

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

**PREPARED BY PROJECT ANAR  
(AFGHAN NETWORK FOR  
ADVOCACY AND RESOURCES)**

[projectanar.org](http://projectanar.org)



**PROJECT  
ANAR**  
AFGHAN NETWORK FOR ADVOCACY & RESOURCES

*a year's overview*

# WHERE WE ARE AND WHERE WE'RE GOING

## OUR WORK IN 2022

**Project ANAR is an Afghan-led immigration justice organization**, fiscally sponsored by Pangea Legal Services. In 2022, Project ANAR's work focused on (1) direct legal assistance, (2) community education and resources, and (3) advocacy. Our priorities in 2022 included working on humanitarian and family reunification legal pathways for Afghans, and establishing a pathway to permanent status for Afghans in the U.S.

Project ANAR has two full-time attorneys and two full-time legal assistant project coordinators, all paid equally and serving as co-directors. Our team provides legal, advisory, and technical assistance to our own volunteers, as well as other practitioners. In addition to our direct partnerships with community, immigration, resettlement, and human rights organizations, our team has both engaged in and taken on leadership roles within coalition spaces related to Afghan resettlement and evacuation.

## WHAT'S NEXT FOR 2023

Project ANAR's advocacy and legal services will continue and expand in the coming year. We remain focused on both a pathway to permanent status for Afghans in the U.S., and an urgent need for pathways to refuge and family reunification for those outside of the U.S.

Project ANAR will continue its grassroots, collaborative legal services model, primarily in Northern California. Project ANAR will also continue its local and national level partnerships and advocacy work. Project ANAR's existence is a testament to our collaboration, expertise, and hope. We look forward to continuing to mobilize with our base of volunteers and community members, and serve as advisors and consultants on Afghan immigration justice in the coming year.

In the DMV region, Project ANAR is an organizational client of the American University Washington College of Law International Human Rights Clinic for the 2022-2023 school year, through which it creates and disseminates know your rights resources and co-hosts legal services events.

*a year's overview*

# OUR WORK IN 2022

## Direct Legal Assistance

Our legal assistance is focused, primarily in the geographic regions that are home to the highest national concentrations of recently arrived Afghans. That critical work has included accessible community updates on immigration legal issues, such as know your rights information about the asylum filing deadline and parole application guidance. Throughout the past year, we've also assisted with responses to dozens of Requests for Further Evidence, and other Humanitarian Parole decisions.

Project ANAR also directly represents clients and assists pro bono attorneys and volunteers representing clients. Some of that work includes:

- Assisting with a Credible Fear Interview for a detained asylum-seeking Afghan family. ANAR assisted in obtaining the release of this family.
- Providing assistance to one of our volunteers that successfully prepared their Afghan client for a student visa interview.

- Co-organizing adjustment of status and asylum preparation workshops.
- Offering training and support to law student groups assisting Afghans
- Lending technical assistance to leading practitioners to assist in the development of practice guidance
- offering assistance to Afghans who have arrived via the border and are detained or in removal proceedings



### ASYLUM INTERVIEW WORKSHOP FOR AFGHANS

**Saturday, November 5, 2022**

American University Washington  
College of Law  
4300 Nebraska Ave NW,  
Washington, DC 20016  
**\*Maryland residents only**

#### How can we help?

If you are:

- an Afghan asylum-seeker
- you have not been interviewed for your asylum application
- you live in Maryland
- you are not represented by an attorney,

You are welcome to join us for this workshop at no cost. We are a group of attorneys and student attorneys who will practice with you before your asylum interview. Although we do not provide legal representation, you will receive important feedback and practice in advance of your interview with USCIS.

If you are interested, please fill out the form at this link: [afghanasylum.click/form](https://afghanasylum.click/form)  
If you have questions, please contact us at (202) 885-7455.

We will provide interpretation for **DARI, PASHTO,**  
and other languages as needed.

# OUR WORK IN 2022

## Continued Humanitarian Parole Advocacy

In addition to legal services, we made waves exposing the government’s disparate treatment of Afghan and Ukrainian war refugees, advocating for policy change, and working in coalitions to advance the rights of Afghans seeking humanitarian parole.. Project ANAR led national advocacy efforts to put pressure on the U.S. government to process Humanitarian Parole applications and create a pathway for vulnerable Afghans. In addition to a series of letters sent to the administration and key members of Congress, signed by more than 200 organizations, Project ANAR held public demonstrations, a Congressional briefing, and months of closed-door engagement with agency officials. Our efforts have been covered in national and local media, including PBS, Los Angeles Times, Al Jazeera, and Reveal News from the Center for Investigative Reporting. Project ANAR also put together calling scripts, a petition, and phone banking

sessions to bring further attention and advocacy for humanitarian parole applicants.

