

# FACES OF A CRISIS



Juan's cousin Marianna. Federal Plaza, NY 2003

19-year-old Juan Diego, a Dominican New Yorker since age 13, showed up to a routine appointment to get his US citizenship. Unexpectedly, at the Immigration and Citizenship office he was shackled and put on an airplane to the Dominican Republic. Officials claimed that although he had completed all the requirements to become a citizen, an old deportation order issued for his mother many years ago made him deportable.

Richard, a 34-year-old Jamaican man from Brooklyn awoke one morning to immigration officials at his door. They took him into custody to deport him for a crime committed 10 years earlier for which he had already served his time. A few months into detention, he was dead on a prison floor in Oakdale, Louisiana. During a year-long news investigation, a penal expert described his death as criminally negligent homicide.

Carol spent three years ardently fighting her husband's deportation. One day her 8 year old daughter Natasha picked up the phone. A fellow detainee was calling to tell her that her father was put on a plane for Guyana. DHS did not have the courtesy to notify the family. The deportation was illegal; a federal judge ordered Homeland Security to keep him in the U.S. pending a court decision. What triggered his 3-year long detention and life-long exile? A seven-day sentence for marijuana possession.

Everyday FFF receives calls from New Yorkers affected by deportation. It is typically a surprise punishment. An immigrant has been shackled and taken from the home or workplace. A son, daughter, father, or fiancée cannot locate a loved one for weeks at a time. The government provides no counsel to people facing deportation (exile), and in some areas as many as 90% of immigrant prisoners (detainees) have no attorney. The laws are so cruel that even with a good lawyer, most people will be deported.

Immigrants are steadily losing legal ground in the United States. Our basic humanity is not respected. Deportation is a mandatory minimum that is tearing apart our homes, and crippling our communities.



Carol with daughter, Natasha, and Agatha. Washington D.C. 2006

## JOIN US:

- \* **If you or a loved one faces deportation, call us and become a member.**
- \* **Teachers, Ministers, Leaders – invite us to do a workshop on deportation for your community.**
- \* **Journalists – read and write about our campaigns.**
- \* **Friends – stay informed by joining our mailing list.**
- \* **Make a tax-deductible donation to support our critical work. (See back of brochure for information on how to make a donation.)**

**“The INS took my dad away from me when I was in kindergarten. They came to my house early in the morning and took him while I was sleeping. My mother told me they took him in his bathrobe. I want them to stop the deportations laws... they should at least consider the children before breaking up any more families.”**

–9-year-old FFF member speaking at Children's Vigil 2006

# CAMPAIGNS

## Children:

One in seven American families is mixed status—at least one parent is a noncitizen and one child a citizen. Most people assume that American children are considered before a mom or dad is kicked out. But because of laws passed in 1996, deportation and detention are mandatory minimums for whole classes of families.

FFF educates the public about the rights of our children through their voices. Responding to our stories, Congressman Jose Serrano introduced the Child Citizen Protection Act to give voice to American children whose parent faces deportation. Elected leaders and community groups are steadily joining our commonsense cause. So are religious leaders through the New Sanctuary movement—a nationwide faith coalition providing spiritual and material support to families suffering under a broken immigration system. Two FFF families were the first to seek sanctuary in New York.

## Deportee International Justice:

This campaign targets foreign governments to defend their nationals in deportation. Many deportations are premature, executed before a case is resolved, or in clear violation of binding international laws.

FFF has convened two roundtables with over a dozen consulates; brought buses to DC to speak with embassies; and organized a transnational dialogue in the Dominican Republic where our deported loved ones testified alongside academics, political leaders and governmental representatives. We have confidentially surveyed consulates on how they facilitate deportation, and identified basic steps receiving countries can take to service nationals facing deportation; prevent illegal or premature deportations; and intervene in cases of abuse.

Across borders, our campaign is building relationships with foreign states, and laying clear foundations for their action.

Over **1.5 million people** have been deported since Congress passed zero tolerance laws in 1996.

America's immigration laws are tearing **families** apart, and even leaving **US citizen children** without their parents.

Countries accepting US deportees are making them **scapegoats**.

When people think of **deportees** they see us as criminals and terrorists.

Deportees are **human beings** with children that need their parents.

Deportees are **our people**.

We—Families For Freedom—are here to fight for **immigrant rights**.

Help us **spread the word**.



## Families for Freedom

Founded in September 2002, Families for Freedom is a New York-based multi-ethnic defense network by and for immigrants facing deportation. We are immigrant prisoners (detainees), former immigrant prisoners, their loved ones, or individuals at risk of deportation. We come from over 30 countries.

Families for Freedom seeks to repeal the laws that are tearing apart our homes and neighborhoods; and to build the power of immigrant communities—as communities of color—to provide a guiding voice in the growing movement for immigrant rights as human rights.

Our space is open to anyone and everyone directly facing and fighting deportation. We are one of the only groups working with immigrants being deported for past criminal convictions. In the New York area, the criminal justice system is the single largest referral point into deportation, with agents staffed at jails waiting to deport immigrants once they have finished their sentence.

FFF is a source of education and action for directly affected families, and an organizing support center for directly affected communities. We invite impacted families into monthly support and education meetings. We hold social events for our children. We organize campaigns around our loved ones' cases, which combine community mobilization, legal advocacy, media work, and congressional outreach to build support and awareness. Through our individual struggles we have forged collective campaigns.

## Deportee



## Depôte



## Deportado



### FAMILIES FOR FREEDOM

3 West 29th Street  
Suite 1030  
New York NY 10001  
646 290 5551  
fax 1-800- 895-4454

[www.familiesforfreedom.org](http://www.familiesforfreedom.org)



### Support Families for Freedom

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Apt. # \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ (other)



Make checks payable to "Urban Justice Center" and write FAMILIES FOR FREEDOM in the memo or donate on-line at [www.familiesforfreedom.org](http://www.familiesforfreedom.org)

Mail to: Families for Freedom \*3 West 29th Street, Suite 1030\* New York NY 10001