

## For immediate release: Four Top Immigration Experts Join Cornell Law School as Distinguished Visiting Scholars and Academic Fellows

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Cornell Law School is pleased to announce that more top immigration experts have joined the [Immigration Law and Policy Research Program](#) focusing on migration and human right. [Amy Nice](#) and [Theresa Cardinal Brown](#) recently joined as visiting distinguished scholars, and Marielena Hincapié will start later this summer. [Dan Berger](#) was also appointed as a nonresident academic fellow in March. The new scholars and fellow join [Randel Johnson](#) and [Charles Kamasaki](#), the inaugural visiting distinguished scholars at the law school's immigration law and policy research program.

The visiting scholars and fellowship opportunities are awarded to exceptional immigration scholars, thinkers, public figures, policymakers, and advocates in immigration law.

*"We're delighted to welcome such an extraordinary group of advocates and leaders in the immigration field to the Cornell community. Amy, Theresa, Marielena, and Dan bring a tremendous wealth of knowledge and great insight on immigration policy issues,"* said Stephen Yale-Loehr, faculty director of the law school's immigration law and policy research program.

Read more about the new distinguished immigration scholars and academic fellow below.

### [Amy M. Nice](#)



[Amy M. Nice](#) has been an immigration lawyer for 35 years, with a broad range of experience in the private practice of immigration law (for more than 20 years) and in the policy realm (since 2010), primarily focused on employment-based immigration. She is a thought leader concerning STEM immigration and is relied upon for her creative, elegant, and practical solutions as well as deep, data-based research on all angles and perspectives of the immigration policy problems she tackles.

From June 2021 to January 2023, Nice served as an Assistant Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, responsible for leading efforts on STEM talent policy. Her policy efforts have also encompassed: supporting coalitions between academia and industry concerning high-skilled immigration during the Trump administration; serving during the last 16 months of the Obama administration at the Office of the General Counsel at DHS headquarters where she contributed to notice and comment rulemaking on such topics as STEM optional practical training; and before that, working as the Executive Director of Immigration Policy at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for almost five years where she primarily pushed legislative reforms, including involvement on S. 744, the bipartisan immigration reform bill that passed the U.S. Senate.

From October 1989 to December 2010, she practiced immigration law at the Washington, DC firm of Dickstein Shapiro, where she managed the immigration practice beginning in 1997. Nice is a Phi Beta Kappa, magna cum laude graduate of Tulane University, where she studied Medieval History, including one year studying abroad in England, and earned her law degree at George Washington University.

The American Immigration Lawyers Association recognized Nice's accomplishments and status as a thought leader with the Edith Lowenstein Memorial Award in 2023 for advancing the practice of immigration law. While her work primarily focuses on employment-based immigration, while in private practice Nice's awards included the Maryland Legal Services Corporation Herbert S. Garten Public Citizen Award in 2010 for assisting Catholic Charities and the Montgomery County (Maryland) Sheriff's Office in developing a domestic violence screening program (U visa, VAWA) at the Montgomery County Family Justice Center and the Immigrant Legal Resource Center Philip Burton Award in 2000 for pro bono assistance in naturalization policy.

## Theresa Cardinal Brown



Theresa Cardinal Brown is a senior advisor of immigration and border policy at the Bipartisan Policy Center and founder of her own consulting firm, Cardinal North Strategies, LLC. She has almost 30 years of experience in immigration law and policy serving in associations, federal government, think tanks, and the private sector.

Brown's career includes serving as director of immigration and border policy at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce; associate director of business immigration advocacy at the American Immigration Lawyers Association; and working in the immigration practices of large Washington, D.C.-based law firms. She also served as a director and of counsel at The Sentinel HS Group, LLC, a government contracting firm, before founding her own consultancy.

Her government career spanned the administrations of George W. Bush and Barack Obama. During the Bush administration, she was a policy advisor in the office of the commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection and was on Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff's Second Stage Review of USCIS. In 2005 and 2006, she became a member and later director of the Immigration Legislation Task Force in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Policy. She then served as the first DHS director of Canadian affairs, and subsequently as the first DHS attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa, continuing until she left government service in 2011.

Brown has done extensive media outreach, including appearances on CBS 60 Minutes, Fox News, NPR Morning Edition, PBS NewsHour, CNN International, CBC, and BBC World, and has been quoted in print publications including the Washington Post, New York Times, Bloomberg, Time Magazine, and USA Today.

