

Giving Done Right Season 5, Episode 5 - A Defining Moment for Democracy: Angelica Salas on the Immigration Crisis

Angelica Salas [00:00:02] We have to step into our courage, step into our abilities and the power we do have, understanding that we don't have all the control. But there are things we can control, and that which we can, like giving, is something that is so supportive.

Grace [00:00:19] Welcome to Getting Done Right, I'm Grace Nicolette.

Phil [00:00:21] And I'm Phil Buchanan

Grace [00:00:26] Today, our guest is Angelica Salas, Executive Director at LA's Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights, or CHIRLA for short. CHIRLA is a nonprofit organization founded in 1986, and it's been serving and protecting the rights of the immigrant community in California since that time. We invited Angelica on the show because of her decades-long advocacy of immigrant organizing and her insights on the targeting and terrorizing of many immigrant communities during this time. Welcome, Angelica.

Angelica Salas It's wonderful to be here with you and thank you for the invitation.

Phil [00:00:55] Yeah, thanks for being here, Angelica. It's hard to put into perspective what we're seeing happen in these recent months in terms of ICE raids that are increasingly brazen, the funding of ICE to levels that are far beyond what you can even get your mind around, the lack of due process in terms of some of the raids that are being carried out and the detention of people. You're in the middle of it all. I guess I just want to dive right in and ask you, what are you seeing? How do you assess what's happening around us right now?

Angelica Salas [00:01:36] Well, I think that what I am seeing is a complete disregard for the humanity of a people who have contributed, who are contributing to this country and to their city, to the state, but who have families where people who are loved, who are working to provide for those families and also whose labor advances the economy of this region, the state and this country. So, a complete ignoring um the needs of and the humanity of these individuals. And I saw that start in early January when the fires were raging here in Los Angeles. And right before the fires, just a couple of days before, you had the beginning of these raids in the Central Valley of California. In any other time when there is a natural disaster, there is... a policy, there was a policy that said no immigration enforcement is going to happen when there's a natural disaster, a humanitarian crisis, because the most important thing is to ensure that individuals would get the assistance that they needed. And so right away I saw the shift, which was enforcement happening at the same time that we have this natural disaster occurring. And so in that time what I saw was a lot of fear from the community to seek shelter even as they were being evacuated from their homes. A lot of fear to seek support and help because of a lot of the rhetoric at that time that was coming from the administration and all the executive orders that were targeting the immigrant community. And then the enforcement just continued in a targeted way at first. A lot of times going to people's homes, seeking to arrest them, but then people exercising their constitutional rights and asking for judicial warrants and not letting agents into their homes or in their neighborhoods. And I think that that's really what prompted, I think, the shift that happened here in Los Angeles which was, okay, we're now going to ignore the Constitution and the rights that individuals have and now we're going to not go to homes, but actually go directly to the streets and create these roving patrols that were then arresting and detaining individuals without warrants, and really utilizing racial profiling

as a means by which to arrest individuals. So a total disregard. And then I wanna just say excessive use of force because I don't think we speak of this enough, which is it's not just arresting individuals and detaining them and denying them their due process, but in the process of arresting the individuals, actually beating them up and mistreating them in horrific ways.

Phil [00:04:21] It is hard to process, uh, what we have seen and hard to process the lawlessness of it all, the disregard for constitutional rights, which have long been understood to apply to anybody in this country, regardless of their citizenship. Can you help us understand a bit Angelica about what you and your organization are doing to counter these forces?

