



2024-25 PRACTITIONER IN RESIDENCE REPORT

Advocating for Justice, Educating for the Future

About the DePaul Migration Collaborative

The DePaul Migration Collaborative engages scholars, practitioners, students and alumni to find solutions to society's most pressing problems in the areas of migration, mobility and human rights. The Collaborative leverages the power of interdisciplinary scholarly collaboration to pursue dynamic, community-engaged projects, advocacy and research, while establishing innovative learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students who will become the field's next generation of leaders and problem-solvers. These efforts will allow the Collaborative to advocate for and contribute to better public policy, stronger communities and a more just society.

About the Practitioner in Residence Program

The DePaul Migration Collaborative (DMC) presents its Practitioner in Residence program as part of the reframing refugee protection initiative. This program invites experts on migration, immigration, and human rights to collaborate, address migration challenges, and inform policies. Participants gain access to DePaul resources and have the opportunity to influence various migration-related discussions. The residency lasts 6-8 months and promotes practical solutions for contemporary migration issues.

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PRACTITIONERS AND PROJECTS

Ellen Miller



Ellen Miller is a humanitarian dedicated to supporting immigrant communities. In the past, Ellen worked with Chicago and national pro bono communities to connect immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers with counsel at the National Immigrant Justice Center and she has worked in Child and International Protection with UNHCR throughout Central and South America, and Northern Africa. She received her B.A. in International Studies from DePaul University; starting her career in immigration with an externship via DePaul at World Relief-Chicago. After years of being a DOJ Accredited Representative working with refugees and immigrants on Chicago's Northwest side, Ellen pursued community-based work in northern Africa. While pursuing a degree at the American University in Cairo, Ellen engaged in emergency management and humanitarian assistance during the onset and immediate aftermath of the Arab Spring. She earned an M.A. in International Human Rights Law and a post-graduate diploma in Psychosocial Interventions for Forced Migration from the American University in Cairo.

Joshua Friedman



Josh Friedman is the Managing Director of Andilay Consultancy firm, based in Vienna, Austria. He has 25 years of experience as a lawyer, development assistance implementer, and program director on four continents. After a decade practicing law in Boston – first as a prosecutor of gender violence crimes and then as a civil litigator – he jumped into development cooperation work with the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI) pro bono program in Tajikistan managing a team of five national attorneys delivering legal aid to rural women. From there, Josh worked with NGOs and bilateral agencies in East and Southern Africa to manage multimillion dollar projects protecting the rights of refugees, IDPs, and other vulnerable migrants. He also managed humanitarian response programming in Ethiopia and Djibouti for Eritrean, South Sudanese, Somali, and Sudanese refugees. For the past four years, Josh has led an independent consultancy firm that primarily conducts evaluations of development assistance projects globally. He is a graduate of Cornell University and Cornell Law School.

Charlotte Long



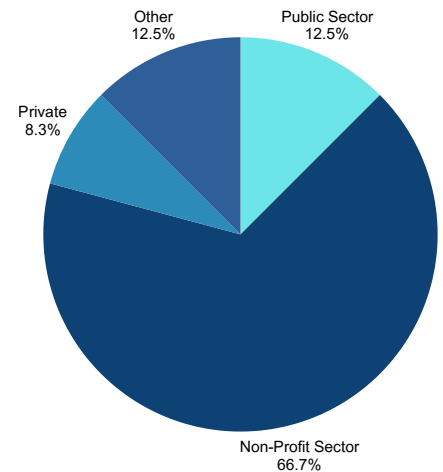
Charlotte Long is a Housing Specialist for migrants and asylum seekers in Chicago and a professor of Gender Justice studies at Roosevelt University. In the past, Charlotte has worked in direct services housing migrants and refugees in Chicago, most recently with Sanctuary Working Group. She has worked in social services for houses of hospitality, in interfaith organizing on immigration, and on a national immigrant housing database collection for the Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America. A Master of Divinity graduate from the University of Chicago with a certificate in Gender Studies, Charlotte's work explores the intersection of religious women, marginalized communities and international migration. To advance this interest, she has worked with Religions for Peace, the Global Women's Narrative Project at Oxford University and in Tblisi, Georgia, and at the Harris School of Public Policy.

