

# Catholic Legal Services Archdiocese of Miami, Inc.



*When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not be so thorough that you reap the field to its very edge, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. These things you shall leave for the poor and the alien." Lev: 23:22*

*2015 Annual Report*

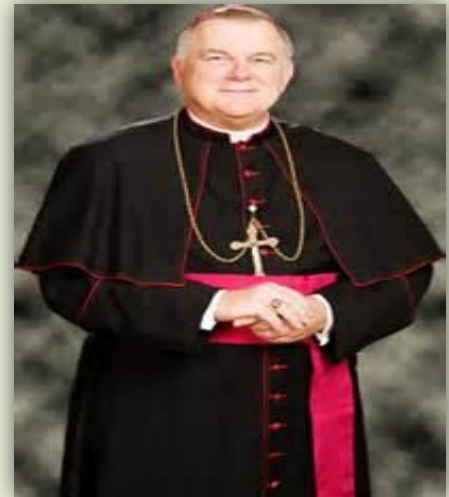
# Mission Statement



- ❖ Legal Services for those who come to South Florida from foreign lands.
- ❖ Assistance for those who lack sufficient means to obtain legal help.
- ❖ Professional services provided without reference to race, religion, gender, ethnic group, or other distinguishing characteristics.



ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI  
*Office of the Archbishop*



Dear Friend,

The work of CCLS remains essential to addressing the needs of immigrant communities in South Florida. These individuals confront a complex immigration law and a confusing bureaucracy. Many have unhealed wounds from a painful past and face an uncertain future. Without CCLS' assistance, too many deserving immigrants and refugees would lose the opportunity to avail themselves of the laws enacted for their protections or would fall prey to schemes of those taking advantage of the desperation of the newcomer.

The Church will continue to speak out on behalf of migrants everywhere. We speak out in defense of those, especially the young, who are trafficked across borders to be exploited in the sex trade. We will continue to advocate for a just and equitable reform of a broken immigration system that continues to separate families for unacceptable periods of time and that provides no path to citizenship for millions who work in jobs that otherwise would have gone unfilled. We will defend the rights of refugees and asylum seekers for a safe haven from persecution and violence.

May the Lord continue to bless you and your loved ones abundantly. With personal good wishes, I am

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Most Reverend Thomas G. Wenski  
Archbishop of Miami

# About Us

Since its inception in 1994, CCLS has remained dedicated to providing professional immigration services to South Florida's refugee and immigrant communities, both in application assistance and attorney representation before the Citizenship and Immigration Services, the Immigration Courts, and the Board of Immigration Appeals.

## *Summary of CCLS Achievements Calendar Year 2015*

❖ Client Sign-ins	26,091
❖ Clients Represented	5,440
❖ General Services Provided	14,572
❖ Requests for Work Authorization	3,688
❖ Applications for Lawful Permanent Residency	999
❖ Requests for Temporary Protected Status	1,338
❖ Applications for Citizenship	1,583
❖ Representation of Asylum Claims	232
❖ Unaccompanied Minors Program	
○ Provided Legal Orientations to over 1,000 families	
○ Screened over 800 children for legal relief	
○ Appeared with over 700 unaccompanied minors in the Miami Immigration court as Friend of Court	
○ Represented 219 children in their immigration cases	

Nevertheless, demand for services continues to exceed supply.

CCLS is a nationally recognized agency with an experienced team of attorneys and immigration professionals. The team combines that professionalism with culturally sensitivity and linguistically appropriate services; the CCLS staff reflects the diversity of the population it serves, facilitating the provision of culturally and linguistically sensitive service. Cubans and Haitians form the largest nationalities we serve, but the agency continues to serve many immigrants from across the Americas and around the world. CCLS has always maintained a strong relationship with South Florida's Haitian Community, a traditionally under-served population. In fact, according to the Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR) statistics, CCLS represented between 8% - 10% of all successful Haitian asylum claims before the Immigration Courts in the entire nation in recent years.

# *Most Reverend Thomas G. Wenski*

## *Sole Corporate Member*

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<i>Honorable Vance E. Salter (2004-2007)</i>	
<i>Br. Edward Van Merrienboer, OP (1998-2004)</i>	

# Milestones in the History of Catholic Legal Services

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2015	<i>Named Pro Bono Hero of the SE Region</i> by the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA)
2014	<i>Organized</i> a 6 agency collaborative to provide unaccompanied children with representation; <i>won</i> legal AmeriCorp grant on behalf of the collaborative
2014	<i>Selected</i> as one of the three law firms to pilot EOIR-funded representation of mentally incompetent detainees
2013	<i>Proclamation</i> of Catholic Legal Services Citizenship Day, June 22, 2013 by the Mayor of Miami-Dade County Carlos A. Gimenez and the Board of County Commissioner Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa
2012	<i>Proclamation</i> of the City of Miami recognizing the agency for “outstanding public service.” Presented by Mayor Tomas P. Regalado
2011	<i>Selected lead organization</i> of the New Americans Campaign (NAC)
2010	<i>Began</i> the nation’s most productive and successful Haitian TPS program in the nation
2009	<i>Community Advocacy Award</i> presented by the Legal Aid Service of Broward County.
2007	<i>Saint Vincent De Paul Award</i> for faithful and compassionate service to those who seek sanctuary, shelter, and security in their new land by the Archdiocese of Miami
2006	<i>Adalsinda Lomangino Award</i> for outstanding contributions to the field of immigration law presented by the South Florida Chapter, American Immigration Lawyers Association
2003	<i>National Award for Excellence In Advocacy</i> , US Conference of Catholic Bishops
2003	<i>Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce NOVO</i> award for innovative excellence in delivering services to the community
2000	<i>Proclamation of Catholic Charities Legal Services Day</i> by the Mayor of Miami-Dade County, as one of the vital organizations whose contributions served to enrich the fabric of life in South Florida’s community
2000	<i>Commendation</i> by the Mayor of the City of Miami for its major contributions to the Miami-Dade community
1999	<i>Admitted into</i> the Haitian-American Grassroots Coalition
1998	<i>Incorporated</i> as Catholic Charities Legal Services of the Archdiocese of Miami
1994	<i>Established</i> as the GWL Legal Project of the Notre Dame d’Haiti Mission, Human Services Division