Angelica Salas [00:04:50] So as soon as the election was over, we knew that this administration was serious about their mass deportation promises, knowing what they had done in the first administration family separation. We took the threats of this mass deportations very seriously. So we did two important things. The first one was we reactivated our Raids Rapid Response Network. This is a regional wide response network that includes now over 60 organizations. It includes over 1,500 volunteers. At that time, we started with 300 volunteers. We're now many more people engaged in that. But at that time we reactivated and we started training individuals around constitutional rights. And really what the Rapid Response Network does is it responds to an enforcement activity. It documents whether the activity did happen because it's important to get accurate information to the community. And if it didn't happen, we let people know. Actually, it was a false alarm or maybe it was another agent's law enforcement agency, it wasn't immigration. But if it did happen, we also let them know what happened there. And our purpose is also to get to the site, document what occurred, most importantly document who got arrested, wait there to talk to family members who usually arrive or eyewitnesses, and then quickly get legal support to those individuals. At the federal building or B18, which is the main processing center here in Los Angeles. This is what we had done in the past. Immigration enforcement, unfortunately, has continued in this country, but I don't think we were prepared at all to understand the scale of enforcement that we were gonna see. So that's the first thing we did. So activate a rapid response network, our coalitions, our volunteers, and then also fortify our ability to provide these legal services. It's also creating a legal. A rapid response connected to our documentation process. We also worked very closely with our elected officials at the state level to get additional resources for legal representation and to, again, to support additional capacity. It was supposed to be a special, well, there was a special session and then very quickly trying to get those dollars out. Unfortunately, government moves slow and it took a while for that to happen. The other thing that we also did, was we brought together a coalition, which includes immigrant rights, community-based organizations, labor leaders, and also faith leaders together, so that we would be working in a coordinated response throughout this entire process. And that has been so significant, that we were preparing and working together to do both the advocacy that we needed to do in order to ensure our elected officials worked with us and coordinated with us. In responding to our community, that we were able also to be public in our activities, whether it's, you know, mobilizations and be responsive in that way too. And then of course, that we responded directly to enforcement. And so we've been meeting in our labor community table every two weeks since November. And I think that's been so important because it has helped us quickly adapt to the changing circumstances, understand how things are changing. The scale of the attack and then adapt ourselves to respond in that way. Immediately we also have, as part of the rapid response network is, a hotline. And so that hotline now is used by the entire region to report when there's enforcement. But I think just as important, it's a hotline for family members to call in when

their family members have been detained so that they can access the legal resources and any other resources that are available for the family.

Grace [00:08:43] So once they tap into some of the legal help that you provide, what has generally happened? Like, are they able then to go free or are you seeing people really kind of being disappeared into the system?

Angelica Salas [00:08:55] Well, first of all, we had to actually do a lot of impact litigation, which is something that I think is really important as well. That is part of our strategic response. We knew that we were going to have to go into court to affirm rights. And so one of the things that we quickly found out is that we are being denied access to provide the supports that were available. So we had 10, 15 lawyers outside waiting to see individuals who had been detained and not being allowed inside the processing centers, or even in the detention centers. That took us some time to even get access, but it took a court order to open up access for individuals to get those services. So family members had called, co-workers had called about the individual names of people who were being detained, and yet we could not talk to them. First, we realized the number one thing, and this was the reason we used disappeared so much, is we couldn't find them. We couldn't find them in the system. So many people are being detained that often it takes quite a while to even put them into the system. And then once we found them, it didn't necessarily mean that they were going to be in Los Angeles, even though they were arrested in the Los Angeles or Southern California region. We suddenly found them in Arizona. We found them in Texas. We found them in Washington state. We have one gentleman who was taken from Adelanto to Santa Ana, California. Then he was sent to Washington State, New York, Miami. And then back to Arizona. And so just the individuals being moved from detention center to detention center against something we had just not experienced or seen before. And usually it was individuals who had been here in this country for the longest, who were the people who would also have the support. You know, they're the individuals who would have more family connections and were more rooted. These are the individuals who've been here for more than 20 years. They have family. And we started noticing that these are the individuals who usually were the ones who were being taken out of state and making it more difficult to access family and access legal counsel. CHIRLA was part of a collective lawsuit to seek access to individuals so that they could have access to counsel. And so we got a temporary restraining order on that count because it was very evident that it was very purposeful, this lack of access. The other thing that I think is important in terms of your question. Are people getting out? Immediately, as soon as we were getting more access to them to then provide them legal intakes and provide them with legal counsel, we started getting denials of their bonds. And so an individual who has been here for more than two years has access to go before a judge and be able to ask that they be released as they're fighting their case through a bond and this is something that we have in our court system, and yet we were being systematically denied bonds. And so we went back to court on this, and now we're starting to slowly see our ability to get people out on bond. The bonds are a significant amount, like \$5,000, sometimes \$10,000. But pay those bonds, get people back to their families, and fight their case from home, as opposed to in detention centers. And then the other thing that I think is important for you to know is that the detention center conditions are horrible, and also the processing centers where people are first picked up... We have horrible stories, but verified stories of individuals who are sleeping on the floors, just basically getting chips and water for food, people who are in their soil clothes for days on end, who are chained up and can't go to bathrooms. I mean, the kind of things that we are witnessing and are seeing. Are things that we would write about happening in other countries. We've always thought, you know, this is a country that follows due process with all our issues as a country, but this is something that is pretty

