

ANNUAL REPORT FY21

JULY 1, 2020 -JUNE 30, 2021



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A WORD FROM BILL HOLSTON

"A change is gonna come....."

Sam Cook

Sam Cook's iconic song, *A Change is Gonna Come*, was inspired by Bob Dylan's *The Times, They Are A-Changin'*. In the song, Cook invites us to imagine the changes that could come by working for a more just world.

As I'm sure all of you know, there are constant and overwhelming changes in our world. But nowhere does that seem more true than in our work with immigrants. Some changes are signs of a better world. Others are challenges to our clients' very existence. One constant is our commitment, as an organization, to work alongside our formidable clients and assist them in achieving the life they deserve. And we must constantly adapt our methods to do that.

Recently, I ran across a picture from August 2014. This was in the middle of the dramatic increased migration of unaccompanied minors from Central America. HRI did what it always does-- we changed our methods to meet the changing needs of clients.



HRI'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BILL HOLSTON

We started screening clinics. Because of the so-called Rocket Docket, we usually had only a few days to file the documents necessary to help these children. So we accepted cases on the spot and started the legal process of protecting their rights.

As I type this, our staff is hard at work finalizing the cases of some of these children, many of whom are now finally eligible for Green Cards. We have been alongside them this entire time. Again, we are adapting to these increased demands. And we are hiring, adding capacity to assist in that work. AND in order to have a safe working environment during Covid, we are doing much of this remotely.

I've had the privilege of representing migrants to the United States, for about 30 years. It has always been difficult. But it was never more difficult than the last four years. Our clients faced almost daily changes that were intended to deny their legal rights in furtherance of a white

"A WORD" cont.

nationalist agenda. Our courageous and dedicated staff and volunteers met those challenges and continued to provide high quality services.

There is a new administration. This was a cause of hope that changes would reduce the intentional barriers to status that our clients face. And some things did change. The Muslim ban ended and the inhuman policy of Remain in Mexico was faded out, which enabled people trapped in Mexico to cross the border. The Administration set aside some of the Immigration Court rulings that had been designed to deny legal relief to women survivors of domestic violence. We celebrate those changes.

However, the Biden administration continues the inhumane policy of Title 42 expulsions, resulting in death and harm. And our country continues its reliance on detention of migrants. And our country has continued deportation flights to Haiti. These policies continue to disproportionately impact our

Black immigrant clients. And all of that must change in order for us to truly live up to the country we have always claimed we are.

When Covid hit, we met the immediate logistical challenges in order to address the extraordinary social service needs of our clients. Our staff adapted amazingly. We created new methods to screen for needs and to provide emergency food and rental assistance and toiletries. We set up tables in our lobby and parking lot, sourced masks and plexiglass shields, and continued to deliver aid in a safe and efficient manner. And our clients received urgently needed support.

Yes, change comes. Some good. Some bad. Some challenge our flexibility. We'll change where we need to, but we will not change our commitment to our clients and our efforts to fight for the lives that they so richly deserve.

Warmly,
Bill Holston

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ABOUT HRI

Mission: Human Rights Initiative exists to serve immigrant survivors of human rights abuses by providing free legal and social services.

Vision: We believe human rights should be guaranteed and human dignity diligently protected. We envision a country that empowers and welcomes immigrants.

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BACKGROUND

Founded 21 years ago by social worker Serena Simmons Connelly and lawyer Elizabeth Healy, Dallas-based Human Rights Initiative of North Texas has grown into an award-winning agency serving immigrant survivors of human rights abuses from all over the world. Our courageous, resilient clients are eligible to apply for legal status under the humanitarian provisions of United States immigration laws and policies. They are

- asylum seekers fleeing persecution;
- children who have been abandoned, abused, or neglected; and
- survivors of family violence and violent crimes eligible under provisions of the Violence Against Women Act or U-Visa statute.

