

# **An Assessment of the Economic and Societal Impacts of Canal Alliance's Immigration Legal Services**



**A Report Prepared for:  
The Marin  
Community  
Foundation**

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# Canal Alliance's Immigration Legal Services Program

## A. Introduction

Founded in 1982, Canal Alliance's Immigration Legal Services program (CA-ILS) offers the only affordable, comprehensive immigration legal assistance available to very low-income immigrant families in the Canal district of San Rafael and other Marin County neighborhoods.

Representation by CA-ILS's advocates fulfills one of our society's most basic promises: *Equal Justice Under Law*. In the process, it saves dollars by reducing the incidence of domestic violence, and boosts the economy by securing higher wages for immigrants and increased tax revenues for state and local governments.

This report<sup>1</sup> describes the findings of an assessment of the economic and societal impacts of Canal Alliance's Immigration Legal Services, one of the three nonprofit organizations funded by the Marin Community Foundation. It summarizes the legal assistance provided by CA-ILS over the four-year period 2009-2012, the vital benefits received by clients seeking to stabilize their lives, and the economic impacts that ripple outward to benefit the entire Marin community.

## B. Legal Assistance Provided and Impacts on Clients

A major focus of the legal assistance provided by CA-ILS is the elimination of barriers to lawful permanent resident status, thereby leading to dramatic improvements in the lives of immigrants and their families.

The legal assistance provided by CA-ILS has the following goals:

- **Directly address the need for legal assistance and information** so that immigrants can secure lawful permanent resident status or become citizens.
- **Help immigrants more fully participate in civic activities, their own education, the local economy, and public services** so that

### *At a Glance:*

#### **Canal Alliance's Immigration Legal Services (CA-ILS) Program**

**Location:** San Rafael

**Client Services:** About 570 immigration matters (for example, applications for green cards) completed per year for low-income clients a year

**Legal Needs Addressed:**

- Work authorization
- U visas, which are available to unauthorized immigrants who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking, and other crimes.
- Naturalization legal assistance
- Family petitions and other immigration matters

**Staffing:** A total of 3 staff, including:

- One attorney
- One paralegal
- One legal assistant

**Services:**

- Legal advice, brief service, referrals
- Extended legal representation
- Educational materials and outreach

**Budget:** \$246,000 in 2012

**Web:** [www.CanalAlliance.org](http://www.CanalAlliance.org)

**Economic Impact, 2009 through 2012:**

- \$17.8 million in economic benefits and savings for clients and communities

<sup>1</sup> This report is excerpted and adapted from, "An Assessment of the Economic and Societal Impacts of Three Legal Services Programs Funded by the Marin Community Foundation – 2009 to 2012: Final Report, September 10, 2013," prepared for the Marin Community Foundation (MCF) by The Resource for Great Programs and available upon request from MCF.

they can make every possible effort to secure legal status and continue their lives here.

In the four years from 2009 through 2012, CA-ILS:

- **Obtained or maintained work authorization or green cards for 479 Marin County residents.** By providing expert legal assistance to immigrants navigating through the complex application process, CA-ILS enabled more than 85 percent of its clients to obtain approval of their applications filed with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), with the following outcomes:
  - **Higher incomes, better benefits.** Studies in California and elsewhere show that work authorization enables working immigrants to qualify for better paying jobs, some with benefits such as health care. CA-ILS enables its clients to become more productive, self-supporting members of the Marin County community.
  - **Family stability.** Authorization to live and work in the United States dramatically reduces the risk of sudden deportation and the shattering impacts of deportation on on families, employers, and the community.
  - **Safety net for vulnerable residents.** Authorization to live and work in the United States qualifies low-income people, older adults, people with disabilities, and children for critically needed public benefits such as health care, housing assistance, food stamps, and income support.
  - **Ability to petition for authorization of family members.** Once authorized, a lawful permanent resident (LPR) can apply for lawful permanent resident status for their spouse and unmarried children in the United States or abroad, extending the benefits of lawful immigrant status to encompass the entire family.
- **Obtained U visas and protection from domestic violence for 432 women.** Application for a U visa provides victims, their families, and the larger community with the following outcomes:
  - **Protection from abusers.** U visa status provides legal protection, as well as a work permit and eligibility for certain public benefits. Together, these critical resources allow victims to become independent from their abusers and begin new lives for themselves and their children.
  - **An end to the cycle of violence for children.** By removing children from a violent environment, CA-ILS reduces the likelihood these children will grow up to be victims or perpetrators of violence in the future.

### Escaping Fear, Starting a New Life

“**Martita**,” her husband, and their two children left Mexico for the United States in search of a better life.

Once settled in Marin County as an unauthorized immigrant, Martita then decided to confront her husband’s longstanding pattern of physically abusing her. Martita was directed by friends to Canal Alliance, where an advocate helped her file a police report and obtain a restraining order against her husband.

Safe from further harm, Martita began attending a domestic violence support group offered by Canal Alliance. Meanwhile, Canal Alliance’s immigration legal services team helped Martita and her two children obtain a “U” visa, which is available to unauthorized immigrants who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking and other crimes.

The U visa enabled Martita to find a better job and provide for her family. In three more years, she will be eligible to apply for permanent residence in the United States.

Now divorced, Martita reports that she is in a stable relationship with a man who respects her. She is looking forward to becoming a permanent U.S. resident so that she can visit her mother and siblings in Mexico.

- **Reduced costs.** By protecting victims from domestic violence, CA-ILS reduces the need for additional resources from the rest of the Marin County community to provide medical care, counseling, law enforcement, and other services to victims and their children. It helps children to perform better in school and have basic needs met, such as nutrition and preventative health care, enabling them to become productive, self-sufficient members of the community.
- **Enabled 155 Marin County residents to become U.S. Citizens.** By helping residents file their applications for citizenship, CA-ILS helped clients achieve the following outcomes:
  - **Pride of being a citizen.** Naturalized citizens can vote, hold public office, and travel freely around the world with the same status and security as a native-born citizen of the United States.
  - **Greater participation in the civic life of the community.** With the security afforded by citizenship, immigrants show higher levels of engagement in public activities in school, work, and community-based organizations than green card holders and much higher rates of engagement than unauthorized immigrants.
  - **Eligibility to bring family members into the United States.** With citizenship, immigrants can unify their families, expanding the benefits of legal immigration to their parents and children after, what for many may have been, years of separation.
- **Achieved a very high success rate.** Through careful analysis of each client's situation and individually tailored legal assistance in completing the application forms, CA-ILS advocates estimate they are able to achieve approval rates of 80 to 95 percent by USCIS of the applications that are filed.<sup>2</sup>

## The Economic and Social Trauma of Deportation

Alexis Molina was just 10 years old when his mother was abruptly cut out of his life and his carefree childhood unraveled overnight.

Gone were the egg-and-sausage tortillas that greeted him when he came home from school, the walks in the park, and the hugs at night when she tucked him into bed. Today the sweet-faced boy of 11 spends his time worrying about why his father cries so much, and why his mom can't come home.

"She went for her papers," he says. "And she never came back."

Alexis' father, Rony Molina, who runs a small landscaping company, was born in Guatemala but has lived here for 12 years and is an American citizen. Alexis and his 8-year-old brother, Steve, are Americans, too. So is their 19-year-old stepsister, Evelin. But their mother, Sandra, who lived here illegally, was deported to Guatemala a year and a half ago.

"How can my country not allow a mother to be with her children, especially when they are so young and they need her," Rony Molina asks, "and especially when they are Americans?"

