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Letter From the Editor

Brandon Bowers

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Brandon Bowers

2018]

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

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Dear Readers,

On behalf of the *University of Richmond's Public Interest Law Review*, I present to you the Symposium Edition of Volume XXI. We began our search in spring 2017 for a symposium topic by asking a simple question: "What public interest issue will society be talking about in the fall?" The 2016 Presidential election made immigration reform a hot-button issue that only gained steam with each passing month. We used the symposium as platform to educate the local legal community on the ever-changing immigration law landscape with hopes of alleviating the uncertainty surrounding federal policy changes.

I would like to thank our keynote speaker, Journalism Professor Shahan Mufti, for taking the time to kick off our symposium and for introducing our audience to his family, reminding them that we all started as immigrants at one point. I would also like to thank the rest of our speakers for helping us carry out an informative, well rounded discussion on immigration reform. I also want to thank the *Public Interest Law Review* staff, namely the symposium committee, for their hard work that resulted in the symposium being a huge success. Finally, I would like to thank you, the reader, and our legal community for coming out to support the symposium on that hot October day and for reading this edition.

We will begin the issue with a transcript of the symposium that took place on October 20, 2017. This is an opportunity for our readers to experience our symposium firsthand, starting with Professor Shahan Mufti's keynote address and ending with our panel on the life of an immigration attorney. For those who attended the symposium, this is a chance to relive the symposium.

Next, we have an article jointly written by one of our symposium lecturers, Professor Jason Cade from the University of Georgia School of Law, and Meghan Flanagan, a student of the law school. The article, entitled "Five Steps to a Better U: Improving the Crime-Fighting Visa," addresses the current issues surrounding U-Visas and proposed steps to improve the process around U-Visas.

After, Ashley Shapiro, an Immigration Resource Attorney for the Virginia Indigent Defense Commission, takes us on a journey exploring the impact of the word "illegal" when discussing immigrants. Her article, "The Criminalization of the Immigration System: The Dehumanizing Impact of Calling a Person 'Illegal'," takes a hard look at the negative stigma phrases like "criminal alien" and "illegal alien" carry which has carried over into our media and our laws.

Finally, we have a comment by one of *Public Interest Law Review*'s very own, Yanie Yuan. The comment, titled "The Unanswered Conundrum: Inconclusive Record and the Burden of Proof for Immigration Relief," tackles the recent Ninth Circuit Court decision, *Marinelarena v. Sessions*, that resulted in the removal of the appellant despite never being convicted of a crime. The comment examines the arguments made on both sides of the case as well as the judge's opinion.

We hope that you find this edition enlightening, encouraging you to engage the community so that you can help make a difference in the name of public interest.

Sincerely,

Brandon Bowers

Symposium Editor

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