

Legal Initiatives for Afghan Humanitarian Crisis

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Abstract : Elena's Light is a non-profit organization focused on building brighter futures for refugees, especially women and children. Our mission is to empower refugee women and children by addressing social, legal, and public health issues that predominantly concern them. Elena's Light offers a range of services that support refugees from structural disadvantages, cultural and social stress, marginalization, and other stressors related to migration. Using a three-pronged approach, our programs focus on legal advocacy, English language acquisition, and health and wellness. Following the Afghan humanitarian crisis, Elena's Light has developed and intensified advocacy efforts in the legal realm to address the influx of refugees who desperately need assistance. We developed and hosted a Know Your Rights presentation with local immigration lawyers and professionals in February 2022 on the Afghan Humanitarian Parole, which was very successful with over 100 attendees. Elena's Light is hosting the second Know Your Rights session in early August 2022 on immigration options for Afghans, including Temporary Protected Status (TPS), asylum, Special Immigrant Visa (SIV), and humanitarian parole. Lastly, EL is also leading the local initiative to develop a pro-bono committee to respond to the overwhelming need for lawyers to work on legal cases for Afghan during this crisis. Furthermore, through our other services, we provide free, in-home customizable ESL tutoring sessions to refugee women with a focus on driver's education, facilitating acculturation, and improving employment opportunities. We also provide in-home maternal, pediatric, and mental health education and wellness services that are aimed at addressing the explicit and implicit barriers to healthcare for refugee populations. Elena's Light's diverse community aims to counter the structural disadvantages and anxiety-inducing emotions and experiences related to being a refugee. We would like to join this International Conference on Refugee Law since protecting refugee rights is our mission. We would like to share what we have learned from our legal initiatives for refugee rights. We would also like to listen, learn from, and discuss with experts and researchers how to better understand and advocate for refugee rights. We hope to improve our understanding of how to provide better legal aid for our clients through this conference.

Keywords : legal, advocacy, Afghan humanitarian crisis, policy, pro-bono

Conference Title : ICRL 2022 : International Conference on Refugee Law

Conference Location : New York, United States

Conference Dates : December 09-10, 2022