profound, disturbing, and we're fighting back. So as CHIRLA and as part of our Rapid Response coalition and network, we're finding back in every way we can. Documenting the abuses, fighting individually case by case but also in a collective way by going to federal court presenting our evidence and asking the courts to support us in stopping the federal government from continuing their lawlessness.

Grace [00:13:26] Immigration was an issue that President Trump obviously ran on. And I think he thinks he has a mandate for a lot of these actions. There's been a lot of discussion about how voters responded to the messages that fear mongered about unbridled immigration. What do you see as the best way to build a broader coalition of Americans that understand that having immigrants is, is good for America and we should really care about what's happening to the undocumented? Like, what would you say? Because obviously, oftentimes it's this, well, you know, he had a mandate thing is kind of pulled out. I don't think that he had it mandate to be lawless, but it does seem like this value of deportations is, you know, superseding a lot of the rule of law. So what would say about this whole idea that he has a mandate?

Angelica Salas [00:14:19] I think that the first thing is for us to answer who are we as a country. And I think that we are a country born first in indigenous land, but from that also a country born from migration and immigration and immigration from all over the world. And so we have to answer for ourselves, how are we going to manage that migration and our identity as a nation of immigrants? And I think that what this administration is saying is we are no longer that, we are no longer a nation of immigrants. And we're going to, number one, seal our borders to people who are seeking refugee status or asylum status. That was one of the first things that occurred. And I think it's important that we were always so proud to be a country that actually was open to others who came here because they were fleeing political persecution, war. We were a place of refuge. So the first thing that happened, it was a refugee ban. So individuals who were in mid-air to come into the country were suddenly denied access. We worked directly with asylum seekers who were coming in from Venezuela, Central America, from all over the world, because there is a crisis, a global crisis of war, of political instability, and people continue to see the United States as a place where they can build a new life. The American dream and all the things that we put out into the world about who we are. That too was sealed off. And so my perspective, whether Republican or Democrat, is that I think that our government is having a hard time managing migration in a global reality where you have so many people who have to leave their home country, who are forced to migrate. And so what are our responses as governments and I think that there is honestly incompetence in dealing with that migration. And instead of saying actually we don't have the modern solutions to deal with the wars that we know are happening, the persecution that we do know is occurring of people, whether it's in the African continent, right now when you think about what's happening in the war with Ukraine and Russia, many of the people we received are Ukrainian, of what happened in Afghanistan. And so the result is migration. But instead of saying we need to challenge ourselves for better solutions, we then punish the immigrant community, the individual who's seeking refuge. And then in the United States, now domestically, we have not changed our immigration laws for 40 years. We haven't provided a path to citizenship to individuals who are present. The Center for Migration Studies now states that as of 2023 there were 14 million people living in this country who have undocumented status with the majority of them having lived in this county for over 20 years. We haven't resolved the situation of our individuals who came in, who came in as children and the deferred action for childhood arrivals or DACA. So we haven't dealt with the statuses of these individuals. So now you have a president who has determined that number one, we're no longer a nation of immigrants. And if we are a nation of immigrants,

we're only gonna welcome white immigrants. Very, very clearly, I mean, by actions and by words, this is the policy. And so it's rejecting a multiracial America. And then on the other hand, then punishing individuals who have only worked and contributed over all these years and not dealing with that solution. I've been working on this for now 30 years. There's always been this idea of this balanced approach, you know, enforcement and access to legal status. What we're seeing now is that there is definitely not a balanced approach. A huge imbalance where you now have \$170 billion committed to enforcing the law, to detaining, deporting, and rejecting people from coming in. And yet we haven't done anything about the legalization and a path to citizenship for the 14 million people. Who live here, in fact, by taking away temporary statuses of individuals, we're increasing the number of people who are undocumented in this country. I just think this is a losing scenario for anybody in America. And then my perspective is that immigrants are also a test population for how far you can go in exerting pain and suffering on a group of people and also ignoring the rights enshrined in the constitution.

