



# Adapting *to* Protect

Impact Report | 2025

# Our Mission

Oasis Legal Services empowers low-income LGBTQ+ immigrants who have survived violence and persecution due to their sexuality, gender identity, and/or HIV status by increasing access to quality, culturally responsive legal representation and social services.

In 2025, Oasis stood with LGBTQ+ immigrants navigating heightened barriers to asylum, rapid deportation proceedings, and discrimination in housing and healthcare. Thanks to our donors, we were able to provide culturally responsive legal representation and social services case management to those most at risk, helping clients reclaim safety and dignity. With your continued support, we can ensure that even in the face of systemic challenges, no survivor faces these threats alone.

**“These are people  
who make you feel like  
family. Thank you.”**

**-OASIS ASYLUM CLIENT**



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# Letter from Executive Director



## Dear Friends and Partners,

In 2025, we turned eight years old during one of the most challenging years our clients and staff have faced. Escalating xenophobia, new asylum fees, increased ICE arrests, and expanded detention generated widespread fear throughout our community.

Our team responded quickly and deliberately, prioritizing accurate legal information, safety planning, and in-house social services navigation to meet urgent and evolving needs. We marked one year of providing deportation defense in immigration court and, as affirmative asylum processing stalled nationwide, focused on protecting our clients' due process rights: tracking delayed

cases, adapting to reduced court capacity, and ensuring continued work authorization. We also accepted a case supporting a client detained at the Golden State Annex Detention Center, reaffirming our commitment to those most vulnerable.

This work strains staff and systems, but it is core to our mission. Grounded in our responsibility to diversity, equity, and inclusion, we made intentional investments to retain staff and prevent burnout, including hiring a dedicated Human Resources Manager to strengthen benefits access, improve internal systems, and support staff navigating the emotional demands of our work.

This year's impact report takes readers through all of 2025 month by month, highlighting key immigration policy changes, our challenges, lessons learned, and successes, and we invite you to explore the full year with us, hoping you'll find inspiration, hope, and innovation in the work we do together.

I am deeply grateful to our team, board, clients, and supporters. In a year defined by uncertainty, Oasis remained a place of safety and care.

With gratitude,

**ADAM RYAN CHANG**  
Executive Director

# Letter from Board Chair



## Dear Supporters,

A year into my service as Board Chair, I am proud to have seen Oasis Legal Services meet unprecedented challenges with discipline, courage, and strategic clarity. Amidst an immigration crackdown, new fees, and deep uncertainty for LGBTQ+ immigrants, Oasis adapted swiftly to center and protect our clients. We expanded legal and social supports, countered disinformation, and strengthened solidarity with peer organizations to confront shared challenges together.

Oasis met the moment by reinforcing deportation defense work and by directly challenging

the administration's unlawful attempt to withdraw Public Service Loan Forgiveness from advocates serving undocumented immigrants. While our mission is first to serve those in need, 2025 again underscored the importance of systemic advocacy to protect the legal workforce our clients rely on.

On behalf of the Board, I extend our deep gratitude to Oasis staff, who sustained their commitment to equity and belonging despite extraordinary urgency and burnout. Their perseverance reflects the character and moral courage of this organization.

Finally, none of this work would be possible without our donors and partners. Despite widespread funding cuts, your continued support allowed Oasis to close 2025 with confidence in our financial stability and leadership.

Sincerely,

**RYAN HEMAN**  
Board Chair

# Making a Difference: 2025 in Numbers

Oasis serves clients from around the world, each carrying the weight of persecution for who they are. Many come from Central America, including Guatemala and Honduras, fleeing abusive policing and state inaction amidst anti-LGBTQ+ violence. Others arrive from South America, including Brazil, Colombia, and Venezuela, where transgender women, gender-diverse individuals, and lesbian or bisexual women face increased sexual and gender-based violence linked to their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Our work also reaches asylum seekers from Sub-Saharan Africa, including Nigeria and Uganda, where same-sex relationships are criminalized and simply being visible can be life-threatening. From Asia, including the Philippines, China, India, and Bangladesh, clients escape deeply entrenched stigma, extrajudicial killings, harm by police, forced conversion therapy, and even censorship. And from the Middle East, including Iran and Yemen, LGBTQ+ individuals confront family violence, as well as arrest, detention, and torture, consequences that make home unlivable. These journeys show that the fight for safety crosses continents. At Oasis, we meet clients where the world has failed them.



In 2025, Oasis served clients from 36 countries.

