



## **Paralegal/Accredited Representative Trainee**

*Bilingual Position*

Application Deadline: Rolling

The Migrant and Immigrant Community Action Project (MICA Project) is a community organization committed to working with low-income immigrants to overcome barriers to justice. The MICA Project utilizes legal services, organizing, advocacy, and education to promote the voice and human dignity of immigrant communities.

MICA Project staff approach our work as a team, supporting and assisting each other. We are passionate about our work and seek someone to join us in working toward our vision of a world that honors the dignity of all people.

### **Position Description:**

The Paralegal/Accredited Rep trainee works, under the supervision of attorneys, to support clients of the MICA Project in their applications for immigration benefits before USCIS and those facing removal proceedings in Immigration Court. This position is funded by the Illinois Access to Justice initiative and will focus on representing residents of Illinois. Furthermore, the goal of this position is to move quickly from a paralegal role to that of Department of Justice Accredited Representative. Training in preparation for and support throughout that process will be provided by the organization.

Cultural fluency is highly valued. Persons of color, persons with disabilities, and gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer individuals are encouraged to apply.

### **Essential Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Under the supervision of attorneys, prepare immigration forms, applications, and supporting documents;
- Assist with on-going communication with clients;
- Conduct intakes, by phone and in person, and interview clients to gather or clarify information;
- Work in collaboration with staff attorneys and accredited representatives;
- Work in collaboration with other staff members as needed;
- Participate in outreach and educational workshops;
- Translate documents;
- Establish, organize and maintain files;
- Review and edit documents for accuracy and completeness;
- Prepare and manage evidence requests and other mailings;

- Perform administrative tasks related to grant reporting and other requirements;
- Maintain a working knowledge of significant policies, laws and trends in immigration law, particularly as it impacts low-income immigrants;
- Supervise assigned volunteers and interns;
- Be responsible for ensuring strict client confidentiality;
- Maintain and establish relationships with community-based organizations, community partners, immigration service providers, policy/advocacy groups and coalitions relevant to the MICA Project's work;
- Ensure the avoidance of conflicts of interest. Generally, outside legal casework is prohibited, as it could lead to a conflict or give rise to a professional liability claim; and
- Other duties as assigned.
- Duties to shift upon receipt of accreditation to more direct legal work.

### **Qualifications:**

- **Language: Professional proficiency in Spanish and English reading, writing, and speaking required.** Will be evaluated at time of interview.
- Preparedness to apply for Partially Accredited Representative status in a timely manner. For more information, please see: <https://www.justice.gov/eoir/recognition-and-accreditation-program>
- Demonstrated commitment to advancing and defending immigrant rights and willingness to support MICA's mission, vision, and values.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, and ability to organize information in a clear and concise manner.
- Previous immigration law experience preferred.
- Previous work experience with trauma-informed approaches preferred.
- Lived experience in a multi-cultural setting or familiarity with different cultures, especially Latin America, is preferred.
- Demonstrated ability to effectively work with marginalized populations.
- Excellent verbal and interpersonal skills to effectively present information, respond to questions;
- Capacity to work both independently and as a member of a team in a fast-paced environment;
- Ability to take initiative and work under pressure.
- Ability to prioritize and manage multiple tasks simultaneously and meet deadlines;
- Strong collaboration and facilitation skills to establish and maintain good relationships with colleagues and partners.
- Strong organizational skills.
- Proficiency in use of web-based software, MS Word and MS Excel.
- Enthusiasm for working in a constantly changing atmosphere where quickly developing crisis situations are the norm rather than the exception.
- **Passion for social justice for immigrants.**

**Annual Salary & Benefits:**

Starting annual salary is \$52,000, with an increase upon accreditation. Starting annual salary is determined by our equity-based compensation plan (which includes additional compensation for experience) and thus is non-negotiable. Benefits include paid vacation leave and PTO, fully-covered, robust health and dental insurance coverage (with mental health parity), retirement account, and professional development opportunities. The organization will pay for any necessary training or ongoing education requirements for Accreditation.

**Application:**

Please send a cover letter, resume, and 2 references with contact information to [nicolecortes@mica-project.org](mailto:nicolecortes@mica-project.org). Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. Part of the interview will be conducted in Spanish.