“Nada Para Nosotros sin Nostros”

Ellen Miller served as one of the 2024-2025 Practitioner in Residence for the DePaul Migration Collaborative. Practitioner Miller conducted community-based research on Chicago’s immigration legal services for recent arrivals and compiled her research into two reports, **“Feedback in Action: Improving Client Feedback Systems to Enhance Legal Services”** and **“Amplifying Migrant Voices: Insights from Participatory Evaluations on Accessing Immigrant Legal Services in Chicago”**. Her reports shed light on the experiences of populations who receive immigration legal services and she provides recommendations for legal service organizations.



Organization Engagement



Why does this matter?

Miller’s project provides avenues for collecting participatory feedback for legal service providers which helps with ensuring that migrant voices are included in programmatic decisions.

Advisory Board: Ellen Miller recruited an advisory board compiled of practitioners, legal service providers, and advocates. This committee was formed to inform the research, provide guidance and feedback, and ensure that research goals are aligned with practical realities.

Data Analysis Consulting: Provided by Marina Burka



Advisory Board

Marina Burka, Johannes Favi, Jacquelin Garcia, Samantha Nordstedt Gonzalez, Idalia Flores Guzman, Kelley Johnson, Rob Paral, Fred Tsao



How to Access Report

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Report 1: Feedback in Action
Report 2: Amplifying Migrant Voices



“[The work] is not just about legal services but about community services”-Research Respondent

DePaul
Migration
Collaborative



Feedback in Action: Improving Client Feedback Systems to Enhance Immigration Legal Services

Ellen Miller, Practitioner in Residence
December 2024

Practitioner Miller’s report “Feedback in Action” addressed a gap that legal service providers were determined to fill. Miller learned that 10/10 participating organizations expressed a desire for client feedback to be incorporated in programmatic decisions. Of the 10, 4 orgs had feedback mechanisms, 1 was designing, and 5 did not have active mechanisms. The goal of this report was to provide resources to organizations attempting to develop surveys to both enhance programming and ensure that services were effectively supporting new arrivals.

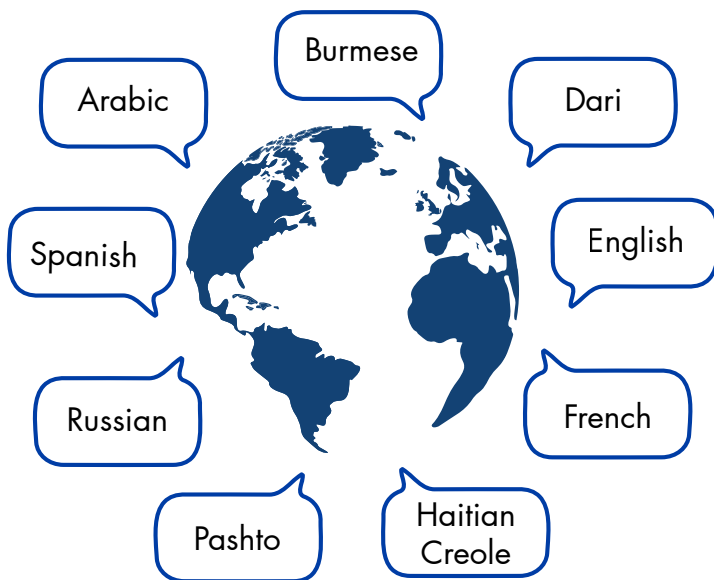
Resources for Program Staff

Variety of methods to collect feedback: surveys, website data analysis, interviews, focus groups

Electronic surveys can be shared through text, email, or QR code

Sample survey questions are provided in 9 language translations










Languages Available

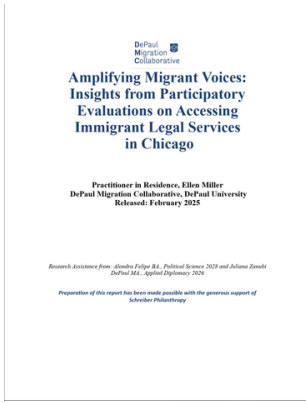


Participating Organizations

-  ASAP
-  Ascend Justice
-  Beyond Legal Aid
-  Centro Romero
-  Erie Neighborhood House
-  HANA Center
-  Legal Aid Society-Metropolitan Family Services
-  RefugeeOne
-  The Resurrection Project
-  World Relief