TOTAL INDIVIDUALS

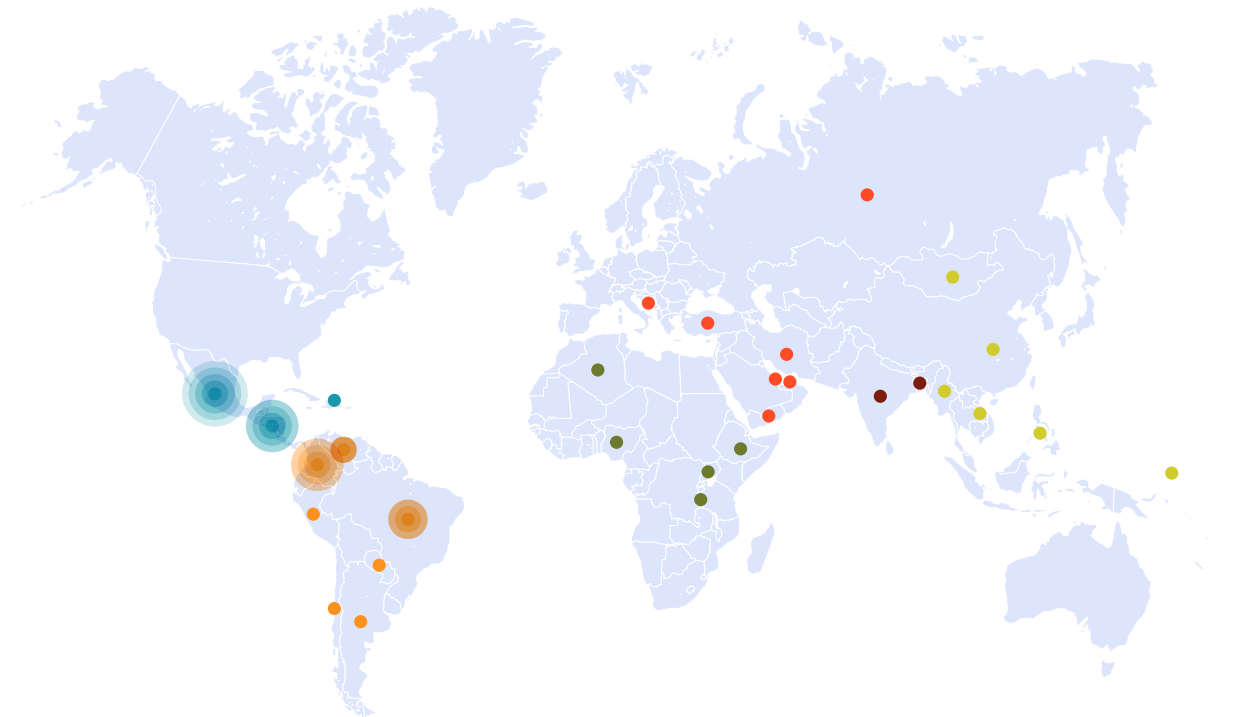
571

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

36

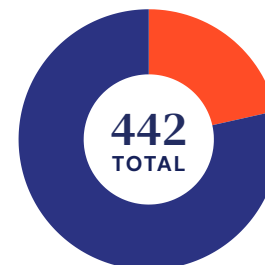
TOP COUNTRY

Mexico



**One in five of our clients served in 2025 is living with HIV.**

\* This data does not include clients whose HIV status is unknown.



**Living with HIV**  
95 individuals | 21.49%

**Not Living with HIV**  
347 individuals | 78.51%

# Making a Difference:

## 2025 in Numbers (Contd.)



**480**

### STRENGTHENED LEGAL ACCESS

In 2025, Oasis strengthened access to immigration justice through legal consultations for 480 queer and trans immigrants.

**95**

### HEALTH OUTCOMES IMPROVED

Our team supported 95 community members living with HIV, connecting them to essential legal services and ongoing care.

**244**

### PATHWAYS TO STATUS

We expanded access to lawful immigration pathways for 118 asylum seekers, 61 LGBTQ+ immigrants pursuing residency, and 65 LGBTQ+ community members seeking U.S. citizenship.

**57**

### DUE PROCESS ACCESS

Strengthened access to due process by supporting 57 LGBTQ+ asylum seekers in deportation proceedings.

**272**

### PEOPLE GAINED INDEPENDENCE

By securing work authorization for 272 LGBTQ+ asylum seekers, we empowered financial independence and advanced equitable employment access.

**1,107**

### CASES ADVOCATED

We continue to represent 1,107 asylum seekers with long-pending cases, securing access to social services and challenging delays in the asylum process.

**41**

### ASYLUM GRANTS SECURED

By winning asylum, we safeguarded their futures and advanced equitable access to protection.

**206**

### LIVES STABILIZED

Through in-house social services case management, 206 queer and trans immigrants obtained critical health, safety, and basic needs, helping shift systemic barriers to care.

**\$18k+**

### CRISIS SUPPORT


Through benefits applications, we delivered \$18,000+ in direct aid, providing immediate relief while advancing fair access to public assistance systems.

**2,500**

### HOURS ADVANCING JUSTICE

Pro bono attorneys donated over 2,500 hours, ensuring client access to legal support while reinforcing pathways for equitable representation.

**These journeys show  
that the fight for safety  
crosses continents. At  
Oasis, we meet clients  
where the world has  
failed them.**





# Headlines

JAN 21, 2025

Trump Orders Dismantling of Federal DEI Programs, Weakening Protections for LGBTQ+ Communities

JAN 21, 2025

Trump Order to End Birthright Citizenship

JAN 21, 2025

Trump Orders Complete Closure of Border to Asylum Seekers

JAN 21, 2025

ICE Allowed to Arrest at Schools, Churches, and Hospitals After Sensitive-Locations Policy Repealed

# January



## Preparing for an Uncertain 2025 Policy Landscape

In November 2024, Oasis launched an emergency effort to submit a historic number of asylum applications for persecuted LGBTQ+ asylum seekers, protecting them from increased deportation risks under the incoming administration. This work was possible through an all-hands-on-deck effort including Oasis staff, an emergency legal clinic with 30 volunteer attorneys from Morrison Foerster, and funding support from partners like Horizons Foundation. ViiV Healthcare's Positive Action Grant Program also enabled linkages to social services for dozens of clients with emergent needs. Through this rapid, community-powered effort, Oasis exceeded our objective, filing strong asylum applications for **88** new clients from deportation and completing work authorization applications for **119** queer and trans immigrants.

**“I found the Asylum Clinic to be well organized and extremely meaningful and impactful. I can't wait to support the next one!”**

— MOFO ATTORNEY



## Welcoming New Board Leadership

In December 2024, Oasis welcomed Ryan Heman as Board Chair. A program director at Humanity United, Ryan brings deep experience in organizing, policy advocacy, and justice-focused philanthropy. Ryan was a committed leader at Oasis throughout the political turbulence of 2025. We also welcomed Rebecca Gordon as our new Treasurer. As a longtime ethics professor and movement activist, her wisdom and care strengthened our governance and updated important internal policies. Their leadership helps ensure we continue to center, protect, and uplift our client community.



## Defending Our Community Through Knowledge

In January 2025, Oasis staff developed a comprehensive *Know Your Rights* (KYR) manual to provide our community with clear, accessible guidance on interacting with immigration authorities and asserting legal protections. The guide offers information, safety strategies, and links to rapid-response and legal support resources, helping reduce fear and uncertainty during enforcement encounters. By creating and widely sharing this resource, Oasis strengthened preparedness and resilience within the queer and trans immigrant communities.

# January (Contd.)



## Opposing the “Remain in Mexico” Policy

On January 16, Oasis joined Immigration Equality, the Los Angeles LGBT Center, the Council for Global Equality, and the National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund in submitting a comment to the U.S. Senate Homeland Security Committee opposing the revival of the dangerous “Remain in Mexico” policy. This policy exposes asylum seekers, especially LGBTQ+ individuals fleeing persecution, to life-threatening conditions, and Oasis’ advocacy helped amplify the urgent need for safer protections.



## Additional Safety Measures

In anticipation of increased ICE enforcement, Oasis implemented safety measures including policies, procedures, and signs indicating our office is a secure space for immigrants.