HRI's Legal team partners with our network of pro bono attorneys to help clients access the U.S. Immigration System to gain legal status and employment authorization. HRI Social Services offers transitional support, case management, and referrals. Our Advocacy program exists to make systemic change in a way that is accountable to the people and communities we serve and integrates our clients directly into the fights and wins.

At HRI, all services are free, and all are designed to help forge a path to safety, freedom, and opportunity. For more information, visit www.hrionline.org.

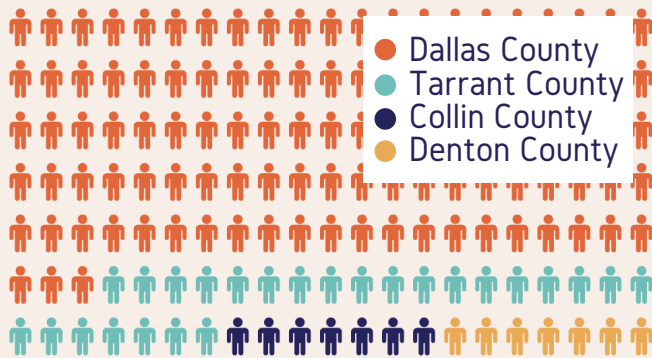
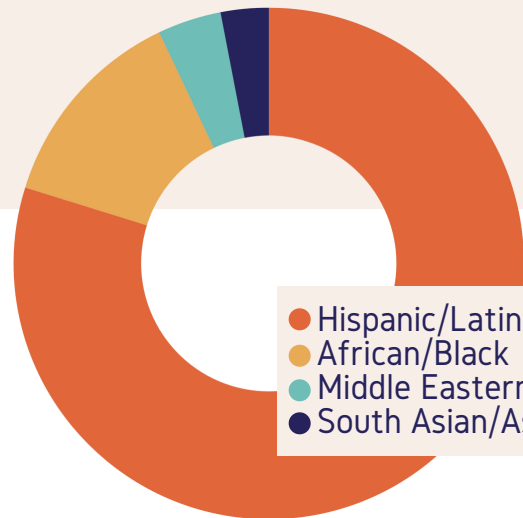
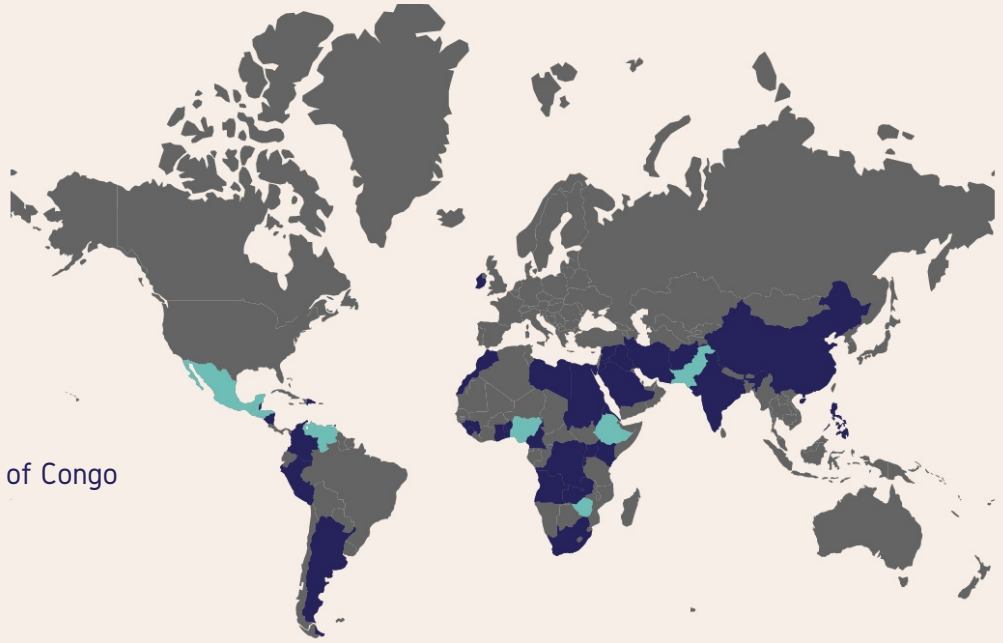
MODEL:

Human Rights Initiative is proud of our innovative and efficient model: to provide the highest quality services at no cost to clients, HRI pairs in-house expertise with an extensive volunteer network. HRI recruits, trains, and supports pro bono attorneys, translators, mentors, interns, office and event volunteers, and others.