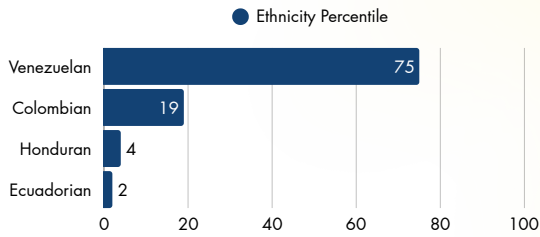
**AT A GLANCE
BENEFITS**

-  Improved Accountability
-  Culturally Relevant Adjustments
-  Empowered Client Decisions
-  Enhanced Service Impact
-  Addressed Barriers Effectively
-  Justified Program Choices
-  Community-Driven Improvements
-  Respected Client Opinions
-  Optimized Resource Allocation

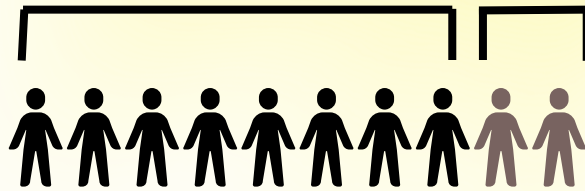


Practitioner Miller’s report “Amplifying Migrant Voices” focused on access to legal services for Southern Border Arrivals between 2022 to 2024 during an influx of over 50,000 new arrivals to Chicago. 58 individuals were interviewed, 57 of which in defensive legal posture or have pending removal proceedings. Only 1 individual had secured full legal representation at the time of research. Interviews were held over 5 Spanish speaking focus groups, 1 Haitian focus group, 5 dyads and 13 personal interviews.

Participant Demographics



80% resided in Chicago and 20% lived outside the city.



Practitioner Recommendations

Participant Recommendations For Service Improvements

- Increase access points with legitimate information
- Create manageable payment plans
- Improve language access and communication
- Expand service areas to suburbs and Chicago southside
- Develop alternatives to asylum
- Be transparent about service limitations

Recommendations for Legal Service Provision

- Legal service providers need to review and ensure all services include a clear orientation and practical next-steps component.
- Legal service providers must proactively seek to understand, as much as possible, different cultural understandings of legal service provision and how they impact client engagement.

Recommendations for Program Design

- Service providers need to keep engaging migrants to learn about their needs, process efficiencies and general impact. Engage other than Spanish-speaking populations. Be specific in what feedback will help refine action plans.
- Program managers and legal services need to consider family group dynamics when designing and executing programs.
- Not all services can be scaled for higher quantity services in the same way. Given the high demand for legal services, strategic division of labor that allows for early intervention and recognizes specialty services can help manage resources.

Unveiling New Scams: Practitioner Miller shares new scams of unauthorized practice of immigration law and fraud



10 out of 53 Spanish speaking participants admitted to enduring the consequences of fraud or knew someone who did. This caused a lack of trust for participants and led to delays, distress, and mistakes in financial processes.

Practitioner Miller learned of individuals impersonating legal service providers and she learned that clients were having a difficult time deciphering what services were real and what was the appropriate amount to be charged for services.

Practitioner Miller shared these findings with legal services providers.



PRAxIS

Practitioner Friedman conducted research in Chicago, IL and Vienna, Austria focused on how these cities can better safeguard the right to adequate housing and the right to adequate food for refugees and asylum seekers. His report **“Protecting Rights Across Contexts and International Sharing (PRAxIS)”** utilizes a mixed-methods approach analyzing legal and policy frameworks in both cities and comparing them to the practice of providing food and shelter to those displaced.

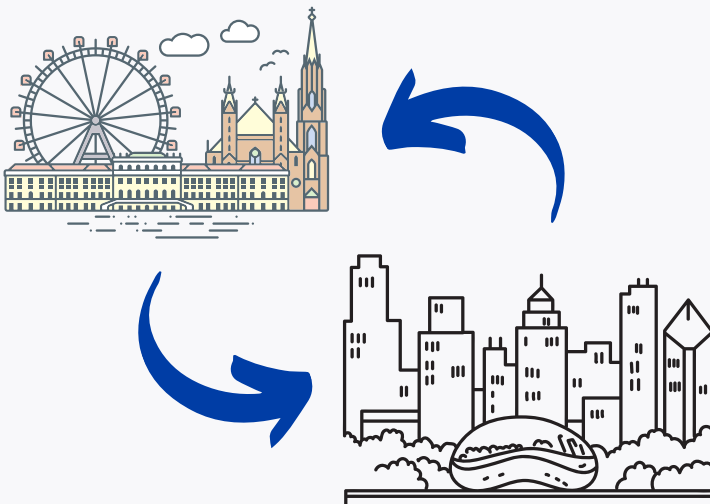


Why does it matter?