# Division of Religious Immigration Services



The DRIS enables CCLS to continue its mission by demonstrating support towards the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. It assists the Archdiocese of Miami, many other dioceses, eparchies, and religious institutes with their immigration needs. The DRIS provides legal representation and assistance in bringing foreign-born priests, religious men and women, ministers and seminarians from around the

globe for formation, education, and/or ministry. It also provides legal representation and assistance for those who are currently present in the United States and assists with student visas. The DRIS provides consultation on religious immigration matters, representation of clients as necessary, preparation of various forms, and on-going management of clients' cases. It maintains contacts with various U.S. Consular offices abroad. It engages in significant outreach efforts.



# Unaccompanied Minors Project

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CCLS continued representing unaccompanied minors through the Unaccompanied Minors Project. The project encompasses three programs designed to meet the legal needs of unaccompanied children in the Miami Immigration Court: 1) the Legal Orientation Program for Custodians, 2) the Office of Refugee Resettlement “Safe Passages” Pilot Project, and 3) the justice AmeriCorps program. With new funding, the Children’s Program implemented the Young Women with Children (YWC) project which funds a full-time attorney to assist recently arriving mothers with children. The project is the first of its kind in Miami and is making a significant impact on South Florida.

## **Legal Orientation Program for Custodians (LOPC)**

CCLS provides legal orientations to custodians of unaccompanied minors (“UCs”). UCs travel alone to the United States fleeing gang violence, threats, poverty, child abuse, or seeking family reunification. The LOPC program educates custodians of applicable programs and laws intended to protect UCs from mistreatment, exploitation and trafficking, and inform the custodians of available resources to assist UCs in this respect. Our LOPC attorneys screen UCs for legal relief, refers them to pro bono attorneys, and mentors the pro bono attorneys matched with a child’s case. Additionally, CCLS conducts LOPC orientations at the Miami Immigration Court and appears as “Friend of Court” with unrepresented children during the juvenile dockets so that no child is forced to appear alone at a hearing before an Immigration Judge. In the event a child cannot be placed with an in-house attorney or pro bono attorney, the LOPC program assists children in completing applications for relief, such as asylum, *pro se*. The LOPC program assists the children in representing themselves *pro se* (without legal representation) from the initial filing step to the final interview.



In 2015, the LOPC program provided legal orientations to over 1,000 families, screened over 800 children for legal relief, and appeared with over 700 unaccompanied minors in the Miami Immigration court as Friend of Court. This year, the LOPC program placed over 26 children with pro bono attorneys in the community and 244 unaccompanied minor cases with in-house attorneys. Through workshops and clinics, LOPC assisted over 40 children submit *pro se* applications for relief with the Miami Immigration Court or the Asylum Office.

### **Office of Refugee Resettlement “Safe Passages Program” (ORR Grant)**



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The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) developed a grant that provides for legal representation of UCs who have been released from immigration detention. Over the past 2 years, many accompanied Central American children fled their homes to come to the United States. These UCs are in proceedings before the Miami Immigration Court and the US government has prioritized their cases, responding by expediting their immigration court proceedings. CCLS responded to the surge cases in the court, and was designated to receive funding under the ORR Grant to represent those children in need of representation. During 2015, four CCLS attorneys represented 219 children in their immigration cases.

## *justice AmeriCorps (jAC)*

CCLS is the proud recipient of the jAC initiative which is a partnership between the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), which administers AmeriCorps, and the Department of Justice to increase national service opportunities while enhancing the effective and efficient adjudication of immigration proceedings. The program serves unaccompanied minors in the Miami Immigration Court and is limited to children under the age of 16 who recently arrived to the US.

In 2015, CCLS, the lead organization on the grant, partnered with 3 legal service agencies to create a Consortium dedicated to representing UCs in South Florida appearing in the Miami Immigration Court. The Consortium was strategically organized to provide high quality representation to the most vulnerable children and assist in the court in efficient and effective adjudication of UC cases. The Consortium houses 4 attorneys, representing a total of 195 children in 2015.

## *Young Mothers with Children (YWC)*

CCLS created the Young Women with Children (YWC) Program designed to educate, represent, and empower vulnerable families from Central America. Primarily from three failed states, Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, these young mothers fled endemic violence. They faced dangers ranging from extreme domestic violence, trafficking, and kidnapping to rape, forced prostitution, extortion, and murders at the hands of the organized criminal enterprises and cartels. YWCs know no English, have limited schooling, and are incapable of navigating a complex legal system without assistance or legal information. The Miami Immigration Court is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest receiving site for the newly arriving families, with over 5,000 cases pending. CCLS houses the only fully funded attorney in Miami to assist YWCs and is hoping to expand the program.



Since the inception of the program, CCLS has provided legal orientations and screened over 319 YWCs for legal relief and human trafficking. The YWC program has represented more than 46 vulnerable families, reopened deportation orders for approximately 5 families, assisted nearly 51 families in representing themselves *pro se* in immigration court, and connected approximately 19 families with pro bono representation. Each of these services gives YWCs a chance to remain in the United States free from human rights abuses.

## Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program (URMP)

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Unaccompanied minors who have been victims of civil war, international trafficking, including sexual and/or labor exploitation, are entitled to refugee status under immigration law. Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami maintains a foster care program for these child victims and provides them with psychological and social services. Catholic Legal Services remains in constant contact with URMP staff in order zealously represent children within the program. CCLS provides legal representation before Juvenile Court and USCIS. During Juvenile Court

proceedings, CCLS assists URMP social workers, case managers and program directors with case plans, judicial reviews and independent living statuses of URMP children. CCLS also provides legal assistance with work permits, special juvenile immigrant visas and adjustment of status. Additionally, CCLS meets with at least two children per month to assess their cases and update new developments to the URMP program.