Through our collaborative efforts, Reveal News from the Center of Investigative Reporting was able to submit a Freedom of Information Act request to USCIS to obtain approval, denial, and financial information about Afghans applying for humanitarian parole. Wogai Mohmand and Laila Ayub worked with reporter Najib Aminy for months to discuss what types of information was critical to our community and helped guide the FOIA process. That FOIA request revealed information critical to advancing our efforts and demonstrating the disparities in the US immigration system, including:

- For Afghan humanitarian parole applicants, there were:
  - Over 66,000 applications received;
  - 123 approved applications; and
  - Fees collected amounted to nearly \$20 million.
- For the Uniting for Ukraine parole program, there were:
  - 88,000 applications received;
  - 68,000 approved applications; and
  - No fees collected.



July 1, 2021 - May 1, 2022

**19,362** rejected Afghan applications. These applications were not processed at all.

**8,037** Afghan applications that have been processed and a decision has been made.

**123** of **8,037** Afghan apps approved, which means the approval rate for apps already processed is **1.5%**.

\*Data gathered by Reveal/CIR via a FOIA request to USCIS on Afghan Humanitarian Parole Applications.

# OUR WORK IN 2022

## **Afghan Adjustment Act (AAA) Advocacy**

Project ANAR recognizes and is committed to securing permanent status for Afghans in the U.S. In line with that goal, we spent much of our time and efforts in 2021 advocating for the Afghan Adjustment Act (AAA) to be passed. The AAA would create a pathway to permanent status for Afghan parolees in the US. Project ANAR created tools for public engagement, including hosting a series of phone banks and targeting Members of Congress in key states to pressure them to pass the AAA.

## **Seized Afghan Assets Amicus Brief**

Our team moved quickly to explore options to oppose the Biden administration's efforts to seize Afghan funds, and ensure our communities' concerns were heard. Project ANAR reached out to the Center for Constitutional Rights and requested an amicus brief filing on behalf of Afghan American community organizations, with Global Advocates of Afghanistan, AACO, and AFBT joining the brief. The brief was filed on April 21, 2022. On February 21, 2023, a federal judge rejected the bid to seize Afghan assets and determined that the funds belonged to the Afghan people.

## **Developing Advocacy and Litigation Strategies**

Project ANAR regularly advises and consults on the development of advocacy and litigation strategies. Project ANAR has coordinated with leading immigration litigators including ACLU chapters, and IRAP, and offered our expertise, including by identifying clients and plaintiffs, sharing aggregate data and trends, identifying and tracking immigration legal issues impacting Afghans. Project ANAR also consulted with ILRC in creating their updated parole manual published in January 2023.

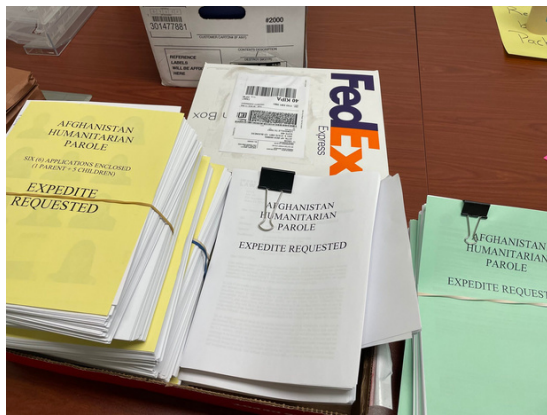
Thank you to our funders in 2022, including:

- NEO Philanthropies' Four Freedoms Fund
- Welcome.US Fund
- California Dignity for Families Fund

*last year's*

# NUMBERS

In 2022, Project ANAR continued to file humanitarian parole applications, assign cases to volunteer attorneys, and advise volunteers on their cases. Since we started our efforts in August 2021, our team has filed over 700 humanitarian parole applications, we have assigned over 1,245 cases, and managed over 1,000 volunteers. Our volunteers have collectively submitted over 5,400 humanitarian parole applications.



