**Reminder to graduating students**

We encourage graduating UC students to book their FREE legal consultations now, well in advance of graduation! In general, UCIMM cannot advise students who are no longer enrolled unless we already have a signed contract (retainer) agreement to do so. [Here is the link](#) to our system-wide appointments page.

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**STATE POLICY UPDATES**

**California Volunteers Program**

Recruitments for 2023-2024 cohorts have begun! Check your campus College Corps website for details. [Cal Volunteers](#) provides students, regardless of immigration status, $10,000 in financial aid in exchange for community service.

**California Penal Code 372.5**

Last year, California passed a law that creates an alternative to most California drug charges that is safer for immigrants.

“A legacy of the War On Drugs is that a conviction for even minor conduct relating to drugs can trigger multiple “collateral” consequences, which can be far more severe than the criminal
penalties. Noncitizens convicted of even a drug infraction can face catastrophic immigration consequences, including mandatory ICE detention, deportation, and permanent separation from family. Policing and prosecution for drug offenses disproportionately target communities of color. This new law gives California prosecution and defense counsel a tool to avoid some of the worst collateral consequences of a drug conviction, without affecting the criminal penalties.”

ILRC Fact Sheet

FEDERAL POLICY UPDATES

New Guidance on Deferred Action for Labor Disputes

Last week, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced a new policy that will allow individuals involved in labor disputes to apply for deferred action or parole in place and employment authorization for a period of two years. This policy was put forth so that immigrants who experience or witness labor or civil rights violations at the workplace (e.g., wage theft, retaliation, threats of deportation, and many others) will feel safe to report violations and have legal protections while the dispute is investigated.

While this relief is temporary, it is important to note that individuals in this situation could also qualify for a path to permanent protection through the U or T visa. Immigrants who are involved in or may have a claim to a labor dispute should contact their campus attorney for more information. See also this helpful FAQ drafted by the National Immigrant Law Center (NILC). For an explanation on deferred action versus parole in place, this document about military deferred action and parole in place has helpful information (note: the eligibility and application guidelines for military family members will not be the same as for labor disputes).

Proposed USCIS filing fee increases

This month, DHS announced a new proposed fee rule that would increase several USCIS filing fees, including employment authorization, family-based petitions, adjustment of status, naturalization, special immigrant juvenile status (SIJS), and others. Click here to view the chart of current and proposed fees.

Individuals and organizations may submit public comments regarding the new rule through March
6, 2023. Please stand by or be on the lookout for template or sample public comments from stakeholder organizations, including UCIMM. After March 6, DHS must review all comments before publishing the final rule. For information about and how to submit a public comment visit this site, and learn more about the regulatory process here.

**Biden’s humanitarian parole program - Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Venezuela**

Last week, President Biden announced a humanitarian parole program for individuals from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. Under this program, 30,000 people per month may be found eligible for humanitarian parole, which allows individuals to lawfully enter the U.S. if they have a compelling humanitarian reason to do so. To be eligible, individuals must have a financial sponsor in the U.S. and apply online before coming to the U.S., among other requirements. Unfortunately, migrants who do not or cannot take the correct steps to apply for parole are subject to automatic disqualification from the program and expedited removal from the U.S. Also, the program will likely create further complications for folks who wish to seek asylum. This Vox article discusses the program’s potential problems and how it interrelates with Title 42.

**Temporary Protected Status (TPS)**

- DHS recently extended and redesignated TPS for Somalia, Yemen, Ethiopia, and Haiti.
- Article: *Biden expands immigration tool that doesn’t require Congress*: “The administration has extended relief to hundreds of thousands of migrants over the past two years, and advocates want to see more.”

**ICYMI**

**Scholarships:** View immigrants Rising’s list of scholarships and fellowships.

**Support:** Immigrants Rising is hosting seven Wellness Support Group series beginning this week. “Immigrants Rising’s Wellness Support Groups help undocumented young people stay grounded and connected to community.” Meetings begin the week of January 17. Advance registration is required.
Fact sheet: The Children’s Partnership, the California Consortium for Urban Indian Health (CCUIH), Two Feathers Native American Family Services, and the United American Indian Involvement (UAII) released the 2022 A Child is a Child: American Indian/Alaska Native Snapshot offering an overview of key American Indian/Alaska Native children’s demographic and health facts in California.

Article: Immigration reformers’ hopes dashed as Senate fails to act: Last month, Congress failed to reach any immigration deals before Democrats lost their majority in the House of Representatives. Advocates including UCIMM will continue to fight for permanent protections.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Thank you,

The UC Immigrant Legal Services Center team