**Our 2015 Client A.T.K.:** A.T.K. is a refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo. CCLS aided Catholic Charities URM program in obtaining legal custody in order for A.T.K to obtain services in the US. In addition, through the help of CCLS, A.T.K is now a permanent resident. Due to his educational success and interests in working with refugees, A.T.K. was invited to speak on a panel at a conference for the U.N. High Commissioner of Refugees held in Geneva, Switzerland in June 2015. Catholic Charities successfully obtained travel documents for A.T.K. in time for the conference.

**Our 2015 Client C.N.:** CCLS aided Catholic Charities URM program in obtaining legal custody in order for C.N. to obtain services in the US. In addition, CCLS helped C.N. in becoming a permanent resident. When C.N. became eligible to apply for citizenship, CCLS filed her naturalization application. On October 16, 2015, C.N. took the oath and became



a citizen of the United States of America. C.N. was filled with joy as she was also preparing to graduate from Miami-Dade College.

## Naturalization

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In 2015, CCLS continued leading the New Americans Campaign (NAC) in greater Miami. Operating in 8 urban cities (Dallas, Charlotte, Detroit, Houston, New York, San Jose, and Miami), the NAC was developed to encourage a diverse pool of eligible legal permanent residents (LPRs) to become U.S. citizens and assist them with the process and promote community capacity to provide such assistance. Other members of the Miami NAC include Read2Succeed, the FIU Legal Clinic, Hispanic Unity, the Florida Immigrant Coalition, and the International Rescue Committee.

### Services

CCLS completed 1583 applications for naturalization. Among them 59 were under our DCF program; 212 under Fast Track; and 1312 under NAC.

CCLS completed 714 forms requesting fee waivers for naturalization applications based on clients' inability to pay. Among them 54 were under our DCF program; 132 under Fast Track; and 533 under NAC.

### Outreach

During 2015, Miami NAC members organized a series of outreach workshops and built effective networks and naturalization coordination. NAC activities are sponsored projects of a group of foundations, including the Carnegie Foundation and the Knight Foundation.



- CCLS organized one large joint event with the participation of all our Miami NAC partners at South Dade Senior High School in Homestead where about 100 applicants came to process their applications.
- CCLS organized a successful event in coordination with FIU at Hialeah High School. Over 150 participants attended. We participated in a large workshop organized by FIU at their School of Law. There were 200 participants.
- Two large joint events were organized with the participation of the Miami NAC partners at St. Thomas University and Broward College, North Campus with 150 participants.
- We served approximately 70 participants at one event held at the northern edge of Broward County, in the city of Coconut Creek.
- We partnered with FLIC on an event at Notre Dame D'Haiti Catholic Church in Little Haiti with approximately 500 individuals came to complete their naturalization applications.
- Taking advantage of our computer lab, we had a number of smaller in-house events using CitizenshipWorks, including 60 applicants were completed.

## **Implementation**

- We implemented the After Hours Knight Lab. This was a new initiative to keep the Knight Computer Lab at our downtown office open after 5:00 pm. We completed 125 applications at the lab.
- We implemented the “Citizenship Fridays.” Every first Friday of the month the staff of our two offices (Downtown Miami and Broward) provides assistance with citizenship application to eligible LPRs.

## **Fast Track**



One of our BIA accredited representatives continued providing her weekly outreach sessions at adult education locations through the Miami Dade school system, resulting in some 200 adult education students receiving orientation and/or instruction about the naturalization application process.

We implemented a new collaboration with the Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS). They have agreed to open the computer labs of three of their facilities for adult students who would be willing to use CitizenshipWorks to complete their naturalization applications. Each facility (located in diverse geographic areas through the county) is now available for CitizenshipWorks twice a week, and one attorney from our office makes the rounds once a month to review each completed N-400 on-site before it is submitted.

## Advocacy

- Our Lead Citizenship Attorney and both Citizenship Coordinators were interviewed by El Nuevo Herald regarding the launch of the new collaboration with the Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS). The Citizenship Coordinators participated in a number of Radio shows (Radio Paz, Radio Caracol, Actualidad Radio) to promote our collaborative citizenship events and activities. We participated in a number of planning meetings with New American Media in preparation for an Ethnic Media Roundtable. We conducted media visits with 12 media outlets where we established relationships with Haitian and Latino print media, television, and radio.
- One of our Citizenship Coordinators attended the World Refugee Day celebration at Government Center in downtown Miami to promote Citizenship events and services under NAC.
- We participated in two separate phone banks in Spanish sponsored by Univision. Both phone banks were carried live on TV during Univision's evening news segments.
- One of our Citizenship Coordinators participated in several events taken place on September 19, "Citizenship Day."
- We met with the Consul of Protection at Consulate of Mexico to promote NAC.
- We helped to coordinate, and we participated in an Ethnic Media Roundtable organized by New American Media and hosted by the Archdiocese of Miami.
- One of our Citizenship Coordinators taped a TV spot at the Doral studios of Univision to promote US citizenship in general, and provided information about a citizenship workshop scheduled at Miami's Archbishop Curley Notre Dame High School.
- We distributed citizenship flyers at four Sunday Masses at Notre Dame D'Haiti Catholic Church.
- We represented the Miami NAC partners at the Government Center press conference for the launch of the Office of New Americans for Miami-Dade County.
- Our agency was invited to be part of the newly created Univision Civic Engagement Task Force whose purpose is to promote citizenship and voter registration during 2016.
- In anticipation of the 2016 Mega Event, we visited the FIU Biscayne Bay Campus and held a conference call with representatives of the Miami Marlins' Foundation.

