

Hardworking families with no criminal backgrounds that have lived in our community for many years are currently being targeted for deportation. Families are being torn apart and sent back to countries they hardly know anymore. What can we do as a community to protect these families?

Avanza Together, a 501c3 organization, was created to assist these families and individuals.

- We educate our immigrant and non-immigrant communities and service providers on deportation.
- We create community-building opportunities for our immigrant community.
- We link our immigrant community to other communities in central Ohio.
- We fundraise for legal defense costs.
- We work directly with families going through removal proceedings, *every step of the way*, through:
 - education about rights
 - advocacy with USCIS, ICE check-ins and immigration court hearings
 - interpretation services
 - transportation assistance
 - social service resource referrals and much more.

Each individual and their family have unique and critical needs that we work to address in a respectful, safe and secure manner.

- We help to tell their story and move forward together. ***Avanza Together***

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avanza TOGETHER

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Avanza Together: Impact Report

The primary work of *Avanza Together* is to directly assist individuals and their families in Central Ohio who are at risk for deportation. Over the past few months we have identified a number of work areas that need to be addressed as families come forward seeking help.

Helping families means ***Avanza Together*** is:

- ❖ Creating a general referral service of providers who can serve immigrants families at risk of deportation
- ❖ Networking with immigration attorneys and service providers in central Ohio to be able to refer to trustworthy legal counsel
- ❖ Engaging and educating at risk communities to ensure access to community resources and knowledge of rights
- ❖ Developing a rapid response network of activists who mobilize upon notice of a developing raid or deportation
- ❖ Establishing an Immigration Deportation Legal Defense Fund.
- ❖ Organizing community workshops to educate the non-immigrant community about the needs immigrants face in central Ohio.
- ❖ Working to ensure the sustainability of these efforts through fundraising, grant writing and collaboration with community partners.

Over the past 9 months, Avanza Together has appointed a Board of Directors, named an Executive Director, **received 501c3 Status**, created a website and social media presence, fundraised over \$16,000, and as a result of those fundraising efforts, created a staff position: a Community Deportation Defense Advocate. We also have donated over \$4,200 to low-income community members for immigration attorney fees.

A mission to assist and empower immigrants.

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Since February 2017 to October 2017, we have reached **223 immigrants through workshops and one on one case management**. We have provided longer-term case management for **11 families at risk of deportation**. We have held **3 Know Your Rights workshops**, one in partnership with the Mexican Consulate.

Since we started operating we have received client referrals from the following organizations:

- Mount Carmel Metrowest Clinic
- CRIS
- Catholic Social Services- Our Lady of Guadalupe Center
- Columbus Health Department
- America's Voice
- Lower Lights Christian Health Center
- Educational Solutions
- CareSource
- The National Association of Social Workers
- Primary One
- Local Attorneys

We recently started a working relationship with the YMCA and their New American Welcome Center while creating a strong relationship with their social responsibility Director, Malik Moore. Our advocate will be working from their north site as well in this new partnership. We have engaged civic action groups like People Power, a local group of community activists that want to engage and support our work to help immigrants.

We have had the opportunity to engage our public officials (specifically Councilmember Brown and Council President Zach Klein) and also our Columbus Police Department leaders through meetings to be able to address issues that are affecting our undocumented community.

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We have presented alongside CRIS at the International Law Committee meeting at the Columbus Bar Association about our work and the community we serve.

We have created media strategies to highlight devastating immigration cases.

Besides these relationships we have been part of dozens of community meetings and presentations where we have talked about and presented about our work.

We have been featured in the media:

NPR and Public Radio International

<https://www.pri.org/stories/2017-03-27/how-community-ohio-stepping-when-deportations-split-families>

The Dispatch

<http://www.dispatch.com/news/20170925/immigrants-in-central-ohio-facing-deportation-can-get-help-navigating-process>

ABC6

<http://abc6onyourside.com/news/local/coffee-shop-owner-and-team-helping-dozens-of-undocumented-immigrants-and>

Columbus Underground

<http://www.columbusunderground.com/avanza-together-connecting-families-facing-deportation-to-resources-ls1>

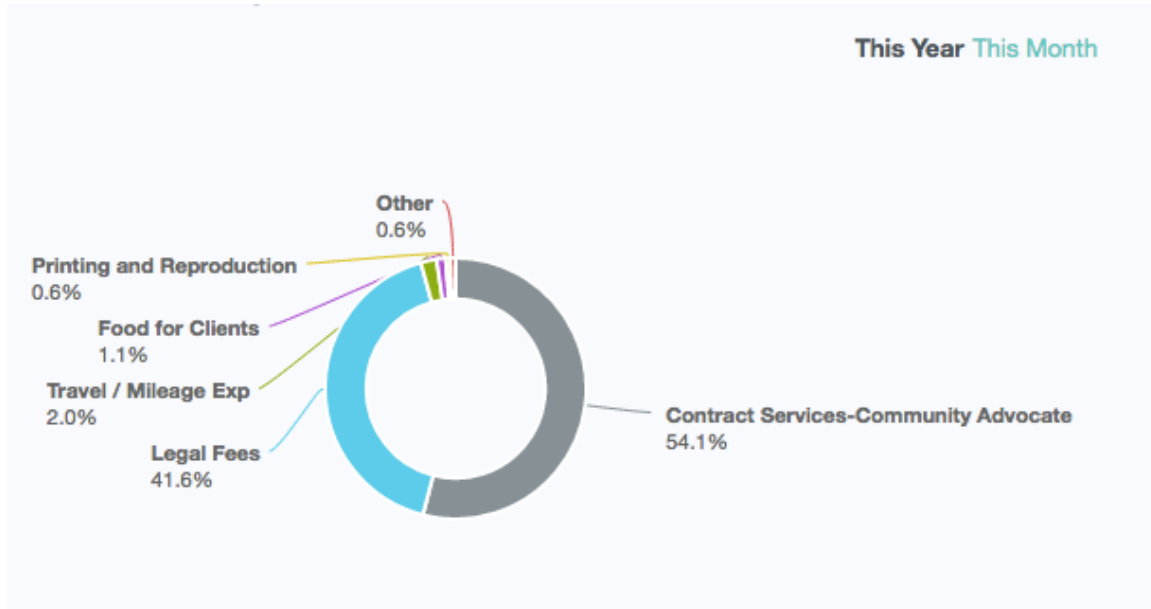
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To finalize, we wanted to share a summary of our investments.



We hope you can join us in the journey to serve our most vulnerable community members. For more information, please visit our website www.avanzatogether.org or email vnunes@avanzabiz.com. Gracias.

Avanza Together Board Meeting 12/9/2017

- Advocate has been to Cleveland 6 times (servicing a total of 8 clients with transportation barriers to court.
- 3 families have benefited from food pantry referrals and advocate continues to take them to receive produce
- 4 families have had their children successfully enrolled in a local school district
- After a brief meeting with Avanza's advocate a judge with the Department of Justice in Cleveland will begin to refer minors that are currently not enrolled in school to Avanza Together
- **Two clients have successfully become documented – one with a permanent resident status and the other as a US Citizen**
- One client after many months of continuous ICE Check-Ins is having her ankle monitor removed. This is in great part due to Avanza's advocate serving as an interpreter with the attorney to fill out the asylum petition, making sure the client never missed a check in and also transporting her to the master hearing court in Cleveland where the petition was finally filed.

Future Short Term Plans:

- Making Avanza Together an OBB site and having the advocate being a certified OBB counselor
- BIA certification for Avanza's advocate (also known as friends of the court)