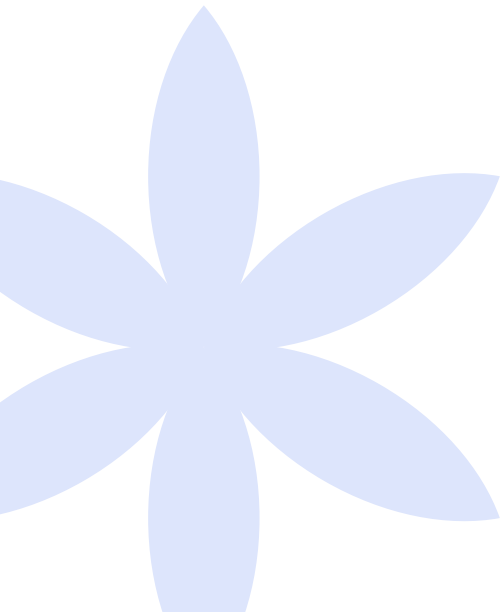
As Director of Operations, Leanne Brotsky implements protocols that strengthen operations to continue to serve and support clients annually, including new tools to communicate with our staff, volunteers, and interns.

Having staff that is reflective of the community we serve means that many on our team are from mixed-status homes and have safety concerns while assisting others. In addition to reinforcing our standard ICE defense protocols, tools for communications to our team. Our clients and staff are *always* provided with flexible work or meeting options.

“To do this work while living with fear yourself is challenging. There’s a lot of uncertainty and stress that takes a huge toll on our team. Oasis is working to support its staff, knowing that the work is not going to slow down.”



— LEANNE BROTSKY,  
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS



# Headlines

# February



**FEB 3, 2025**

Day Without Immigrants Shuts Down Businesses Nationwide to Protest Mass Deportations

**FEB 18, 2025**

Halt on Federally Funded Legal Services for Unaccompanied Children

**FEB 25, 2025**

Federal Registration Requirement for Immigrants Announced



## International Imperial Court System Recognizes Oasis

Over 300 people gathered in San Francisco to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the International Imperial Court System. Hosted by the Imperial Family of San Francisco, the event brought together members of the International Court Council (representing Canada and Mexico), along with esteemed drag courts and families from across the U.S.

The Imperial Court System was founded 60 years ago by José Julio Sarria, the first openly gay candidate to run for public office.

During Act One of the evening's program, Queen Mother Nicole presented Oasis with a generous donation in honor of Her Imperial Majesty, Empress Linda Summers, who reigns as San Francisco's empress in this milestone year.

**“Oasis is supporting over 200 new queer and trans asylum seekers each year—enough to fill this room. Asylum for LGBTQ+ people is about helping all of our clients reach their full potential.”**

**— ADAM RYAN CHANG,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

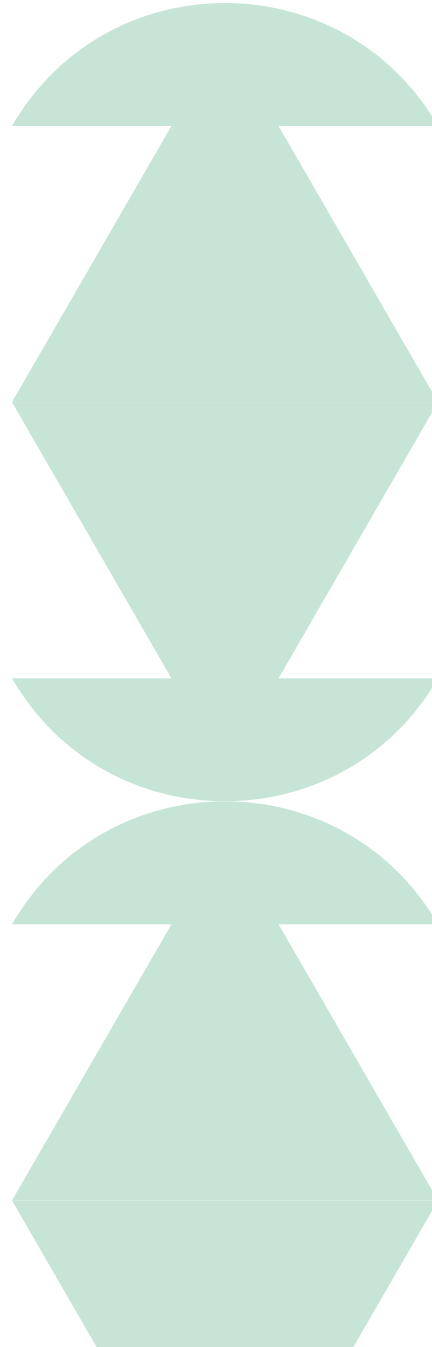


# February (Contd.)



## Client Empowerment Through Advocacy

Our quarterly advocacy newsletter was launched specifically for clients to highlight leadership opportunities in direct advocacy. In response to federal executive orders affecting asylum seekers, we used this newsletter to communicate about *Know Your Rights* presentations, resources and advocacy opportunities. Events like Immigrant Day of Action brought together over 300 immigrant rights leaders and advocates. By centering those most impacted, our client advocacy newsletter remains authentic and effective—protecting individual rights and cultivating a growing network of community-based leaders.



## Prism Foundation Empowers Asian & Pacific Islander LGBTQ+ Immigrants

Funding support from the Prism Foundation (a Bay Area–based nonprofit dedicated to empowering Asian and Pacific Islander LGBTQ+ immigrants and refugees) has been transformative. Through this partnership, we significantly strengthened language access by engaging qualified interpreters and translators fluent in Burmese, Mongolian, Farsi, Mandarin, and Tongan, ensuring clients could safely and fully share their stories in their preferred languages. This investment expanded our reach, deepened client dignity and trust, and reinforced our commitment to serving the most marginalized. Since the partnership began, Oasis has built a robust network of 13 active volunteer interpreters, continued collaboration with [Respond Crisis Translation](#), and strengthened ties with [Asian Law Caucus](#) and [Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach](#), collectively advancing a more inclusive, responsive ecosystem of support for LGBTQ+ API asylum seekers.

