, Hawa had more than her share of challenges. Born in Liberia in the early 1980s as the nation collapsed into civil war, much of her family was refugee. Hawa was raised solely by mother, until she died from an infection when Hawa was a young teen. Hawa went to live with other family, but when soldiers came, Hawa's family was robbed at gunpoint. Hawa was beaten, the family home was burned. After surviving for nearly fifteen years in a refugee camp in neighboring Ghana, Hawa's father, who had resettled in the United States, successfully petitioned for Hawa to come to the United States.

After surviving multiple traumas in Liberia and the refugee camp in Ghana, Hawa was diagnosed with severe Bipolar disorder shortly after her arrival. With episodes of severe mania marked by hallucinations, Hawa struggled to maintain employment. Despite multiple hospitalizations, her symptoms were poorly controlled. She was prosecuted for minor crimes, such as creating a public inconvenience.

Hawa was arrested by ICE and detained in York in October 2020--which was amid a major outbreak of COVID-19. Hawa became infected with COVID, causing her to remain quarantined through the end of the year. As a result, court proceedings were delayed. Hawa received representation from PAIFUP when the quarantine lifted in early 2021. Based on a showing of persecution of persons with mental illness in Liberia, where there is widespread belief that mental illness is brought about by engaging in sorcery or other evil acts, and only one psychiatrist serves the entire nation, an Immigration Judge granted protection from removal.

Hawa has been deeply frustrated by her struggles to work and succeed. Hawa says that



her medicine is so important for her to be able to manage her Bipolar, which she feared losing if she were deported to Liberia. Hawa has a daughter in Africa who turns ten this month. Hawa's main priority is to earn money to support her little girl, and ultimately to reunite with her in the United States.

Names have been changed to protect anonymity.

Artwork: [Didier William, Dancing, Pouring, Cracking and Mourning \(2015\)](#)

## Stronger Together: Meet Our Affiliates



Make the Road PA builds the power of Latino and working class communities to achieve dignity and justice through organizing, policy innovation, transformative education, and survival services. [Learn more about their work and/or join a committee here.](#)

## In Other News



### Immigration advocates sue Berks over residential center

Make The Road Pennsylvania and other immigration advocates are suing the Berks County commissioners, saying the board is not publicly sharing information about plans related to the future of the Berks County Residential Center.

[Read more](#)  
[www.wfmz.com](http://www.wfmz.com)



### He's tireless about helping refugee and immigrant families

Khara Timsina seems tireless in his efforts to help others, including fellow refugees from the Asian nation of Bhutan.

[Read more](#)  
[www.post-gazette.com](http://www.post-gazette.com)



### New York to offer COVID aid to immigrants excluded earlier

In the largest program of its kind, New York lawmakers have created a \$2.1 billion fund to aid workers who lost jobs or income during the coronavirus pandemic but were excluded from government relief programs because of their immigration status.

[Read more](#)  
[www.inquirer.com](http://www.inquirer.com)

Catch up on the previous issue here

Questions? Comments? News worth sharing? Send Karina, our PAIFUP coordinator, an email at [ksuarez@pirclaw.org](mailto:ksuarez@pirclaw.org).

**The Pennsylvania Immigrant Family Unity Project (PAIFUP)** is a collaborative of nonprofit organizations in Pennsylvania formed in order to achieve universal representation for detained immigrants in removal proceedings in PA.