

# NYC PARTNERING FOR MIGRATION JUSTICE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2024

STARR FOUNDATION HALL

63 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NEW YORK

## OPENING REMARKS

**Achilles Kallergis** is the Director of the Cities and Migration Project at the Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility. In this role, he coordinates the Research Platform on Cities, Migration and Membership—a collaboration of The New School and fifteen research institutions from around the world.

His research focuses on urbanization, migration and mobility in rapidly growing cities. Specifically, it explores how locally-generated data can provide new evidence on mobility patterns and contribute to improving living conditions in low-income urban settings through better provision of housing and services. In his research, he has collaborated with transnational community networks Slum/Shack Dwellers International and the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights.


Previously he was a Research Scholar at the Marron Institute of Urban Management at New York University. He has taught at the Wagner Graduate School of Public Service at New York University and the New School Graduate Program in International Affairs. He holds a PhD in Urban Policy and an M.A. in International Affairs from the New School University, and an M.A. in Political Science from the Université de Lausanne.

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## KEYNOTE

**Edafe Okporo** is the author of the compelling book "ASYLUM: A Memoir and Manifesto," and founder of Refuge America. He brings a deep personal commitment to his work with refugees. Born in Nigeria, Edafe faced the harsh reality of persecution and discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals in his homeland. Seeking safety and freedom, he sought refuge in the United States, where he has become a passionate advocate for the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals and refugees. Edafe's personal experiences as a refugee and his unwavering commitment to equality and justice have made him a prominent voice in the fight for a more inclusive and compassionate world. Through his writing and activism, he continues to inspire and drive positive change.

With a bachelor's degree from Enugu State University and a master's degree in HR Management from NYU, Edafe is an accomplished Inclusion and Diversity, Talent & Organization, and Change Transformation Leader. Based in New York City, he also works as a Talent and Organization Consultant.



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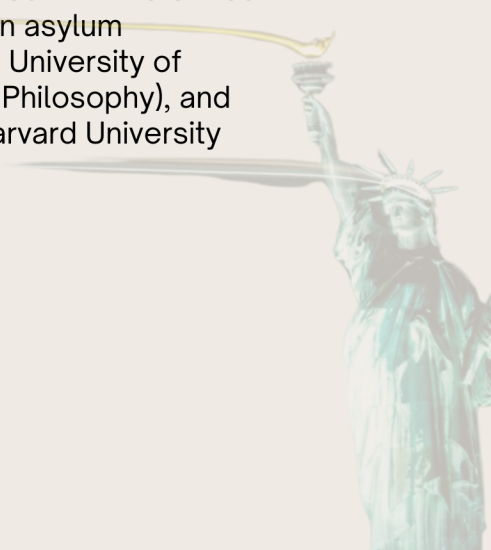
**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2024**

PANEL DISCUSSION: TAKING STOCK OF WHERE WE ARE

**SPEAKER** **Jahzeela Aguilar** is a Political Scientist from Peru. She received a degree in Law and Political Science from the National University Federico Villarreal, with a Postgraduate Specialization in Public Project Management at the University of the Pacific. She has worked at public institutions such as the National Youth Council of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the National Council for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities, the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations, and the Ministry of Production in Peru. She was forced to migrate to the United States in 2022 with her husband and twin children.

**SPEAKER** **C. Mario Russell** is the Executive Director at the Center for Migration Studies of New York (CMS). Mr. Russell is an attorney and professor with over 25 years of experience in migration policy and law. He has lectured and presented extensively and has served on various state, city, and federal immigration policy and practice committees. Before joining CMS, Mr. Russell was Director of the Immigrant and Refugee Services Division of Catholic Charities in New York, where he oversaw legal, resettlement, asylum, unaccompanied minors, and day laborer services. He conducted litigation in the federal district and appeals courts and managed the asylum defense clinic at St. John's University School of Law, where he teaches immigration and comparative refugee law both in the United States and in Europe.

Mr. Russell also previously worked as Regional Director for the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC), and consulted with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on asylum protection in Eastern Europe. He is a graduate of the University of Maryland School of Law and Haverford College (BA, Philosophy), and served as a Wasserstein Public Interest Fellow at Harvard University Law School.



