Dear Colleagues,

It’s no secret that 2017 has been a tough year for immigrant rights and racial justice. But we at Detention Watch Network (DWN) have been fighting for dignity, justice, and liberation for 20 years, and the commitment of our Network has never been stronger. Despite the forces in the White House and Congress, I’m proud to say that we achieved some major accomplishments this past year. Many of those wins are highlighted in this annual report.

DWN underwent a leadership transition this year. Over the summer, Ana Carrion transitioned out of the Co-Director role, and I stepped into the Executive Director role in August. I’m so grateful for all of Ana’s contributions over the past 7.5 years. She maintained our finances, operations, and fundraising and developed a comprehensive transition plan to ensure the responsible continuation of our systems and infrastructure after she left. We are finishing 2017 in solid financial standing, with a strong staff of eight and a robust membership, including 20 new members who joined the Network this year.

In 2017, we shifted our priorities to make our work more effective in response to new and evolving challenges. We were able to refocus our tactics and take advantage of opportunities that emerged amidst an administration led by bigotry, xenophobia, and white supremacy.

We ramped up our organizing capacity and now have three full-time organizers on staff to support the resistance on the ground. Through our Organizing Support Program, we increased the level of technical assistance and sub-grants offered to members. We monitored policy changes happening at the federal level and provided information, analyses, talking points, and other resources to strengthen our members’ advocacy. We also invested in communications to shift the conversation and engage more audiences in our efforts to end immigrant detention.

We honored DWN’s 20th anniversary this year. We had a lot of fun celebrating DWN with many members and supporters at our anniversary reception in Washington, DC in November. We also launched our $20,000 for 20 years fundraising campaign, and are grateful for all the support from the DWN community.

In addition to our public campaigns, communications, and advocacy, we have been making internal shifts to ensure we are modeling the fight for dignity, justice, and liberation from within. This included the creation of a language justice cohort among staff. In 2017, we committed to making all member communications available in English and Spanish, and joined the movement to X out gender binaries in Spanish. Consequently, DWN now uses the letter ‘x’ in place of the ‘o,’ ‘a,’ or ‘@’ endings of gendered words in Spanish in our translations, to be more inclusive of different gender identities.

This fall, DWN started the process of developing a new strategic framework that will inform our priorities and focus for the next few years. Our last strategic planning process took place in 2012, and it’s now time to reassess and revise our approach to make sure we’re having the greatest impact possible especially given the new political terrain we’re negotiating. Throughout the fall, we consulted with members, allies, funders, steering committee, and staff. The strategic plan will be finalized in early 2018, and shared with members at our National Member Conference in Denver, CO in May.

After almost nine years on staff at Detention Watch Network, I am taking advantage of our sabbatical policy, and will be taking some time off in early 2018 to spend time with my family and take a much-needed break. I will return to work on March 12th and I look forward to continuing to build the movement to end immigrant detention with you all in 2018.

In unity and hope,

Silky Shah
Legislative and Policy Wins

#DefundHate

**DURING BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS IN THE SPRING**, the Trump administration requested $3 billion in additional DHS funding for fiscal year 2017. We mounted a largely successful campaign against this request, drawing from the strengths of our membership with diverse tactics.

We created resources in English and Spanish, hosted two webinars, and delivered a petition to pressure Members of Congress to vote against the supplemental funding request. Our organizers worked with members, allies like United We Dream, and individuals directly impacted by detention to put pressure on legislators, including key leaders on appropriations. In the final negotiated funding bill (which ran through September 2017) the administration received some funding, but significantly less than they had requested. Our work helped to educate and mobilize new supporters around our issue, and we impacted the ultimate outcome of the negotiations. We also had a surprising win with the removal of the detention bed quota from the final bill, which we have been campaigning against since 2013.

Following this experience, and recognizing that funding is one of the only barriers to DHS enacting its hate-fueled detention and deportation expansion, we launched the #DefundHate campaign in August. Along with United We Dream, Church World Service, and the Southern Border Communities Coalition, we received funding to run a targeted appropriations campaign.

This campaign combined our organizing, policy, and communications efforts to pressure Members of Congress to oppose funding for the detention and deportation machine during the federal budgeting process for fiscal year 2018 (FY18). We hired four short-term organizers; developed a video series: Hides, Lies & Retaliates: a video series on Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection’s (CBP) shameful practices; and supported our members in organizing in-district visits, townhalls, mobilizations, social media campaigns, and op-ed placements.

**OUR #DEFUNDHATE CAMPAIGN HAD TWO GOALS:** to push back against the massive increases in immigration enforcement funding that Trump requested for FY18, and to get a critical mass of Members of Congress on the record calling for cuts in funding for DHS (rather than merely opposing further expansion).