Common Countries of Origin

Mexico
Honduras
El Salvador
Venezuela
Zimbabwe
Guatemala
Democratic Republic of Congo
Nicaragua
Nigeria
Pakistan
Burundi
Cameroon
Ethiopia
Angola
Afghanistan
Egypt
Uganda



Current County of Residence

ABOUT OUR CLIENTS



20% 40% 40%

ages 0-17

ages 18-35

ages 36+

THE YEAR IN CONTEXT

KALI COHN, DIRECTOR OF
ADVOCACY AND
COMMUNITY EDUCATION

AUGUST 2021

We write this year's Year in Context watching in horror as decades of American foreign policy decisions in Afghanistan culminate in a withdrawal that leaves human rights workers, government officials, and women in desperation. Meanwhile, our government continued its deportation flights to Haiti—deportations that were already incredibly dangerous because of political turmoil and violence, made even more incomprehensible by the 7.2 magnitude earthquake. And how, the same week, a judge in Texas ruled that the human rights travesty of President Trump's Remain in Mexico program must go back into effect.

This year, which began in crisis, remains in crisis.

Last year, we had only seen the beginning months of COVID-19. The pandemic has now been ongoing for nearly a year and a half. In some ways, things have become steadier. Immigration offices and courts have reopened, allowing some of our clients stuck in the stagnant backlog to move forward. Vaccination access has eased, and masks are providing more consistent protection from sickness.

But in other ways, things remain just as hard. The folks we serve—immigrant people and people of color—continue to disproportionately carry the economic and health burdens of the pandemic. They are working on the frontlines, exposed at much higher rates to COVID-19, and in jobs that are increasingly volatile and unsteady as the Delta variant spreads.

"YEAR" cont.

Many racist, white supremacist policies of the former Administration remain in place. In some cases, the Biden Administration has not yet had the opportunity to unfurl and undo all of the harm. But in other cases, the Biden Administration has made the express decision to keep them in place.

Title 42, which expels people seeking safety under a public health pretext, is the most egregious example. Despite CDC experts and public health officials determinations that is no public health justification, the Trump Administration denied asylum seekers the opportunity to seek protection in the U.S., citing Covid-19. Since the policy was enacted in March 2020, we have turned away 850,000 people and 80,000 families. Rubén Garcia, the founder of El Paso's Annunciation House put it best: "Trump got his wall, it's called Title 42".

When faced with the choice, the Biden Administration did not overturn Title 42. The policy, which has expelled countless people into dangerous conditions resulting in sexual assault, torture, and death, is having an especially severe effect on Black migrants, who often must travel to the U.S. border alone and are being expelled into anti-Black violence and discrimination.

In the face of continued crisis, we at HRI find strength in community. Over the past year, the people we serve have continued to come together in our client-lead advocacy group, HRI Connect, to push for a future that is brighter for their families and their neighbors. Our legal team has continued to work alongside them on their legal cases. And our social services team has continued to help navigate through crisis.

Last year, we promised to continue to fight, whatever Administration was in place, until our immigration system is one representing justice, equity, and a vision of what American should be. We're still fighting.

Thanks for fighting alongside us.