Grace [00:19:08] I think what kills me is that, right, in some cases, the government provided temporary protected status and invited different groups of people to come. And then, you know, now that's being revoked. And like you said, there isn't a solution. And then they're going after people in courts where these are the people who are actually trying to follow the rules. And so it just feels like the cruelty is almost the point of it. And it's kind of hard to wrap our minds around just the scale and scope of it.

Angelica Salas [00:19:39] Well, we do have, through the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and through our Office of Refugee Resettlement, we have structures within the United States that have actually allowed for people to come in, for people go through a process from one status to another, to move forward until the ultimate oath of citizenship. So I'm a naturalized citizen. I came here as an undocumented immigrant, as a child, an unaccompanied child, to then reunite with my parents. My parents were then able to legalize their status. We became green card holders, and eventually becoming a citizen of the United States. Our system is set up so that that journey happens. It's easier for some populations than others, but that's the way our system is set up. I think what's important for people to understand right now is all of those structures are being destroyed. So the first thing that they also did was they started defunding all the immigrant rights organizations, the refugee resettlement institutions. And those are the institutions that have existed for over a hundred years that actually have been supporting the integration, the inclusion of all new arrivals. So really destroying the infrastructure of immigrant reception and immigrant welcoming and integration. One of the first things that happened at CHIRLA was that our citizenship grant got revoked. And its whole purpose is to teach people English, teach people the Constitution, and basic facts about how we work as a nation, and then prepare them to pass their citizenship test and then take the oath, and go through and journey with them on that. When I received the letter that said that they were doing away with this entire grant program that we had worked for for so long, and had worked in for so long, because it didn't align with the values of this nation. And the priorities of this administration. To me, that was so telling about where we were going. And so I really think it's important to really question whether, again, this administration truly believes that we are a nation founded on immigration and that we continue to be this nation of immigrants. And then the other part too is the attack on the Latino community, on the African community, on the Asian community, on anybody who is non-white. Because it's also about migration of a people of color that has really changed the demography of this country beginning in 1965 when our immigration laws changed. And it was an opportunity for us finally in this country to say to people of color, you're not just workers in this county, you're also part of families. And in welcoming you, we're also allowing you to open up access and have access to the family

petition system and the family unity system. Which is a cornerstone of our immigration policy, but then opening up access to more communities and people from different continents and different racial backgrounds. And that is who we are now. And so there's this idea of a backlash about who we have become over years and years of migration. So I think the fight is much bigger than just fighting the enforcement. It's really rescuing our structures and our values around making sure that we continue to be a country built out of the many, pluribus unum, out of many one.

Phil [00:23:17] More after the break.

BREAK

Phil I want to go back to something you said about test case, I think was the phrase that you used. And I guess it connects a bit to just the lawlessness and sort of really, there's no other word I think, other than authoritarianism. And it really hit home for me, I think, when Rümeyza Öztürk, the Tufts University student here legally on a student visa was put into a van by masked agents outside her home near the Tufts University campus because of an op-ed she co-authored that was critical of the Tufts University administration's stance with respect to Israel. And you know, it should have hit me hard anyway, but it also made me think of the fact that my father was here on a student visa in 1960 and he was involved in a lunch counter sit-in in Durham, North Carolina, protesting segregation. I don't think as a white man, even on a student visa, who knew he would be arrested. I, I don, I don't know. He's not been alive for many years. I can't ask him, but I don't think he ever feared that he would be thrown into a van, even in 1960, right? Even in that era. And so, there is an effort to intimidate. To suppress expression and to me that connects to why every person should care about this issue even if they didn't think about immigration much before. They should care for all the reasons you said about our country being a nation of immigrants. I'm a naturalized citizen, Grace is, you are, that's who our country is, but also because of the threat to all of us. If we allow this kind of abuse, retribution directed at people who, who dare to say things that are seen as outside some acceptable norm in a country that's supposed to prize free expression and, and, you know, we've, I, it, it is mind boggling that, that we're here. And I wonder if you could talk a little bit about the broader implications of what we're seeing to organizations of all types in the nonprofit sector and to donors who might have any number of interests and might not have thought about immigration before.