## Victims of Human Trafficking

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Human trafficking is the trade in human beings, commonly for sexual slavery, forced labor, or the extraction of organs. It garners an estimated \$32 billion annually worldwide (Wikipedia). Its victims are often lured by false promises (such as good jobs elsewhere) or abducted, then maintained in bondage by threats or other forms of coercion. Victims are commonly women,

children, and immigrants, especially the undocumented, are commonly victims. To help combat this menace, Congress has passed legislation to grant legal status to undocumented victims if they cooperate with authorities in the arrest or prosecution of their traffickers. Catholic Legal Services helps immigrant victims of trafficking obtain legal status under these laws.

CCLS represented several victims of violent crimes and filed their petition for U Nonimmigrant Status during the calendar year of 2015. The Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act (VTVPA) allows victims of certain crimes, who have suffered substantial physical or mental abuse, reported the crime to the law enforcement agents and cooperated with the investigation of the crime, to file for U Nonimmigrant Status. The required forms must be filed with supporting documents such as police reports, psychological evaluations and an affidavit from the victim, among other documents. Once the petition is approved, the person must live in the United States for three years before filing the application for adjustment of status. When the applicant for Nonimmigrant status has qualifying relatives, the applicant can include them as derivatives.

## Victims of Violence

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Immigration law recognizes the special claims of abused women and children, yet they remain the most vulnerable immigrants with nowhere to turn to escape exploitation and mistreatment because they remain ignorant of their rights and without the resources to exercise them. These women represent some of the poorest members of the South Florida community and have little hope of escaping their abusive situation or of changing their economic situation without obtaining legal status in the United States. Their irregular immigration status increases their vulnerability in that their abusers exploit their lack of immigration status and threaten deportation to prevent the victim from seeking outside help and protection. Abusers manipulate the fear and isolation of the immigrants to perpetuate the abuse.

CCLS provides them with free legal assistance to obtain legal status under the Violence Against Women Act and other statutes and refers them for job assistance and social services.

In 2015, CCLS represented several women who were victims of domestic violence by filing their self-petitions before USCIS.

## Detention Program

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### *Legal Orientation Program (LOP)*

In 2009, CCLS established the Legal Orientation Program (LOP) at the Krome Service Processing Center (Krome) to educate detainees in their immigration & legal rights. LOP was expanded to include the Broward Transitional Center (BTC) in September of 2015. Increased enforcement of civil immigration laws often results in immigrants awaiting their removal hearings while detained at the detention center. Although located on the outskirts of major metropolitan cities, many immigrants detained at Krome and BTC will not be represented by counsel. This may be due to distance, lack of resources, inability to communicate with friends and family members on the outside, or a combination of the above. The LOP strives to educate

immigrants that are detained about their rights in immigration proceedings, so that they may be prepared to represent themselves should the need arise.



Catholic Legal Services is the sole LOP provider in South Florida. The program, funded through the VERA Institute for Justice (VERA), is now entering its seventh year of service. Catholic Legal Services continues to provide these presentations at minimum twice a week at the Krome Detention Center, and four times per week at BTC. Our LOP staff consists of Spanish, English, Creole, and French speakers. This ensures that we are able to accommodate a large majority of the population that comes through the South Florida detention centers. Telephonic access to interpreters permits staff members to offer services to detainees in many native languages, including Bengali, Mam, Mandarin, and Tigrigna.

### **National Qualified Representative Program (NQRP)**

In 2013, Krome formed a 30-bed unit for the mentally ill who cannot be kept in the general population but do not require acute hospitalization. The AILA Krome Mental Incompetency Project (AKMIP) has been providing pro-bono legal representation to the mentally ill population at Krome since 2011. AKMIP's 8 pro-bono attorneys (2 from CCLS) have served many severely ill Krome Detention Center detainees.

Building on the expertise gained through AKMIP and LOP, Catholic Legal Services positioned itself to effectively represent this often marginalized population. The Executive Office for Immigration Review, contracting through VERA, initiated the National Qualified Representative Program (NQRP) to provide *pro bono* representation to respondents found to be mentally incompetent to represent themselves in removal proceedings. VERA contracted with CCLS to expand services offered at Krome. This expansion ensures that the rights of a special class of immigrants, often most needing of our services will receive competent legal counsel at no cost to them. CCLS began representing its first client under the NQRP program in September of 2015.

## **Cuban Family Reunification Parole Program (CFRP)**

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USCIS created the Cuban Family Reunification Parole Program (CFRP) to facilitate Cuban family reunifications. Under CFRP, USCIS offers beneficiaries of approved family-based immigrant visa-petitions the opportunity to come to the US via parole rather than remain in Cuba awaiting visa availability. The purpose of the program is to expedite family reunification



through safe, legal, and orderly channels of migration to the U.S and to discourage dangerous and irregular maritime migration. During the year 2015, due to changes in the CFRP program, no new applications have been prepared by CCLS. CCLS is awaiting USCIS to reopen the program for new applications to continue assisting Cuban families to

reunite with their loved ones. During this transition process, CCLS continues to provide guidance and assistance to these families.

## Cuban Parole Program

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The Cuban Parole Program originated in 2001 serves a great influx of Cuban aliens. Arriving undocumented, and thus unable to access programs and other benefits designed to assist them, the CPP was the only way to successfully mainstream them into society. The CPP helps them obtain parole and work authorization, and refers them to employment agencies and/or other federally-funded agencies for appropriate aid. Once they obtain employment, they become productive members and have the opportunity to fully contribute to the vibrant immigrant community which distinguishes South Florida.



In early January 2005, the Supreme Court decided *Clark v. Martinez*, which held that individuals such as Mariel Cubans could not be held indefinitely by DHS after being ordered deported if their countries do not accept them. CCLS provides services to Mariel Cubans in light of the Supreme Court case.

