



DEPORTEE PROGRAM

FIGHTING AGAINST FAMILY SEPARATION AND THE CRIMINALIZATION OF IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

OVERVIEW

Thousands of parents of U.S. citizens are deported each day. Through Al Otro Lado's Deportee Program, indigent deportees, most of whom lived for decades in the United States, receive free legal screening, medical screening, housing referrals, mental health services, substance abuse counseling, HIV/STI testing, job referrals, and information on how to continue or validate their education in Mexico. Al Otro Lado recruits, trains, and hosts dozens of pro bono attorneys, as well as volunteer doctors, social workers, and others who wish to support the deportee community. Al Otro Lado screens deportees to identify legal, medical, housing, or social service needs of any family members left behind in the United States and connects deportees' family members in Los Angeles to these vital services or make appropriate referrals elsewhere. Wherever possible, our attorneys work to assist deportees who are able to legally return to the United States, or help single deported parents reunite with their U.S. citizen children, who often end up in foster care or homeless.

THE NEED

In 2016, Tijuana received an average of 3,000 deportees per month. Almost all of the deportees served by Al Otro Lado were the primary breadwinners for their families in the United States, and many left behind minor U.S. citizen children. These families often experience housing and food instability following a parent's deportation. Many deportees grew up in the United States, and lack the Mexican identity documents necessary to obtain housing, employment, and medical care. Al Otro Lado also frequently encounters individuals who were deported in violation of their due process rights, unceremoniously dumped over the border hours after apprehension without ever having the opportunity to see a judge. Deportees and their families end up traumatized by this sudden separation, and need immediate assistance to ensure their survival.



WHAT YOUR CONTRIBUTION WILL ACCOMPLISH

\$5,000 Pays for one Deportee Clinic, providing legal orientation for up to 50 deportees

\$60,000 Pays for one full-time Legal Assistant, drastically increasing program capacity

\$90,000 One full-time Attorney to help reunify deportees reunify with their families

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OUR CLIENTS

Sam (not client's real name) is a 25 year-old who lived in Los Angeles from age two until he was deported at age 19. As a child, Sam and his siblings suffered prolonged sexual abuse and exposure to brutal domestic violence. He had a diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder by the time he was three years old.

Sam self-medicated to deal with his trauma, was convicted of a drug crime, and at age 18 was deported directly from prison. While Sam was in prison, his siblings, then also undocumented, sought legal advice to see if there was any way for Sam to remain in the United States. Sam's siblings were improperly advised and told that he would never be able to return. Sam's family was devastated at not only losing their youngest member to prison and deportation, but not even being able to visit him in prison or in ICE custody, due to their undocumented status.



Several years later, Sam's siblings found Al Otro Lado and were informed that they all qualified to apply for the U Visa because they had all been victims of crime and had cooperated with law enforcement. Since then, Sam's three siblings have all been granted the U Visa and are now applying to be residents. They have stable employment, thriving family lives, and one of the siblings is pursuing a career in STEM. Sam and all of his siblings are current Al Otro Lado clients. Al Otro Lado has provided Sam and his siblings with complex legal representation, vocational referrals, educational support, social service referrals (including counseling), and a variety of other services.

Sam's first arrival to the U.S. was as an undocumented toddler, launched into a world of violence, poverty, fear, and chronic instability. Sam's second arrival to the U.S. will be as a mature young man, with lawful immigration status and the immediate ability to work. He will land safely in a solid support network, the most crucial factor in one's ability to successfully adjust after deportation or reunification post-deportation. His older siblings are excited for his return and to help him adjust. They are able to support him and are no longer in fear of their future in the U.S.

Sam's case was difficult, given his criminal history and deportation, but his case was ultimately approved. Sam will be in the United States within the next few months. Just as Al Otro Lado was there for Sam when he was in Mexico, we will be there for him once he returns to the U.S. Al Otro Lado staff has a high degree of expertise in the complex psychological process of returning to the U.S. post-deportation.