It's a question thousands of other families are wrestling with as a record number of deportations means record numbers of American children being left without a parent. And it comes despite President Barack Obama's promise that his administration would focus on removing only criminals, not breaking up families even if a parent is here illegally.

Nearly 45,000 such parents were removed in the first six months of this year, according to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

*Helen O'Neill, "U.S.-Born Kids Of Deported Parents Struggle As Family Life Is Destroyed,"  
Huffington Post, August 25, 2012*

<sup>2</sup> In the past two years, CA-ILS has begun to receive feedback from USCIS on the approval status of applications filed with the program's assistance, so more reliable figures on approval rates will be available in the near future.

Other examples of societal and economic (non-quantifiable), but highly significant results, flowing from CA-ILS’ legal services include the following:

- **Reduced risk of deportation for breadwinners.** (Please see “*The Economic and Social Trauma of Deportation* on the previous page.) By helping immigrants achieve authorized status, CA-ILS reduces the likelihood of shattering economic and social impacts that result from parents and breadwinners being deported, often without warning – an event similar to a fire or flood that leaves families destitute and totally dependent on charity and emergency assistance.
- **For the community, a more stable workforce and reduced drain on state and county budgets.** By helping hundreds of immigrants to achieve authorization to live and work in the United States, CA-ILS fosters a more stable workforce for employers and contributes to the independence and economic sustainability of working immigrant families.

### C. Economic Impacts of Canal Alliance’s Immigration Legal Services

As indicated above, a major focus of the legal assistance provided by CA-ILS is the elimination of barriers to lawful permanent resident status, thereby leading to dramatic improvements in the lives of immigrants and their families. While many of the benefits of becoming a lawful permanent resident are intangible – for example, the peace of mind that comes from knowing one no longer lives under the cloud of imminent deportation – several others are quantifiable. In the aggregate, they are significant.

As summarized in **Exhibit 1** below, Canal Alliance ILS generated \$17.8 million in economic impacts over the four-year period from 2009 through 2012.

#### **Exhibit 1** **Economic Impacts of Canal Alliance’s** **Immigration Legal Services (CA-ILS) Program**

Summary of Economic Benefits and Savings	Impact, Millions
<b>I. Estimated Direct-Dollar Benefits for Clients</b>	<b>\$8.4</b>
<i>A. Wage Impacts of Authorization</i>	<i>\$4.2</i>
<i>B. Wage Impacts of Naturalization</i>	<i>\$0.8</i>
<i>C. Public Benefits</i>	<i>\$3.4</i>
<b>II. The Economic Multiplier Effect</b>	<b>\$3.9</b>
<b>III. Increased Tax Revenues for State &amp; Local Governments</b>	<b>\$3.4</b>
<b>IV. Estimated Cost Savings - Prevention of Domestic Violence</b>	<b>\$2.1</b>
<b>Total Economic Impact (Sum of Lines I through IV)</b>	<b>\$17.8</b>

The major components of this total were the following:

**1. Wage Impacts of Work Authorization: \$4.2 million**

When an immigrant receives authorization to work legally in the U.S., his or her employment prospects become significantly better, and the immigrant's wages reflect this fact. One's ability to get a decent job improves, and the chances of being exploited by an unscrupulous employer decreases.<sup>3</sup>

Studies in California and elsewhere have quantified the impact of work authorization. One study (highlighted in **Exhibit 2** on the next page) by Manuel Pastor and Justin Scoggins, et al., which focused on Latino immigrant workers in 14 occupation categories in California, found that the wages earned by authorized immigrant workers were 9.5 percent higher than those of unauthorized immigrant workers, controlling for differences in human capital characteristics and specific jobs.<sup>4</sup>

This means that workers in the kinds of entry-level jobs held by the low-income immigrants who became authorized with the help of CA-ILS received wages that were approximately \$1,350 per year higher on average than their unauthorized counterparts having the same skills and performing the same jobs.<sup>5</sup>

As will be shown later in this section, this helps not only the worker but the entire community and the state when the worker spends this wage differential in the community and his employer sends the full amount of taxes due to the state rather than pocketing them as off-the-books profits.

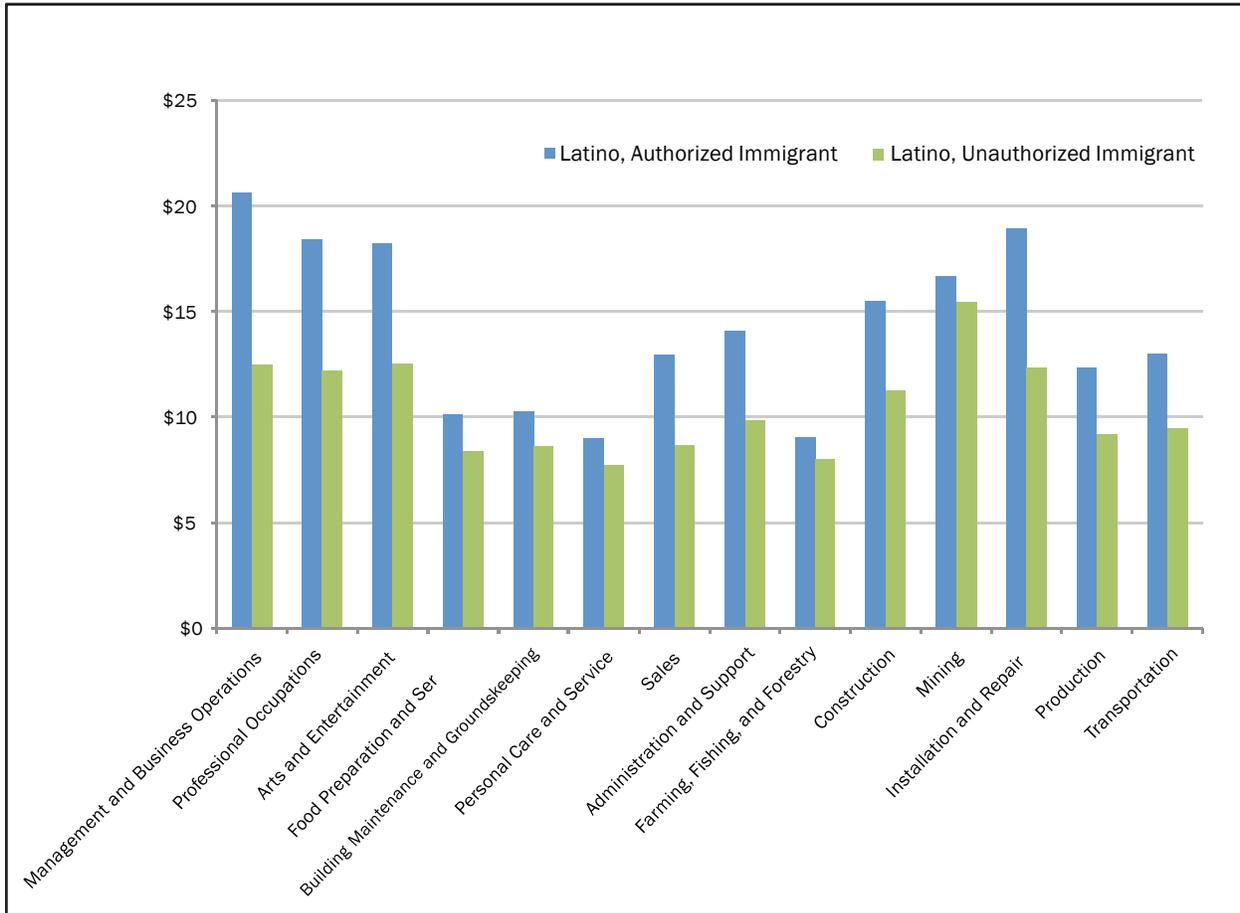
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<sup>3</sup> Source: Telephone interview, February 7, 2013, with Eric Cohen, Executive Director of the Immigrant Legal Resource Center and author of *Naturalization and U.S. Citizenship: The Essential Legal Guide for Legal Practitioners*.