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PANEL DISCUSSION: TAKING STOCK OF WHERE WE ARE

**SPEAKER** **Harold Solis** is an attorney and the Co-Legal Director at Make the Road New York, the largest grassroots immigrant-led organization in New York State. His work at MRNY includes directing the provision of MRNY's legal services on a range of issues, including asylum and other humanitarian forms of relief. Prior to joining MRNY, he was a Supervising Attorney at Immigrant Justice Corps, where he led its in-house removal defense practice and created IJC's Long Island Project, a joint initiative between IJC and CARECEN-NY to increase access to representation for Long Island families in removal proceedings. He received his Juris Doctorate degree from the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law and is licensed to practice law in New York and New Jersey.

**MODERATOR** **Leah Zamore** is a Senior Fellow at the Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility. She also co-directs an Experts Group on Global Refugee Policy; is the co-author, with Alex Aleinikoff, of *The Arc of Protection: Reforming the International Refugee Regime* (Stanford University Press, 2019); serves as Vice Chair of the Board of Directors of Asylum Access, a global refugee rights NGO; and teaches on migration and human rights at the New School.

Prior to her current positions, Ms. Zamore taught international human rights law at Fundação Getúlio Vargas law school in São Paulo, Brazil; served as a special advisor to the federal Government in Brasilia on refugee and humanitarian issues; and, before that, worked as a policy adviser to the Deputy High Commissioner of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in Geneva, Switzerland. In previous years, her human rights and humanitarian work has taken her to Ethiopia, northern Uganda, South Africa, France, Kosovo, and India.

Ms. Zamore has a Juris Doctorate from Yale Law School, a Master's degree from Oxford University, and a Bachelor's degree from Harvard University.



# NYC PARTNERING FOR MIGRATION JUSTICE

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2024**

PANEL DISCUSSION: FROM EMERGENCY TO SUSTAINABLE RESPONSES

**SPEAKER** **Adam Brown** is an Associate Professor of Psychology at The New School for Social Research and Vice Provost for Research at The New School. He has extensive experience developing programs to promote mental health awareness, providing trainings, technical guidance, and support in the creation, implementation, and evaluation of scalable, evidence-based, culturally responsive mental health strategies that can be delivered in a wide range of contexts by non-specialists. Head of the Trauma and Global Mental Health Lab and the Global Mental Health graduate minor, Dr. Brown focuses his research on the adaptation of mental health and psychosocial interventions that can be delivered globally by non-mental health professionals and works closely with cross-sector partners to carry out this work. Additionally, he has extensive experience in the study of traumatic stress and the identification of factors that contribute to mental health risks and resilience. Dr. Brown is a co-founder and member of the Human Rights Resilience Project, an interdisciplinary group of scholars and practitioners carrying out research and creating tools to improve resilience and well-being in the human rights community. He has served as a consultant for organizations such as the United Nations, UNICEF, and Amnesty International. He is the recipient of grants from the National Institute of Health, USAID, Fulbright, and numerous private foundations. His work has appeared in numerous peer-reviewed journals and as book chapters.

**SPEAKER** **Els de Graauw** (she/her/hers) is a Professor of Political Science at Baruch College, CUNY, and Deputy Director of the International Migration Studies MA Program at the CUNY Graduate Center. She is an affiliate faculty of Black and Latino Studies and the Austin W. Marxe School of Public and International Affairs at Baruch College, as well as of the International Migration Studies MA Program and the Political Science MA and Ph.D. Program at the CUNY Graduate Center. Els is interested in immigration, civil society organizations, urban politics, government bureaucracies, and public policy, with a focus on understanding how governmental and nongovernmental organizations build institutional capacity for immigrant integration and representation.





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PANEL DISCUSSION: FROM EMERGENCY TO SUSTAINABLE RESPONSES

**SPEAKER** **Lorena Kourousias** (she/her/ella) is the Executive Director of Mixteca, an immigrant-women-led organization. She has devoted her work to building a social movement that moves away from mainstream systems and methods. She believes in the power of women and communities and is committed to challenging oppressive systems with non-conventional approaches. Lorena has received multiple awards and recognitions for her outstanding work with the Latinx community. The last one was the prestigious Zaragoza Award in May 2021.

**SPEAKER** **Sophie Kouyate** is African Communities Together's Membership & Services Manager. Sophie was born in France to a father from Guinea and a mother from Guadeloupe, Sophie lived in Paris, France before moving to the United States. Sophie's background is in hospitality and customer service, having nearly 20 years of experience working in front-facing roles managing large teams and projects in industries ranging from restaurants to art galleries. She also has approximately 5 years of experience as a tax preparer. Sophie joined ACT first as a member in 2015, where she was part of the Language Access Campaign. She also played an important role in helping to organize membership dues. Sophie graduated from the University of Evry in France with a degree in Marketing and Management. Sophie speaks French and Creole. He is a trained mediator and fluent in Spanish.



