



The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) supports the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as it secures the nation while preserving individual liberty, fairness, and equality under the law.



CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia Delivers Remarks at Naturalization Ceremony

This month, CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia delivered remarks at a Naturalization Ceremony held at the Brown vs. Board of Education historic site in Topeka, Kansas where fifty citizenship candidates from twenty-five countries took the Oath of Allegiance and became U.S. citizens.



During her remarks, Officer Sivaprasad Wadhia shared her personal experience as a daughter of Indian immigrants, an immigration attorney, and a scholar. “I could not have dreamed that I could have the honor of a lifetime to serve as the Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties for the Department of Homeland Security. I would like to use my example to encourage you to dream big—and explore all the limitless opportunities that are America for you, your children, and your grandchildren,” said Officer Sivaprasad Wadhia. “Your talents and contribution will uphold America’s tradition of providing opportunities for generations. We are a Nation unlike any other—individuals from across the globe bound by a common belief in human freedom. We are a Nation seeking justice for all. Just as you will strive to be better than yesterday, so will America. And you will be part of that story.”

While in Topeka, Officer Sivaprasad Wadhia, also met with diverse stakeholders, including the Mayor of Topeka, where she shared information about the mission and work of CRCL.

CRCL Participates in Meeting with Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

This month CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia joined other DHS leaders in a meeting with members of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights (LCCHR). The LCCHR is a coalition of organizations committed to the protection and advancement of civil and human rights. During the meeting, DHS leadership had an opportunity to share information on the Department’s work furthering the Administration’s commitment to equity, including providing updates on the various equity-related executive orders, as well as information on DHS grants, trainings, and resources available to community organizations. Additional discussion topics included the use of artificial intelligence and its nexus to the DHS mission, updates on the “Public Safety-Public Trust” executive order, and the Administration’s ongoing commitment to combatting domestic violent extremism and combatting antisemitism, among others.

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Former DHS Deputy Secretary John Tien Visits CRCL

Earlier this month, CRCL was pleased to welcome then-Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security John Tien at an employee meeting, where he provided brief remarks and thanked CRCL's staff for their tireless work and unwavering commitment to safeguarding civil rights and civil liberties in all aspects of the Department's mission. CRCL thanks then-Deputy Secretary Tien for his support and his service during his tenure at DHS.



CRCL Participates in Panel Discussion on “BAMEMSA Communities and Immigration”

This month CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia participated in a panel discussion on “BAMEMSA Communities and Immigration” hosted by the National Immigration Project. The event brought together Black, Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian (BAMEMSA) groups to discuss key priorities for BAMEMSA communities in the immigration space. Topics discussed included DHS screening and vetting procedures, DHS efforts to advance equity across the Department, and DHS efforts to ensure nondiscrimination in all DHS programs and activities, among others. CRCL will continue outreach and engagement efforts with diverse BAMEMSA communities to address concerns at the intersection of BAMEMSA and immigration issues.

CRCL Participates in ICCPR Civil Society Consultation

This month, CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia, along with representatives from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), participated in a civil society consultation held in preparation for the upcoming U.S. government presentation to the United Nations Human Rights Committee on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (to take place in October 2023). The event was hosted by the U.S. Department of State. Topics discussed included human trafficking and forced labor and the treatment of foreign nationals, including refugees and asylum seekers.

CRCL's Officer is the Department's designated point of contact for international human rights treaty reporting and coordination under Executive Order 13107. CRCL coordinates DHS-wide efforts and works with the federal interagency on U.S. government reporting to various international organizations, namely the various United Nations Treaty Bodies as well as the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

CRCL Participates in IACHR Working Meeting

This month, CRCL Officer Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia, along with representatives from the DHS Family Reunification Taskforce, participated in a virtual working meeting entitled, “Migrant Children Affected by Zero Tolerance Policy,” which was called by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and hosted by the U.S. Department of State. U.S. government representatives included Ambassador Frank O. Mora from the U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States, as well as representatives from the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice. DHS's remarks included an update on the Family Reunification Taskforce's ongoing efforts and other Departmental developments demonstrating a commitment to family unity.