The focus of the research is on the human rights to food and housing of forcibly displaced persons outside of their countries of origin, particularly refugees and asylum seekers. This study aims to have a migrant-sensitive and migrant-centered approach to address the knowledge gap for the rights to food and housing for forcibly displaced people in urban settings within the Global North.

How to Access the Report

Visit our website → Select Reports and fill out the request form



3 Objectives for the PRAxIS project

1. To increase understanding of legal and integration needs and frameworks of forced migrants in Chicago and Vienna for food and shelter, using a comparative approach.
2. To develop practical legal and policy recommendations promoting forced migrants' rights and integration regarding food and shelter at local and state levels.
3. To engage the DMC and the broader DePaul community in protecting the rights of forced migrants based on an evidence-driven, comparative project approach.

Meeting the Definition of Adequacy

Research findings showed how access to housing and food did not always meet international human rights standards. While access in both countries to housing was accessible and did not meet the definition of adequacy. In this research story, the individual resided in a physical apartment, but the apartment did not meet her changing health needs and basic commodities such as bad placement were made difficult due to the layout of the space.

Research Story: (Afghan Refugee in Vienna)

"[My wife] had an accident at work where her back and legs were injured and she now has problems going up the stairs. That's why we are looking for a [ground floor] apartment where we can live and the apartment is only 43 m2 and we pay € 780 in rent. There's not enough space. We couldn't put in a bed and she has to sleep on the floor with her injury because we don't have enough space for a bed."

Practitioner Friedman shared 11 Key Findings in his report: below is a snapshot of what he found.

Finding 4: Legal status determines access to services.

Finding 5: It is very difficult for refugees and asylum seekers without credit or work histories to find adequate housing, which was amplified by discrimination.

Finding 6: Limited support for refugees to "know your (tenant) rights".

Finding 9: Fractured service provision by program and agency decreases effectiveness.

Finding 10: Coordination by the government is generally weak, although stronger in certain, specific areas like with refugee resettlement agencies.

Read the full report to learn about his findings and how they relate to Practitioner Friedman's final Recommendations

Methodology and Approach

Interviewee Demographics



Languages include: **Dari, Arabic, German, and English**



Ethnicities include: **Arab, Afghan, Rohingya**

A mixed method approach was used in interviewing participants. Migrants were interviewed in a series of focus groups and service providers were interviewed through Key Informant Interviews all meeting the standards of the Institutional Review Board.

Focus Groups

8 Focus Groups
91 Participants



Key Informant Interviews

34 Kils
36 Key Informants



10 Recommendations

Practitioner Friedman provided 10 suggestions for governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to strengthen the protection of refugees' rights to adequate food and shelter.

1. Government, NGOs/CSOs, and refugee communities need to raise the salience of diverse, culturally-appropriate, and nutritious food

2. Government promulgation as well as NGO/CSO advocacy and programmatic creativity to administratively ease uptake of food benefit programs

3. Government and NGO/CSO stakeholders in close collaboration with refugee communities develop a refugee and housing integration strategy

4. Government working with NGO/CSO stakeholders increase housing supply and housing subsidies

5. Government promulgation and NGO/CSO advocacy to prohibit considering a recognized refugee credit scores and disallowing "risk fees" or security deposits more than one month of rent

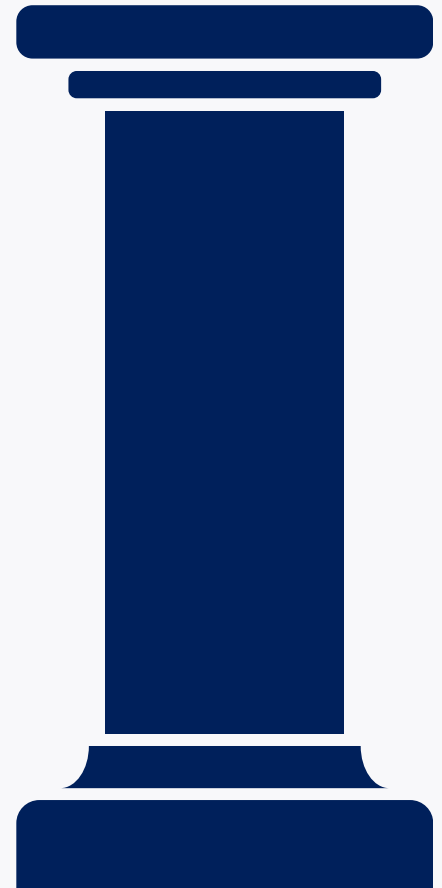
6. Government promulgation and NGO/CSO advocacy to generally reduce administrative and bureaucratic barriers for refugee food and housing support.