At the time of writing this report, there is not yet a funding deal for FY18, but we have made significant progress towards our goals. To date, DWN members have engaged 51 Representatives and Senators around the demands of this campaign. We have 23 Members of Congress on the record calling for our demands. For more information about the #DefundHate campaign, you can visit: [www.defundhatenow.org](http://www.defundhatenow.org).
Legislative and Policy Wins

Dignity for Detained Immigrants Act

WHILE WE HAVE UNDOUBTEDLY EXPERIENCED POLICY SETBACKS THIS YEAR, and gains we made under the Obama administration have been undone, there is still some hope coming out of Congress. In October, the Dignity for Detained Immigrants Act of 2017 was introduced by Representatives Smith (D-WA) and Jayapal (D-WA), with 65 cosponsors. This legislation is the most progressive we have ever seen on immigrant detention. The bill does not fully end detention, but it takes a bold step forward by ending mandatory detention and privatized detention, enacting critical safeguards, and reversing the trend of constant, unchecked detention growth.

This bill aims to push supportive Members of Congress to be more forceful in how they talk about immigration detention, particularly as it relates to accountability, the rights of individuals held in detention, and the number of people who are placed in detention in the first place. While there is not a viable path for this bill to pass in Congress, it lays the groundwork for future legislative wins on detention, and the long list of sponsors is a result of DWN’s policy efforts. DWN is in the process of identifying a Senate office to introduce similar legislation in early 2018.

DWN IS DEEPENING OUR CULTURE OF FEEDBACK! As an organization, we strive to be the most effective we can be, and we are committed to cultivating an environment of honesty, transparency, and trust. If you have any feedback for us (things we did well and/or areas where we can improve), please let us know by contacting a staff member or by emailing feedback@detentionwatchnetwork.org.
FOLLOWING THE ELECTION, the importance of capacity building became clearer than ever. We directed energy and resources towards the base this year, knowing that we all benefit when our membership is informed, trained, and well-resourced to fight against the detention and deportation machine.

This past spring, we re-launched our program of direct support to members, which we had piloted in 2016, as the Organizing Support Program (OSP). We awarded a total of $35,000 to eight member organizations to support their anti-detention work. The 2017 Organizing Support Program cohort includes: American Friends Service Committee-Iowa, Puente Arizona, Georgia Detention Watch, Northwest Detention Center Resistance, Shut Down Etowah, Sureñxs en Accion, Families for Freedom, and New Orleans Workers’ Center for Racial Justice/Congress of Day Laborers. These OSP sub-grantees support a wide range of anti-detention work, including: campaigns to shut down detention centers, a hotline for people in detention, developing the leadership of directly impacted individuals, providing legal assistance for individual cases, and building state-wide coalitions, among other areas. In addition to the financial assistance, OSP members are eligible to receive various forms of technical support from DWN staff.

WE ALSO HOSTED THREE TRAININGS FOR DWN MEMBERS THROUGHOUT 2017.

• In January, we hosted Active Resistance, a training and strategy convening for over 50 members and allies. The training focused on non-violent direct action and digital security and privacy.
• We followed up the training with an Active Resistance: Organizers’ Meeting in February in partnership with NW Detention Center Resistance in Washington State. This convening provided a space for 30 organizers to come together to strategize and share best practices for the fight ahead.
• In July, we convened 25 members for a Spokesperson Training in Chicago. Members were trained in messaging and spokesperson skills to bring back to their own organizations and communities, and partnered up to keep honing their skills with monthly mock interviews.
DWN MEMBERS JOINED THE SECOND NATIONAL DAY OF THE DEAD WEEK OF ACTIONS, which included 16 events between October 28th and November 6th, 2017. These actions included vigils, processions, and community art spaces, among other activities. Members honored the lives of the 22 individuals who have died in detention since October 1st, 2015.

In addition, these actions called for an immediate review of those deaths that occurred in ICE custody in fiscal years 2016 and 2017 and the public release of these findings.

COMING IN 2018. DWN will be launching our #ICEOnTrial campaign! This innovative campaign was inspired by member Northwest Detention Center Resistance’s annual People’s Tribunal in Washington state. ICE On Trial will include people’s tribunals at detention facilities organized by our grassroots members, impact litigation to effect systemic changes, documentation and research efforts, advocacy targeting oversight mechanisms within Congress and the Office of Inspector General, and a strong communications component. The campaign will launch in February, and ramp up until our National Member Conference in May 2018. If you’d like to learn more or get involved, please contact campaign@detentionwatchnetwork.org.
IN OCTOBER, WE HAD A MAJOR SUPREME COURT VICTORY, when the highest court rejected a petition by private prison corporations seeking to block the release of government documents about their immigration detention practices. The Supreme Court’s decision lets stand the February ruling by the Second Circuit Court of Appeals, which rejected the private contractors’ unusual attempt to fight for government secrecy when the government itself had acceded to the court’s ruling, making it a decisive win. DWN and the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) first filed the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) litigation in 2013, looking to obtain information about the workings of the detention bed quota. This long-awaited decision was a victory for government transparency and will help us to advocate against the profiteering and perverse incentives of privatized immigrant detention.