<sup>4</sup> Source: Pastor, Scoggins, Tran and Ortiz, "The Economic Benefits of Immigrant Authorization in California," Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration, University of Southern California (USC), 2012, page 1.

<sup>5</sup> In our analysis, we applied the 9.5 percent differential to the median wages reported by Pastor, et. al. for two occupational categories typically occupied by unskilled workers such as those served by CA-ILS: building maintenance/grounds-keeping, and personal care/services. This computation produced a range between \$.73 and \$.82 per hour, translating to an average annual wage differential of \$1,278 to \$1,435.

## Exhibit 2 The Wage Impact of Authorization in California<sup>6</sup>



**Quantifying the wage impact of CA-ILS’ legal services:** For purposes of our analysis, we assumed that once CA-ILS clients received authorization to live and work legally in the U.S., they were able to get a better job – for example, they gained the freedom they needed to move from an unscrupulous employer paying low wages “off the books” to a job with a legitimate employer paying market wages and adhering to legal requirements for tax withholding and reporting. To estimate the aggregate economic impact of the 9.5 percent wage differential across the total number of clients served by CA-ILS, we applied that percentage to the average wages earned by unauthorized immigrants working in job categories that are typical of those held by the low-income immigrants who comprise the bulk of CA-ILS’ client population, as follows:<sup>7</sup>

- For men, we applied the 9.5 percent differential to the median wage found by Pastor, et.al. for unauthorized Latino workers in the “building maintenance and grounds-keeping” occupational category – \$8.61 per hour – to derive a wage differential of

<sup>6</sup> Source: Pastor, Scoggins, Tran and Ortiz, *ibid*.

<sup>7</sup> This was a conservative approach, focusing on the impact on workers occupying the bottom end of the wage scale. The average wage impact is likely somewhat higher inasmuch as some unauthorized immigrants served by CA-ILS are, in fact, working in occupations where the average wage is higher than those we selected.

\$1,435 per year.<sup>8</sup> This would be the wage impact experienced by a typical worker in the landscaping industry, a common occupation of unskilled, unauthorized immigrant men in the communities of Marin County.

- For women, we applied the 9.5 percent differential to a median wage of \$7.72 per hour for unauthorized Latino workers in the “personal care and services” occupational category to derive a wage differential of \$1,278 per year.<sup>9</sup> This would be the wage impact experienced by a typical person working as a hotel housekeeper or childcare helper, common occupations of unskilled, unauthorized immigrant women in Marin County,
- We conservatively assumed that the duration of the wage impact would be five years.<sup>10</sup>

Application of these assumptions produced the result that our estimated net present value of the wage impact in 2012 was \$4.2 million. **Exhibit 3** on the next page shows the details of this calculation.

A key element of our analysis was the use of “net present value” as the measure of total impact. Net present value is the value today of a stream of income that will occur in the future. Our premise was that by helping a client to submit a successful application for lawful permanent resident status, CA-ILS enabled the client to receive not just a one-time benefit, but a stream of higher income lasting for at least five years. For example, in our analysis, a male immigrant worker receiving a work permit during the study period 2009 through 2012 would, in effect, receive a \$1,435 “bonus payment” for each of the five years following his authorization. The net present value of these future payments to be applied in the year of a client’s authorization would be five times \$1,435, or \$7,175.<sup>11</sup> As summarized in **Exhibit 3**, on the next page, the sum of all net present values received by CA-ILS clients who achieved authorization over the study period was \$4.2 million.

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<sup>8</sup> This calculation assumes the worker was employed for 50 weeks, 35 hours per week for a total of 1,750 hours per year.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> The assumed duration of five years is extremely conservative inasmuch as the average age of an unauthorized immigrant is 32 years, giving authorized workers another 33 years to enjoy the wage differential before reaching the age of 65. Moreover, once immigrants obtain work permits, they are likely to remain in the United States for much longer periods than unauthorized immigrants, and five years is an extremely low figure to assume for the length of their stay. The term of a work authorization (green card) is 10 years before renewal, so the filings of the program for authorization during the study period 2009 through 2012 were assumed to be virtually all new applications.

<sup>11</sup> Present value computations typically require an estimate of the interest rate earned by an investment. We have assumed a net interest rate of zero; that is, wage earners would spend their wages as soon as received, rather than investing them and earning interest. Moreover, we assumed that the wage differential would remain constant in real-dollar terms over the five years of assumed duration; that is, their wages would keep up inflation (i.e., the inflation rate to be applied in the net present value computation would be zero).

## Exhibit 3

### Estimated Wage Impact of Authorization for CA-ILS Clients

Estimated Wage Impacts of Authorization	
<b>1. Number of Immigrants Who Received Authorization:</b> Number of CA-ILS clients who achieved authorization in the 4-year period 2009-2012 as a result of CA-ILS' legal assistance (see Note 1)	
A. Through family based permanent resident filings:	184
B. Through U visa filings:	410
C. Through renewals of Temporary Protected Status (TPS):	295
<b>D. Total who received authorization ("1.A" + "1.B" + "1.C"):</b>	<b>889</b>
<b>2. Impact on Working Immigrant Women</b>	
A. Number of the total in line 1.d who were female (see Note 2):	631
B. Percentage of authorized immigrant women who are employed (see Note 3):	61%
C. Number of employed women who received authorization ("2.A" x "2.B"):	385
D. Assumed differential in average annual wages between unauthorized and authorized female immigrant workers (see Note 4):	\$1,278
<b>E. Estimated annual wage impact for women ("2.C" x "2.D"), millions:</b>	<b>\$0.49</b>
<b>3. Impact on Working Immigrant Men</b>	
A. Number of the total in line 1.d who were male ("1.D" minus "2.A"):	258
B. Percentage of authorized immigrant men who are employed (see Note 5):	94%
C. Number of employed men who received authorization ("3.A" x "3.B"):	242
D. Assumed differential in average annual wages between unauthorized and authorized male immigrant workers (see Note 4):	\$1,435
<b>E. Estimated annual wage impact for men ("3.C" x "3.D"), millions:</b>	<b>\$0.34</b>
<b>4. Total Estimated Annual Wage Impact ("2.E" + "3.E"), Millions:</b>	<b>\$0.83</b>
<b>5. Assumed Duration of Wage Impact in Years (see Note 6):</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Estimated Net Present Value of Wage Impact ("4" x "5"), Millions:</b>	<b>\$4.2</b>

**Note 1:** The program's case tracking data system was used to determine the actual number of applications that were filed by the program on behalf of clients. Based on the intake experience and professional judgment of program advocates, the rate of acceptance by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) of filings prepared by the program was assumed to be 85 percent for family LPR applications, 95 percent for U visa applications and 100 percent for TPS applications.

**Note 2:** The percentage of unauthorized immigrants who are female was reported to be 46 percent in Furtuny, Capps and Passel, "The Characteristics of Unauthorized Immigrants in California, Los Angeles County, and the United States"; The Urban Institute, 2007; Table 9.