7. Government support with NGO/CSO staffing and implementation to increase one-stop shops for refugee benefits staffed by multiple agencies

8. Government and service providers work together to establish inclusive, comprehensive coordination mechanisms for food and housing rights of refugees

9. NGOs and CSOs should develop and deliver capacity development for refugees and asylum seekers to facilitate their housing and food support.

10. Government and NGOs/CSOs develop "know your housing rights" outreach and awareness-raising



Filling in the Gaps



Charlotte Long's served as a 2024-2025 Practitioner in Residence for the DePaul Migration Collaborative. During her residency, she collected qualitative information on faith-based informal housing networks in the Chicagoland area that have worked to house recent migrant arrivals in the past three years. Her report, "**Filling In the Gaps: Faith-Based Housing Beyond City Services**" is based on existing literature on "Sanctuary" networking, but is also focused on understanding new tools and techniques that informal community groups and religious spaces use to assist houseless immigrants unable to benefit from city programming.



Key Terms

Why does this matter?

Long's study sought to address the gap in data on where arrivals from the Southern border to Chicago were resettled. The city claimed that 27,359 of the 51,648 arrivals had been resettled which leaves a great number of people unaccounted for. Long found that grassroots and unofficial networks filled the gaps in the missing data. This study investigates the efforts of faith-based networks and communities in the Chicagoland area who have played a central role in securing housing for recently arrived migrants. Her research also provides networks with recommendations for program improvement.

Faith-based network (FBN): A purposefully connected, faith-based network of two or more organizations, communities, religious groups, mutual aid groups, or nonprofits in partnership, who intentionally are working together to provide holistic services or accompaniment along with housing for two or more migrant families

Multi-site organization: A single nonprofit organization running an internal, faith-based program of multiple housing sites for the sole purpose of housing migrant families.

Single-community: A single faith-based community (church, mosque, synagogue, faith-based interest group, or other) that works by its own efforts to house migrant families either through occasional, non-formalized partnerships, or through its own self-run ministry or taskforce.

How to Access the Report

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Findings from "Filling in the Gaps"



Beyond Basic Housing

Organizations found themselves to not assisting in searching for housing for families but also, they adopted a case management role. Other ways these orgs filled service gaps was by providing:

- Rent funds for apartments
- Providing space "on-campus" on that community's property
- Agreeing to co-sponsor and mentor families through volunteer support
- Furnishing apartments
- Professional case management through budgeted staff or volunteer partnership with a social service agency

FBN affiliations and the models they used

- 5 FBNs reported having case managers, 3 of which are categorized as non-profits
- 4 FBNs reported using mentorship models, 3 were interfaith and 1 was a non-profit
- 3 FBNs reported a strong network reliance model
- 3 FBNs reported having to use self taught case management even if they had assistance from volunteer partnership

To understand the perspective of FBNs they were asked to identify their community by affiliation or type. This pie chart represents how these 12 organizations self-identified:

Faith based communities were asked to recount the amount of cases they served over the past 4 years.

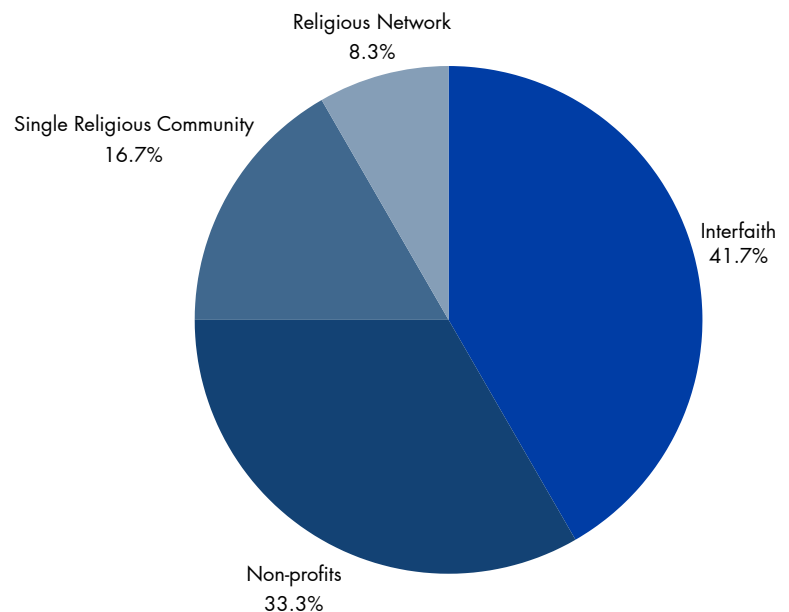
Single Communities:

80-96 cases, approximately 200 to 240 individuals.

Mutli-Site:

663 families and individual cases

Out of the limited pool of FBNs that were interviewed, these groups potentially supported up to 1,000 migrant families/individuals in the past 4 years with less resources than an average agency dedicated to these services.



Faith-Based Housing Models Fit Assessment

Model A: The "Total Package Network"

Characteristics

- Ability to search for affordable apartments, and provide up to a year of rent
- Ability to offer Professional Case Management with paid staff or volunteer mentorship teams that are up to date on policy changes
- Access to a building or are interested in managing their own building that mimic small family settings
- Comfortability with providing services and housing for >15 individuals or families

Why fit

- If they are interested in becoming nonprofits
- They are comfortable with Director Led models
- They desire and are ready to acquire a full budget to run their services
- They want to be able to offer holistic "wrap-around" case management services to help families progress as they are being housed

Challenges

- Expensive
- Full time work for all staff and mentorship teams involved
- Needs access to large scale resources like property, or fully dedicated groups of volunteers, or affordable legal services

Model B: The "Expanding Impact Community"

- Access to an empty space completely set up for safe, and private housing for 1 or 3 families at a time
- Strong and large volunteer teams; no professional case management
- Serious reliance on networks who can supply assistance, resources and specific case services
- Emphasis on migrant families' agency and community building

- They have access to limited funding; although the least funded, one or two grants from social services is extremely helpful for kickstarting the program
- They have a larger number of interested lay persons to volunteer (< 7).
- They have an interest and the time available to learn immigration social service procedures, or might feel a strong connection to an immigrant housing network that can aid in information sharing

- Self-taught case management in immigration is not for the faint of heart! It requires focus, time, and the ability to get correct information quickly and in completion.
- Having many decision makers can be a challenge
- There can be irregularity of control of the empty space according to the FBN's regulations around it, insurance, maintenance, etc.

Model C: Streamlined Operation"

- Lots of helpers for less families at a time (i.e. large mentorship team to family case ratio)
- Ready and able volunteers with available time to give
- A strong and official partnership with a volunteer but professional case management service
- Mentorship teams

- They have financial resources at their disposal or a well-off community ready to fundraise and give generously
- They already have or feel confident that they can create a strong partnership with a social service agency to provide regular case management/referrals and/or training
- They prefer a social service agency to provide family vetting for them

- Requires dedicated mentorship volunteer teams and specific leadership roles (various roles in charge of housing, mentorship coordination duties, or co-leading troubleshooting meetings)
- Requires regular financial backing from each community in the network
- Can quickly become chaotic if the professional social service partner is overstretched, not comprehensive, or regularly communicative with the FBN

RESEARCH ASSISTANT HIGHLIGHTS



Jr. Alvarez

*B.A., Geography/GIS and Sustainable Urban Development 2027
Practitioner: Charlotte Long*



Crystal Campos

*B.A., Political Science, Peace Justice and Conflict Studies Minor 2025
Practitioner: Charlotte Long*



Alondra Felipe

*B.A., Political Science, 2028
Practitioner: Ellen Miller*

This year students engaged in many research activities including but not limited to:

- Translation, Transcription, and Interpretation
- Conducting Focus Groups and Key Informant Interviews
- Mapping and Coding
- Data Analysis

“The most rewarding part of my position was being able to support people by giving them a space to share their concerns and experiences. I valued being someone they could talk to about their challenges, and this experience helped me develop stronger listening skills. It also deepened my commitment to advocating for migrants and individuals facing difficult circumstances.”