And in September, in collaboration with the National Immigrant Justice Center, the National Immigration Law Center, United We Dream, and Women’s Refugee Commission we were able to disrupt ICE’s plan to conduct a massive nationwide raid. When we learned that ICE was planning “Operation Mega”—slated to apprehend 6,000-10,000 immigrants—we immediately developed a response plan. We established three goals: to disrupt ICE’s raid plans, to prepare affected communities, and to ensure that this was not successfully used as a justification for additional detention funding for FY18.

We released a press release and social media graphic, and within a few hours, a reporter at NBC obtained a memo substantiating the information. ICE then quickly announced that the operation had been postponed because of the hurricanes. While the operation was largely scaled back, we still developed a field strategy, in partnership with Mijente and the National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild (NIP-NLG). Nationally, the responses included filing Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests at all 24 ICE field offices with our members and allies, coupled with actions at ICE offices. ICE rejected these FOIA requests, so we, along with Mijente and NIP-NLG, filed a federal lawsuit in November against ICE and DHS for refusing to release information about the operation. This lawsuit is still pending, and we will continue to monitor and play an active role in supporting this legal effort.
DWN 2017 Expenses: $1,227,704

- Personnel: 52%
- Consultants: 13%
- Fees (fiscal sponsor and external): 4%
- Operating Costs: 6%
- Staff and Member Travel: 9%
- Member Support (trainings, convenings, Organizing Support Program): 16%

FUNDERS WHO MAKE OUR WORK POSSIBLE

Anonymous Foundations
Anonymous Individual Donors
David Rockefeller Foundation
Ford Foundation
Four Freedoms Fund
Oak Foundation
Open Society Foundation
DWN STAFF
Danny Cendejas, Organizing Director, Feven Ferai, Finance and Operations Associate, Bárbara Suárez Galeano, Organizer, Gabriela Marquez-Benitez, Senior Organizer, Aimee Nichols, Associate Director, Carly Pérez, Communications Director, Silky Shah, Executive Director, Mary Small, Policy Director

DWN STEERING COMMITTEE
Eunice Cho, Individual Member (WA)
Lauren Dasse, Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project (AZ)
Quyen Dinh, Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (DC)
PJ Edwards, Georgia Detention Watch (GA)
Romy Lerner, University of Miami School of Law Immigration Clinic (FL)
Jessica Shulruff Schneider, Americans for Immigrant Justice (FL)
Liz Sweet, Individual Member (DC)
Michael Tan, ACLU Immigrants’ Rights Project (NY)
Fred Tsao, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (IL)
DWN ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS: 2017—2018

ACLU Immigrant Rights’ Project
ACLU National Prison Project
Alianza Americas
American Friends Service Committee
American Gateways
American Immigration Council
American Immigration Lawyers Association
Americans for Immigrant Justice
Amnesty International USA
Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore
Catholic Legal Immigration Network
Center for Constitutional Rights
Chicago Religious Leadership Action on Latin America
Comite Popular Somos Raleigh
Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement
Comunidades Unidas en Una Voz
Congress of Day Laborers, New Orleans Workers Center for Racial Justice
Conversations With Friends
Cornell Law School, Asylum Convention Against Torture Appellate Clinic
Detained Migrant Solidarity Committee
El Refugio Ministry
Families For Freedom
First Friends of New York and New Jersey
Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Georgia Detention Watch
Grassroots Leadership
HIAS
Human Rights First
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Immigrant Defense Project
Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project
Immigrant Youth Coalition
Immigration Legal Resource Center
Immigration Task Force of Mission Presbytery
Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice
Interfaith Coalition on Immigration
Juntos
Just Detention International
La ColectiVa
Law Offices of Brelje and Associates, P.C.
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
Maria Baldini-Potermin & Associates, P.C.
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Law Center
National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild
National Religious Campaign Against Torture
New Sanctuary Coalition of NY
NWDC Resistance
Private Corrections Institute
Progressive Americans Action League
Public Counsel
Puente Arizona
Queer Detainee Empowerment Project
Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services
Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network
Shut Down Etowah
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center
Southeast Immigrant Rights Network (SEIRN)
Southern Poverty Law Center
Southern Poverty Law Center, Immigrant Justice Project
St. Louis Inter-Faith Committee on Latin America
Stanford Law, Immigrants’ Rights Clinic
Sureños en Acción
The Opportunity Agenda
UndocuBlack
University of Miami School of Law Immigration Project
Washington Defender Association Immigration Project
Women’s Refugee Commission
THANK YOU

To Our Members, Allies, Supporters and Friends

Your support makes it possible for the Network to advocate at the national level and to support our members working on the frontlines at the regional, state and local levels.

Thank you for your commitment to a more just world where human dignity is valued and the rights of all persons are respected.

DETENTION WATCH NETWORK (DWN)
is a national coalition of organizations and individuals working to expose and challenge the injustices of the United States’ immigration detention and deportation system and advocate for profound change that promotes the rights and dignity of all persons.

DWN ENVISIONS
• A world without immigration detention where every individual lives freely.
• A nation that fosters racial equality, values migration and honors family unity.
• A judicial system that promotes human rights and the dignity and due process rights of all persons.

1419 V St. NW  •  Washington DC 20009  •  www.detentionwatchnetwork.org