

## **ABA Commission on Immigration & CILA Training: “Representing Children and Families in Immigration Matters”**

**Date: Thursday, March 3, 2022**

**Time: 12:00-4:00pm CT**

### **Speakers Bios:**

**Emily McCabe**

*ABA Commission on Immigration (COI), Senior Staff Attorney*

Emily McCabe (she/her/ella) is a Senior Staff Attorney for the Family Group Legal Orientation Program (FGLOP) at the American Bar Association's Commission on Immigration (COI). Emily obtained her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Spanish from Arcadia University, and she earned her Juris Doctorate from American University's Washington College of Law.

Prior to joining COI, Emily worked for five years as an immigration attorney at Northern Virginia Family Service. Emily represented mostly unaccompanied children who had been abused, abandoned, or neglected by one or both parents, asylum-seekers, survivors of human trafficking, and survivors of other criminal activity.

Emily is licensed to practice law in Virginia.

**Shakira M. Rodriguez Oliveras**

*ProBAR, Senior Staff Attorney*

Shakira Maria Rodriguez Oliveras graduated from Pontifical Catholic University in Ponce Puerto Rico in May 2010 and graduated from Emory University School of Law in Atlanta, Georgia, in May 2013 with an LLM in Transactional Law.

In Puerto Rico, Shakira worked in several areas of law such as, Criminal Law, Family Law, and Civil Law. In May 2019, Shakira began working at ProBAR (South Texas Pro Bono Asylum Representation Project) as a staff attorney representing Unaccompanied Children in their removal proceedings and with USCIS. In August 2021, Shakira was promoted to Senior Staff attorney.

**Stacie Hammond**

*Latino Memphis, Senior Immigration Attorney*

Stacie Hammond is the Senior Immigration Attorney at Latino Memphis, where she has worked since 2015. Stacie represents clients in affirmative cases with USCIS, including relative petitions, asylum, U and T nonimmigrant status, and Special Immigrant Juvenile Status. Before the Memphis Immigration Court, Stacie represents clients seeking Asylum, Cancellation of Removal, and Adjustment of Status. Stacie serves on the Board of Directors of the Federal Bar Association's Memphis/Mid-South Chapter. She has spoken on panels for the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA), AILA's Midsouth Chapter, and UnidosUS.

Prior to joining Latino Memphis, Stacie served as the Attorney Advisor at the Memphis Immigration Court from 2013-2015. She is a 2012 graduate of Penn State Dickinson School of Law and is licensed in Pennsylvania.

### **Roxana Avila-Cimpeanu**

*Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project, Children's Program Manager*

Roxana Avila-Cimpeanu was born in Honduras and immigrated to the United States as a young child. She grew up in Indiana and attended Indiana University, where she earned a B.S. in Business, a B.A. in Psychology, and a minor in Spanish. She earned her J.D. from Boston College Law School, where she immersed herself in the fields of immigration law and juvenile rights. Roxana joined the Florence Project as a Staff Attorney with the Children's Program in September 2016, and held positions as Pro Bono Mentor and Pro Bono Managing Attorney before transitioning to Children's Program Manager in January 2022.

### **Casey Dempsey**

*Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project, Pro Bono Mentor, Children's Program*

Casey is a Pro Bono Mentor Attorney with the Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project. She mentors pro bono attorneys in assisting Unaccompanied Children with their asylum and special immigrant juvenile status claims as well as other forms of legal relief. Casey began her career as a civil litigation attorney in 2016 and transitioned to immigration law in 2019. She has worked on the Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project's children's team for nearly three years. She has a passion for representing children and giving them a voice as they navigate paths to relief in the immigration system.

### **Nicole Johnson**

*Safe Passage Project, Acting Legal Director*

Before Nicole Johnson joined Safe Passage Project as a Senior Staff Attorney in September 2018. Prior to coming to Safe Passage Project, she was a Senior Staff Attorney with the Immigration Intervention Project of Sanctuary for Families at the Bronx Family Justice Center, representing victims of gender based violence in a variety of immigration matters including U Nonimmigrant visa Petitions and VAWA Self-Petitions before USCIS, Asylums applications both at the Asylum office and before the Immigration Court. Before joining Sanctuary for Families, she was an Associate attorney at Salmen Navarro Law. There she represented clients before the Immigration Court in a number of applications including Asylum, Cancellation of Removal, Provisional Waivers of Unlawful Presences, and other waivers of inadmissibility.

Nicole was born and raised in Southern California. She received her bachelor's degree in Political Science from Mills College in Oakland, California. Her passion for travel and helping others led her to join the Peace Corps where she was a Youth Development Volunteer in Peru from 2006-2008. She returned from Peru with a dedication to international human rights and received her J.D from Rutgers School of Law-Newark in 2012. While in law school, Nicole was very committed to public interest work. She was a Kinoy-Stavis Public Interest Fellow, helping to lead the Rutgers Newark Community in Public Interest. She was also a Deborah T. Portiz Public Interest Law Fellow at Legal

Services of New Jersey. She worked in the Constitutional Litigation Clinic and assisted in the organization of the newly formed Immigrants' Rights Clinic at Rutgers. In her spare time, she enjoys cooking, baking, crafting and traveling.