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PANEL DISCUSSION: FROM EMERGENCY TO SUSTAINABLE RESPONSES

**SPEAKER** **Tom Tortorici** has over 10 years of diverse experience supporting the well-being and integration of asylum seekers, migrants, and refugees in the U.S. and abroad through direct service, program design and implementation, and policy advocacy. As Executive Director of Legal and Support Initiatives at the NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, Tom has led the design and implementation of innovative programs including the Ukrainian Response Initiative, Haitian Response Initiative, Asylum Seeker Legal Assistance Network, and Asylum Seeker Resource Navigation Center. He engages with city leadership and other stakeholder groups on immigration policy matters and directs a broad portfolio of immigrant-serving programs in partnership with local non-profits, community-based organizations, and public institutions. Previously, Tom served as a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer in northern Peru and held a series of operations and strategy roles advancing the effectiveness of people, projects, and organizations across multiple sectors. Tom holds a BA from New York University, an MA from Columbia University Teacher's College, and a JD from the City University of New York School of Law. He is a trained mediator and fluent in Spanish.

**MODERATOR** **Connor Smith** is a Melamid Doctoral Fellow at the Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility and a PhD student in the Politics Department at the New School for Social Research. As part of the Zolberg Institute, he has led a multi-year research project focused on non-citizen voting in New York City and served as a project manager for the Institute-hosted secretariat of the Global Strategic Litigation Council for Refugee Rights. His PhD research focuses on the material, aesthetic, and technological dimensions of political identity documentation beyond nation-state citizenship. Prior to joining The New School, Connor was an Associate Strategy Officer at the Open Society Foundations and completed an MA in Political Theory (University of Ljubljana, 2018) and a BA in International Relations (College of William & Mary, 2014).



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## **KETNOTE**

**Nina Glick-Schiller** is a Visiting Scholar at the Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility. Dr. Glick Schiller joins Zolberg from the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Germany, where she is a Senior Research Partner. She is also an Emeritus Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Manchester, U.K., and will hold a two-month residency in 2024 as Scholar of Excellence at CERC Migration and Integration at Toronto Metropolitan University.

Since the beginning of her career, Dr. Glick Schiller's research has focused on migrant settlement and transnational connections; cities, migrants, and urban regeneration; cosmopolitanism; and methodological and long-distance nationalism. While at Zolberg, her research, "Emplacing Dispossession: Migrant Services, the Migration Industry, and Urban Governance", will examine the humanitarian sector of migrant services, settlement, and policy as an industry "integrally related to processes of capital accumulation" through unpaid/exploitative labor, collective dispossession, and increasing financialization.

Dr. Glick Schiller holds a PhD in Anthropology from Columbia University, was awarded honorary degrees from Erasmus University (Netherlands) and Malmo University (Sweden), and has held faculty, research or visiting scholar positions at the University of Manchester, the University of New Hampshire, Columbia University, Stockholm University, University of Vienna, and the Free University of Amsterdam among other institutions. In addition to her academic posts, Dr. Glick Schiller founded and edited the journal *Identities*, *Global Studies of Culture and Power* from 1992-2000, served as Chair of the New York Academy of Sciences' Anthropology section from 1991-1992 and again from 2017-2018 and is an editor of *Anthropological Theory*. Her current book co-edited book project is *The Transnationality of Migrant Moral Economies in a Transforming World*.



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PANEL DISCUSSION: HOUSING

**SPEAKER** **Marthé Kiembe** is a woman activist from Burkina Faso currently living in New York City. Marthé left Burkina in 2016 with her husband to seek asylum in the United States. After arriving in the US, she lived for four years in the New York City shelter system until she was able to find an apartment and faced considerable discrimination throughout the process. Marthe feels passionate about helping individuals, especially migrants navigate the complex housing situation in New York. Marthe works at Mount Sinai Hospital as a Dietary Associate.

