



## About the Authors

**Rachel Davidson** (she/her) is the Director of the [End SIJS Backlog Coalition](#), a project of the National Immigration Project. Prior to taking on the role of Director of the Coalition, Rachel worked at the Door first as a staff attorney representing immigrant youth in humanitarian matters, and then launching the organization's policy program as the Managing Attorney for Policy and Special Projects. Rachel co-founded the End SIJS Backlog Coalition in February of 2021. Through youth organizing, administrative and legislative advocacy, her work focuses on building momentum and political power to end the SIJS backlog and to realize permanent legal protection in the United States for immigrant children who have survived abuse, abandonment and neglect. Her work and writing on the SIJS backlog has been published in national media and in academic journals. Rachel's background in community organizing, youth development, and participatory action research inform her work as an immigration attorney and her strategy with the Coalition. Rachel obtained her BA and law degrees from McGill University in Montreal and her MA in International Relations at the Universidad del Salvador in Buenos Aires, where she was a Rotary Peace Fellow.

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**Laila Hlass** is a Clinical Professor of Law at Tulane Law School, where she co-directs the Immigrant Rights Clinic. Her research and writing focus primarily on legal frameworks governing immigrant children and the convergence of the immigration enforcement and criminal legal regimes. Her articles have appeared in a number of journals including

California Law Review, Georgetown Law Journal, and Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review, as well as news outlets including the Boston Globe, Ms. Magazine and Slate.

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**Katia Leiva** is a J.D. Candidate seeking a certificate in Maritime Law at Tulane University Law School. She graduated from Tulane University with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science - International Relations and a minor in French. As the child of a Honduran immigrant, Katia is passionate about immigration law and advocacy. She has been involved in the immigration field for over three years, working as a law clerk at immigration firms. At Tulane, Katia has remained dedicated to immigration advocacy. During her second year of law school, she served as the Vice President of the Immigration Law Society. In that role, she increased engagement and helped bridge the gap between Tulane students and immigration professors, practitioners, and courts. Katia has also served as a Research Assistant for Professor Laila L. Hlass. Additionally, she is a Student Intern for the Tulane Immigrant Rights Clinic under the direction of Professor Mary Yanik. Finally, Katia serves as the Senior Articles Editor of the Tulane Law Review. After graduation, Katia will join the litigation group at Holland & Knight's Houston, Texas office.

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**Gabriela Cruz** is a staff attorney and Immigrant Justice Corps fellow at the Tulane Immigrant Rights Clinic, where she was also a student attorney during her last year of law school. As a fellow, Gaby supports and assists clients in applying for humanitarian relief in the U.S., including vulnerable youth applying for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status. Gaby received her JD from Tulane Law School in 2021 and a bachelor of arts from the University of Miami in 2018.