IMMIGRATION REALITIES

1425447 cases in the immigration backlog

227644 cases in Texas immigration backlog

79.5% of immigrants, including children, had no attorney when their removal order was issued

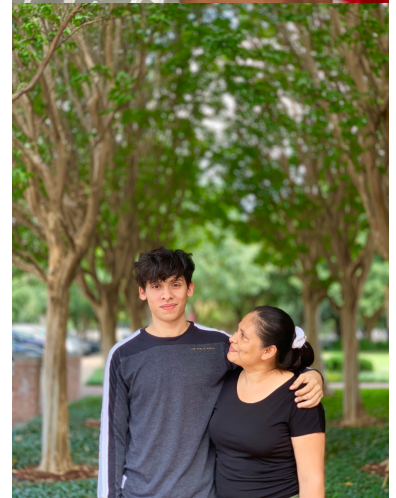
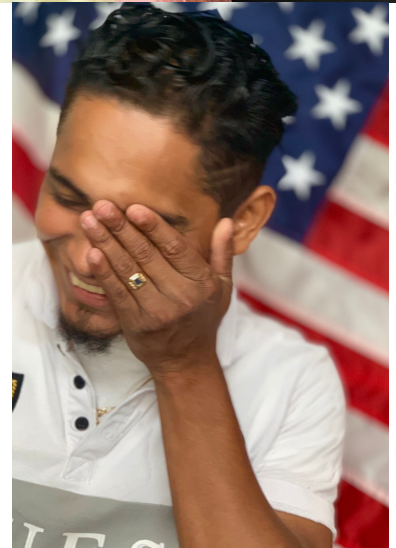
<https://trac.syr.edu/immigration/>

HRI CORE PROGRAMS



HRI's primary legal services are separated into three programs: Asylum, Crime Victims, and Children's. Advocacy, Social Services, Development, and Volunteer programs round up the rest of our organization.

HRI clients are eligible to receive critical support through our Social Services Program. They and their loved ones can participate in peer empowerment Advocacy programs to address systemic barriers to achieving safety and stability.



STATS

626	Legal Clients
97%	Legal Status Approval Rate
31%	Asylum Program
21%	Children's Program
48%	Crime Victims Program
1535	Recipients of Social Services

ASYLUM

The Asylum Program serves clients who are afraid to return to their home country because they have been harmed or believe they will be harmed because of a fundamental characteristic of themselves that they cannot and should be expected to change and their government is unable and unwilling to protect them.

Our asylum clients receive legal representation for their asylum cases, which may be evaluated administratively by US Citizenship and Immigration Services or in court by an immigration judge. A person who has fled their home and come to the United States is eligible for asylum if they can prove a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group.



CHILDREN'S

The Children's Program serves immigrant children who have been abandoned, abused, and/or neglected by one or both parents. Most Children's Program clients live in DFW after a journey through Central America to the US Southern border, where the government has identified them as unaccompanied minors.

HRI's Children's Program represents children first in family court, where a judge makes necessary findings of fact about abuse, neglect, or abandonment, and decisions about the child's best interests. Once we secure the required order in family court, we represent children in the administrative adjudication of their immigration applications and, when necessary, represent them in removal proceedings in immigration court.



CRIME VICTIMS

Clients in our Crime Victims Program are eligible for a pathway to legal status because they have survived qualifying crimes. Some clients are protected under the Violence Against Women Act because they were the spouse or child of an abusive U.S. citizen or green card holder. Others are protected through the U-Visa program because they were the victim or witness to a qualifying serious crime, which they helped law enforcement investigate or prosecute. We represent these clients in the administrative adjudication of their immigration applications.



SOCIAL SERVICES

The Social Services department provides supportive services to clients awaiting resolution of their legal cases. This includes identifying a family's most urgent needs, linking them to our community partners, and providing advocacy and guidance when they encounter challenges and barriers to obtaining documents and services.

During the pandemic, we distributed \$385,000 in direct aid for rental assistance and other basic needs (like utilities, food, and healthcare).