**“The Prism Foundation is proud to champion Oasis for its meaningful impact on queer, trans, and immigrant communities. Selected through a competitive process, Prism Foundation recognizes Oasis’ vital role in uplifting and supporting those most impacted by systemic inequities.”**

— THE PRISM FOUNDATION

# Headlines

# March



## MAR 7, 2025

Trump Order Restructures  
Public Service Loan Forgiveness,  
Threatening Nonprofit Attorney  
Recruitment and Retention

## MAR 15, 2025

Gay Venezuelan Asylum Seeker  
(Andry José Hernández Romero)  
Deported Under Alien Enemies  
Act Without Hearing or  
Criminal Record

## MAR 25, 2025

Trump Administration Plans  
To End CHNV Parole Program  
Protecting Cubans, Haitians,  
Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans



## Our Team Shares Their Expertise Through Panel Discussions

In March, Oasis staff brought their expertise to panels and community forums. Our Executive Director joined a ViiV Healthcare–moderated panel with Funders Concerned About AIDS, AIDS United, and the AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania, presenting Oasis’ integrated service model to 300 attendees, highlighting approaches to HIV prevention and treatment. Rachel Kafele, Director of Programs and

Advocacy, spoke at the California State Bar Convening, exploring how legal services can respond to a rapidly changing immigration landscape. Mateo Sánchez, Development and Communications Manager, participated in the Horizons Foundation East Bay Regional Town Hall, engaging community members in discussion about local challenges and mutual support strategies. Anuar Arriaga, Legal Advocate, led a *Know Your Rights* session for Colectivo Acción Latina de Ambiente in the South

Bay, amplifying legal resources for Spanish–speaking trans women.

Through these engagements, strengthened networks, educated peers, and ensured that marginalized communities continue to have access to critical information and support.

# Headlines

## April



**APR 2, 2025**

USCIS Policy Update Limits Sex Recognition to Male and Female on Immigration Forms and Benefits

**APR 7, 2025**

Hundreds of Student Visas are Revoked

**APR 11, 2025**

Policy Announced To Increase Dismissal of Asylum Cases Without Full Review

### **Our New Human Resources Manager Stewards Organizational Wellness**

In April, Oasis invested in long-term organizational sustainability by hiring our first full-time Human Resources Manager. As our team grows, and continues trauma-informed work alongside LGBTQ+ asylum seekers, this role has been critical to strengthening staff wellness, retention, and organizational resilience. Our HR Manager aims to offer support to our team through trainings ranging from benefits coordination to thoughtful organizational development. This investment in internal infrastructure allows Oasis to better care for those doing frontline work, reduce burnout, and build a stable, values-aligned organization capable of delivering lasting impact for the communities we serve.

**“By taking an equity-centered approach to People & Culture, Oasis ensures that everyone on our growing team has meaningful support and accountability to do this difficult work, alongside the care and leadership provided by colleagues.”**

— HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER



### **Rachel Kafele Honored by NYU OUTLaw**

NYU Law’s OUTLaw honored Oasis co-founder and Director of Programs & Advocacy, Rachel Kafele, as its 2025 Alum of the Year, recognizing her leadership in defending LGBTQ+ immigrants. Behind the scenes, Rachel works steadfastly with our team to analyze every new policy and practice, shaping thoughtful legal responses while supporting staff and hundreds of clients with care and steadiness. In her remarks, Rachel called on lawyers to “lean into the privilege we have... to use the law to protect the people and communities we care deeply about,” underscoring both the urgency and the possibility of this moment.

# April (Contd.)



## Undoing the Harm of Immigration Fraud

In April, Ana\* came to Oasis for help at one of our free legal clinics, and we were able to take on full representation for her case in immigration court. Not long after, having experienced Oasis as a place where she was treated with dignity and care, Ana urged her friend Luis\* to seek help when he “received” deceptive “legal services.”

Luis had paid nearly \$2,000 to someone who claimed to be a “paralegal” and promised to handle his asylum case. Months later, he learned that nothing had been filed on his behalf. Not only had he lost his money, but the delay put his chance of qualifying for asylum at serious risk. By the time Luis came to Oasis, he was scared and unsure whether it was too late to remedy the situation.

Our Asylum Fellow, celia, stepped in to help. They worked with Luis to properly submit his asylum application, moved his case to San Francisco Immigration Court, where he now lives, and connected him with a team that helps report immigration fraud so others are not harmed the same way. With proper legal support, Luis was able to get his case back on track and regain hope for a more secure future.

*\*Name changed to protect privacy.*



## Oasis Advocates for Immigrant Rights at Statewide Immigrant Day of Action

In 2025, nine Oasis staff members participated in the California Immigrant Policy Center’s Immigrant Day of Action (IDA), a two-day statewide event that brings together hundreds of advocates to celebrate and defend immigrant rights. This year’s theme, “Rise Up for Immigrant Rights: Empowering Communities, Strengthening California,” directly addressed the

growing anti-immigrant sentiment in communities across the state.

At IDA, we engaged with partner organizations to highlight the impact of state policies focused on expanding professional opportunities for immigrants, securing increased funding for legal services for children, youth, college students, workers, and families, and urging state and local agencies not to participate in immigration enforcement.



# April (Contd.)



## Oasis Celebrates Dedicated Volunteers and Alumni

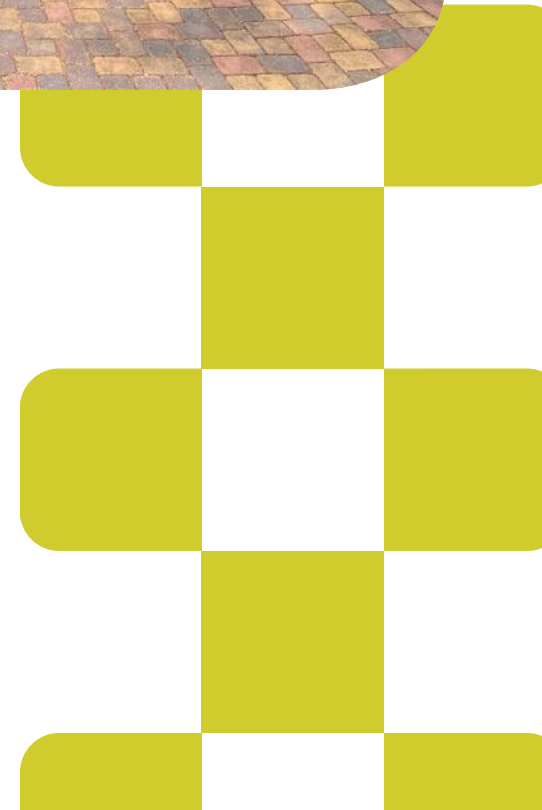
Our team is simply not complete without our amazing community of volunteers, whose dedication, care, and expertise are vital to the safety of, and advocacy for, our clients. This year, we celebrated their contributions at our annual volunteer appreciation event, graciously hosted by longtime supporters Bill and Renée Sherer.