Brown is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Delaware.

## Marielena Hincapié



Marielena Hincapié served as the executive director of the National Immigration Law Center (NILC) and the NILC Immigrant Justice Fund (IJF) until November 2022. She began her tenure at NILC in 2000 as a staff attorney, leading the organization’s labor and employment program. During that time, she successfully litigated law reform and impact litigation cases dealing with the intersection of immigration and employment/labor laws. She then served as NILC’s director of programs from 2004 to 2008, after which she became executive director. Under her leadership, NILC and the IJF strategically combined litigation, policy, communications, narrative change, and movement-building to effect transformational change.

Hincapié is a nationally respected leader, legal and political strategist in the social justice movement, and a leading voice in the national conversation on immigration. A seasoned strategist and bridge builder, she co-led the transformational Immigrant Movement Visioning Process, resulting in a long-term vision grounded in racial, economic, and gender justice and equity. She co-chaired the Biden-Sanders Unity Taskforce on Immigration, and helped lead the national conversation on the essential role immigrants play in shaping the future of the U.S. and safeguarding our democracy. She played a key role in supporting youth leaders in the creation and successful implementation of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and co-founded the Protecting Immigrant Families (PIF) coalition to address the chilling effect the public charge rule had on children and families needing health, nutrition, housing, and other safety net programs. She co-created the #ImmigrantsAreEssential cultural campaign, which won the 2021 Shorty Award for Best Integrated Campaign and the 2022 Gold Anthem Award Winner for Civil and Human Rights.

Before joining NILC, Hincapié worked for the Legal Aid Society of San Francisco's Employment Law Center, and previously served on the American Bar Association's Commission on Immigration, and the boards of Jobs with Justice, the Center for Law & Social Policy, and as founding Board President of the Indivisible Project. She currently serves as a member of the Board of Trustees for The David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

As an immigrant from Colombia, Hincapié brings a bilingual and bicultural perspective to her work in the for equity, justice, and democracy. She is sought out by the media and as a keynote speaker, including the New York Times, Washington Post, Univision, Telemundo, CNN, MSNBC, USA Today, and has given many keynotes, including as commencement speaker for the Roger Williams University Law School.

Hincapié has been recognized with numerous awards, including Univision's Corazón Award, UnidosUS and the Cesar E. Chavez Community Service Award by the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute, a Stanton Fellowship from the Durfee Foundation, and the National Public Service Award from Stanford Law School. Hincapié served as the Northeastern University School of Law Daynard Distinguished Visiting Fellow and the Practitioner-in-Residence at the Thelton E. Henderson Center for Social Justice at the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law.

Hincapié immigrated as a child from Medellín, Colombia, to Central Falls, Rhode Island, and grew up as the youngest in a family of 10 children. She earned her juris doctor degree from Northeastern University School of Law.

## [Dan Berger](#)



[Dan Berger](#) is a partner at the immigration law firm of Curran, Berger & Kludt in Northampton, MA and an Honorary Fellow of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys. He is on the Legal Advisory Board of the Presidents' Alliance on Immigration & Higher Education, on the Legal Advisory Council of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (bipartisan congressional adoption caucus), and a member of the USCIS Liaison Committee and the Afghanistan Task Force for the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA).

Berger is a frequent writer and speaker on immigration, including after the 2020 election for the Brookings Institute on recommendations for the Biden/Harris Administration and on strategies to support international entrepreneurs. He co-edited updated editions of *Immigration Options for Academics and Researchers* and the *International Adoption Sourcebook*, released in 2021. He also wrote an Issue Brief for the American Council on Education (ACE) after the 2016 election and was a co-author on a “Note” on immigration in 2017 for the National Association of College and University Attorneys (NACUA). Berger has been quoted in various media, including the *Atlantic Magazine*, *USA Today*, *Al Jazeera*, and the *Huffington Post*, and is an advisor for the American Immigration Council on their informational website on STEM immigration initiatives.

Berger has a particular focus on DACA and undocumented students, evaluating options for longer term status, including monthly sessions for students at [thedream.us](http://thedream.us) and the International Language Institute Free English Program. He is also an immigration law adviser on the use of DNA technology in immigration and co-authored a peer-reviewed article in *Science* on the use of DNA technology to address family separation at the border.

Berger developed his interest in immigration at Harvard University, where he studied immigration history and taught English to adult refugees. He graduated from Cornell Law School and has practiced immigration law for over 20 years.