



November 20, 2014

Dear Family Law Practitioner:

Through the Office of Violence against Women, the National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project (NIWAP) is pleased to announce a new form of technical assistance—our Family Law Attorneys Advocating for Immigrant Survivors: Community of Practice (COP). We are recruiting family law attorneys who work with immigrant survivors to apply to join this exciting new COP. This will be the first COP in the country providing support and assistance to family lawyers representing immigrant women and children survivors of intimate partner violence, sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, human trafficking, elder abuse and/or child abuse.

Through a series of monthly 90-minute conference calls, a special members only listserv, and the opportunity for COP participants to meet each other at Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) sponsored grantee trainings, family law attorneys will learn best practices from colleagues and national experts with diverse experiences. Participants will also explore practical innovative solutions to real-world challenges experienced by family law attorneys in a small, supportive, peer-to-peer mentoring environment. Participants might also have an hour of outside research or follow-up from the monthly conference calls, creating a time commitment of up to 2.5 hours per month. The team facilitators and faculty are seasoned consultants from NIWAP with extensive experience working with immigrant survivors of violence who provide training and technical assistance to family lawyers working in jurisdictions across the country.

This Community of Practice creates an opportunity for participants to learn what strategies are effective in their work, such as representing immigrant survivors in custody, child support, divorce, Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act (UCCJEA), protection order, child abuse, termination of parental rights and other family court proceedings. The COP provides a forum for practitioners to discuss and test out new ideas and implement new approaches while building long-term support from a community of colleagues. Our purpose is to ensure that family law practitioners have the support they need to represent immigrant victims when abusers raise immigration status related issues in a range of family court cases.

We encourage you to complete the application early to participate in this new Community of Practice. We are seeking applicants who are OVW Legal Assistance, STOP, and RURAL grantees, grant partners and subgrantees. We also ask that you share this application widely with your grant partners and subgrantees who are family law attorneys working with immigrant survivors. Please register online at www.niwap.org/go/COPApp or complete the attached application and submit it to: community@niwap.org or to NIWAP at WCL, 4801 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC 20016. Space is limited to 50 participants. **Deadline to apply is January 23, 2015.** The application gives us an opportunity to learn about your interests, needs, priorities, challenges and availability and select a diverse group of participants. If you are interested in being a part of this Community of Practice for attorneys working with immigrant survivors and/or have additional questions, please contact our COP Project Coordinator, Rocío Molina, Associate Director of NIWAP, at 240-480-6378 or via email at: molina@wcl.american.edu or community@niwap.org.

Sincerely,

Leslye E. Orloff
Director and Adjunct Professor

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