**Note 3:** Source: Furtuny, Capps and Passel, Table 9 - see Note 2 above.

**Note 4:** Source: Pastor, Scoggins, Tran and Ortiz, "The Economic Benefits of Immigrant Authorization in California", 2012. That study found an average wage differential between unauthorized and authorized immigrant workers to be 9.5 percent controlling for human capital and other characteristics. To estimate the impact for men we applied the differential to the average wage for unauthorized Latino immigrants working in California's "Building Maintenance and Groundskeeping" industry. To estimate the wage impact for women we applied the differential to the average wage for unauthorized Latino immigrants working in California's "Personal Care and Service" industry. We assumed the workers were employed 35 hours per week, 50 weeks per year, or 1,750 hours per year. The figures are in 2009 dollars and were not adjusted for inflation.

**Note 5:** Source: Furtuny, Capps and Passel, Table 9 - see Note 2 above.

**Note 6:** The duration of the wage impact of authorization was assumed to be five years. This is a conservative assumption considering that at least one author has argued that a time horizon of 20 years should be applied, based on the fact that most unauthorized immigrant workers are young and are likely to stay in the United States throughout their working lives once achieving authorized status.

## 2. Wage Impacts of Naturalization: \$0.8 million.

When an immigrant moves from lawful permanent resident status to citizenship, studies indicate there is a further increase in his or her earning potential. A 2012 study by Manuel Pastor and Justine Scoggins indicates that naturalized citizens will earn 5.6 percent more within one to two years after naturalization than they were earning before, controlling for human capital characteristics (such as English language proficiency or educational attainment) and type of job, and that differential will continue to increase after naturalization as the immigrant gains experience over time.<sup>12</sup>

**Exhibit 4** on the next page summarizes our computation of the net impact of this wage differential achieved by clients as a result of naturalization legal assistance they received from CA-ILS. A total of 155 clients achieved citizenship over the study period between 2009 and 2012. Based on the findings of Pastor and Scoggins, we assumed conservatively that the annual wages of these clients increased by 5 percent after naturalization compared with their earnings as authorized immigrants.<sup>13</sup> We applied this differential to the same categories of workers as we used previously in estimating the wage impacts of authorization; for men, we applied the five-percent differential to the median wages of authorized Latino workers in the “building maintenance and grounds-keeping” employment category, and, for women, we applied the five-percent differential to Latino workers in the “personal care and services” employment category.

An important assumption we applied in our estimation procedure was that this wage differential would last at least 10 years.<sup>14</sup> With this assumption, the net present value of the wage differential would amount to 10 times the annual impact (\$0.08 million), or \$0.8 million.<sup>15</sup> We believe that this is an extremely conservative approach inasmuch as the average age of people at naturalization is 42 years, giving naturalized workers more than 23 years to receive the wage differential before reaching a retirement age of 65. Naturalized citizens are much more likely to stay in the United States for the remainder of their working lives than are non-citizen lawful permanent residents, so, in reality, it is highly likely that the clients served by CA-ILS will continue to receive the higher wages they earn as citizens long after the 10 years assumed in our calculations.

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<sup>12</sup> Source: Pastor and Scoggins, “Citizen Gain: The Economic Benefits of Naturalization for Immigrants and the Economy;” Center for Immigrant Integration, University of Southern California (USC), December 2012, Figure 2.

<sup>13</sup> Thus, we rounded down the 5.6 percent, first-two-years-after-naturalization figure found by Pastor and Scoggins in their 2012 study.

<sup>14</sup> Recall that we assumed a shorter duration - five years - in computing the net present value of the wage differential for authorization – see Exhibit 3. This also was a very conservative assumption, but reasonable considering the greater likelihood that non-citizen immigrants will move back to their native country at some point in the future than will naturalized citizens.

<sup>15</sup> See page 7 of this report for further information about our use of “net present value” as the measure of economic impact for this study.

## Exhibit 4

### Estimated Wage Impacts of Naturalization for CA-ILS Clients

Estimated Wage Impacts of Naturalization	
<b>1. Number of Immigrants Who Received Citizenship:</b> Number of CA-ILS clients who achieved citizenship in the 4-year period 2009-2012 as a result of CA-ILS' legal assistance (see Note 1)	
<i>A. Total applications for citizenship filed (see Note 1):</i>	182
<i>B. Estimated acceptance rate - percent of applications that are approved (see Note 2):</i>	85%
<b>C. Estimated number who naturalized ("1.A" x "1.B"):</b>	<b>155</b>
<b>2. Impact on Working Immigrant Women</b>	
<i>A. Number of the total in line 1.C who were female (see Note 2):</i>	79
<i>B. Percentage of authorized immigrant women who are employed (see Note 3):</i>	59%
<i>C. Number of employed women who received citizenship ("2.A" x "2.B"):</i>	47
<i>D. Assumed differential in average annual wages between unauthorized and authorized female immigrant workers (see Note 4):</i>	\$735
<b>E. Estimated annual wage impact for women ("2.C" x "2.D"), millions:</b>	<b>\$0.03</b>
<b>3. Impact on Working Immigrant Men</b>	
<i>A. Number of the total in line 1.C who were male ("1.C" minus "2.A"):</i>	76
<i>B. Percentage of authorized immigrant men who are employed (see Note 5):</i>	84%
<i>C. Number of employed men who received authorization ("3.A" x "3.B"):</i>	64
<i>D. Assumed differential in average annual wages between unauthorized and authorized male immigrant workers (see Note 6):</i>	\$823
<b>E. Estimated annual wage impact for men ("3.C" x "3.D"), millions:</b>	<b>\$0.05</b>
<b>4. Total Estimated Annual Wage Impact ("2.E" + "3.E"), Millions</b>	<b>\$0.08</b>
<b>5. Assumed Duration of Wage Impact in Years (see Note 7):</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Estimated Net Present Value of Wage Impact ("4" x "5"), Millions</b>	<b>\$0.8</b>

**Note 1:** Source: program's case tracking data system.

**Note 2:** Estimate by program based on intake experience and professional judgment of advocates.

**Note 3:** Source: Furtuny, Capps and Passel, "The Characteristics of Unauthorized Immigrants in California, Los Angeles County, and the United States"; The Urban Institute, 2007; Table 9. This table shows the characteristics of foreign-born citizens, legal non-citizens and unauthorized immigrants.

**Note 4:** Source: Furtuny, et. al., Table 14.

**Note 5:** Source: Pastor and Scoggins, "Citizen Gain: The Economic Benefits of Naturalization for Immigrants and the Economy." To estimate the wage impact for men we applied the differential to the median wage for Latino immigrants working in California's "Building Maintenance and Groundskeeping" industry. To estimate the wage impact for women we applied the differential to the median wage for Latino immigrants working in California's "Personal Care and Service" industry. According to Pastor and Scoggins., the wage impact of going from authorized immigrant to citizen status is 4.5 percent of median wages of these workers. We assumed the workers were employed 35 hours per week, 50 weeks per year, or 1,750 hours per year. The figures are in 2009 dollars and were not adjusted for inflation.

**Note 6:** Source: Furtuny, et. al., Table 14.

**Note 7:** The duration of the wage impact of naturalization was assumed to be ten years. This is extremely conservative inasmuch as the average age of people at naturalization is 42 years, giving naturalized workers more than 23 years to receive the wage differential before reaching a retirement age of 65. Naturalized citizens are much more likely to stay in the United States for the remainder of their working lives than are non-citizen legal permanent residents.

