

**OFFICE OF THE CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES  
OMBUDSMAN  
SIXTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**Government and Stakeholders Working Together to Improve Immigration Services**

*December 6, 2016  
National Archives  
Washington, D.C.*

8:30 – 9:00           **Registration**  
Lobby of William McGowan Theater

*All morning events will be held in the William McGowan Theater*

**Master of Ceremonies Stacy Shore**  
Acting Deputy Director, Ombudsman's Office

9:00 – 9:15           **Welcome by Maria Odom**  
CIS Ombudsman

9:15 – 9:30           **Remarks by León Rodríguez**  
USCIS Director

9:30 – 10:00       **Keynote Remarks by Shelly Pitterman**  
UNHCR Regional Representative for the USA and the Caribbean

10:00 – 10:30       **Remarks by Juan Osuna**  
Executive Office for Immigration Review Director

10:30 – 10:45       **Break**

10:45 – 12:00       Morning Plenary

**USCIS Now – Challenges and Opportunities to Improve our Immigration System**

**Moderator:** Ombudsman Odom

**Speakers:**

Mariela Melero, Associate Director, CSPED, USCIS

Joseph Moore, Chief Financial Officer, USCIS

Donald Neufeld, Associate Director, SCOPS, USCIS

William Yates, Principal, W.R. Yates & Associates, LLC

Gary Merson, Ombudsman's Office

This panel will bring together former and current U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) executives and Ombudsman's Office leadership for a dynamic conversation about the current state of USCIS operations and public engagement.

12:00 – 1:15 Lunch (on your own)

12:15 – 1:15 **Ask the Experts – Questions & Answers with Ombudsman Staff**

**Location:** Washington Conference Room

**Participants:** Allison Posner, Case Team Analysts

1:30 – 3:00 **Simultaneous Roundtables – Session I**

**The World of Provisional Immigrant Waivers**

**Location:** Jefferson Conference Room

**Moderator:** Peggy Gleason

**Speakers:** Robert Blackwood and Roselyn Brown-Frei, USCIS; Susan Schreiber, CLINIC; Joel Nantais, DOS; Phill Slattery, NVC

Since its inception in 2013, the I-601A Provisional Waiver program has grown to approximately 50,000 applications per year. Current changes will expand the volume and eligibility criteria even further. This panel will discuss how both USCIS and the Department of State (DOS) have developed the program to date and explain new developments in USCIS guidance. The panelists will also describe interagency communication between USCIS and DOS in this process, and the impact on stakeholders of the program.

**Employment Hot Topics – Year in Review**

**Location:** William McGowan Theater

**Moderator:** Carrie Anderson

**Speakers:** Frederick Troncone, Ombudsman's Office; Kevin Cummings and Ciro Parascandola, USCIS; Allen Orr, Orr Immigration Law Firm P.C.; Sunday Rubenstein, Ernst & Young; Alberto Ruisanchez, DOJ Office of Special Counsel

Employers and foreign national workers have faced a changing immigration landscape this past year. Panelists will discuss how they have responded to USCIS changes in H-1B policies, F-1 training programs, uncertain processing times, and proposed and implemented regulations. Panel experts will also highlight agency efforts to protect the foreign national worker and business owner from unlawful employment and noncompliant I-9 practices.

**Humanitarian Hot Topics – Year in Review**

**Location:** Washington Conference Room

**Moderator:** Emily Creighton

**Speakers:** Leslye Orloff, National Immigrant Women's Advocacy Project; Rená Cutlip-Mason, EOIR; Ted Kim, USCIS; Mary Giovagnoli, DHS; Michelle Mendez, CLINIC

This panel will explore challenges and potential solutions to the increasing asylum backlog, highlighting steps taken by USCIS' Asylum Division and EOIR's immigration courts, as well as the backlog's impact on applicants. The panel also will address developments related to benefits for vulnerable immigrant populations, including victims

of crimes who qualify for a U visa and issues related to the administration of the Special Immigrant Juvenile (SIJ) program.

3:00 – 3:15                      Networking Break

3:15 – 4:30                      **Simultaneous Roundtables – Session II**

**Temporary Workers – Employment Issues and Labor Trafficking**

**Location:** William McGowan Theater

**Moderator:** Rachel Winkler

**Speakers:** Naomi Tsu, SPLC; Jennifer Van Trump and Elizabeth Dallam, USCIS; James Kessler, DOL; Jeff Stiff, DOJ-FBI

This panel will examine current employment issues impacting temporary workers and their vulnerability to labor trafficking. The panelists will describe existing worker protections and the opportunities that exist to strengthen program compliance. Panelists will also give an overview of the Signal International case, which involved a U.S. Gulf Coast shipbuilding company's labor trafficking of over 500 H-2 temporary workers from India.

**Regional Refugee Resettlement Issues and the Central American Minors Program**

**Location:** Jefferson Conference Room

**Moderator:** Jason Boyd

**Speakers:** Anne Chiorazzi, USCIS; Kelly Gauger, DOS; Anna Greene, IRC; Jennifer Podkul, KIND

This panel will explore successes, challenges, and recent developments associated with U.S. refugee processing programs in Central America. Panelists will discuss outcomes and issues pertaining to the Central American Minors program established in December 2014. Panelists will also provide updates on and examine the announced Northern Triangle in-country referral program, as well as the Protected Transfer Arrangement for refugee applicants processed in Costa Rica.

**Citizenship and Naturalization for Special Populations**

**Location:** Washington Conference Room

**Moderator:** Fatimah Mateen

**Speakers:** Michael Valverde, USCIS; Eric Cohen, ILRC; Monica Fuentes, Welcoming America; Peter Katson, Pentagon Joint Legal Assistance Office

This panel will cover citizenship through the lenses of those having most difficulty accessing it, including military and their families, derivative children of naturalized parents, refugees, and low-income and disabled individuals. For naturalization applicants, the panel will discuss the impacts of higher fees and fee waiver processes. For those filing disability waivers, the panel will describe disability waiver challenges. The panel will also give an overview of processing challenges for citizenship applications and USCIS' use of ELIS in naturalization processing.