In addition in individual case management and crisis intervention, typical Social Services programs include:

- ESL classes
- Youth Empowerment Program (YEP), an educational program offering guidance for immigrant teen youth
- Holiday Wish, which provides free gifts and grocery cards to our families in need during the holiday season
- Essentials for Life, offering toiletries, baby care items, and other supplies throughout the year



279 client households directly impacted by Covid



118 grocery gift cards (\$50/ea)



Essentials bundles:
122 food, 632 toiletries/hygiene, 182 diapers & wipes



Holiday Wish served 57 households, 195 individuals



In all, HRI Social Services benefited 1535 individuals (835 adults, 700 children)

Top In-Kind donation needs:

- Water bottles
- Beans
- Rice
- Potatoes
- Sandwich bread
- Canned goods
- Non-perishable snacks.
- Paper bags or drawstring bags to organize toiletries
- Toiletries

ADVOCACY

HRI's Advocacy Program is premised on the principle that our clients should drive how our organization prioritizes the structural problems we address.

HRI Connect/Conexión HRI is a multilingual English/Spanish/French space where current and former HRI clients come together to discuss collective problems, strategize about a shared vision for the future, and make decisions about tactics about how to achieve that vision. The group meets in full once a month and throughout the month in formal and informal committees. The program is new, coming out of an effort that began in 2019 to build a program to center the folks that HRI serves in decision-making and strategy about systemic change work.

Among the year's highlights:

- In March 2021, HRI Connect launched a healthcare navigator to help North Texas immigrants access free and affordable care. Information and hotline support are available in English, Spanish, French, and Arabic.
- Advocating for an end to the "traffic stop to deportation pipeline." Members supported the Drive Texas Adelante Campaign in realizing a People's Hearing for Driver's Permits on May 25, which included testimony from an HRI Connect leader.
- In collaboration with other HRI departments, the group also issued video and text explainers on important issues, including evictions and tenants' rights, energy costs, changes to the U visa program, and changes to the immigration system more broadly.



VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

Partnership is at the heart of everything we do at HRI.

A dedicated Volunteer Director recruits and cultivates volunteers, oversees the matching of clients with pro bono attorneys, and supervises interns. In addition, our Volunteer Director also works with community volunteers in a non-legal capacity.

Non-legal volunteers range from professionals who provide medical assistance, mental health workers, volunteer translation and interpretation, and much more.

Once matched, pro bono attorneys are trained, supported, and supervised by Legal Department Directors. To support these efforts, HRI offers regular Continuing Legal Education programs and monthly volunteer trainings. All volunteers must pass a background check and sign a confidentiality agreement.



HRI VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

PRO BONO ATTORNEYS AND OTHER VOLUNTEERS

We actively recruit and train volunteers to help fulfill our mission: providing excellent, responsive, and always free legal and social services to immigrant survivors of human rights abuses. Pro Bono attorneys are recruited by work with our Pro Bono Association, networking with our active volunteers, speaking at Dallas Bar events, and advertising on our website and social media. We provide both regular quarterly and additional occasional Continued Legal Education (CLE) programs. These presentations describe our programs, offer foundational information on immigration, and outline the basics of client representation.

PROFILE



6,379 hours



329 legal volunteers



104 non-legal



10 Corporations



44 Law Firms



Valued at \$2,733,417

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

HRI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

HRI's board members bring a wealth of legal, business, and nonprofit management expertise to the organization. They are executives at national and multinational corporations, lawyers at corporate and specialty law firms, and leaders in the nonprofit and philanthropic community.

Each year, current Board members identify the skills and perspectives needed and generate prospective members. The Pro Bono Association is another significant source of potential leadership, as are members of our coalition partners.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

The Company provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants without regard to race, color, religious creed, sex, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, pregnancy, childbirth, physical disability, mental disability, age, military status or status as a Vietnam-era or special disabled veteran, marital status, registered domestic partner or civil union status, gender (including sex stereotyping and gender identity or expression), medical condition (including, but not limited to, cancer related or HIV/AIDS related), genetic information, or sexual orientation in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws. In addition, the Company complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every location which the Company has facilities.