### 3. Public Benefits for Authorized Immigrants: \$3.4 million

**Exhibit 5** (below) summarizes the major public benefits for which the immigrants served by CA-ILS become eligible once they become authorized or apply for a U visa.

Immigrants who are not authorized to live and work legally in the U.S. qualify for only the most basic humanitarian services, such as treatment for serious injuries or illness at emergency medical facilities. Authorized immigrants, on the other hand, qualify for a larger umbrella of public services and benefits when they experience the challenges of illness, disability, age, or poverty. The benefits for which they qualify are shown in **Exhibit 5**.

As a matter of public policy, this umbrella acknowledges the significant contributions that immigrants are making to the well-being of the community as a whole by working, paying more taxes<sup>16</sup>, and supporting the local economy through spending of their earnings. CA-ILS helps to implement this policy by helping immigrants who meet eligibility criteria to overcome the significant hurdles presented by the complex application process for immigrant authorization.

In addition to the value of these public benefits in providing a safety net for vulnerable members of the Marin community, these benefits return state tax revenue to the county that otherwise would go elsewhere and generate revenue and jobs for Marin communities through the economic multiplier effect (which is discussed in greater detail later in this section).

#### Exhibit 5 Eligibility for Public Benefits of Canal Alliance ILA Clients Who Receive Authorization

	Cash Assistance for Immigrants (CAPI)	FOOD (SNAP, CalFresh, CFAP, WIC)	CalWORKs	Adult Health (Medi-Cal, etc.)	Child Health (CHDP, etc.)
Key: ● = Eligible for program					
<b>A. Clients Who Received Family Based Lawful Permanent Resident Status</b>					
Seniors:	●			●	
Low-income disabled adults:	●	●		●	
Low-income households with children:		●	●	●	●
Low-income adults - No children, not seniors, not disabled:				●	
<b>B. Clients Who Applied for U Visas</b>					
Applicants - all family types:	●	●	●		
Applicants with children:				●	●
Applicants without children:				●	
<b>C. Clients Who Renewed TPS Status</b>					
Seniors:	●				
Low-income disabled people:	●				
Low-income households with children:			●	●	●
Low-income adults - No children, not seniors, not disabled:					

**Source of Information:** Distilled by the authors from "Major Public Benefits Available to Immigrants In California;" National Immigration Law Center, 2011; available at [http://www.nilc.org/bens\\_table.html](http://www.nilc.org/bens_table.html).

For purposes of our analysis, we applied the following assumptions:

- **We assumed that the demographic characteristics of CA-ILS clients tracked those of immigrants in California as a whole.** We applied data from a variety of available

<sup>16</sup> The Urban Institute has estimated that 55 percent of unauthorized immigrant workers pay taxes, whereas the compliance rate for authorized immigrants is close to 100 percent – see Note 4 in Exhibit 8.

studies for estimating key factors such as the percentage of CA-ILS clients whose incomes fell within the eligibility guidelines of various benefit programs.

- **We assumed that CA-ILS clients utilized benefits at the same rates as immigrants do nationally.** For example, we applied the findings of a national study of utilization rates as a measure of the percentage of eligible immigrants who actually applied for, and received, specific public benefits for which they became eligible as a result of moving from unauthorized to authorized status.<sup>17</sup>
- **We applied a conservative assumption regarding how long recipients received public benefits.** Since data were not available regarding the average duration of most benefits (CalWORKs was the exception), we applied a conservative estimate of 24 months for each of the public benefits considered in this analysis. As with our analysis of the wage impact of authorization (see earlier in this section), we used “net present value” as the measure of total impact. Our premise was that clients received not just a one-time benefit but a stream of benefits lasting for an average of two years.

**Applying these assumptions, we estimated that public benefits generated from 2009 through 2012 CA-ILS cases totaled \$3.4 million.** Exhibit 6 on the next page shows the results of applying the above assumptions to the outcomes of CA-ILS’ legal assistance.

**Moreover, we found that the public benefits received by immigrants as a result of the work of CA-ILS are more than covered by the increased tax revenues produced by this same work.** As discussed later in this section (see page 15), our estimate of the tax impacts of authorization and naturalization – which include increased tax revenues on the higher earnings of authorized immigrants and naturalized citizens, as well as higher tax compliance by the employers of those workers – totaled \$3.4 million into state and local government budgets, roughly equal to the \$3.4 million paid out in the form of public benefits.

This finding should reassure those who might fear that the authorization and naturalization work of CA-ILS might generate an unfair burden for citizens by increasing the demand for public services from previously unauthorized immigrants. At the same time, other economic impacts of CA-ILS’ work, such as the increased purchasing power resulting from the higher wages of clients, tend to reduce the need for, and thus the cost of, public assistance.

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<sup>17</sup> Source: Ku and Bruen, “The Use of Public Assistance Benefits by Citizens and Non-citizen Immigrants in the United States,” The CATO Institute, 2013. Ku and Bruen based their findings on information in the March, 2012 Current Population Survey. More specific data on rates of utilization of public benefits by immigrant residents of Marin County proved not to be available from records kept by the Marin County Department of Health and Human Services.

## Exhibit 6

### Estimated Public Benefits Generated from 2012 Cases of Canal Alliance's Immigration Legal Services (CA-ILS) Program

	Total Number of CA-ILS Cases 2009-2012 (See Notes 1 and 2)	Number of Households, by Benefit Program, for which ILS Clients Are Eligible (See Note 3)					TOTAL
		Cash Assistance for Immigrants (CAPI)	FOOD (SNAP, CalFresh, CFAP, WIC)	CalWORKs	Adult Health (Medi-Cal, etc.)	Child Health (CHDP, etc.)	
<b>A. Clients Who Received Family Based Lawful Permanent Resident Status</b>							
<b>Total clients who became authorized - all income levels:</b>	<b>184</b>						
Low-income seniors:	0						
Low-income disabled adults:	2	2	2		2		
Low-income households with children:	56		56	56	56	56	
Low-income adults without children - not seniors, not disabled:	58				58		
Other clients, none of the above:	68						
<b>B. Clients Who Applied for U Visas</b>							
<b>Total applicants:</b>	<b>432</b>	432	432	432			
Applicants with children:	88				88	88	
Applicants without children:	344				344		
<b>C. Clients Who Renewed TPS Status</b>							
<b>Total clients who become authorized - all income levels:</b>	<b>295</b>						
Low-income seniors:	0						
Low-income disabled people:	2	2					
Low-income households with children:	56			56	56	56	
Low-income adults without children - not seniors, not disabled:	58						
Other clients, none of the above:	179						
<b>D. Total Eligible for Program &gt;&gt;</b>		<b>436</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>200</b>	
<b>E. Assumed Utilization Rate - Percent of eligible beneficiaries who apply and are accepted for benefit (see Note 4):</b>		<b>3%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>49%</b>	
<b>F. Average Benefit per Household per Month (see Note 5):</b>		<b>\$634</b>	<b>\$151</b>	<b>\$634</b>	<b>\$532</b>	<b>\$85</b>	
<b>G. Average Duration of Benefit in Months (see Note 6):</b>		<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	
<b>Estimated Total Benefits ("D" x "E" x "F" x "G"), Millions:</b>		<b>\$0.2</b>	<b>\$0.7</b>	<b>\$0.3</b>	<b>\$2.0</b>	<b>\$0.2</b>	<b>\$3.4</b>

**Note 1:** Source of figures for numbers of cases completed: program's case management system.

**Note 2:** The percentages of clients who fell into the demographic categories in sections "A," "B," and "C" were estimated from Fortuny, Karina, et. al., "The Characteristics of Unauthorized Immigrants in California, Los Angeles County, and the United States," The Urban Institute, 2007.

