

JOSEPH A. VAIL ASYLUM LAW WORKSHOP



Immigration in the Time of COVID 19:
Asylum and Beyond

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
IRA KURZBAN

American Civil Rights and Immigration Lawyer

Friday, January 29, 2021

9 am – 1 pm (CST)

Complimentary due to COVID 19

Approved for 4 hours of Texas CLE credit with 1 hour of ethics

SCHEDULE

For questions about the workshop contact: Geoffrey Hoffman, Immigration
Clinic Director at ghoffman@central.uh.edu or 713-743-2094

BIOGRAPHIES



MAGALI SUÁREZ CANDLER

Magali Suárez Candler is the founder of Suárez Candler Law, PLLC. She is Board Certified in Immigration and Nationality Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization and in her 31st year of legal practice.

She began her career at Catholic Charities' immigration program in Houston, where she was staff then supervising attorney for over 10 years. She was then head of litigation and partner at Tindall & Foster (then FosterQuan, now known as Foster, LLP), before opening her own firm in 2014. She is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA), served on the TSC and EOIR national liaison committees, and is currently Chair of the Lawyer Well-Being Committee. A former Chair of the Texas Chapter of AILA, she held other offices and was liaison for the Asylum Office and the Houston EOIR. She is a member of the State Bar of Texas (SBOT), served on their Committee for Laws Relating

to Immigration and Nationality and was V.P. for Asylum and Refugee Issues and later V.P. for Deportation and Removal for Immigration Law Section. She currently serves on the SBOT Commission for Lawyer Discipline. In 1999 the SBOT awarded her the J. Chrys Dougherty Legal Services Award for outstanding contributions guaranteeing indigents access to the legal system. She served on the Houston Bar Association (HBA) Gender Fairness Committee, was on the Advisory Board of the Tahiri Justice Center in Houston, Texas from its inception through 2018, and is currently on the Advisory Board of the UH Law Center's Immigration Law Clinic.

Ms. Candler specializes in removal and worksite enforcement, advises corporate clients and individuals, criminal defense counsel and individuals on the immigration consequences of crimes, and often serves as an expert. She is a frequent presenter, most recently for the University of Texas (UT) 2020 Immigration Law Conference, on Family-Based and Removal updates. Ms. Candler received her J.D. from the University of Houston Law Center in 1989 and was licensed in 1989.



GEOFFREY HOFFMAN

Professor Hoffman specializes in immigration-related federal court litigation, deportation defense, asylum cases, and appeals before the Board of Immigration Appeals. He has represented numerous immigrants in a variety of settings including before the Executive Office for Immigration Review, Department of Homeland Security, and in the federal courts. Professor Hoffman served as co-counsel before the Supreme Court of the United States in the precedent-setting immigration case, *Carachuri-Rosendo v. Holder*.

Professor Hoffman is a frequent commentator on immigration law and policy. He has been quoted in the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *Mother Jones*, *Reuters*, *Bloomberg News*, *Houston Chronicle*, among other outlets. He has published articles in the following representative law reviews, *Maryland Journal of International Law*, *Journal of Gender, Race, and Justice* at the University of Iowa,

Houston J. of Int'l Law-Sidebar, *Houston Law Review-Online*, *Nova Law Review*, *Loyola L.A. Int'l and Comparative L.J.* He also has published pieces in *Salon.com*, *Jurist*, *Immigration Professor's Blog*, *Lexis Nexis Immigration Legal News*, *Notice and Comment*, a blog from the *Yale Journal on Regulation*, among other venues.

Prior to joining the Clinic, he practiced immigration law at Kurzban Kurzban Weinger & Tetzeli, P.A. in Miami, Florida. Previously, he taught at the University of Illinois, Tulane Law School and the University of Miami. In addition to his practice and teaching experience, Professor Hoffman served as a judicial law clerk for the Honorable Paul V. Gadola, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan for a two-year term.

In 2016, Professor Hoffman received the Ethel M. Baker Faculty Award for community service. In 2015, Professor Hoffman received the University of Houston Teaching Excellence Award, for clinical faculty, a University-wide award established by the UH Provost. In 2015, he was awarded the Certificate of Excellence for service to the Law Center and University. In 2014, Professor Hoffman received the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) Elmer Fried Excellence in Teaching Award.

The UHLC immigration clinic under Professor Hoffman's leadership was awarded the Pro Bono Hero Award for the Central Region by AILA for 2015.