The afternoon celebrated all that our volunteers make possible, from case research to interview prep. Our Social Services Program Director and Director of Programs & Advocacy shared the looming challenges facing the LGBTQ+ immigrant community, followed by client success stories that demonstrate the power of collective care.

Slater Stanley, a former Law Student Intern, closed out the event speaking about how their experience at Oasis shaped them and the path to their current role as a community leader and Staff Attorney at the [AIDS Legal Referral Panel](#) (ALRP).



**We recognize that our communities are stronger together, and creating opportunities to stay connected is incredibly important to the sustainability of the work we do to protect LGBTQ+ immigrants.**



# Headlines

## May



**MAY 12, 2025**

Trump Administration Announces Termination of Temporary Protected Status for Afghans



### Hosting our 3rd Annual Fresno Open House

In 2022, we opened our doors in Fresno to address the existing and growing needs for our services in the Central Valley. Initially sharing an office space with the Fresno EOC LGBTQ+ Resource Center, in 2025, we secured our own multi-year office lease to support our **three staff** and **200+ clients**. In three years, Central Valley clients have grown from 10% to 20% of new cases annually.

This year, we hosted a community game night to highlight the impact of our work. The evening aimed to foster connection, community joy, and reflection. Attendees enjoyed several rounds of bingo while learning about our team and programs. Vasmer (Legal Fellow), Vereniz (Paralegal), and Juana (Social Services Coordinator) shared insights into their work, including ongoing challenges, progress made in their respective fields, and client stories that highlight the strength of our community.

**MAY 27, 2025**

ICE Detains Immigrants at Court Hearings and ICE Check-ins in San Francisco

### Strengthening Berkeley's Sanctuary Infrastructure

Oasis is a founding organization of the Berkeley Immigration Collaborative (BIC), a coalition of local providers (including East Bay Sanctuary Covenant, Multicultural Institute, Social Justice Collaborative, and East Bay Community Law Center) supporting immigrants in our community. We meet quarterly to share data about program capacity, service gaps, and opportunities for joint advocacy, including funding for legal representation and social services. In March, members of the BIC met directly with Berkeley Mayor Adena Ishii to discuss the growing need for expanded immigration legal services in the city. As a direct result of this coordinated advocacy, the Mayor's Office and Berkeley City Council approved funding to ensure Berkeley-based nonprofits can continue providing immigration legal services, strengthening the city's long-standing commitment to immigrant communities.

# Headlines

**JUN 12, 2025**

DHS Terminates CHNV Parole Program and Urges Affected Parolees to Self-Report

**JUN 24, 2025**

USCIS Rescinds Informal Marriage Recognition, Threatening Family Unity for Refugees and Asylees

**JUN 28, 2025**

San Francisco Dyke March Returns After Six Years, Drawing Tens of Thousands for Celebration and Justice

**JUN 30, 2025**

California Budget Ends New Medical Enrollment for Undocumented Immigrants Starting 2026

# June



## HIV is Not a Crime

HINAC 6 (the sixth HIV Is Not a Crime National Training Academy) was held May 31–June 3, 2025, at North Carolina State University in Raleigh. This biennial gathering brings together people living with HIV, advocates, policy leaders, legal experts, public health professionals, and community organizers focused on HIV criminalization reform. At HINAC 6, Oasis’ Executive Director, Adam Ryan Chang, joined national advocates on a panel exploring the intersection of immigration enforcement and HIV criminalization. The panel highlighted how punitive policies disproportionately harm LGBTQ+ immigrants, pushing many away from HIV testing, treatment, and essential services due to stigma and fear of arrest or deportation, which ultimately makes communities less safe and less healthy. Adam’s participation underscored Oasis’ commitment to confronting these overlapping systems of harm through advocacy, education, and community-centered legal support.

## Pride in Asylum Campaign

Every year during Pride Month, we lead a grassroots fundraising campaign inviting our community to sustain our work.

In 2025, this campaign was more critical than ever because some of our institutional funders de-prioritized “DEI” initiatives. The result for Oasis was a loss of more than \$125,000 annually.

Impacted by this loss, we turned to the people who have always been there: our community of individual donors. Together, **217** supporters raised **\$49,761**, directly funding critical services for LGBTQ+ clients seeking stability in a volatile political environment.

**217**  
SUPPORTERS

**\$49k**  
RAISED

**“Thank you for carrying out your mission. Your work is much needed all over our country. As a counselor, I have worked with clients who faced issues in navigating asylum. Knowing that you exist gives me hope.”**

- ANONYMOUS OASIS DONOR

# June (Contd.)



## Training the Next Generation of Immigrant Advocates

This summer, through a California State Bar Fellowship, we welcomed five law student fellows to our legal team. Fellows supported 16 full-scope asylum clients, drafting declarations, and completing applications. They also provided guidance at an asylum clinic, to unrepresented individuals, during a period of intense need. They also advanced our advocacy efforts by drafting two Federal Register comments opposing harmful regulations relating to immigrant youth, updating litigation templates, and researching Ninth Circuit case law. Beyond legal work, fellows connected LGBTQ+ and immigrant community members to services at Pride and immigrant-focused events. We are grateful to work with students, deepening our capacity and advancing our commitment to training the next generation of immigrant justice advocates.