**Note 3:** Assumptions regarding eligibility for specific programs were derived by the authors from "Major Public Benefits Available to Immigrants In California," National Immigration Law Center, 2011; available at [http://www.nilc.org/bens\\_table.html](http://www.nilc.org/bens_table.html).

**Note 4:** The assumed utilization rates (which include the percentage of eligible people who apply for benefits and their success rate in having their applications accepted by the relevant agency) were derived by the authors from data presented in Ku and Bruen, "The Use of Public Assistance Benefits by Citizens and Non-citizen Immigrants in the United States," The CATO Institute, 2013.

**Note 5:** The figures used for the average benefits per household were derived from Ku and Bruen, cited in Note 4.

**Note 6:** The average duration of Cal-WORKs is 24 months, according to Caroline Danielson in "California's Welfare Recipients: Family Circumstances, Income, and Time on Aid among CalWORKs Families," Public Policy Institute of California, May 2012, available on the web at [http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R\\_512CDR.pdf](http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_512CDR.pdf). This same figure was assumed for other programs in this analysis, for which figures on average duration of benefits were not available.

This result – a net positive impact on state and local government budgets – is a consequence of the extremely low rates of utilization by immigrants of public benefit programs for which they are eligible. (Please see line "E" in **Exhibit 6**, above.) An analysis of the most recent U.S. Census data by the CATO Institute, published in 2013 (from which we derived the assumptions about utilization rates we used in our analysis), indicates that low-income non-citizen immigrants, including adults and children, are generally less likely to receive public benefits for which they are eligible than those who are native-born.

Moreover, when non-citizen immigrants receive benefits, the value of benefits they receive is usually lower than the value of benefits received by those born in the United States.<sup>18</sup>

Our finding is consistent with other recent studies of the economic impacts of immigrant authorization. Researchers at Harvard Medical School, for example, found in a study released in 2013 that immigrants contributed about \$115 billion more from their paychecks to the Medicare Trust Fund than they took out over a seven-year period in the same decade.<sup>19</sup>

Indeed, the low utilization rates of public benefits by noncitizen immigrants is a problem needing to be addressed in light of the intent of the public policies that made authorized immigrants and the children of unauthorized immigrants eligible for these benefits in the first place. Immigration legal services can help to achieve the intent of these policies by helping more immigrants to receive the benefits for which they are eligible.

#### D. “Economic Multiplier Effect” on the local economy: \$3.9 million

Every dollar brought into Marin County from *outside the county* as a result of CA-ILS’ services and operations circulates 1.16 times before leaving the county, providing revenue for local businesses and supporting jobs for working Marin County residents.<sup>20</sup>

**The estimated multiplier effect generated from 2009 through 2012 CA-ILS cases totaled \$3.9 million. Exhibit 7** below shows the results of applying the multiplier effect calculation to the outcomes of CA-ILS’ legal assistance.

### Exhibit 7 Economic Multiplier Effect from 2009 through 2012 Cases of Canal Alliance’s Immigration Legal Services (CA-ILS) Program

Economic Multiplier Effect	
1. Public benefits received by authorized immigrants in Marin County, millions ( <i>see Note 1</i> ):	\$3.4
2. Economic multiplier for Marin County - Dollars circulating in local economy per dollar brought in from the outside:	1.16
3. Total economic multiplier effect ("1" x "2"), millions:	\$3.9
<b>Total Impact of Dollars from Outside Marin County, 2009-2012, Millions:</b>	<b>\$3.9</b>

**Note 1:** See Exhibit 36 for computation of amount of public benefit dollars flowing into Marin County from outside. No distinction is made between federal and state dollars for this computation - for example, the share of Medi-Cal payments that are reimbursed to the state by the federal government via the "FMAP Percentage."

<sup>18</sup> Source: Ku and Bruen, “The Use of Public Assistance Benefits by Citizens and Non-citizen Immigrants in the United States,” The CATO Institute, 2013; see Abstract.

<sup>19</sup> See “Immigrants Subsidize Medicare Recipients, Study Says,” in *USA Today*, May 29, 2013.

<sup>20</sup> For a further description of the multiplier effect, see page 17 of the full report on the study on which this analysis is based, page 17. (See the citation to the full report in the footnote on page 1.)

The economic multiplier effect means that tax dollars sent to Sacramento and Washington, D.C., by Marin County residents – immigrants and non-immigrants alike – are returning to the community. In returning, those tax dollars help not only the Marin residents for whom public benefits were intended, but also the local economy where the money is spent and circulates. As the money is spent and churns in the local economy, it benefits non-immigrant business owners, workers, health care organizations, and other service providers who experience higher demand for their goods and services, and higher revenues as a result. In this way, the positive economic impacts of CA-ILS’ work are being felt not only by those who directly receive services, but by the entire Marin community.

#### E. Impacts on California Tax Revenues for State & Local Governments: *\$3.4 million*

**Exhibit 8** (next page) shows the details of our computations. The dollars generated by CA-ILS in the form of higher wages for immigrants (the “wage impact” of authorization and naturalization) and revenues brought into Marin County from outside the county circulating in the local economy (the “multiplier effect”) have a direct impact in the form of higher tax revenues generated for the state of California. These, in turn, help to offset state expenditures on public benefits, roads, schools, and other services enjoyed by everyone in the community as employees, business operators, parents, students, and other California residents.

In the case of newly authorized workers, not only do they pay higher taxes as a result of the wage impact, but studies indicate that a higher percent have income taxes withheld from their paychecks as a result of working for legitimate employers who comply with tax withholding requirements, as opposed to unscrupulous employers who pay substandard wages “under the table.”<sup>21</sup>

Moreover, regardless of authorization status, immigrants pay state and local taxes, both directly and indirectly, when they spend their wages on food, gas, rent, and other essentials.

In our analysis, we applied the average state and local tax burden on California residents (11.2 percent) to make an order-of-magnitude estimate of the tax impact of the increase in earnings of CA-ILS’s clients and the higher compliance with tax withholding requirements by their employers.

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<sup>21</sup> The Urban Institute has estimated that 55 percent of unauthorized immigrant workers pay taxes, whereas the compliance rate for authorized immigrants is close to 100 percent – see Note 5 in Exhibit 8.