# 700+

*HP applications filed by our team*

# 1,245

*cases assigned to volunteers*

# 1,000+

*volunteers*

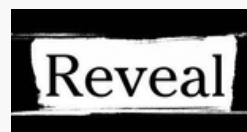
# 5,400+

*HP applications filed by our team and volunteers**last year's*

# NEWS

Project ANAR continues to use its platform to bring attention to the stories of Afghans. Our team and work was featured in over a dozen articles last year, including the New York Times, Al Jazeera, Reveal News, and PBS News Hour.

These stories covered our work on humanitarian parole, asylum, AAA, and seized Afghan assets. Read more at: <https://www.projectanar.org/in-the-news>.



*last year's*

# EVENTS & TIMELINE

Project ANAR led or participated in a number of events and projects throughout 2022. We are proud of the space we create for our community to come together and of the space our partner organizations continue to share with us. We look forward to expanding these efforts in 2023.

**JANUARY 4, 2022, DIRECT ACTION IN WASHINGTON, DC**

Our team collaborated with AFBT to organize a direct action targeted at Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas to demand the approval of Afghan humanitarian parole applications.



**FEBRUARY 15, 2022, SIX MONTHS LATER: THE AFGHAN CRISIS**

Laila Ayub and Wogai Mohmand, along with AFBT, participated in a community update regarding the status of Project ANAR's efforts and ways to support Afghans.

**JANUARY 14, 2022, JULIETTE CHISAM-MAJID WITH WOMEN FOR AFGHAN WOMEN**

Juliette Chisam-Majid led a discussion on Afghan humanitarian parole applications, providing an update on how to fill out the application, what barriers Afghans face, and advocacy strategies.

**FEBRUARY 15, 2022, THIRD LETTER TO PRESIDENT BIDEN AND USCIS REGARDING AFGHAN PAROLE PROGRAM**

Project ANAR joined over 200 organizations in a request for the creation of an Afghan Parole Program, similar to the Uniting for Ukraine program.

**FEBRUARY 17, 2022, PROJECT AFGHAN ASSISTANCE: HOW LAWYERS AND CITIZENS CAN HELP WELCOME AFGHANS TO THE US**

Wogai Mohmand participated in a session, hosted by the Bay Area Lawyer Chapter of the American Constitution Society, where she provided lawyers and non-lawyers an update on how they can support Afghans in pursuing immigration pathways to the US.

**FEBRUARY 23, 2022, IMMIGRATION CLE**

Wogai Mohmand led a Continuing Legal Education (CLE) session regarding humanitarian parole and other immigration assistance for Afghans in an event hosted by Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles.

\*Photos courtesy of Valerie Plesch.

last year's

# EVENTS & TIMELINE

**MARCH 1, 2022, LETTER REGARDING RESCINDING EXECUTIVE ORDER ON AFGHANISTAN'S FROZEN FUNDS**

Project ANAR joined over 80 organizations to call on the Executive Branch to rescind its executive order freezing Afghanistan's assets.



**MARCH 16, 2022, JOINT STATEMENT**

Project ANAR, along with several other organizations, released a statement of solidarity with Cameroonians and other Black immigrant communities after temporary protected status was extended to Afghans.

**APRIL 21, 2022, FILED AMICUS BRIEF REGARDING FROZEN AFGHAN ASSETS:**

Project ANAR led efforts to file an amicus brief on behalf of Afghan American community organizations, arguing that frozen Afghan assets belonged to the Afghan people.

**APRIL 26, 2022, A LIFELINE FOR AFGHAN EVACUEES**

Saamia Haqiq spoke with the San Francisco Foundation about Project ANAR's Rapid Response Funding to file HP applications.



UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK	
<i>IN RE: TERRORIST ATTACKS ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001</i>	Case No. 03-md-1570 (GBD)(SN)
JOHN DOES 1-7, CREDITORS, V. THE TALIBAN, <i>ET AL.</i> , DEBTORS, FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF NEW YORK, GARNISHEE	Case No. 20-mc-740 (GBD)(SN)
FIONA HAVLISH, INDIVIDUALLY AND ON BEHALF OF THE ESTATE OF DONALD HAVLISH, JR., DECEASED, <i>ET AL.</i> , CREDITORS, V. THE TALIBAN, <i>ET AL.</i> , DEBTORS, FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF NEW YORK, GARNISHEE	Case No. 03-cv-9848 (GBD)(SN)
BRIEF OF AMICI CURIAE AFGHAN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS OPPOSING PLAINTIFF-CREDITORS' TURNOVER MOTIONS	

**JUNE 14, 2022, AN AFGHAN ADJUSTMENT ACT FOR OUR COMMUNITY**

Project ANAR hosted an IG Live with AFBT where Laila Ayub spoke about the importance of getting the AAA passed and its impact on our community.