### **Alexandra Rizio**

*Safe Passage Project, Managing Attorney, Training and Partnerships*

A graduate of Fordham Law School and Columbia College, Alexandra Rizio has a long history of advocating for the rights of immigrants. Alex joined Safe Passage Project as a staff attorney in 2015, and she later supervised the organization's New York City team. Alex now serves as Managing Attorney for Training and Partnerships at Safe Passage, where she develops litigation and technical assistance tools for attorneys and leads the organization's pro bono department, which works with over 550 volunteer lawyers throughout New York City and Long Island. Alex also led Safe Passage Project's representation of over 60 children forcibly separated from their parents at the U.S.-Mexico border during the summer of 2018.

Before Safe Passage, Alex was an Associate Immigration Attorney at the firm Masliah & Soloway (now the Masliah Firm), which focused on serving LGBTQ immigrants; prior to that, she coordinated a pro bono program at Start Small Think Big, an economic empowerment non-profit located in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx. At Fordham Law, Alex was a Stein Scholar in Public Interest and Ethics, a Crowley Scholar in International Human Rights, and a 2012 recipient of the Archibald R. Murray Public Service Award. During law school, Alex worked as an Ellenbogen Fellow at HerJustice (formerly inMotion), as an intern in the Family Law and Domestic Violence Unit of South Brooklyn Legal Services, and as an asylum intern at the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. She was also a Leitner Fellow at MAP Foundation in Chiang Mai, Thailand; in that role, she researched labor violations and gender-based violence experienced by female Burmese migrant workers and analyzed Thailand's compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

Alex enjoys cooking and (in the before times) traveling. During Covid, she has taken up embroidery and furniture refinishing. She might enjoy the tv show "Bluey" more than her 4-year-old.

### **Stephanie Baez**

*ABA COI, Pro Bono Counsel*

Stephanie Baez is Pro Bono Counsel for the ABA Commission on Immigration (COI). Stephanie obtained her undergraduate degree from the University of Southern California, and received her Juris Doctorate from Fordham University School of Law, where she graduated Magna Cum Laude.

Stephanie began her legal career as a litigation associate in the New York office of Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson, LLP. While at Fried Frank, Stephanie was actively involved in the firm's pro bono program and she was selected to spend one year as the Fried Frank Fellow to Her Justice, Inc., a nonprofit in New York that provides family law and immigration assistance to low-income women. Stephanie next served as a judicial clerk in the United States District Court, Southern District of New York. Following her clerkship, Stephanie moved to San Diego where she worked at the San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program, providing direct representation to low-

income individuals in need of domestic violence and family law assistance. As a Supervising Attorney, Stephanie also managed the family law pro bono program and developed initiatives to recruit, mentor and engage pro bono volunteers.

Stephanie works out of the ABA Immigration Justice Project office in San Diego. She is licensed to practice law in California and New York.

### **Yasmin Yavar**

*ABA Children's Immigration Law Academy (CILA), Senior Staff Attorney*

Yasmin Yavar is a Senior Staff Attorney with the ABA's Children's Immigration Law Academy. She is a 2004 graduate of the University of Texas School of Law, where she fell in love with immigration law through Barbara Hines' immigration clinic and a brief summer internship at ProBAR. She began her legal career as a commercial litigator at the Houston office of Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw. After three years, Yasmin relocated to Harlingen, Texas for a year to work for the South Texas Pro Bono Asylum Representation Project (ProBAR) and learn the ropes of removal defense for detained adults. She returned to Houston and was the first employee of Kids in Need of Defense's Houston office, serving as the pro bono coordinator. Immediately prior to working at CILA, Yasmin worked as a consultant for ProBAR's Children's Project.

### **Laura Egan**

*ABA CILA, Senior Staff Attorney*

Laura Egan is a Senior Staff Attorney with the ABA's Children's Immigration Law Academy (CILA). She graduated from The Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law in Washington, DC in 2011. She obtained a certificate in Comparative and International Law and participated in the International Business and Trade program in Krakow, Poland and interned in a Human Rights clinic while in Krakow. Laura became passionate about immigration law during law school when she participated in her school's Columbus Community Legal Services Families and the Law Clinic and worked with refugees and asylees while interning with International Rescue Committee's immigration program. Laura started her legal career as a disability attorney with Russell & Hill in Everett, Washington. Prior to joining CILA, Laura worked in removal defense for Carney & Marchi, an immigration law and criminal defense law firm in Seattle, Washington.