During the year 2015, The United States and Cuba re-established diplomatic relations and reopened their respective

embassies. This change in diplomatic relations caused a surge in the number of Cuban nationals who entered the U.S.; either by land or sea in the year 2015, which in turn, increased the number of initial I-94 requests for parole cards CCLS prepared during the year 2015 by 38%.

CCLS CPP manager continues to attend weekly meetings with USCIS and monthly meetings with VOLAGs (Voluntary Resettlement Agencies). These encounters have led to a very professional but close relationship with many USCIS officers and adjudicators working with these agencies. This relationship has allowed CCLS to inquire, review and solve hundreds of cases that had felt into the cracks, had been erroneously denied, or had been pending adjudication for years. This relationship with the USCIS has grown over the years. CCLS has now an extensive and reliable network that helps us resolve many cases. Such a unique partnership has permitted a fresh, new start for hundreds of CCLS clients.

**Our 2015 Client Rogelio:** “Rogelio” is a 70 year-old citizen of Cuba. He entered the United States during the Mariel Boatlift in May 1980. In Cuba, he suffered persecution at the hands of the oppressive Castro regime on account of his opposition to the Communist Regime. In particular, the Government considered his refusal to join the Communist Party and support the Cuban Government as act against the “Revolution” and as such, the Cuban Government sent him a letter telling him to leave the country. Fearing for his life, he left his home and his country. After arriving in the United States, he became a self-supporting member of the community and worked continuously until his retirement. Rogelio is now afflicted by several medical issues and now lives with his granddaughter and great-grandchild. CCLS assisted “Rogelio” in the preparation of his I-485 residency, work permit, and fee waiver applications. Additionally, CCLS provided him assistance in the preparation of an I-601 waiver application that Rogelio required in order to become a legal permanent resident. CCLS assisted Rogelio to gather all the supporting documentation of his I-601 waiver application, and in the preparation of the required statement. Rogelio’s I-765, work permit application, was approved in 2013. With the assistance of CCLS Rogelio’s residency and I-601 applications were approved and “Rogelio” became a legal permanent resident. “Rogelio” now hopes to become a naturalized citizen once he meets the 5 year residency requirement.

## Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program

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On December 18, 2014, USCIS announced implementation of the Haitian Family Reunification Parole (HFRP) program for certain beneficiaries of family-based preference petitions filed on or before that date. Under the program, eligible Haitians whose immigrant visas were expected to become available within approximately 18 to 30 months were given an opportunity to receive parole to enter the United States. Once in the United States, the parolees are eligible to apply for an employment authorization document; when their priority dates become current, they may apply to adjust status to permanent residence. The program is intended to expedite family reunification and aid Haiti in its continued recovery efforts following the devastating January 12, 2010 earthquake. CCLS conducted several joint outreach events with the local USCIS office, in order to educate the community on the program, explained the costs and benefits of the program, and the criteria of eligibility. USCIS began inviting eligible beneficiaries to apply for the program in March of 2015. Applications were accepted during a six month period following the invitation. CCLS provided 126 HFRP related services through November 15, 2015. CCLS

anticipates that USCIS will begin issuing new invitations to eligible beneficiaries by March of 2016.

## Recent Haitian Arrivals

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CCLS continued to implement a monthly Know Your Rights (“KYR”) presentation. KYR is specifically designed to address the needs of recent Haitian arrivals. It informs them about their rights and the immigration process in the US. In 2015, CCLS discussed the immigration process from being apprehended at the US border or entering lawfully to obtaining relief in immigration court and the Board of Immigration of Appeals (“BIA”). CCLS discussed the possible forms of

relief that recent arrivals maybe eligible for.

Individual consultations were conducted after the presentation where attendees were able to ask questions specific to their cases.

The July 2014 surge of unaccompanied child migrants (“UACs”) resulted in a backlog of adult cases. This is a particular problem for Haitian asylum applicants, who have only one year to file an asylum application and must wait at least 150 days upon filing to apply for work authorization. Backlog adult cases are being rescheduled to November 2019.



Given the circumstances, EOIR implemented the “Lodging Asylum Application” memo. The latter allows asylum applicants to lodge their asylum application and request work authorization after 150 days of lodging their asylum applications.

With EOIR’s lodging policy, CCLS ensured that Haitian asylum applicants lodge their applications within a year of arrival to preserve their request for asylum. In addition, CCLS helped them file for their work authorization once 150 days have elapsed.

## TPS for Haitians Project

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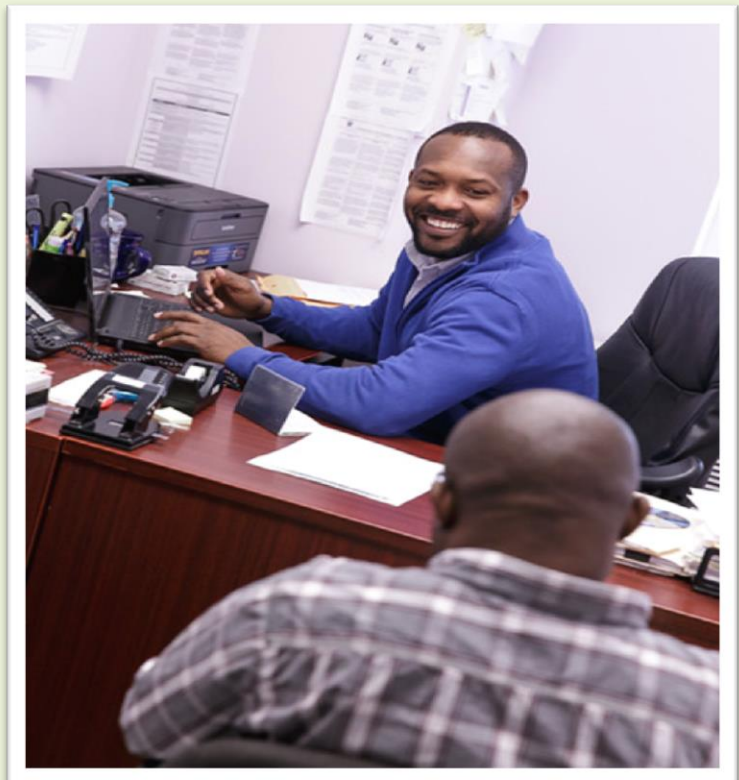
On January 12, 2010, Port-au-Prince and its environs suffered devastation in the form of a major earthquake. More than 310,000 Haitians lost their lives in the quake and 1.5 million were



