

BYU Law Students Help Migrant Women and Children in Texas

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Photo courtesy of The Source. [/caption]

Summary: A group from BYU Law heads to Texas during the fall and winter semesters to help immigrants apply for asylum.

Two professors at BYU Law are working to help detained refugees who had attempted to cross the US-Mexico border illegally. According to [The Daily Herald](#), the Utah-based university has an initiative where students can travel to Dilley, Texas to help migrant women and children who are seeking asylum.

"Most of the women I have met with made the decision to leave their countries really quickly," Carolina Núñez, the associate dean of research and academic affairs at the Brigham Young University J. Reuben Clark Law School, told the Daily Herald. "They are still traumatized."

Nunez and Professor Kif Augustine-Adams lead the Refugee and Immigration Initiative that began in 2016. The initiative sends students to Dilley for one week during the fall and winter semesters, and their most recent trip is set for this October.

BYU Law students help migrant women seeking asylum to prepare for their claims in immigration court. According to The Daily Herald, "The students do personal consultations and group discussions about the law in addition to anything from writing data entries, to writing briefs, to helping children while their mother recounts the violence she's attempting to escape from."

Augustine-Adams said that the law students use their legal education to serve others, and all participants undergo a background check with Immigration and Customs Enforcement before they're allowed to enter the facility. The students talk to the women being detained and they use the information they collect to help them build a case for asylum.

Most of the women at the Dilley center speak Spanish and they have varying degrees of education. Some of them have escaped domestic abuse, gang violence, sex slavery, and other forms of torture or violence.

"You know the more horrific the story the more likely this woman is going to meet the credible fear standard, and yet you wish that she didn't have to have that and the U.S. didn't require so much," Núñez said.

Last month, Attorney General Jeff Sessions said that the US was changing what qualified for asylum, showing a crackdown in immigration that was promised by President Donald Trump.

The BYU Law students use their communication skills to work with the women, but they are technically not allowed to represent them. Instead, they are there to accompany them in court and provide support.

Many of the BYU Law students who participate in the program return for several trips and some decide to go into immigration work after they graduate.

"Almost without exception, students say it changes their lives," Núñez said.

- [University of Wisconsin-Madison Law Students Helping Immigrants in Texas](#)
- [JD Journal Names Top Immigration Law Firms in New York](#)

What do you think of the US immigration policies? Let us know in the comments below.