*last year's*

# EVENTS & TIMELINE

**JULY 30, 2022: PROJECT ANAR CO-ORGANIZED AN ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS CLINIC IN THE DMV REGION**

Project ANAR joined Human Rights First, LIRS, AILA, and others in organizing an adjustment of status clinic to assist Afghans in northern Virginia.

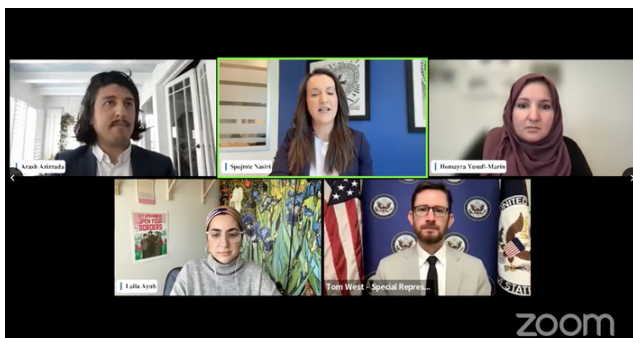


**AUGUST 30, 2022, CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING ON HUMANITARIAN PAROLE**

Laila Ayub and Wogai Mohmand participated in a Congressional briefing on Afghan Humanitarian parole where they discussed the difficulties Afghans face, the disparities in adjudications, and how to address these issues.

**OCTOBER 17, 2022, TOWN HALL WITH SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE TOM WEST**

Project ANAR partnered with PANA, AACO, and AFBT to question Tom West regarding the status of Afghans and advocacy efforts.



**AUGUST 28, 2022, PROJECT ANAR ANNIVERSARY PICNIC**

Project ANAR hosted its first anniversary picnic at Lake Merritt in Oakland, California. We shared space with our community and were able to come together to reflect on our past year.

**SEPTEMBER 14, 2022, ONE YEAR AFTER THE WITHDRAWAL**

Laila Ayub joined AFBT and Madre to discuss the status of Afghans seeking immigration pathways a year after our work began.

**NOVEMBER 5, 2022, ASYLUM INTERVIEW WORKSHOP FOR AFGHANS**

Laila Ayub of Project ANAR, in partnership with HIAS, University of Maryland School of Law, and American University Washington College of Law, held an interview workshop for Afghans to prepare for their asylum interviews.

*last year's*

# EVENTS & TIMELINE

**NOVEMBER 17, 2022 - NEW YORK WOMEN'S BAR ASSOCIATION CLE**

Laila Ayub presented about humanitarian parole and asylum for Afghans on a CLE hosted by the New York Women's Bar Association.

**NOVEMBER 15, 2022 - GUEST LECTURE AT UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND**

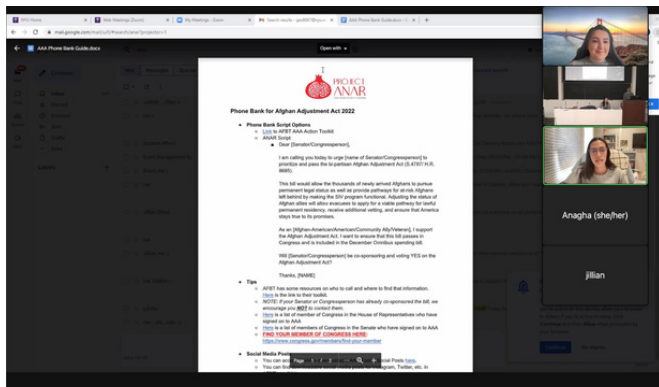
Laila Ayub presented to students in an undergraduate naturalization and citizenship seminar at the University of Maryland.

**DECEMBER 8, 2022 - PROJECT ANAR CO-HOSTED AAA CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING IN DC**

Laila Ayub attended a briefing in Washington, DC on behalf of Project ANAR, where Afghan women directly impacted by the AAA urged Congress to pass the legislation.