**“My summer with Oasis during a time of tremendous uncertainty in the immigration system reminded me that all of us, no matter our role, have a part to play. I was inspired not only by the hard work and dedication of the attorneys and staff I met and my fellow interns, but also the resilience and bravery of clients seeking asylum. As a law student, I learned not only the substantive law of asylum, but also about the work of providing direct client services that has inspired me to continue to volunteer with Oasis and other legal nonprofits.”**

— LEAK, LAW STUDENT INTERN



## Celebrating Pride Month *and* Immigrant Heritage Month

We recognize the importance of highlighting LGBTQ+ immigrants as we celebrate both Pride and Immigrant Heritage in June. Our team participated in the following celebrations:

- ◆ **Fresno’s Pride Parade: “Throwback to Stonewall”**
- ◆ **Santa Clara County’s Bill Wilson Center Pride 2025**
- ◆ **Emeryville Pride**
- ◆ **Modesto Pride (“MoPride”) 2025**
- ◆ **Tabling at Trans March SF**
- ◆ **World Refugee and Immigrant Day Festival**



### JUL 4, 2025

H.R. 1 Reconciliation Bill Signed Into Law, Imposing New and Ongoing Asylum Fees, Expanding Detention and Deportation Funding, and Restricting Immigrant Access to Public Benefits

### JUL 17, 2025

Trump Administration Orders Termination of National LGBTQ+ Youth Suicide Lifeline



## 2nd Annual Puzzle Paloozas in the Bay Area and Central Valley

We were thrilled to host our 2nd Annual Puzzle Palooza in Berkeley and Fresno! Over 30 teams across both locations came together to compete and show their support for LGBTQ+ immigrants, raising a total of **\$13,656**.

A speed puzzling and fundraising competition where teams race to solve a jigsaw puzzle while rallying to raise crucial funds for vital services, this year's competition recruited even more teams and puzzlers.

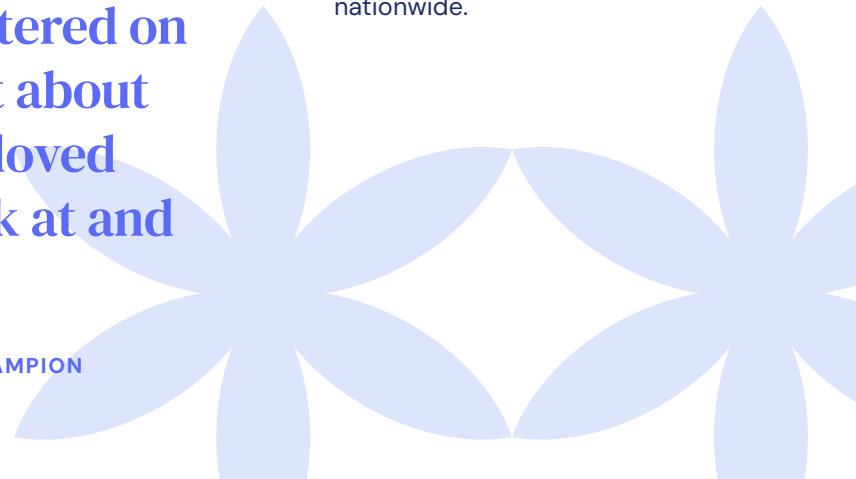
Our custom puzzle featured a brand new design created exclusively for Oasis by renowned illustrator Marcos Chin, an award-winning artist whose work spans books, fashion, and magazines. Marcos' perspective as an immigrant, and queer person of color, informs his approach to creating beautiful art that captures the spirit of our community.

**“It had a really great community feel to it. The event felt more centered on the mission of Oasis than just about puzzles, which added a lot. I loved meeting the people who work at and support Oasis.”**

— ANDREA PENG, REIGNING OASIS PUZZLE PALOOZA CHAMPION

## Supporting Trans Asylum Seekers Amid Policy Challenges

Despite recent transphobic executive actions and policy changes, transgender asylum seekers continue to have strong legal grounds to seek protection. To help navigate this challenging landscape, Oasis worked with the National Immigration Project, Immigration Equality, Ready to Stay, and the National Immigrant Justice Center to create a comprehensive Practice Advisory on presenting trans-based asylum claims. We also teamed up with pro bono law firm partners to compile extensive supporting evidence, offering critical guidance and resources to attorneys and applicants nationwide.



# Headlines

## August



### AUG 6, 2025

Senate Report Finds Widespread Abuse, Medical Neglect, and Human Rights Violations in Federal Immigration Detention Centers

### AUG 6, 2025

ICE launched a campaign to hire 10,000 agents

### A Race Against Time: Securing a Lifeline for Alex

When Alex\*, a non-binary, gay young immigrant, endured abuse, neglect, and abandonment by their parents, their future was suddenly at risk. With Oasis' support, Alex successfully petitioned for their older sibling to become their legal guardian and qualified for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), a critical protection that would allow them to remain safely in the United States.

But time was running out. Weeks of state court delays pushed Alex dangerously close to the SIJS age cutoff, threatening everything they had worked toward. Just one day before Alex would have aged out, an ally within the court helped move the case before a judge, and the long-awaited orders were finally signed.

With only hours to spare, Oasis sprang into action. Rachel Kafele, Director of Programs & Advocacy, personally retrieved the court orders from the San Jose probate court and rushed them to the local immigration field office, advocating until a supervisor accepted the filing. The application was submitted just in time, and it was approved, securing a lifeline and a future for Alex.

**“Oasis has been amazing for me. They gave me the chance to create a new story, a new life without fear. I can be who I really am in this country.”**

\*Names changed to protect privacy.

### Walking Out Free

In August, our Social Services Program Director, Eric, accompanied our client Romeo\* to a routine ICE check-in, which quickly took a frightening turn. Upon arrival, the officer announced his intent to detain Romeo and transfer him to an immigration detention center, despite Romeo having fully complied with all conditions of his release.

Eric immediately stepped in, advocating in real time. He explained how detention would pose serious risks to Romeo's health and safety as an LGBTQ+ individual, while also underscoring Romeo's strong community ties, solid legal case, and committed support team. By grounding his advocacy in both the law and compassion, Eric ensured that Romeo walked out free that day.

In moments like these—when harsh policies feel overwhelming—skilled, determined advocacy can mean the difference between detention and freedom. This is when our work matters most.

# August (Contd.)



## Ink & Impact

When Oasis' founders created our logo, the bird symbolized journey, migration, and hope, while its rainbow wings reflected our commitment to the LGBTQ+ community. So it was profoundly moving when former client Jorge honored that symbol by getting a tattoo of it, saying, "In honor and gratitude for all your support, I decided to get this tattoo." Jorge's journey is a testament to years of dedicated advocacy: granted asylum in 2019, receiving his green card in 2021, and finally taking his U.S. citizenship oath on June 3. Jorge's story is a vivid reminder that the care and advocacy donors make possible can transform lives, and leave a mark that lasts a lifetime.