Angelica Salas [00:25:56] Well, I think that's a perfect example that you have brought up, because the first thing is the implications for everybody are the following. If you are going to be arrested, you should know why you're being arrested, that there should be a warrant for searching your person, your home, your car, and that you should know who's arresting you. Anybody should have those basic expectations. And what we're seeing is, number one, people are being detained, they don't know why they're being arrested. There is no warrant for their arrest. There's no warrant for the search of their person. And then when you ask, who are you? Who are you who is arresting me? First of all, they're not showing their badges. They're not show their faces. They're fully armed. And also their vehicles are not denoting what agency they are representing in many instances. These are unmarked cars, usually with tinted windows. And so then picking people up. I just think it's incredibly troubling. And what I've seen is also people being knocked down. And then those who are documenting, you know that case because there was somebody who was actually using their First Amendment right to videotape what was occurring so that that did not happen in anonymity and that she got picked up and nobody knew about it. Actually, there was someone who witnessed it who then provided that video testimony. And then what we were seeing is with the people who were documenting, using their First Amendment rights

to document, to take a picture of what occurred, to videotape the arrest of the individuals, those individuals were being arrested and put into jail. And so a lot of the people who were calling early on were not just immigrants, they were US citizens. One who weren't believed that they were US citizens because of who they were, the English they spoke or how they spoke it, where they were working. But then it was also individuals who were U.S. Citizens who were videotaping. And so the implication on this is that anybody can be picked up from your home, from anywhere, no judicial warrant, no arrest warrant, or search warrant, and you will then just be picked up by these masked individuals who are not going to identify themselves. That's why we're moving legislation in the state of California to try to push on the clear identification of these law enforcement agents. The other thing is then for your family, now you're arrested and now you are incarcerated. You don't know how much work goes into finding the individual. Where are they located? Where they have been arrested? Where have they been taken? And of course, then providing them access to counsel. That's the second thing. So all of these things have implications for all of us. I think the other part about it is about creating a comfort level with masked men and military operations because that's what they are, roaming your community, and you're just getting used to it. You're just seeing tanks going down your street as if this is normal. This is not normal. But I do think there is a strategy to normalize these operations so suddenly you're not questioning why the National Guard, military, and federal police officers, not just Border Patrol and ICE, but the DEA, the FBI, the ATF, why they're out there, and then in the manner in which they're picking people up and, and even, you know, marching down the streets as if it's a military operation. Because in fact, now I say it is a military operation so I think for all of us, it's actually what are we condoning? And what are we getting used to? What are we normalizing because we're not speaking up? And we're accepting this for the immigrant community. But then very quickly you saw the president also talked about the home grows, right? Well, who are those? What's the image that he has when he talks about home grows? And then I think the equally troubling situation, I mean, everything is so unacceptable, is then also being detained, and not just being detained here in the United States domestically, but actually being detained in another country. And the fact that you have a situation in which individuals who don't know why they were arrested, but where are they going to go? And then taken to prisons outside of this country, prisons that we know have been accused and there's documentation about the human rights abuses. It is so troubling, it is so troubling. And that's why a lot of people say to us, why do you even believe in the court system anymore? Taking this, and I'm like, we got to believe, we have to remind ourselves that we have use our democratic tools, which is... we have a judicial branch, we have a legislative branch, we have the executive. What are the checks and balances? And even if we might lose, we have to use them because we have to document and bring to account individuals and remind them that what they're doing, individually and as agencies and as part of government, even the federal government, that you're accountable to something more than just what you believe you wanna do in order to move forward in operation to deport massive numbers of people from this country.

Grace [00:31:17] Angelica, what would you say is philanthropy's role? I mean, of course, folks who are listening, they could consider supporting CHIRLA's work. But I mean what you describe is so large in scope, it's talking about specific major cracks in our rule of law. Our show is a show about giving. What do you think is the role that donors or foundations can play?