Mursal Fahimi

*B.S., Computer Science, Mathematics and Public Policy Minor, 2026
Practitioner: Joshua Friedman*



Golaleh Yazdani

*PHD Value-Creating Education for Global Citizenship
Practitioner: Joshua Friedman*



Juliana Zanubi

*M.A., Applied Diplomacy, 2026
Practitioner: Ellen Miller*

EVENTS

2024-2025

Participatory Feedback Mechanisms with Chicago Immigration Legal Services: A Discussion of Findings

January 7, 2025

To start off the new year, DMC Practitioner Ellen Miller met with Chicago immigration legal service providers to discuss her report and the resources she created to aid organizations in gathering feedback from participants. The first half of the session focused on Ellen's initial report, examining key data and demonstrating how to utilize the resources provided. She emphasized the importance of gathering feedback, addressing current challenges, and offering creative solutions for overcoming barriers to data collection such as staff capacity, language, etc. Legal service providers received resources including survey questions for post case closing and post clinic evaluations in 8 languages including: Arabic, Burmese, Dari, French, Haitian Creole, Pashto, Russian, and Spanish. Practitioner Miller spoke about evaluation implementation logistics and provided advice on how to use that feedback for program improvement. Miller then shared a preview of her initial findings from focus group participants, detailing their experiences accessing legal services and the barriers they face.



“Nada para nosotros sin NOSOTROS”: Evaluaciones Participativos con Migrantes y Solicitantes de Asilo en Chicago

January 16, 2025

Practitioner Ellen Miller presented her initial findings from participatory evaluations to the participants involved in her DMC community-based research study. Miller stated, "I was really looking forward to re-engaging and sharing with the community what their collective voices and experiences can teach programmatic decision makers." Overall, this was a moment to connect with the voices that made the research possible and confirm the interpretation of findings is accurate. The purpose of this event is to gather more feedback on her analysis while staying true to the projects goal of inclusive data collection.

Amplifying Migrant Voices: Insights from Participatory Evaluations on Immigrant Legal Services

February 20, 2025

In her final event, Practitioner Miller shared research insights with the public. Miller started by introducing her team and research, focusing on migrants' access to legal resources, the challenges they face, and potential solutions. Key topics included community engagement, the allocation of legal aid resources, and the existing gaps in service delivery. Research highlighted barriers such as information gaps, financial constraints, system overwhelm, and language barriers. Research Assistants Juliana Zanubi and Alondra Felipe emphasized the diversity of participants and the research methodology. The discussion underscored the need for improved representation through feedback, how that data can change programming, and the need for improved information sharing that will better support individuals navigating complex legal systems and avoid scams.



Strengthening Refugee's Rights to Food and Housing: Participatory Workshop

February 27, 2025

To spark meaningful discussions and get a clear picture of what's really happening in Chicago housing services for refugees, Practitioner Josh Friedman hosted an exciting and interactive workshop, bringing together passionate community organization representatives to dive into the challenges refugees and asylum seekers face when it comes to securing food and housing. The conversation was centered around the principles laid out in the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and the realities in Chicago. Guests broke into groups focusing on key areas: housing, food, refugee services, and the role of government in shaping these needs. The energy was high, and the conversations were flowing!

All the insights shared played a crucial role in shaping Practitioner Friedman's study, helping to connect the dots and highlight areas that still need attention.



Beyond the Brick Wall: Shaping Adequate Housing in Urban Environments for Migrants

April 24, 2025



The panel, Beyond the Brick Wall brought together researchers from the DePaul Migration Collaborative to discuss the pressing issue of adequate housing and its intersections with forced migrant experiences. Professor Molly Brown an Associate Professor at DePaul and Director of the Homelessness Advocacy, Research and Collaboration Lab, moderated the conversation. Professor Brown, is involved with direct housing advocacy efforts such as coordinated entry systems which are methods that local communities use to allocate scarce housing resources to the population of unhoused individuals, families, and youth, experiencing homelessness of any kind.

The discussion centered on the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and its definitions of the 7 elements of adequate housing: (1) Security of Tenure, (2) Availability of Services, (3) Affordability, (4) Accessibility, (5) Habitability; (6) Location, (7) Cultural Adequacy.

To start the conversation, researchers shared some of the ways they have seen housing evolve or be provided for in cities. Speakers mentioned that despite IL being a Welcoming City there is no formal right to housing in IL which can impact programming and policy. Each speaker shared examples of supportive policies, migrant experiences, and methods of gap fulfillment. Panelists addressed how legal status, discrimination, and documentation issues compound housing challenges for migrants and make it challenging to achieve adequate housing.