"PARTNERSHIPS" Cont.

This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training.

Cooperative and Collaborative Relationships

HRI leadership is actively involved in the North Texas Immigration Coalition, Force for Immigrant Rights and Empowerment Coalition (FIRE), ASISTA, and a number of local, statewide, and national coalitions and working groups that collectively strategize and exchange information regularly. We sustain regular outreach to faith communities and have spoken to Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopal, and Unitarian churches as well as synagogues.

HRI's Social Services Director has developed collaborative relationships with over 140 North Texas nonprofit agencies. Some of our strongest relationships include: Catholic Charities in Dallas and Fort Worth, Mosaic Family Services, DASH Network, Agape Clinic, Genesis Women's Shelter, Hope's Door, and Momentous Institute. More recently, HRI has begun working more closely with Family Compass, Jewish Family Services, New Life New Friends, youth and Family Centers within DISD, and the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center.



DEVELOPMENT

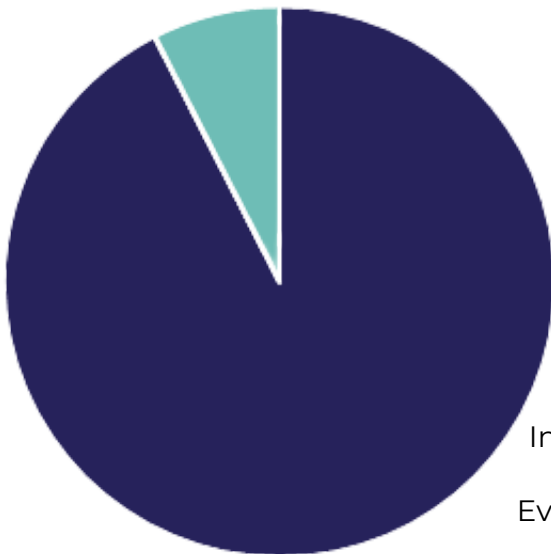
TOTAL INCOME
\$1,847,347

TOTAL EXPENSES
\$1,449,589

NET ORDINARY INCOME
\$397,758

FY2021 EXPENSES

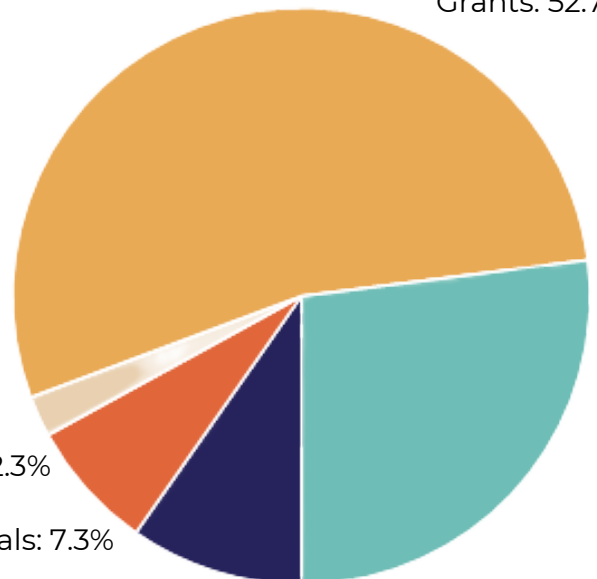
Admin & Fundraising: 7.5%



Programs: 92.5%

FY2021 INCOME

Grants: 52.7%



PPP Loan: 9.7%

Individuals: 27%

EVENTS

The breadth of HRI's mission expands beyond providing 100% free legal and social services, as we believe in creating safe spaces, in our community, for our former clients. Our Marketing & Events team engages with this philosophy most visibly through our annual storytelling event, **Stories From the HeART: Rock Your Heart Out (RYHO)**.