IRA J. KURZBAN

J.D. and M.A., University of California, Berkeley. Mr. Kurzban is a founder of the law firm of Kurzban, Kurzban, Tetzeli & Pratt, P.A., of Miami, Florida. He is a past-national President and former General Counsel of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and is a Fellow of the American Bar Association. He has litigated over fifty federal cases concerning the rights of aliens, including *Jean v. Nelson*, *Commissioner v. Jean*, and *McNary v. Haitian Refugee Center, Inc.*, which he argued before the United States Supreme Court. Mr. Kurzban is an adjunct faculty member in Immigration and Nationality Law at the University of Miami School of Law. He is the author of *Kurzban's Immigration Law Sourcebook*, the most widely used one-volume immigration source in the United States in its 17th Edition and he has lectured and otherwise published extensively in the field of immigration law, including articles in the *Harvard Law Review* and *Columbia University Press*.

Mr. Kurzban has practiced Immigration and Nationality Law for over 40 years and has won numerous awards for his work. He was the first recipient of the Tobias Simon Pro Bono Service Award presented to him by the Chief Justice of the Florida Supreme Court for his work in protecting Haitian asylum seekers. He was selected as an Honorary Fellow by the University of Pennsylvania Law School for his work on behalf of refugees. He has been the recipient of the Wasserstein Public Interest Fellowship from Harvard Law School and in 2020 he received the Leonard J. Theberge Award for Private International Law from the American Bar Association.



ELIZABETH M. MENDOZA

Elizabeth M. Mendoza is a sole practitioner licensed by the state of Texas since May 1993 who practices exclusively immigration law. She is a graduate of Rice University and the University of Houston Law Center.

Ms. Mendoza has provided pro bono representation to immigrant clients of Catholic Charities, the YMCA International Services, and various local battered women’s shelters throughout her career. She is a frequent speaker at immigration attorney training workshops, community forums regarding know your rights presentations, and, local media has interviewed Ms. Mendoza and her clients throughout the years on various immigration related topics. Ms. Mendoza provided pro bono assistance at Bush Airport in Houston, Texas after the travel ban was temporarily stayed to ensure Customs and Border Protection honored the stay.

Ms. Mendoza is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association AILA and served as co-captain of the AILA Houston advocacy committee and is currently AILA Houston EOIR liaison. She also serves as a board member for the advocacy/outreach group Fort Bend For All. Ms. Mendoza has lobbied state and federal legislators in opposition to SB4 and in support of DACA and comprehensive immigration reform. Ms. Mendoza is married and the mother of two stepsons and two daughters. Ms. Mendoza enjoys spending time with her family, cooking, traveling, gardening, playing badminton, and talking politics and world affairs with open minded people.



SUSHAM M. MODI

Susham M. Modi received a B.A., magna cum laude, from the University of Texas at Arlington and a J.D. from Penn State Law School. He is a former Adjunct Professor of Law and Clinical Supervising Attorney at the University of Houston Law Center. He is the Principle Attorney and Partner of his firm, The Modi Law Firm, PLLC. The Modi Law Firm, PLLC focuses exclusively on all types of immigration law cases.

Prior to moving to Houston over 8 years ago, he taught as an Attorney Advocate at Harvard Law School’s Immigration and Refugee Clinical Program.

Professor Modi is a frequent speaker about immigration matters and has been a guest lecturer at various events, including at Rice University Graduate Programs’ Immigration Law & Policy Course, Catholic Charities, Harris County Criminal District Court Judges, ProBar, Neighborhood Centers, American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) as well as the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.



RUBY L. POWERS

Ruby L. Powers is founder of Powers Law Group, P.C., a Houston-based, full-service immigration law firm and is Board Certified in Immigration and Nationality Law.

She is a frequent national and international speaker, author, and media resource on the topics of immigration law and policy and law practice management. Her expertise and advocacy efforts have been featured in the Washington Post, CNN, NPR, the New York Times, BBC World News, and beyond. She is a child of an immigrant and married to an immigrant and has lived in six countries. She has represented individuals from more than 25 countries for asylum in the United States, affirmatively and defensively.

In 2019, AILA published her book “Build and Manage Your Successful Law Practice (Without Losing Your Mind) and in 2020, Powers began providing law practice management consulting services with Powers Strategy Group, LLC.

She has served as AILA’s Law Practice Management Committee Chair, Vice Chair for the Media Advocacy Committee, TX, NM, OK Chapter Advocacy (Co-) Liaison and various conference committees. She is a member of Rotary and serves on various boards including the Police Officers’ Civil Service Commission and the Harris County Commissioner Precinct 2, Immigration Advisory Committee. She previously served on the State Bar of Texas Law Practice Management Committee and as the Houston Bar Association Law Practice Management Section Chair. She is a graduate of the University of North Carolina School of Law, Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses, Leadership Houston, and American Leadership Forum. She is a former candidate for public office and advocate for her immigrants and her community at large. For more: www.RubyPowersLaw.com and www.RubyPowers.com. Connect at Linkedin: RubyPowers.