Angelica Salas [00:31:44] Well, I think philanthropy has a very important role. I said earlier that the federal government has tried to dismantle, dismember the infrastructure of immigrant-serving organizations, of immigrant inclusion. So I think this is a moment where philanthropy has to be bold and do the opposite, which is to build it up, to create it stronger

than it was before, to support it in a way that lifts up and allows the work to happen. And so I'm also incredibly encouraged. By what our individual donors have done. And this is community. So CHIRLA, by the third quarter of our last fiscal year, by March, we were almost \$4 million underwater, in terms of a deficit, based on everything, all the monies that didn't come in from the federal government, all the money that was taken, all the that was owed, that wasn't paid. It was just, it was a very difficult time. So we tapped into our reserves because certainly we asked our board, I said, this is a moment. If any moment we're gonna tap into our reserves, this is our reserves and we're going to, how can we continue moving forward in order to serve our community? But then what ended up happening was that our community started responding by doing small and large fundraisers for us. As we're doing the work and we were saying, please donate and as more attacks were coming to CHIRLA because the other thing that the federal government did was starting attacking us very specifically, attacks through intimidating letters and threats of investigation and a lot of defamation of who we are as an organization, but even introducing legislation that pinpointed to us as CHIRLA. People started seeing these attacks and people know our work. We've been around for more now 39 years. Next year will be our 40th year anniversary. They know who we, we know the role that we serve in our community. And all of a sudden immigrants themselves giving us donations, you know, small donations. There is like sales right now my individual giving donor manager came in and he was telling me that there was a restaurant Tacos Unicos who basically did this wholesale of churros for CHIRLA? So they you know churros being such a you know it's a dessert in and so they did this and they said not only did we raise \$16,000 for CHIRLA, but just our connection and the fact that we were doing this increased our sales by 30% and so these are the stories, these are the things that I keep seeing over and over again, young people branding T-shirts and selling them on our behalf, and artists and singers supporting us. And so that has really allowed us to continue to do our work and to inspire, and I didn't have to lay anybody off and knock on wood. You know, things are just still very difficult, but to me it's important. So the role of philanthropy is so important in this time. So important and it does take acts of courage because I have had some philanthropy who's they're concerned because everybody's afraid of retribution going back to retribution like if you say something or you're aligning yourself with a particular organization that's actually fighting back I mean we do have lawsuits that say CHIRLA vs No so sometimes philanthropy is also careful about their own well-being and their own sustainability but I just really want to say this is a moment that we have to be courageous. It's a moment where we all are fearful about what is to come. And that's so natural. It is so natural because if you're not worried, then you're paying attention. So I think fear, concern is just so natural, but then from there, we have to step into our courage, step into our abilities and the power we do have, understanding that we don't have all the control. But there are things we can control and that which we can, like giving, is something that is so supportive. Early on in the beginning of the year, I saw so many of our organizations lay off our folks, maybe closed down offices in certain parts of the region. And so for me to be here, what is it, September, and to still be able to say I haven't had to lay people off is just such a blessing. But I know that that happened because there were individual donors. Philanthropic or institutions that said no we're stepping in with you into this moment and we're going to make sure that you're able to continue to do the work because ultimately the resources we get are so we could do the work we could actually journey and advocate with and for our immigrant community. There is nothing like going into somebody's home, I get this incredible privilege to go into our members' homes and to families' homes and to see families reunited. Because of all the work. And it's not just CHIRLA's work. It's a collective work. So I'm also asking philanthropy support the ecosystem of immigrant rights and immigrant supporting institutions, refugee resettlement institutions, because it is together that we're able to do all of it.