displaced. The earthquake destroyed the nation's infrastructure, including government offices, hospitals, and roads. Shortly thereafter, the Secretary of Homeland Security (HS) halted Haitian deportations and announced that Haitians present in the US prior to the earthquake would be permitted to apply for temporary protected status (TPS), and later HS further re-designated TPS for Haitians, permitting those who entered on or before 12, 2011, remained continuously in the US, and otherwise qualified to apply for TPS. With this, victims of the earthquake who had entered the US became eligible for TPS for the first time. Limited relief in the form of deferred action was made available for earthquake victims beginning in June 2010. CCLS, serving the nation's largest Haitian community and with its own roots there, quickly organized its Haitian Emergency Legal Program (HELP) and became a national leader in securing this relief.

On August 25, 2015, the Department of Homeland Security ("DHS") extended TPS status for Haiti through July 22, 2017. However, prior to the extension, and on February 20, 2014, USCIS updated form I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status. The updated form requires TPS Applicants to disclose information about their immigration history that may raise eligibility issues for TPS. Furthermore, such information may also raise inadmissibility issues when some TPS applicants become eligible to adjust status.

Given the latter, CCLS dedicated its time to ensure that clients were properly informed about the legal ramifications pertaining to some questions. CCLS completed and filed thousands applications to renew TPS, extend work permits, and request fee waivers. CCLS has also been effective in responding to numerous RFE in conjunctions to those new issues.



## The Broward Office

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CCLS' Broward office is staffed by a full-time supervising attorney, two staff attorneys, four para-professionals, including three full-time paralegals, and a full-time paralegal/receptionist. Since CCLS was able to contract with DCF-ORS for funding for the Broward Office in September 2012, the Broward Office has been to offer employability program services to residents of Broward county that are Haitians, Cubans, refugees and asylees from all over the world.



**Our Client Maxy:** One of the recipients of the quality services provided by CCLS' Broward office is "Maxy". "Maxy" is a 28 year old young man from Haiti that made the difficult decision of leaving behind his wife and young son after he and his family were attacked and his life threatened because of his political leanings. With the help of the Broward office's supervising attorney, Maxy was granted asylum by an immigration judge. In June of 2015, Maxy and his family were reunited again in the United States with CCLS' help as derivatives of Maxy's asylum status. Again in December of 2015, CCLS helped Maxy become a permanent resident of the United States. When they are eligible, CCLS will also help Maxy's wife and son become permanent residents.

The Broward office also has had the great privilege of serving those women, men, and children affected by domestic violence and human trafficking. Immigration law recognizes the special claims of abused women, men, and children, yet they remain the most vulnerable immigrants with nowhere to turn to escape exploitation and mistreatment because they remain ignorant of their rights and without the resources to exercise them. These individuals represent some of the poorest members of the South Florida community and have little hope of escaping their abusive situation or of changing their economic situation without obtaining legal status in the United States. Their irregular immigration status increases their vulnerability in that their abusers exploit their lack of immigration status and threaten deportation to prevent the victim from seeking outside help and protection. Abusers manipulate the fear and isolation of the immigrants to perpetuate the abuse. Fortunately, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA), among other statutes, provides these individuals the opportunity to gain employment and autonomy from their abusers and traffickers.

## **The Doral Office - Cuban Services**

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The Doral office is located within the offices of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Its accredited representative staff provides legal assistance to the predominantly Cuban community in the area. It accepts referrals, most notably from the Refugee Resettlement Office operated by USCCB. Our Doral Office also provides assistance to this same population with their adjustment of status applications after a year of their arrival so they can become legal permanent residents. Subsequently, after their five years as legal permanent residents, it provides them assistance for naturalization. Moreover, our staff at the Doral Office assists Cuban nationals who are legal permanent residence or U.S. citizens to reunify with their family member who are in Cuba through Family Relative petitions and the CFRP program; which has enable our Doral Office to be a one-stop center for the Cuban population of South Florida by meeting all their primary immigrations needs.

In 2015, staff executed hundreds of work permits, parole requests, and fee waiver requests for recent Cuban arrivals in order for them to have the rights tools to start their new life in the United States. During the year 2015, our Doral Office saw a considerable increase in the number of Cuban national seeking assistance with I-94 request for initial parole card and work authorization applications due to the surge of Cuban national coming to the U.S. since the

diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Cuba were reestablished. Our Doral Office staff has been working tirelessly in order to meet the new need for assistance from the Cuban population of South Florida.

## People with Special Needs

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CCLS has designed a program of community outreach and legal services to serve those with specific needs, limitations, and capabilities. Types of special needs vary in severity. We take an active role in providing legal immigration services and representation to this population.

CCLS understands that each of us is unique and different and that persons with special needs must be treated with dignity, compassion, patience, caring, and understanding. They must be protected and CCLS looks out for their legal immigration needs.

CCLS also provides auxiliary aids and services at no cost to deaf or hard-of-hearing clients.

## Special Projects

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As a society, we have come to recognize that all human beings are entitled to fundamental rights and that the ultimate measure of the justice of any community is the measure of protection it provides to its weakest and humblest residents. Thus, America guarantees the educational rights of the learning impaired, the rights to proper treatment of imprisoned criminals, and the legal rights of undocumented aliens against deportation without due process.