## Exhibit 8

### Tax Revenues Generated from 2009 through 2012 Cases of Canal Alliance's Immigration Legal Services (CA-ILS) Program

<b>Tax Revenues for State and Local Governments</b>	
<b>A. Tax Impacts of Wage Increases for Authorized and Naturalized Workers</b>	
1. Wage impact of authorization - estimated total differential in wages received by clients after successful filings for authorized status, millions (see Note 1):	\$4.2
2. Wage impact of naturalization - estimated total differential in wages received by clients after successful filings for citizenship status, millions (see Note 1):	\$0.8
3. Total increase in immigrant earnings ("A.1" + "A.2"), millions:	\$5.0
4. Average state and local tax burden (see Note 2):	11.2%
<b>5. Increase in state and local tax revenues due to increased immigrant earnings ("A.3" x "A.4"), millions:</b>	<b>\$0.7</b>
<b>B. Tax Impacts of Dollars Circulating in the Community Due to the Multiplier Effect</b>	
1. "Multiplier Effect" - estimated total dollars circulating in the local economy as a result of revenues brought in from the outside, millions (see Note 3):	\$3.9
2. Average state and local tax burden (see line A.4 above):	11.2%
<b>3. Increase in state and local tax revenues due to multiplier effect ("B.1" x "B.2"), millions:</b>	<b>\$0.4</b>
<b>C. Impacts of Higher Tax Compliance by Employers of Authorized Immigrants</b>	
<b>1. Taxes paid by employed CA-ILS clients prior to authorization</b>	
<b>a. Earnings of women</b>	
(1) Number of employed women served by CA-ILS in analysis period 2009-2012:	438
(2) Average hourly wage before authorization (see Note 4):	\$7.72
(3) Total annual earnings ("C.1.a.1" x "C.1.a.2" x 1,750 hours per year), millions:	\$5.92
<b>b. Earnings of men</b>	
(1) Number of employed men served by CA-ILS in analysis period 2009-2012:	242
(2) Average hourly wage before authorization (see Note 4):	\$8.63
(3) Total annual earnings ("C.1.b.1" x "C.1.b.2" x 1,750 hours per year), millions:	\$3.7
<b>c. Total annual earnings ("C.1.a.3" + "C.1.b.3"), millions:</b>	<b>\$9.6</b>
d. Percent of tax liability actually paid by unauthorized workers via withholding by employers (see Note 5):	55%
e. Average state and local tax burden (see line A.2 above):	11.2%
<b>f. State &amp; local taxes collected on wages of unauthorized workers ("C.1.c" x "C.1.d" x "C.1.e"), millions:</b>	<b>\$0.59</b>
<b>2. Taxes paid annually by employed CA-ILS clients after authorization (see Note 1):</b>	
a. Percent of tax liability actually paid by authorized workers (see Note 5):	100%
<b>b. State &amp; local taxes collected on workers' wages at higher compliance rate ("C.1.c" x "C.2.a" x "C.1.e"), millions:</b>	<b>\$1.07</b>
<b>3. Annual increase in taxes due to differential in tax compliance ("C.2.b" minus "C.1.f"), millions:</b>	<b>\$0.48</b>
<b>4. Duration of increase assumed for net present value computation in years:</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5. Increase in Taxes due to differential in tax compliance by employers of CA-ILS clients served in 2009-2012 ("C.3" x "C.4"), millions:</b>	<b>\$2.4</b>
<b>Total Increase in Tax Revenues (sum of "A.5," "B.3," and "C.5"), Millions:</b>	<b>\$3.5</b>

**Note 1:** See the total wage impacts of authorization and naturalization, Exhibits 33 and 34.

**Note 2:** Source: "California's State and Local Tax Burden, 1997-2010;" The Tax Foundation, data published on the web at <http://taxfoundation.org/article/californias-state-and-local-tax-burden-1977-2010>.

**Note 3:** See the total economic multiplier effect, Exhibit 37.

**Note 4:** Source: Pastor, Scoggins, Tran and Ortiz, "The Economic Benefits of Immigrant Authorization in California", 2012. For male workers, we used the median wage figures cited for Latino immigrants working in California's "Building Maintenance and Groundskeeping" industry. For women we applied the median wage figures cited for Latino immigrants working in California's "Personal Care and Service" industry.

**Note 5:** Researchers from the Urban Institute, the Migration Policy Institute, the Pew Hispanic Center, and the Center for Immigration Studies have assumed a 55 percent compliance rate for income, Social Security, and Medicare taxes by unauthorized immigrants, according to the Congressional Budget Office - see "The Impact of Unauthorized Immigrants on the Budgets of State and Local Governments," CBO, 2007, page 6. For authorized workers, we have assumed the same high level of compliance as native workers - 100 percent. See Passel and Clark, "Immigrants in New York: Their Legal Status, Incomes and Taxes;" The Urban Institute, 1998, page 18.

<b>Tax Revenues for State and Local Governments</b>	
<b>A. Tax Impacts of Wage Increases for Authorized and Naturalized Workers</b>	
1. Wage impact of authorization - estimated total differential in wages received by clients after successful filings for authorized status, millions (see Note 1):	\$4.2
2. Wage impact of naturalization - estimated total differential in wages received by clients after successful filings for citizenship status, millions (see Note 1):	\$0.8
3. Total increase in immigrant earnings ("A.1" + "A.2"), millions:	\$5.0
4. Average state and local tax burden (see Note 2):	11.2%
<b>5. Increase in state and local tax revenues due to increased immigrant earnings ("A.3" x "A.4"), millions:</b>	<b>\$0.6</b>
<b>B. Tax Impacts of Dollars Circulating in the Community Due to the Multiplier Effect</b>	
1. "Multiplier Effect" - estimated total dollars circulating in the local economy as a result of revenues brought in from the outside, millions (see Note 3):	\$3.9
2. Average state and local tax burden (see line A.4 above):	11.2%
<b>3. Increase in state and local tax revenues due to multiplier effect ("B.1" x "B.2"), millions:</b>	<b>\$0.4</b>
<b>C. Impacts of Higher Tax Compliance by Employers of Authorized Immigrants</b>	
<b>1. Taxes paid by employed CA-ILS clients prior to authorization</b>	
<b>a. Earnings of women</b>	
(1) Number of employed women served by CA-ILS in analysis period 2009-2012:	438
(2) Average hourly wage before authorization (see Note 4):	\$7.72
(3) Total annual earnings ("C.1.a.1" x "C.1.a.2" x 1,750 hours per year), millions:	\$5.92
<b>b. Earnings of men</b>	
(1) Number of employed men served by CA-ILS in analysis period 2009-2012:	242
(2) Average hourly wage before authorization (see Note 4):	\$8.63
(3) Total annual earnings ("C.1.b.1" x "C.1.b.2" x 1,750 hours per year), millions:	\$3.7
<b>c. Total annual earnings ("C.1.a.3" + "C.1.b.3"), millions:</b>	<b>\$9.6</b>
d. Percent of tax liability actually paid by unauthorized workers via withholding by employers (see Note 5):	<b>55%</b>
e. Average state and local tax burden (see line A.2 above):	11.2%
<b>f. State &amp; local taxes collected on wages of unauthorized workers ("C.1.c" x "C.1.d" x "C.1.e"), millions:</b>	<b>\$0.59</b>
<b>2. Taxes paid annually by employed CA-ILS clients after authorization (see Note 1):</b>	
a. Percent of tax liability actually paid by authorized workers (see Note 5):	<b>100%</b>
<b>b. State &amp; local taxes collected on workers' wages at higher compliance rate ("C.1.c" x "C.2.a" x "C.1.e"), millions:</b>	<b>\$1.07</b>
<b>3. Annual increase in taxes due to differential in tax compliance ("C.2.b" minus "C.1.f"), millions:</b>	<b>\$0.48</b>
<b>4. Duration of increase assumed for net present value computation in years:</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5. Increase in Taxes due to differential in tax compliance by employers of CA-ILS clients served in 2009-2012 ("C.3" x "C.4"), millions:</b>	<b>\$2.4</b>
<b>Total Increase in Tax Revenues (sum of "A.5," "B.3," and "C.5"), Millions:</b>	<b>\$3.4</b>

**Note 1:** See the total wage impacts of authorization and naturalization, Exhibits 3 and 4.

**Note 2:** Source: "California's State and Local Tax Burden, 1997-2010," The Tax Foundation, data published on the web at <http://taxfoundation.org/article/californias-state-and-local-tax-burden-1977-2010>.