**SEPTEMBER 2022 - DECEMBER 2022, PHONE BANKING FOR AAA**

Saamia Haqiq, Juliette Chisam-Majid, and Belinda Liu hosted numerous phone banking sessions where volunteers called representatives to encourage them to pass the AAA.



**JANUARY 31, 2023, SPEAKER SERIES FEATURING SAAMIA HAQIQ**

Saamia Haqiq was featured in Santa Clara University's Middle Eastern and North African Club's Speaker Series where she spoke about Project ANAR's efforts and work.



**FEBRUARY 2, 2023, ASSISTING AFGHANS ARRIVING VIA THE SOUTHERN BORDER**

Project ANAR held a session for community, legal, and advocacy organizations on how to assist Afghans who arrive at the US-Mexico border.

# OUR TEAM



**LAILA AYUB** is an immigration attorney and Co-Director of Project ANAR. Prior to co-founding Project ANAR as an emergency response effort in August 2021, Laila was Special Projects Attorney at RAICES, where she coordinated advocacy efforts alongside asylum-seeking families and individuals detained in ICE custody in Texas. Through that work, she led collaborative campaigns, tracked detention conditions, assisted in litigation efforts, filed civil rights complaints, and directly represented families and individuals in immigration proceedings, towards the goal of obtaining their release and ultimately abolishing detention. Laila is Afghan and has a background in workers rights and community and political organizing. She is based in the DMV area.

**JULIETTE CHISAM-MAJID** is a Legal Assistant and Program Director with Project ANAR. Prior to working with Project ANAR, Juliette was a legal volunteer helping with Humanitarian Parole applications with Project ANAR and worked in biotech. Juliette is an Afghan American and received her Bachelor's degree in Chemistry from the University of San Diego, and is expected to receive her Master's degree in Chemistry from the University of Washington - Seattle in 2024.



**SAAMIA HAQIQ** is a Legal Assistant and Program Director with Project ANAR. She has over 6 years of experience working in immigration law, including assisting in refugee resettlement, filing business visa applications with USCIS, coordinating pro bono partnership efforts, and consolidating resources for Afghans in the immigration process, with the ultimate goal of reshaping U.S. immigration pathways. As an Afghan American, she speaks Dari and has worked closely with clients to help file humanitarian parole, asylum (affirmative), and family-based green card applications. Saamia received her Bachelor's degree in Political Science from UC Berkeley in 2017 and plans to attend law school in Fall 2023.

**BELINDA LIU** joined Project ANAR as an Immigration Attorney and Program Director in 2022 after volunteering with ANAR's humanitarian parole project through the end of 2021. She has been practicing immigration law since 2018, helping low-income immigrants to secure lawful status and permanent residence in the U.S. through family-based and humanitarian pathways, and representing individuals and families facing deportation before the San Francisco Immigration Court. She has also volunteered extensively with human rights organizations across four continents. Belinda received her JD with Specialization in International Legal Affairs from Cornell Law School in 2014. She is licensed to practice law in California and speaks Cantonese and Spanish.



# OUR TEAM



**WOGAI MOHMAND** is an attorney based out of Los Angeles. Wogai co-founded Project ANAR in August 2021 to assist Afghans in accessing immigration pathways to the United States. Her work with ANAR now focuses on advocacy efforts, specifically issues related to AAA, continuing parole status, and immigration legislation. Wogai has worked on social justice issues for years, including prison abolition, eviction defense, civil rights, and other immigration issues. She is licensed to practice law in California and speaks Pashto.

**ROXANA MOUSSAVIAN** helped co-found Project ANAR in August 2021, and continues to support Project ANAR as a friend and advisor. She is also an attorney and Co-Director of Pangea Legal Services, an immigration defense non-profit based in San Francisco and San Jose, California. At Pangea Legal Services, Roxana has filed and litigated three habeas petitions arguing that ICE custody is a form of disability discrimination and that Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act warrants release from custody as a reasonable accommodation. She recently co-authored an article about this novel legal theory, which was published in the Harvard Law & Policy Review. Roxana is passionate about collective action that builds agency and creates joy for and with women and non-binary people, people with disabilities, Muslims, and immigrants. She is Muslim, second-generation Iranian, and lives with disabilities in the Bay Area.



Project ANAR is fiscally sponsored by Pangea Legal Services, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit immigrant defense organization based in San Francisco, California.