**SPEAKER** **Gabriela Rendón** is an Associate Professor of Urban Planning and Community Development and Founding Director of Parsons Housing Justice Lab at The New School. She currently co-coordinates the Graduate Minor in Design and Urban Justice and is a Faculty Fellow at the Graduate Institute for Design, Ethnography, and Social Thought (2022-2023). Rendón's expertise and research interests include community planning and design, socio-spatial restructuring of immigrant neighborhoods, rise and settlement of Latinx urban communities, housing and tenants rights, gentrification and displacement, cooperative housing models, as well as other collective and non-speculative housing development schemes providing equitable development in profit-driven urban environments. She is a board member of the Cooper Square Community Land Trust and the Cooper Square Mutual Housing Association. She has previously served other community-based organizations and boards, including the Left Forum in New York City. Rendón is co-founder of Urban Front, a transnational consultancy offering localized knowledge to public and third-sector organizations that work for social and environmental justice, and of Cohabitation Strategies, a nonprofit that facilitates community-led local efforts through participatory frameworks leading to urban and social transformation.





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PANEL DISCUSSION: HOUSING

**SPEAKER** **Alex Strada** is a multimedia artist and educator based in Brooklyn, New York. Through film/video, installation, sound and orality, performance, and public art, her socially-engaged artworks explore collectivity, critical legal studies, and political transformation. Her projects often involve transdisciplinary collaboration with scholars, activists, organizations, artists, and students. Currently, Strada serves as the inaugural Public Artist-in-Residence with the New York City Department of Homeless Services and the Department of Cultural Affairs. Recent solo exhibitions include the Queens Museum; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts; Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum; and Times Square Arts. Strada's projects have been featured in the New Yorker, New York Times, BOMB, Artsy, Vice, New York Magazine, and WNYC's The Brian Lehrer Show. Her work has been supported through fellowships from the Graham Foundation, Artadia, NYFA, NYSCA, Rema Hort Mann Foundation, and the Foundation for Contemporary Arts. She is an Assistant Professor of Art at the Tyler School of Art and Architecture at Temple University.

**MODERATOR** **Achilles Kallergis**, The Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility



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PANEL DISCUSSION: WORK

**SPEAKER** **Ligia Gualpa** the daughter of a former day laborer and garment worker, is the Co-Executive Director of Workers Justice Project (WJP), a community-based building, workers' rights organization that is winning better working conditions for low-wage immigrant workers. At WJP, Ms. Gualpa has spearheaded efforts to ensure safe and dignified jobs for NYC's 2,000 day laborers, construction workers, and domestic workers. Through her leadership, WJP played a key role in the creation of two Brooklyn-based worker centers, a new union, Laborers' Local 10, and alternative economic models to transform the culture of exploitation by enforcing higher wages and safety standards for construction and domestic workers who live and work in New York City. Ms. Gualpa's work has been covered on Univision and in publications like The Nation, New York Daily News, and The New York Times.

**SPEAKER** **Liza Schwartzwald** is the Director of Economic Justice and Family Empowerment. She focuses on Early Childhood Education and Care, Adult Literacy, and Two-Generation work, and works with the Director of Education to uplift educational opportunities for immigrant families and English Language Learners in New York in a holistic and integrated way. She previously worked as a Policy and Advocacy Associate at United Neighborhood Houses, where she worked on the Families United for Learning and Literacy (FULL) family literacy initiative



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PANEL DISCUSSION: WORK

**SPEAKER**

**Cynthia Tobar** is an artist, activist-scholar, filmmaker, and oral historian who is passionate about creating interactive, participatory stories documenting social change. A highly skilled and engaged producer, she is adept in oral history project design, digital project planning, and management. Cynthia is an accomplished facilitator who brings together scholars, technologists, and artists to engage as a team to create compelling public history digital projects, humanities teaching and learning prototypes, and community-based archiving and storytelling projects. Cynthia has conceptualized and worked on several captivating oral histories, socially engaged art projects, and community-based archives that document social movements and student activism. She has lectured and published on student activism in higher education, housing justice, and counter-narratives of historical exclusion in monument culture. Her multimedia art, storytelling, and film work, which centers participatory oral histories as modes for resistance and place-keeping, has been shown in solo and group exhibits throughout the city. Cynthia is an Associate Professor and Head of Archives at Bronx Community College, where she creates socially engaged art programming, community-based archiving, and storytelling projects that incubate spaces of culturally responsive memory-building to further advance community engagement with the Archives. Proud to have begun her higher education journey at CUNY, Cynthia is a Hunter College alum who holds an MA in Politics from the New School, an MLS from Pratt Institute, and an EdD in Higher and Postsecondary Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. Her doctoral oral history study documented the formation and impact of the student-led movement of Black Lives Matter in Higher Education. A first-generation Ecuadorian American, Cynthia was born in Jackson Heights, Queens, and raised in several neighborhoods in Queens and Brooklyn. She lives in Bushwick, Brooklyn. Other obsessions include running, traveling, and cooking with her daughter for family and friends