DHS Celebrates 33rd Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act



On July 26, 1990, 33 years ago, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law. This landmark civil rights legislation prohibits discrimination based on disability, guaranteeing individuals with disabilities equal opportunity and full participation in many areas of everyday life. The ADA covers the following protections:

- **Employment:** Title I requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations for applicants and employees with disabilities and prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all aspects of employment.
- **State and Local Government Services:** Title II requires that state and local governments must provide people with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from all of their programs, services, and activities.
- **Public Transit:** Title II Subtitle B requires that public transit systems must provide people with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from their services.
- **Businesses Open to the Public:** Title III requires that businesses and nonprofits that serve the public must provide people with disabilities and equal opportunity to access the goods or services they offer.
- **Telecommunications:** Title IV requires that phone companies must provide services to allow callers with hearing and speech disabilities to communicate.

The ADA builds upon the protections afforded by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination in federal employment, as well as federally conducted and assisted activities. These laws have leveled the playing field, expanded opportunities, and unlocked doors to full inclusion for individuals with disabilities.

DHS and CRCL are committed to supporting and promoting access, equity, inclusion, and equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities and upholding the principles of the ADA. CRCL is committed to ensuring equal access in DHS and DHS-funded programs and activities and continuing engagements with members of the disability community. Learn more about [Disability Access at DHS](#).

CRCL Meets with Community Stakeholders Along the Southwest Border

Over the past month, CRCL traveled to the Southwest Border to hold multiple in-person and virtual listening sessions with community stakeholders in the Rio Grande Valley, El Paso, and the Phoenix/Tucson area. These sessions focused on addressing challenges in the post-Title 42 immigration environment. While on the Border, CRCL also met with officials from DHS and federal partners representing CBP, ICE, and U.S. Border Patrol, and with representatives from 27 local stakeholder organizations.

CRCL Leads Series of Presentations on Deferred Action and Employment

CRCL recently hosted a series of virtual engagements with diverse stakeholders on the deferred action process and the Department's support of the enforcement of labor and employment laws. Over 138 participants joined the session held this month, including non-governmental organizations, local labor unions, worker centers, and legal service providers. During the presentation, CRCL provided an overview of the deferred action process, which is a form of prosecutorial discretion to defer removal action against a noncitizen for a certain period of time. Participants then had an opportunity to ask questions. In addition to CRCL, representatives from USCIS and ICE also participated in the presentations. The engagement was conducted both in English and Spanish.

Transparency in Civil Rights Investigations

CRCL strives to maintain transparency in its civil rights investigations processes and developed an online collection of memos and other documents related to CRCL investigations that are available to the public. [Read more and access CRCL's Investigations and Recommendations Memos](#)



CRCL on the Road, July*

El Paso, Texas; Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona

From July 1-10, CRCL hosted stakeholder engagements with community organizations in El Paso, Phoenix, and Tucson.

Tokyo, Japan

From July 22-30, a CRCL representative traveled to Japan to participate in the Sasakawa USA Emerging Experts Delegation (SEED) program.

Omaha, Nebraska

From July 20-21, CRCL hosted stakeholder engagements with diverse communities in Omaha.

Topeka, Kansas

From July 27-28, CRCL met with diverse stakeholders in Topeka.

*CRCL's Community Engagement team conducts in-person, virtual, and hybrid engagements with federal, state, local, and civil society stakeholders across the country. We remain available to respond to any stakeholder questions or concerns via email at: CommunityEngagement@hq.dhs.gov.

Additional information, and contacting us

The goal of this periodic newsletter is to inform members of the public about the activities of the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, including: how to file complaints; ongoing and upcoming projects; opportunities to offer comments and feedback; etc. We distribute our newsletters via our stakeholder email list and make them available to community groups for redistribution. Issues of the newsletter can be accessed online at: www.dhs.gov/crcl-newsletter.

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, want to request back issues, or have other comments or questions, please let us know by emailing crcloutreach@hq.dhs.gov. For more information, including how to make a civil rights or civil liberties complaint about DHS activities, visit: www.dhs.gov/crcl.

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