PARKER SHEFFY

Professor Sheffy is a Clinical Supervising Attorney at the University of Houston Law Center Immigration Clinic. He earned his Doctor of Jurisprudence from Georgetown University Law Center in May 2017. He is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and History, as well as St. John’s University in Queens, NY, where he earned a Master of Science in Math Education.

Professor Sheffy comes to the Clinic from the St. Francis Cabrini Center in Houston, TX where he worked as a Fellow for two years providing representation to individuals with wide ranging immigration-based issues, including: asylum, special immigrant juvenile status (SIJS) family-based immigration issues, and inadmissibility waivers, among others. While in law school, he served as a law clerk in both chambers of the U.S. Congress, which included working on projects pertinent to

immigration policy. Prior to law school, Professor Sheffy taught high school algebra in the Bronx, NY, and worked as a community organizer in South East Houston in connection with a presidential campaign. His professional interests include economic mobility, identity, and the influence of law and policy thereon. It is through this lens that he first became interested in immigration law.



JOSEPHINE SORGWE

Josephine Sorgwe is a Clinical Supervising Attorney at the University of Houston Law Center Immigration Clinic. Professor Sorgwe completed her undergraduate studies at Texas A&M University, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. After completing her undergraduate studies, she attended the University of Houston Law Center (UHLC) where she received her Doctor of Jurisprudence.

At the Immigration Clinic, she supervises law students on pro bono cases involving crime victims, asylum seekers, and more. Professor Sorgwe also provides direct pro bono legal representation to immigrant victims of crime, domestic violence, and human trafficking under a grant from the Texas Access to Justice Foundation. She has spoken at numerous events regarding deferred action for childhood arrivals, crime victims, naturalization, and more. She is also an active member of the

community, as she participates in numerous workshops and offers legal advice to community organizers and community members. Professor Sorgwe has always had a passion for people from diverse places and for helping those in need. Thus, she thoroughly enjoys representing each of the clients who walk through the doors of the Immigration Clinic.



ROSEMARY VEGA

Rosemary Vega is a Clinical Lecturer with the UHLC Immigration Clinic. She was licensed in November of 2000. She received her law degree from St. Mary's University School of Law in May of 2000. She received her B.A. in Political Science and minor in Spanish from Austin College in Sherman, Texas in 1997.

Prior to being a law professor, she had her own law practice, and before that she was a partner at Tausk & Vega, where she also practiced Immigration law. In 2003-2005, She was also the sole staff attorney at YMCA International Services in Houston. In 2000, Ms. Vega was the Judicial Law Clerk for seven (7) Immigration Judges at the Houston Immigration Court through the Department of Justice Honors Program from 2000-2001. Her interest in Immigration law began in the International Human Rights Clinic at St. Mary's Law school and has been advocating for immigrants since that time. She has

presented at many conferences for the State Bar of Texas and Texas AILA chapter and other immigration organizations.



AMANDA WATERHOUSE

Ms. Waterhouse is an experienced immigration attorney with over 13 years of practice in the field of immigration law. She is a Senior Immigration Attorney with Gonzalez Olivieri, LLC and supervisor of the firm's associate attorneys. She received her Juris Doctor from the University of Houston Law Center in 2006 and began practicing immigration law in February of 2007. Ms. Waterhouse is a member of the State Bar of Texas and has been admitted to the US Supreme Court, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, and the US District of Court for the Southern District of Texas. She is also a member of the College of the State Bar of Texas and a frequent speaker at conferences for the State Bar of Texas and the American Immigration Lawyers' Association. She has successfully represented thousands of clients in cases before the US Department of Homeland Security, the US Department of State, and US Citizenship & Immigration Services over the course of her career.



ANN E. WEBB

Ann E. Webb is an attorney, a licensed clinical social worker, and a 2019 Ph.D. graduate from the University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work. Dr. Webb's research focuses on the intersection of social work and the law, with a particular interest in interdisciplinary practice involving social workers and lawyers, and immigration issues affecting children and families. She has served as faculty on collaborative projects involving social work and law students assisting detained families seeking asylum and has developed a unique experiential learning program to engage social work students in practice arenas involving law and social work. Her scholarly agenda is informed by her experience as a lawyer and social work clinician, and by her role as an advocate for underserved populations. As adjunct faculty at the University of Houston, Dr. Webb teaches assessment and advanced social policy, and has provided guest lectures on topics relating to social work and the law, social work with immigrants and refugees, and trauma and secondary trauma as it impacts immigration law and practitioners.