## Education

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In year 2015, CCLS engaged in public education workshops both in private and non-profit organizations by providing continuing legal education regarding immigration law. Additionally, CCLS staff participated as presenters in local and national conferences. CCLS COO participated as a presenter at Department of Children and Families' Consultation talking about the

implementation of Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program.

## Training and Development

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CCLS created opportunities and sponsored regular trainings for its staff during the year of 2015 regarding immigration law and information related to its contracts. CCLS continued providing extensive training to its staff on substantive law and litigation skills. Additionally, CCLS continued receiving training on immigration law and mental health issues. CCLS also provided in-house trainings to its entire staff on ESA contract eligibility, services and contract compliance.

## Public Information and Advocacy

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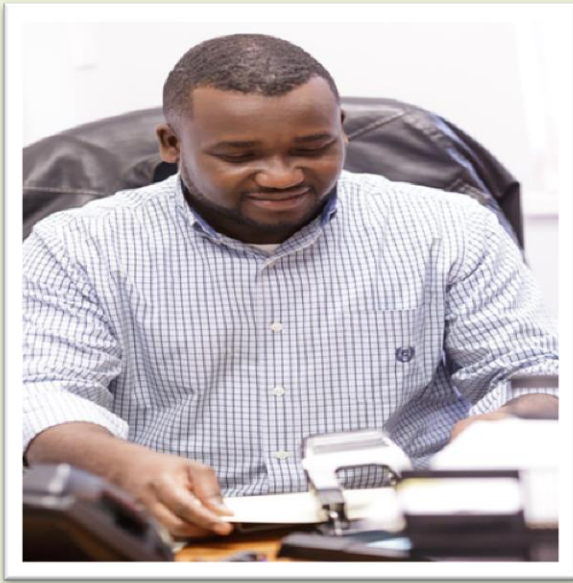
CCLS continued to meet on a regular basis with members of Congress and their staffs and with officials of the federal government, briefing them on such issues as the: need for immigration reform, difficulties and delays in family reunification, importance of granting temporary protected status and work authorization to those who qualify, and destructive effects of detention not only on the lives of the detained immigrants but on their families.

## Staff Self-Care

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CCLS recognizes that vicarious trauma (VT) is a real phenomenon among people who work with the victims of torture and abuse and detainees suffering from family separation, the loss of work, and the threat of being permanently uprooted from the communities of which they have become a part. Studies indicate that attorneys/BIA-accredited representatives may be at special risk of VT. VT can lead to intrusive imagery, burnout, and even disruptions in living relationships with spouses and children. Those measures an individual undertakes to reduce and deal with negative impact of VT are collectively referred to “self-care.”





CCLS has undertaken several interlocking strategies to promote self-care: (1) New staff learn about VT at orientation, to become aware of its signs and symptoms, and recognize that it is natural for people who work with people who have suffered trauma and torture. (2) We also explained the importance of creating a sense of balance of stress and relaxation both at work and at home.



# Statement of Financial Position

ASSETS	JUNE 30, 2014	JUNE 30, 2015
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash	\$214,042	\$147,261
Accounts receivable net of allowance for doubtful accounts of \$33,569	31,448	33,569
Grants Receivable	240,429	393,613
Prepaid expenses	3,821	3,530
Security Deposit	36,189	42,189
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>525,929</b>	<b>620,162</b>
<b>NONCURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Property and equipment, net	16,801	11,465
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$542,730</b>	<b>\$631,627</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET DEFICIENCIES</b>		
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$138,050	\$190,123
Notes Payable	483,899	192,430
Compensated absences	66,842	86,134
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>688,791</b>	<b>468,687</b>
Notes payable, less current maturities	N/A	273,624
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$688,791</b>	<b>\$742,311</b>
<b>NET ASSETS (deficiency)</b>		
Temporarily restricted	\$24,988	\$83,749
Unrestricted	(171,049)	(194,433)
<b>TOTAL NET DEFICIENCY</b>	<b>(146,061)</b>	<b>(110,684)</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Deficiency</b>	<b>\$542,730</b>	<b>\$631,627</b>

# Statement of activities

UNRESTRICTED AND TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED SUPPORT AND OTHER REVENUE:	JUNE 30, 2014	JUNE 30, 2015
<b>SUPPORT</b>		
Grants	\$1,545,187	\$1,901,549
Clients fees	505,639	447,493
Fundraising	106,561	132,468
Contributions	147,950	148,644
Interest Income	18	14
<b>Total Support &amp; Other Revenue</b>	<b>2,305,355</b>	<b>2,630,168</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Program Services:		
Immigration Services	1,935,780	2,137,850
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>1,953,780</b>	<b>2,137,850</b>
<b>SUPPORTING SERVICES</b>		
Management & general	287,978	437,230
Fundraising	11,432	19,711
<b>Total Supporting Services</b>	<b>299,410</b>	<b>456,941</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$2,235,190</b>	<b>\$2,594,791</b>
Change in net assets	70,165	35,377
Net deficiency – beginning of year	(216,226)	(146,061)
<b>NET DEFICIENCY – END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$(146,061)</b>	<b>\$(110,684)</b>