## Centering Ourselves to Sustain Our Work

Oasis staff gathered at Green Gulch Farm in the redwoods above Muir Beach for our annual all-staff gathering. This year's theme, "Camp Corazón," created space to step back from the demands of the year and reconnect with each other. Over two days, staff engaged in deep listening, peer support, and grounding, exploring individual and collective sources of power, and reflecting on personal and professional growth. Activities ranged from meditation and stretching, to a hike to Muir Beach, an outdoor scavenger hunt, and creative collaging. Our staff reflected on challenges, shared strategies for resilience, and set intentions for sustaining energy and focus in the months ahead.



## SEP 17, 2025

USCIS Expands Citizenship Civics Exam, Raising Question Pool and Increasing Required Correct Answers

## SEP 25, 2025

Trump administration launches ICE crackdown in Illinois while state officials say they received no formal notice of the operation



## Fragomen Receives Ally in Action Award

At our 8th Annual Community Celebration: **Liberation Sounds Like Us**, we were proud to honor Fragomen with the Ally in Action Award for their extraordinary pro bono support. Since partnering with us in 2022, Fragomen attorneys have gone above and beyond, guiding clients through complex citizenship interviews, navigating legal hurdles, and achieving life-changing victories with compassion and meticulous advocacy. During the ceremony, Chad Ellsworth, Attorney and Managing Partner, accepted the award on Fragomen's behalf. Remarkably, every client represented by Fragomen has had their citizenship case approved—a powerful testament to the firm's skill, dedication, and unwavering commitment to ensuring our clients' safety and belonging.

## Pro Bono Partnerships in Action

When we launched our LGBTQ+ Asylum Declarations Project in June 2024, we weren't sure how clients would feel sharing deeply personal stories with pro bono attorneys outside our core Oasis team. Over the past 16 months, 27 clients have collaborated with pro bono teams from three law firms to draft statements supporting their asylum cases. In a September survey, every respondent said their attorney was knowledgeable, communicative, and supportive. One client reflected, **"These are people who make you feel like family. Thank you."** Another shared, **"It was a very positive experience for me. Thank you for your constant support."** The project shows how thoughtful pro bono partnerships can expand access to justice while ensuring clients feel informed, respected, and genuinely supported throughout their asylum journey.

**27**  
CLIENTS

**3**  
LAW FIRMS

# September (Contd.)



## Clients Reflect on What Citizenship Means for Them

September 17 marked Citizenship Day, honoring both the adoption of the U.S. Constitution and those who have become U.S. citizens. Oasis joined the National Partnership for New Americans in celebrating Citizenship Month, a time to share resources and highlight the life-changing impact of naturalization. Citizenship offers protections and opportunities unavailable through other immigration statuses. One client, Alexis, shared what this milestone means to them:

**“Becoming a U.S. citizen means I can move forward with my life. I hope to use my privilege and access to support fellow LGBTQ+ community members and uphold the values I believe this country stands for.”**

## Welcoming Our Social Services Interns

Each academic year, Master’s in Social Work interns join Oasis through university field placement programs to provide case management, engage partner organizations, and develop educational materials for our clients.

**“One of the most rewarding parts of my role at Oasis is training and supervising four MSW students each year. They all bring deep passion for our clients and a strong desire to learn immigration law so they can better support immigrant communities. Their fresh perspectives continually strengthen our work. In 2025, MSW interns supported over 70 Oasis clients through full needs assessments and connections to critical services.”**

**- ERIC CLINE, SOCIAL SERVICES PROGRAM DIRECTOR**



## Paralegal Interns and Fellows

To strengthen our long-term capacity, we continued investing in a paralegal training pipeline rooted in first-generation and community-based leadership. Through partnerships with College Track’s FirstGen program and UC Berkeley, we welcomed four paralegal interns from UCLA, Stanford, and UC Berkeley who directly supported 11 affirmative asylum cases by drafting client declarations, preparing applications, and providing interpretation support.

At the same time, DreamSF fellows helped sustain the Immigration Pathways Program. Working one-on-one with naturalization applicants, fellows prepared and filed citizenship cases, supported interview readiness, and provided steady encouragement. In feedback surveys, clients shared that this level of care was a source of confidence and relief.

# Headlines

**OCT 22, 2025**

Threats of Major Federal Immigration Operation Headed to Bay Area

**OCT 30, 2025**

USCIS Stops Automatic 540-Day Work Permit Extensions for People Waiting on Renewal Applications

**OCT 31, 2025**

Education Dept. Publishes Final PSLF Rule Allowing Employer Disqualification

# October



## Strengthening Our Work Through Technology

Oasis has leveraged technology to keep our many projects organized and ensure staff and community members have timely, accurate information. Following the 2024 election, staff used a centralized tracking system to record rumors and misinformation about new policies and ICE activity, helping us respond quickly and provide reliable guidance to clients and partners. Technology has also allowed us to maintain organized databases of qualified interpreters and translators, track planning steps for events and outreach, and coordinate resources across teams, making our work more efficient and effective in supporting both staff and the communities we serve.



## Imperial Dove Court de Fresno Recognizes Oasis (Organization Partnership)

We want to express immense gratitude to the Imperial Dove Court de Fresno for recognizing Oasis at their 2025 Ducal Ball. As an organization serving the LGBTQ+ community for over 45 years in the counties of Fresno, Madera, Tulare, Kings, and Kern, the Imperial Dove Court de Fresno raises funds in support of various charitable organizations. During the evening's program, Oasis received a generous donation. We deeply appreciate the Court for recognizing our work as necessary and urgent in the face of targeted attacks toward the LGBTQ+ and immigrant communities. Thank you for supporting our clients!



# Headlines

**NOV 21, 2025**

Five More San Francisco Immigration Judges Fired, Total Reaches 12 of 21 in 2025

**NOV 28, 2025**

U.S. Suspends All Asylum Decisions and Halts Afghan Visa Issuances After D.C. National Guard Shooting

# November



## Fighting to Protect Public Service Loan Forgiveness

In October, a new rule threatened to bar attorneys serving immigrants from qualifying for Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF), a program that helps those who dedicate at least ten years to public service manage their educational debt. This rule would also affect teachers, nurses, social workers, and other public service professionals, significantly restricting the ability of nonprofits like Oasis to recruit and retain staff. On November 3, Oasis joined a coalition of cities, labor unions, and nonprofits in suing to halt the rule, advocating for our staff and protecting the advocates who make our work with LGBTQ+ immigrants possible.