Every year, HRI carefully recruits visual artists to turn our client stories into works of art. These works are presented, alongside musical performances, testimonials and mini-documentaries, at RYHO.

This year RYHO was offered digitally across social media platforms, with not only an impressive roster of artists and musicians, but also poets and storytellers who know personally what it means to be an immigrant during these uncertain times. All of our performers and artists represent diverse voices and identities reflective of our own client community.

This event is great way to find out more about our work!



A: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sanjeeb Samanta, Chair

Mr. Samanta is the principle partner at Praxis Solutions International. His career spans leadership roles at Fortune-500 companies such as Texas Instruments, IBM, Technip, and PriceWaterhouse. He first volunteered at HRI in 2014, when he led a project with InterNations Dallas. He joined HRI's Board in 2016 and got appointed to the board in 2019.

Alan Wright, Vice Chair

Mr. Wright is a commercial litigator with Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton. His first pro bono asylum case was 30 years ago; he has been an active pro bono with HRI since its inception. He joined the Board in 2017.

Kelly Rogers, Treasurer

Ms Rogers is Executive Director at JP Morgan. She joined the HRI Board in August 2020.

Natalie Nanasi, Secretary

Assistant Professor and Director of the Judge Elmo B Hunter Center for Victims of Crimes Against Women at the SMU Dedman School of Law, Ms. Nanasi is a former immigration attorney and refugee.

Ashlie Alaman, Director

Ms. Alaman is Senior Corporate Counsel at CyrusOne and an active pro bono attorney and Board member throughout the city, including the Parkland Foundation. She joined HRI's Board in 2018.

Greg Curry, Director

Mr. Curry is a partner in the Thompson & Knight Energy Litigation Practice Group, and he is active in the city, state, and national Bar Associations. He is a long-serving member of the HRI Board.

APPENDICES

"Board" cont.

Tricia Freshwater, Director

Ms. Freshwater is a partner at the immigration law firm of Lopez & Freshwater, and an active member of the Hispanic Bar. She has served on the HRI Board since 2018.

Betsy Healy, Co-Founder and Director

Ms. Healy is a program officer at the Harold Simmons Foundation and a leader in the Dallas philanthropic and nonprofit community. She served as Executive Director at HRI from its founding in 1999 until 2005.

Anita Kelley, Director

Ms. Kelley is a financial advisor and Vice President at Morgan Stanley and is active throughout the city's nonprofit scene. She founded SMU's Executive MBA Scholarship Program and joined HRI's Board in 2019.

Carolyn Ruiz, Director

Ms. Ruiz is a Harvard Law graduate now with the Office of Civil Rights, US Department of Education. Active with Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program, Ms. Ruiz joined HRI's Board in 2018.

Eric Renner, Director

Mr. Renner is Director of Mergers & Acquisitions Tax at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP. He is a CPA and CFA. He joined the HRI Board of Directors in 2021.

APPENDICES

B. Staff

B. HRI'S STAFF

William O. Holston, Jr.
Executive Director

Maryam Baig
Marketing & Special Events
Director

Kali Cohn
Community Education & Advocacy Director

Elisandra De La Cruz
Social Services Director

Layne Faulkner
Volunteer Director

Pilar Ferguson
Asylum Program Director
Children's Program Director (1/2021)

Zeyla Gonzalez
DOJ Accredited Representative

Emily Heger
Equal Justice Works Legal Fellow, Sponsored
by AT&T and Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld
LLP

Sierra Houck
Family Case Manager, Children's & Crime
Victims Programs

Kristina Morales
DOJ Accredited Representative

Elean Martinez
Client Intake Manager

Carolina Pina
Case Management Coordinator & Legal
Assistant

Anna Rupani
Children's Program Director
(7/2020 - 10/2020)

Cory Sagduyu
G. Rollie White Trust Children's Program
Attorney

Sara Wahl
Crime Victim Program Director

Jennifer Weil
Development Director