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PANEL DISCUSSION: WORK

**MODERATOR** **Anna Reumert** is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility, a political anthropologist, and a gender studies scholar. Her work has appeared in *Cultural Anthropology*, *Mashriq & Mahajar*, *Merip*, *Kohl Journal for Body and Gender Research*, and *Jadaliyya*, among other journals. She has a Ph.D. in Anthropology from Columbia University, and she is currently working on two research projects. Her book manuscript *Future Returns* follows Sudanese migrant workers in Lebanon and migrant returnees in subsistence farming communities in Sudan during a time of economic and political upheaval in both countries. Her second project, “Sex in Wartime Beirut”, examines the political economy of sex as a weapon of extraction and control in the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990).





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**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2024**

PANEL DISCUSSION: CHANGING THE NARRATIVE

**SPEAKER** **Sarah Bishop** is an Associate Professor at Baruch College and serves on the Board of Directors of the immigrant-serving nonprofit Mixteca Organization in Brooklyn. My research concerns the interactions of migration, narrative, and identity, and I teach classes in Gender/Race/Ethnicity in Communication, Media and Migration, Global Communication, and Privilege and Difference. I am the author of *Undocumented Storytellers: Narrating the Immigrant Rights Movement* (Oxford University Press, 2019; winner of the Best Book Award, American Studies Division of the National Communication Association), and *U.S. Media and Migration: Refugee Oral Histories* (Routledge, 2016; winner of the Sue DeWine Distinguished Scholarly Book Award).

**SPEAKER** **Jeff Garcia** is the Director of Finance, Operations & Special Projects at Documented. Jeff has used his finance and leadership acumen to advance social impact missions for over a decade. He has previously worked at GiveDirectly, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, and Goodwill and began his career in Public Accounting.

Jeff earned his B.S./B.A in Accounting from the University of Richmond, an M.S. in Nonprofit Leadership from Fordham University, and his Ed.M. from Harvard University where he completed numerous fellowships and focused on the intersections of Entrepreneurship and Identity, Power & Justice in Education.

Jeff is a proud Oliver Scholar Program Alum and Development Committee member and newly appointed Board Member for Directions for Our Youth, a K-12 youth development organization operating in the Bronx and Manhattan. A first-gen Dominican and Washington Heights native, Jeff is excited to support the vibrant immigrant communities that nurtured his entrepreneurial spirit.



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PANEL DISCUSSION: CHANGING THE NARRATIVE

**SPEAKER**

**Abraham Paulos** is a seasoned communications expert, journalist, and movement leader who has advocated for human rights for more than a decade. Abraham is currently the Deputy Director of Communications and Policy of the Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI). He develops and implements BAJI's overall communications strategy nationwide in collaboration with BAJI members and staff. Before joining BAJI, Abraham was the Executive Director of Families for Freedom (FFF), a position he held after facing immigration detention at Rikers Island and becoming a member of FFF. Earlier in his career, Abraham was a researcher at Human Rights First, focused on immigration detention. He also served as Program Director at Life of Hope, a community-based organization in Brooklyn, that provides services to low-income immigrants, and as the Communications Coordinator for WHY Hunger, a global NGO that tackles issues of hunger and poverty. As a journalist, Abraham reported on urban policy and human rights for City Limits, the NYC civic affairs magazine, and for the Foreign Policy Association, writing about foreign policy and global issues. Abraham is a Stateless Eritrean refugee, born in Sudan and raised in Chicago. He is a graduate of George Washington University with a degree in International Affairs and a Master's at The New School.

**MODERATOR**

**Gianluca Gatta** is an MSCA postdoctoral fellow at the University of Milan and a Visiting Scholar at the Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility at The New School.

He has published research on border crossing; body, power, and production of illegality; third places and sociability; migrant self-narration, memory, and subjectivity, with a particular focus on the Euro-Mediterranean region. He is currently carrying out research on the memory practices of the Afghan and Somali diasporas in the U.S. and Italy.

He holds a Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology and an M.A. in International and Diplomatic Studies from the University of Naples "L'Orientale", Italy. He previously taught at Kobe University, Japan, and the Universities of Naples "L'Orientale," Calabria, and Naples "Federico II", Italy. He has carried out fieldwork in Italy (Lampedusa, Rome, Naples), Japan, and Tunisia. Gatta is also the co-founder of the Archive of Migrant Memories (AMM), an association based in Rome.