**“Oasis Legal Services will fight relentlessly to protect our staff and the communities we serve from unlawful, discriminatory policies.”**

— ADAM RYAN CHANG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## The Federal Immigration Enforcement Surge That Almost Was

As events quickly developed, Oasis began receiving messages from clients asking what they needed to do to prepare in case of a federal enforcement surge. Our first steps were to reinforce Oasis' ICE defense protocols and send out large-scale communications to our entire team and client community. Because all of our clients and staff have been on high alert for a while, we are well prepared to respond if and when there is advanced immigration enforcement presence in the area. The federal surge was called off, but as our staff processed our response to the potential scenario, we realized that while it was an unfortunate test, it was a test that went well thanks to our team's preparedness.



## Noches de Cultura

Noches de Cultura grew from our clients' desire for belonging in the Central Valley and our commitment to building community for LGBTQ+ immigrants. Co-led by clients and staff, these fall gatherings (held annually since 2022) bring together LGBTQ+ asylum seekers and the broader community to celebrate culture and connection. Centered on art, food, music, and shared traditions, Noches de Cultura offers a rare space of safety and joy during the holidays. For many who have experienced rejection and harm simply for being who they are, these moments of welcome and belonging are deeply healing and central to our work.



## DEC 2, 2025

USCIS Pauses Processing of Asylum and Other Benefit Applications for Nationals of 19 "High-Risk" Countries

## DEC 4, 2025

USCIS Cuts Work Permit Validity for Asylum Seekers and Humanitarian Immigrants from 5 Years to 18 Months

## Client Supply Closet

We are overjoyed to announce the soft launch of Oasis' Client Supply Closet. Our clients' well-being depends on far more than their legal immigration status alone. Many of our clients are low-income, and others face barriers such as employment discrimination. These conditions often lead to housing instability, food insecurity, and unmet basic needs. In response, our Social Services Program has been building out a new resource to help meet our community's essential needs with care and dignity. We have already begun providing hygiene kits, as well as pads and tampons in our waiting room.

**In the new year, we're excited to begin providing critical items to clients who may not otherwise be able to afford them.**



Notes our team plans to include with each supply kit.



# Financial Snapshot



## Revenue

	DOLLAR AMOUNT	PERCENT
Foundations	\$990,000	32%
Government Contracts	\$1,329,531	42%
Client Fees	\$74,479	2%
Individual Donations	\$522,873	17%
Special Events	\$118,255	4%
Other revenue	\$99,601	3%
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>	<b>\$3,134,737</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Expenses

	DOLLAR AMOUNT	PERCENT
Programs Total	\$1,971,664	74%
Development	\$426,306	16%
Admin	\$266,441	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,664,411</b>	<b>100%</b>



# Board of Directors



Our board reflects the communities we serve, with 11 of 15 members identifying as LGBTQ+ and 11 serving as first- or second-generation immigrants, bringing lived experience and perspective to guide our mission.

## Board Officers

**Ryan Heman**  
Board Chair

**Rebecca Gordon**  
Treasurer (Finance Chair)

**Adam Chang**  
Ex Officio Director

## Board Directors

**Allan**  
Director (Community, Advocacy,  
Finance & Compliance)

**Birgit Eschmann**  
Director (Finance & Governance)

**Duc Le**  
Director (Finance & Compliance)

**Ian O'Brien**  
Director (Advocacy,  
Governance & Compliance)

**Jackie Rivas-Landaverde**  
Director (Fundraising Chair;  
Compliance)

**Jasmine Gabb**  
Director (Governance,  
Community & Advocacy)

**Jensen Li**  
Director (Fundraising)

**julie vue**  
Director (Governance Chair;  
Fundraising)

**Kim Mejia-Cuellar**  
Director (Governance,  
Legal & Compliance)

**Marcos Segura**  
Director (Audit Chair;  
Legal & Compliance)

**Nick Martinez**  
Director (Marketing &  
Communications)

**Raquel Aldana**  
Director (Governance,  
Legal & Compliance)

**Wes McGaughey**  
Director (Governance,  
Legal & Compliance)

# Partners & Funders



**Our work is made possible through collaboration with community partners and the generosity of funders who share our commitment to dignity, equity, and lasting change.**

## **Institutional Funders**

American Immigration Lawyers Association

Cal State University Fresno

California Access to Justice Commission

California Wellness Foundation\*

City of Berkeley\*

City of Fresno

County of Santa Clara

Firedoll Family Foundation

Gilead Sciences, Inc.

Grass Roots Gay Rights Foundation\*

Horizons Foundation

Imperial Dove Court de Fresno, Inc.

International Community Foundation\*

Legal Services Funders Network

New Americans Campaign / Immigrant Legal Resource Center

Pepita Foundation\*

Prism Foundation\*

*\*New partnership*

Silicon Valley Community Foundation

Silicon Valley Social Venture Fund\*

State Bar of California

State of California Department of Social Services

The California Endowment\*

The Campbell Foundation\*

The City of San Francisco Office of Civic Engagement & Immigrant Affairs

The Victor & Lorraine Honig Initiative at Tides Foundation

van Löben Sels / RembeRock Foundation

ViiV Healthcare's Positive Action Grant Program

Zellerbach Family Foundation

## **Special Thanks**

Anonymous funders and individual donors whose generosity made this work possible

## Looking Ahead: 2026 and Beyond

In 2026, Oasis Legal Services will continue to deepen our impact for LGBTQ+ immigrants. We will expand our capacity to provide removal defense, spotlight our clients' lived experiences through art, activism, and advocacy, and launch a pro se workshop to educate and empower immigrants beyond our direct caseload. At the same time, we will continue providing in-depth social service navigation, strengthen our board governance and leadership as we prepare a two-year strategic plan for 2027, diversify revenue streams, and bolster cybersecurity protocols. Each of these initiatives is designed to ensure that we can serve more clients, protect more rights, and amplify the voices of the LGBTQ+ immigrant community in meaningful ways. With your support, we can continue building a resilient, inclusive, and empowered community.



## Stand With Our Community

Your support ensures that LGBTQ+ immigrants facing persecution and systemic barriers can access the legal guidance, education, and social services they need to thrive. Together, we can expand legal defense, provide essential resources, and amplify the voices of those whose stories deserve to be heard. Donate, volunteer, or advocate today to stand with our community.

**“It was a very positive  
experience for me.  
Thank you for your  
constant support.”**

**-OASIS ASYLUM CLIENT**





2025