

# A Year of Resistance...

In 2019, the Trump Administration escalated its heartless attacks on asylum seekers, continued its campaign against refugee women, children, and families, and took radical steps to shut down access to the asylum process. Facing crisis-level need for our services, the Center for Gender & Refugee Studies stepped up to confront some of the greatest threats to refugee rights in this country's history.

## When the Trump Administration...

tried to **block access** to asylum for those arriving at our southern border:

tried to **re-write the law** to deny protection to refugees fleeing gender-based violence:

tried to **gut due process** for asylum seekers:

## CGRS fought back by...

- winning an injunction against the cruel and unlawful "Remain in Mexico" policy, which has forcibly returned over 55,000 asylum seekers to danger, in *Innovation Law Lab v. McAleenan* (now on appeal at the Ninth Circuit).
- recruiting 50 organizations to join CGRS's *amicus* ("friend of court") brief in *East Bay Sanctuary Covenant v. Barr* challenging "asylum ban 2.0," the policy that effectively closes the door to any non-Mexican applying for asylum at the border.
- leading a fact-finding trip to the border, identifying the resource needs of advocates on the ground, and developing a series of video module trainings, which will be released in January.

- representing the woman at the center of the Administration's attack on asylum for domestic violence survivors before the Board of Immigration Appeals in *Matter of A-B-*; defending the rights of survivors seeking protection at the border in *Grace v. Barr*; and litigating nine court challenges to *Matter of A-B-*.
- mobilizing support for **#ImmigrantWomenToo**, our grassroots campaign to defend protections for domestic violence survivors, by amplifying the voices of women asylum seekers and educating the public through diverse media coverage.
- working with our allies in Congress to introduce the Refugee Protection Act, a historic bill that would restore justice to our asylum system, including for those fleeing gender-based violence.

- taking ICE back to court to enforce compliance with the court order we won in *Damus v. Barr* last year, which requires that the agency provide asylum seekers with a fair parole [release] process.
- training over 5,000 attorneys to provide effective legal representation to asylum seekers around the country.
- providing critical country conditions evidence, litigation resources, and mentorship to NGO, pro bono, and private attorneys in over 8,000 active cases.



# ... 20 Years in the Making

For the past two decades, the Center for Gender & Refugee Studies has played a key role in every major precedent-setting victory in the area of gender-based asylum, breaking new legal ground and dramatically expanding the availability of protection for asylum seekers. Through our training and technical assistance programs we have provided critical support in over 34,000 individual asylum cases, helping advocates secure protection for their clients at all levels of immigration decision-making and creating good law from the ground up. Twenty years on, we reflect on the progress we've made.



**Mentored thousands of attorneys** representing courageous clients like Brenda, a Honduran domestic violence survivor who won asylum this year. Facing an uphill battle in the wake of *Matter of A-B-*, Brenda's attorney turned to CGRS for guidance and resources that proved pivotal to her success. After being granted asylum this spring, Brenda said, "I finally feel safe now. I have a future, and I have so many goals." Read Brenda's story in her own words at [immigrantwomentoo.org/Brenda](https://immigrantwomentoo.org/Brenda).

**Litigated groundbreaking cases that advanced the law** for asylum seekers, creating pathways to protection for thousands of women, children, and others fleeing life-threatening persecution. Over the years CGRS has secured victories in important cases involving female genital cutting, domestic violence, coercive population control, sex trafficking, anti-LGBTQ persecution, and violence perpetrated by gangs.



**Became a leading voice in the movement to advance U.S. asylum law and policy**, developing persuasive evidence to support asylum seekers and providing critical guidance to policymakers and members of the press. In the last year alone, CGRS was cited or published in over 75 media outlets, including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *NPR*.

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**Held the United States accountable** for its abysmal treatment of asylum seekers at home and on an international level. This year CGRS Director Karen Musalo testified before the Canadian parliament, and Co-Legal Director Blaine Bookey appeared before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.