DEPARTMENT	STAFF
Executive	Randolph P. McGrorty Chief Executive Officer Myriam Mezadiou Chief Operating Officer
Advocacy	Randolph P. McGrorty Executive Director
Religious Immigration Services	Myriam Mezadiou Administrative Director
General Immigration Services; Detention (LOP, NQRP)	Georges Francis Managing Attorney
Broward Office	Peterson St. Philippe Supervising Attorney
ESA(RS/CWS); Doral Office; CPP; CFRP; TPS for HP; HFRP; URMP	Cassandra Suprin Supervising Attorney
Unaccompanied Minors (LOPC, ORR, jAC, YMC)	Elizabeth Sanchez-Kennedy Supervising Attorney
Citizenship Project(NAC, MDPS, CW); DACA; CIR; VHT; VAWA	Ana L. Quiros Citizenship & Immigration Reform Programs Coordinator
Grants	Martin Terris Director for Development & Evaluations
ESA (RS/CWS); Other Projects	Soledad Araya Programs Manager
Citizenship Project	Raul Hernandez Coordinator
<b>MIAMI OFFICE STAFF</b>	<b>EMAIL ADDRESS</b>
Ana Quiros, Esq	<a href="mailto:aquiros@cclsmiami.org">aquiros@cclsmiami.org</a>
Austyn Sanders, Esq	<a href="mailto:asanders@cclsmiami.org">asanders@cclsmiami.org</a>
Bernardette Calvimonte, Paralegal	<a href="mailto:bcalvimonte@cclsmiami.org">bcalvimonte@cclsmiami.org</a>
Brad Ginter, BIA-Accredited Representative (F)	<a href="mailto:bginter@cclsmiami.org">bginter@cclsmiami.org</a>
Carolina Bayona, Esq	<a href="mailto:cbayona@cclsmiami.org">cbayona@cclsmiami.org</a>
Cassandra Suprin, Esq	<a href="mailto:csuprin@cclsmiami.org">csuprin@cclsmiami.org</a>
Cassy Pierre, Paralegal	<a href="mailto:cpierre@cclsmiami.org">cpierre@cclsmiami.org</a>
Sr. Cecilia Chen, BIA-Accredited Representative (F)	<a href="mailto:cchen@cclsmiami.org">cchen@cclsmiami.org</a>
Dante Lendecky, Paralegal	<a href="mailto:dlendecky@cclsmiami.org">dlendecky@cclsmiami.org</a>
Elizabeth Sanchez-Kennedy, Esq	<a href="mailto:esanchezkennedy@cclsmiami.org">esanchezkennedy@cclsmiami.org</a>
Elsa Galbes, Administrative Assistant/Receptionist	<a href="mailto:egalbes@cclsmiami.org">egalbes@cclsmiami.org</a>
Esperanza Montaldo, BIA-Accredited Representative (P)	<a href="mailto:emontaldo@cclsmiami.org">emontaldo@cclsmiami.org</a>
Fernando Wytrykusz, Esq	<a href="mailto:fwytrykusz@cclsmiami.org">fwytrykusz@cclsmiami.org</a>
Georges Francis, Esq	<a href="mailto:gfrancis@cclsmiami.org">gfrancis@cclsmiami.org</a>
Gracia Cuzzi, Esq	<a href="mailto:gcuzzi@cclsmiami.org">gcuzzi@cclsmiami.org</a>
Kristie-Anne Padron, Esq	<a href="mailto:kpadron@cclsmiami.org">kpadron@cclsmiami.org</a>
Krystina Francois, Natz Coordinator	<a href="mailto:kfrancois@cclsmiami.org">kfrancois@cclsmiami.org</a>
Luz Castilla, BIA-Accredited Representative (P)	<a href="mailto:lcastilla@cclsmiami.org">lcastilla@cclsmiami.org</a>
Marie Claire Moise, BIA-Accredited Representative (P)	<a href="mailto:mcmoise@cclsmiami.org">mcmoise@cclsmiami.org</a>
Martin Terris, PhD	<a href="mailto:mterris@aol.com">mterris@aol.com</a>
Br. Mike La France, Esq	<a href="mailto:ml@cclsmiami.org">ml@cclsmiami.org</a>
Muriel Ambroise-Cauvin, Administrative Assistant/Receptionist	<a href="mailto:mcauvin@cclsmiami.org">mcauvin@cclsmiami.org</a>

Octavio Caro, Esq	ocaroc@ccslsmiami.org
Onel Joseph, Paralegal	ojoseph@ccslsmiami.org
Raul Hernandez, PhD	rhernandez@ccslsmiami.org
Sabine Pierre Louis, Intake Paralegal	spierrelouis@ccslsmiami.org
Sherly Sanon, BSW, Paralegal	ssanon@ccslsmiami.org
Soledad Araya, Programs Manager	svenegas@ccslsmiami.org
Stephanie Audate, Esq	aaudate@ccslsmiami.org

Doral Office Staff	
Emilio Garcia, BIA-Accredited Representative (P)	egr30@hotmail.com
Broward Office Staff	
Daniella Palmiotto, Esq	dpalmiotto@ccslsmiami.org
Kevin Bradley, Esq	kbradley@ccslsmiami.org
Lydia Divers, Paralegal	ldivers@ccslsmiami.org
Martine Legagneur, Administrative Assistant/Para	mlegagneur@ccslsmiami.org
Miriam Zelaya, Paralegal	mzelaya@ccslsmiami.org
Myriam Robertson-Poux, Paralegal	mrobertson@ccslsmiami.org
Omar Novillo, Esq	onovillo@ccslsmiami.org
Peterson St. Philippe, Esq	pstphilippe@ccslsmiami.org

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*With Humble Gratitude To All Our  
Benefactors!*



**CCLS clients are usually poor or low income and often must rely upon public transportation. To better meet their needs, Catholic Legal Services maintains three offices in different neighborhoods across the Archdiocese of Miami:**

## **Catholic Legal Services Archdiocese of Miami, Inc.**

### **Miami Office**

**Ingraham Building – Downtown Miami**

25 SE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Ste. 220

Miami, Florida 33131

Phone: 305-373-1073 \* Fax: 305-373-1173

### **Broward Office**

**St. Stephen's Catholic Church**

6081 SW 21<sup>st</sup> Street

Miramar, Florida 33023

Phone: 1-954-306-9537 \* Fax: 1-800-691-5203

### **Doral Office**

**USCCB Migration & Refugee Services**

7855 NW 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Ste. 114

Miami, Florida 33126

Phone: 305-887-8333 Fax: 305-541-2724

Website: [www.cclsmiami.org](http://www.cclsmiami.org)