Lessons from international contexts, including Austria and Chile, revealed common themes of exclusion and the need for policy reform and coordinated support systems. The conversation also highlighted the intersectional impact of housing inadequacy, particularly on families, gender or socioeconomic status prior to migration. When panelists were asked about conflict between a host cities' homeless population vs immigrant populations, speakers dispelled the assumption that there is a correlation between rising housing costs and immigration through sharing data driven research with guests and shared how migration rather highlights an already existing problem and pushes policy makers to prioritize a response.

Looking forward, panelists stressed the importance of civil society/informal groups, legal reform, and interdisciplinary collaboration for all affected by homelessness. Students were encouraged to engage through policy, advocacy, volunteering, and applying their learned skills in combination with the Vincentian question "What Must Be Done" to promote equity.

Filling in the Gaps: Faith Based Housing Beyond City Services Lunch and Research Presentation

June 3 2025

Practitioner Charlotte Long and Research Assistants Crystal Campos and Jr. Alvarez shared insights from her recent research project, "Filling in the Gaps." Drawing from in-depth qualitative research across 20 faith-based networks in diverse communities, Long's study explores the crucial role of faith-based informal housing in supporting newly arrived immigrants. Participants of the research attended a private lunch to talk with the Practitioner and learn about her data results as well as provide feedback. Afterwards, Practitioner Long shared her findings at a public research presentation.



The event unpacked how single community organizations, multi-site programs, and faith-based networks are collectively supporting up to 1,000 cases annually just amongst the networks she researched. Services range from temporary shelters and apartment searches to mentorship, sponsorship, and professional case management. The research also contextualizes these efforts within the broader Sanctuary movement and the city's evolving migrant advocacy. This conversation offered valuable takeaways for community organizers, and anyone interested in immigrant justice, housing equity, and the power of local networks to respond where formal systems fall short. Her findings include a full breakdown of these faith-based housing models, including a deep dive into challenges, themes and recommendations, shedding light on community-based solutions.



Chicago to Vienna: Comparative Housing and Food Justice

June 5 and 24, 2025

On June 5th, Practitioner Friedman presented alongside student researchers Golaleh Yazdani and Mursal Fahimi. Sharing his findings in both Austria and Chicago, Friedman's project PRAxIS (Protecting Rights Across Contexts & International Sharing) The research aimed to examine legal frameworks and mechanisms for integration to create actionable recommendations. Shared recommendations included enhancing government coordination among service sectors, acknowledgement of cultural and religious needs in food access, simplifying the application process for housing and food access, and advocating for systemic change.



On June 24th, Practitioner Friedman traveled back to Vienna to present with research assistant Theresa Herzog-Abusaeeda. Friedman and Herzog-Abusaeeda opened the presentation by introducing the research goals and methodologies used for data procurement while sharing some of the key preliminary findings from 34 Key Informant Interviews and 9 Focus Group Discussions with 86 participants of Afghan, Syrian or Rohingya forced migrant populations. Mr. Friedman concluded his presentation with recommendations for increased cross-collaboration and coordination between grassroots, NGO, and city/state efforts. His presentation emphasized the need for food and housing to be referenced less as a commodity, but a human right, reframing the structures that support forced migrants. Following his presentation, these researchers led a panel discussion with guests Maryam Singh, Maren Reibe, and Christina Gugerell who provided insight into the challenges they face with food and housing support in Vienna.

How to Get Involved

How can I become involved?



Solutions Lab

The Solutions Lab is designed to foster interdisciplinary, community-engaged research projects. Faculty partner with community organizations to co-design research with tangible benefits.



Practitioners in Residence

This program invites experts on migration, immigration, and human rights to collaborate, address migration challenges, and inform policies. Participants gain access to DePaul resources and have the opportunity to influence various migration-related discussions. The residency lasts 6-8 months and promotes practical solutions for contemporary migration issues.



Attend Events

We host informative events throughout the academic year that highlight the research at the DMC or that educate on forced migration topics.

Join us at **Broken by Design: Refuge, and Responsibility** — Learn, connect, and reimagine what is possible on May 1, 2026. Stay tuned via our social media to learn more about the Symposium and how to register.

DMC Newsletter

Stay in the loop!

Check out our newsletter for updates, insights, and opportunities.



@depaulmigration

The DePaul Migration Collaborative and DePaul University are grateful to Schreiber Philanthropy for their partnership and generosity.