**Note 3:** See the total economic multiplier effect, Exhibit 7.

**Note 4:** Source: Pastor, Scoggins, Tran and Ortiz, "The Economic Benefits of Immigrant Authorization in California", 2012. For male workers, we used the median wage figures cited for Latino immigrants working in California's "Building Maintenance and Groundskeeping" industry. For women we applied the median wage figures cited for Latino immigrants working in California's "Personal Care and Service" industry.

**Note 5:** Researchers from the Urban Institute, the Migration Policy Institute, the Pew Hispanic Center, and the Center for Immigration Studies have assumed a 55 percent compliance rate for income, Social Security, and Medicare taxes by unauthorized immigrants, according to the Congressional Budget Office - see "The Impact of Unauthorized Immigrants on the Budgets of State and Local Governments," CBO, 2007, page 6. For authorized workers, we have assumed the same high level of compliance as native workers - 100 percent. See Passel and Clark, "Immigrants in New York: Their Legal Status, Incomes and Taxes," The Urban Institute, 1998, page 18.

## F. Cost Savings from reductions in domestic violence: \$2.1 million

Over the four-year period from 2009 through 2012, Canal Alliance ILS assisted 432 women and their families to apply for U visas, which are available to unauthorized immigrants who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking, and other crimes.<sup>22</sup>

The U visa is the centerpiece of an array of services offered by Canal Alliance that afford not just immediate legal protection to domestic violence victims, but also crucial resources enabling survivors to achieve independence from their abusers and build new lives as productive contributors to the Marin community as a whole. (See “*Escaping Fear, Starting a New Life*,” page 2.) Not only are these outcomes extremely beneficial in a broad social context, they also have important economic consequences in terms of reducing the costs imposed on taxpayers and the community as a result of domestic violence.

Many of the economic costs of domestic violence are unquantifiable – especially long-term impacts borne by the victim and her children as a result of the physical and emotional trauma that can impair performance in school, on the job, and in relationships for a lifetime. Yet even the cost savings that are immediate and quantifiable add up to a substantial amount.

**The estimated cost savings generated from 2009 through 2012 CA-ILS U visa cases totaled \$2.1 million. Exhibit 9** (on the next page) shows the computations used to derive this estimate.

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<sup>22</sup> Virtually all CA-ILS’ U visa filings are based on domestic violence; the other categories rarely apply to the clients seeking CA-ILS’ help.

**Exhibit 9**  
**Estimated Cost Savings Generated from 2009 through 2012 U Visa Cases of Canal Alliance's Immigration Legal Services (CA-ILS) Program**

<b>Estimated Cost Savings - Reducing Domestic Violence</b>	
<b>A. Impact of U Status Filings</b>	
1. Number of U status applications approved (see Note 1):	432
2. Percentage of the above cases in which domestic violence was a major issue (See Note 2):	99%
3. Number of cases in which DV was a major issue ("A.1" x "A.2"):	428
4. Percentage of applications that were approved (see Note 2):	95%
5. Number of cases for which client received protection from DV ("A.3" x "A.4") (see Note 3):	407
<b>B. Cost Savings Achieved</b>	
1. Average cost per year of medical treatment, counseling, police protection and other support per DV victim (see Note 4):	\$5,193
2. Annual savings from prevention of DV ("A.5" x "B.1"), millions:	\$2.1
<b>Total Estimated Savings from Prevention of Domestic Violence, Millions:</b>	<b>\$2.1</b>

**Note 1:** Source: Program's case tracking data system.

**Note 2:** Estimate by program based on intake experience and professional judgment of advocates.

**Note 3:** The assumed impact on DV is based on the premise that U status provides both legal protection to the victim and a work permit and/or financial support (from public benefits for which she is eligible) that enables the victim to live on her own, independent of the abuser.

**Note 4:** To estimate this impact, we applied the results of national studies cited in a 2011 analysis in New York in which we were engaged. Those studies provided the basis for an estimate of annual direct costs of medical care and lost wages for victims, counseling for affected children, police resources, and incarceration of abusers. To err on the conservative side, they did not include costs such as emergency housing which were not addressed in the national studies on which the estimate was based. We adjusted the average impact per case derived in our New York analysis to allow for the differential in costs relevant to treatment of domestic violence victims in California versus New York.

To estimate this impact, we applied the results of national studies cited in a 2011 analysis in New York in which we were engaged. We adjusted the average impact per case derived in that analysis to allow for the differential in costs relevant to treatment of domestic violence victims in California compared to the United States as a whole, to produce an estimate of annual direct costs such as medical care, lost wages, counseling for affected children, police resources, and incarceration of abusers.

This analysis indicated that the average savings from protecting a victim from domestic violence in Marin County for a period of one year was \$5,200.

## G. The “Justice Gap:” *A Disparity Between the Legal Needs of Low-Income Immigrants in Marin with the Capacity That Exists to Meet Them.*

Previous sections of this report have documented the economic and societal benefits that result from the legal assistance provided by Canal Alliance’s Immigration Legal Services program for low-income immigrants in Marin County. Legal assistance strengthens Marin County’s families by reducing the incidence of domestic violence, and it boosts the economy by securing higher wages for immigrants and increased tax revenues for state and local governments.

CA-ILS could do even more to benefit families and the local economy if it had the resources to address more than just a fraction of the legal need that exists.

Over the four years covered in this report, Canal Alliance ILS handled 2,782 matters – approximately 700 per year. With 14,000 unauthorized immigrants residing in the county, CA-ILS’ output represents approximately 5 percent of those who potentially need its services each year.<sup>23</sup> These numbers suggest that many low-income immigrants who are eligible for Canal Alliance’s specialized legal assistance are either unaware of those resources or face substantial barriers in accessing them. This is exacerbated by a shortfall in the resources that are available to CA-ILS and its minimal staff of three, comprised of just one attorney, one paralegal, and one legal assistant.

This disparity between legal needs and the capacity to address them – the “justice gap” – represents both a challenge to the justice system and a unrealized opportunity for the funders and partners of CA-ILS to produce even more profound economic and societal benefits for low-income Marin County immigrants and the entire community – as demonstrated in the previous sections of this report – through expansion of their support for this clearly effective program.

## H. Conclusion

This analysis has shown that Canal Alliance’s Immigration Legal Services program, with support from the Marin Community Foundation and other funders and partners, is providing essential services that help thousands of low-income immigrants in Marin County to create a better future – and in the process, to make a measurably stronger contribution to the entire community.

By helping immigrants apply for U-visas, CA-ILS’ legal advocates enable families to rebuild their lives after falling victim to domestic violence, sexual assault, and other crimes.

By helping clients secure authorization and naturalization, CA-ILS’ legal advocates promote higher wages for the immigrant workers and their families who make such an important contribution to Marin’s economy. And authorization qualifies the most vulnerable – especially domestic violence victims, children and people who are disabled – to apply for and receive the public benefits they need to rebuild their lives.

As shown by this analysis, these public benefits are more than paid for by the increased tax revenues to state and local governments that flow out of the increased wages and spending generated by the economic consequences of CA-ILS’ work.

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<sup>23</sup> For details on this computation, see the Justice Gap analysis conducted for Marin County, excerpted here from: “An Assessment of the Economic and Societal Impacts of Three Legal Services Programs Funded by the Marin Community Foundation – 2009 to 2012: Final Report, September 10, 2013,” prepared for the Marin Community Foundation (MCF) by The Resource for Great Programs and available upon request from MCF.

The results achieved by CA-ILS in 2009-2012 provide compelling evidence that additional investments aimed at bridging the “justice gap” will not only help many more immigrants, it will have dramatic economic and societal impacts that spread far beyond those directly served, to provide important benefits touching the entire Marin community.