

# Human Rights First

## Discrimination, Detention, and Deportation: Immigration & Refugees

<https://www.humanrightsfirst.org/blog/pro-bono-stars-new-york-city-edition>

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Current Initiatives

As part of the American Bar Associations Celebrate Pro Bono Week, we are recognizing individuals with outstanding dedication to pro bono service as Pro Bono Stars. Today we highlight Molly Kammien, Noah Czarny, and Angela Urbano from Seward & Kissel LLP in New York.

Mr. W, an Ethiopian man, was discriminated against, enslaved, and tortured in Eritrea. When he sought asylum in the United States, he was locked up in a New Jersey immigration detention center. But last month, he finally walked free. He won his asylum case and release from detention. Molly Kammien, Noah Czarny, and Angela Urbano, all associates at Seward & Kissel LLP in New York, made that happen.

Mr. W was born in Ethiopia, but belongs to the Tigrayan minority ethnic group. The discrimination was so severe that it led to his family's exile from Ethiopia to Eritrea when he was a young child.

In Eritrea Mr. W was forcibly conscripted into the military, where he was forced to complete hard labor with no pay and in terrible conditions. He eventually became involved with an underground youth opposition network within the military camp. When the Eritrean military discovered his involvement, they imprisoned, tortured, and starved him. Mr. W managed to escape the prison and Eritrea, fleeing over land to Israel.

Mr. W. was never able to seek permanent protection in Israel, living under constant threat of deportation to Eritrea by the Israeli government. Eventually he fled to the United States, undertaking a six-month journey before reaching the United States southern border in search of safety. Immigration officials then sent him to detention. While there, Mr. W sought asylum with the aid of his pro bono attorney team from Seward & Kissel.

Molly, Noah, and Angela went to great lengths to ensure that the immigration judge had ample evidence to support Mr. W's claims and to demonstrate the great risk he would face if forced to return to Eritrea. This included finding experts on the conditions in Eritrea and one of the most repressive countries in the world and the obstacles to seeking permanent refugee protection in Israel. The team did all of this while their client was confined, unable to meet with them outside of the detention center or readily contact them.

After spending ten months in immigration detention, Mr. W. was released the night he was granted asylum in September 2016. Even then, his pro bono attorneys continued to go above and beyond finding their client a safe place to stay in New York City for a week before he relocated to Chicago to live with family and friends.

This commitment to their client and zealous representation make Molly, Noah, and Angela true Pro Bono Stars.

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