



ACLS Leading Edge Fellowship 2025

Position Title	Advocacy Manager: Universal Representation Initiative
Organization	Amica Center for Immigrant Rights
Location	Washington, DC
Stipend	\$72,000 in the first year, \$74,000 in the second year
Benefits	Access to employer health insurance. Professional development funds and relocation funds provided by ACLS.
Start Date	September 2025

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

The Capital Area Immigrants' Rights (CAIR) Coalition is now Amica Center for Immigrant Rights ("Amica Center" for short); click [here](#) to learn more about our new name. We are the only non-profit organization in the Washington, D.C. area that is exclusively focused on providing legal assistance to adult and child immigrants detained by the government in the Capital Region and beyond. We couple direct representation of immigrants facing deportation with impact litigation and national advocacy. The Detained Adult Program (DAP) works with hundreds of adults who are detained by ICE each year, providing information, support, and legal representation. We provide trauma-sensitive, person-centered services, and deeply value the autonomy of the people we work with in detention as they navigate the fundamentally inhumane immigration system.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

The Advocacy Manager will work on expanding universal representation for adult immigrants from Virginia held in ICE detention centers. The number one indicator for success for a person fighting deportation is the availability of an attorney to work with them. As there is no right to counsel in Immigration Court for those who cannot afford an attorney, Amica Center has been at the forefront of the movement to establish state and local funding for representation. We have made stunning strides in Maryland and the District of Columbia, with many adults there now able to have a free attorney to fight their deportation through universal representation programs. The Advocacy Manager will work with other members of the Detained Adult Program, including our Deputy Program Director for external advocacy, and our Communications staff to expand universal representation to Virginia. This will require the team to assess the political and advocacy map of Virginia, develop an advocacy plan, build coalitions, publish data-supported advocacy papers, create and effectuate communication plans, and meet with local and state government officials. The Advocacy Manager will be central in this team.

We envision an advocacy campaign that speaks to potential funders, grassroots organizations, impacted communities, and the general public. We want the campaign to sit at the intersection of the legal and human component of our work and our clients. The fellowship tenure is 24 consecutive months, with an expected time commitment of approximately 37.5 hours per week.

Responsibilities and tasks:

- Work with DAP, including Deputy Program Director for external advocacy, and communication team members to create a long-term vision and plan for advancing universal representation in Virginia.
- Meet with immigrant rights and human rights groups throughout Virginia in order to build coalitions and develop a power-map of support in the state.
- Lead and take-part in coalition meetings focused on immigrant rights and representation in Virginia and nationally.
- Prepare and present an internal plan for a multi-year approach to advocacy, including timelines and action items.
- Assess and scrutinize the complete range of communication needs of a human rights campaign, including creating and deploying plans to advocate for universal representation through public

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messaging, client storytelling, data-grounded evidence, community-focused support, and grassroots inclusion. This will require leveraging a background in the humanities to ensure that the campaign is thoughtful, genuine, humane, and persuasive both to government officials and to impacted communities.

- Lead the data component of our advocacy campaign, demonstrating the potential impact of deportation defense services on individuals, families and the wider community in VA.
- Identify, and work with, academics and existing external partners such as the Vera Institute of Justice to create data-based reports on the state of representation in Virginia and the economic and human impacts of universal representation.
- Provide impact data support for Maryland and DC universal representation renewal efforts.
- Meet and interview clients, client families, and community members to inform advocacy publications.
- Collaborate with the communication team to prepare public advocacy campaigns.
- Prepare persuasive communication pieces for use in the advocacy campaign, including op-eds, white papers, social media campaigns, and legislative letters.
- Meet with local and state public officials in Virginia to advocate for universal representation.
- Stay abreast of national developments on, and challenges to, universal representation initiatives.
- Work with directors and program management to set long-term program strategic plans.
- Take part in client meetings, court hearings, and jail visits to better inform advocacy efforts.
- Interface with leadership of other Amica Center programs to ensure cross-program information and strategy sharing.
- Take part in stakeholder relationship activities, including in-person and telephonic meetings with community groups, governmental bodies and representatives, and other legal service providers.
- Attend and participate in internal Development and Communications strategy group meetings.
- Support and reinforce organizational plans for equity and inclusion.

Qualifications:

- PhD in any field of the humanities or interpretive social sciences. Read more about eligible fields [here](#).
- Interest in immigration and human rights.
- Strong writing and communication skills, including in-person communications in seminars, coalitions, and public meetings.
- Favorable results on background check including driving record.
- Valid driver's License required and willingness to travel for work-related business (mileage and other travel expenses are reimbursed, candidate need not have access to a private vehicle).
- Experience in resolving conflicts and ensuring smooth collaboration among team members and external partners.
- Proficient in planning and implementing projects.
- Demonstrated ability to adapt to changing priorities, strategies, and circumstances.
- Experience writing for a non-academic audience.

Preferred:

- Written and oral Spanish competence.

APPLICATIONS

- Information on the Leading Edge Fellowship Program: <https://www.acls.org/Competitions-and-Deadlines/Leading-Edge-Fellowships>
- All applications must be submitted through the ACLS Online Fellowship Application System (ofa.acls.org)
- Application deadline: 9 PM EDT, March 12, 2025.

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