Phil [00:36:51] I really like what you said about courage. I've been thinking a lot about courage recently because I think we're seeing it in unexpected places. And we're seeing also sometimes a surprising lack of courage from powerful institutions that I would have expected more from, honestly. I stumbled across this Maya Angelou quote from a commencement speech she gave in 2008. Courage is the most important of all the virtues, she said. Because without courage, you can't practice any other virtue consistently. And that's right. And it goes to your point about what the goals are here, you know, to scare folks from what they know is the right thing, to stop them out of fear. And, you, know, I've been also trying to think about, well, how do you inspire people, you to act with courage? And I think one thing is to point to the others who are doing it, right? People get comfort in that. And I don't know what the answer is, but another thing that I think about is just like the stories of people who have experienced such terrifying denial of their basic human rights, the feeling it's hard to imagine the feeling somebody must have if they are ripped off the street, taken in the back of a van, they don't where and to end up in the inhumane conditions that you described, maybe without access to a lawyer for longer than that should be the case, you know, it's like the courage has to come from our recognition that others need us to be courageous. And I hope that we see more and more of that. Grace and I both listened to a podcast recently about immigration issues and the expert on, the guest on the episode was talking toward the end of the interview about how disappointed he had been in the lack of courage of some of the big institutions he expected to do more in this time, but then just the everyday examples of people standing up for what's right and putting themselves on the line. So I hope that that's true. I hope those things are really happening. I see some of it and it sounds like you see some as well.

Angelica Salas [00:39:07] And I also think it aggregates, and that's the thing. It's like, you don't have to be the most courageous person and do all, but your act adds to somebody else's act that is positive and that is affirming of the humanity of the people who are being impacted. Tonight, there'll be a funeral mass for Mr. Carlos Montoya, Roberto Carlos Montoya, who was killed as he was running from immigration agents and he ran into the freeway as he was being chased by these individuals. And he came to my mind when you were saying, what happens? Well, you know, mass men coming and chasing you and picking you up, and it's very natural to be fearful. We always say, remain calm and do not run. But at the end of the day, even when you do that, they still pick you up. But some people, they run, which is, again, very natural in this given the situation. He lost his life. And what I've noticed of this moment was these high school students from Monrovia, the community of the city where he actually was looking for work, just have been rallying and supporting. And so tonight, his family will be there with, you know, all services paid. He's going to be taken back to Guatemala, where he had his four daughters, four grandchildren who miss him deeply. But this whole community through GoFundMe campaigns and others. The National Day Labor Organizing Network getting involved, faith institutions getting involved. So that this family does not feel alone and that they understand that there are people in this country who do not agree with the way this man was treated in his life in terms of as a day laborer and the family talked a lot about wage theft and all the things that actually happened while he was living. But yet his commitment to his family, to his neighbors. He was a very religious individual as well, a man of faith. And so for me, it's also about how we demonstrate to others that we're not in agreement with what's going on but that there is another face of America that is compassionate, that is connected to its own humanity and is willing to support and to be with people in their journey to justice. And that too is a part of who we are as Americans. And so, yes, let's rescue that. Let's really make sure that through our small and large actions, we can support and here again, we were talking about, this is about philanthropy and giving. These are individuals from all

walks of life supporting a person they did not know. They now know about his tragic death, but they are coming forward, bringing flowers, because in connecting to his humanity, the humanity of the family. They're connecting to their own and being reminded of who they are and how they want to be treated on this earth. And so that's what I really believe deeply is opening up and for me that's what inspires me and I know all the members of our staff and the people who are working on this and all the people, who are volunteers to keep going because this is really hard work. It's really difficult to witness what's happening to other human beings. It angers you a lot, and so I just want to say there are moments I'm just so deeply angry about what's going on. I say that too is an emotion, but how does it generate into positive? How do I guide that into positive action? And also just at the end of the day, we're more loved than we are about hate in this country, and let's tap into our love and into our compassion and to our belief that we all belong here.

Grace [00:42:52] Angelica, what's your journey into activism, and how does your own experience navigating the US immigration system inform the work that you do?

Angelica Salas [00:43:01] My mom came to this country alongside my dad. First my dad came here to work because he literally ran away from Durango, Mexico. This is the time when there was a big war on drugs in that region, into the rural regions. And so people were leaving the mountains, a place that we, it was our ancestral land, a place where we had lived in time immemorial, this is, I've done all the re... we we left because my father immigrated. But he left, and he left my mom and my sister and I in Durango. He came to work. My mother then followed. And as soon as they could, they sent for my sister and I, and we came as children. We were toddlers. I was maybe four years going on five. I came with an uncle who was 16 years old, so all of us children, crossing that border. I still have memories of the nighttime and crossing. But I knew I was going to be reunited with my mom and my father. And that I was going to north to El Norte. I was going there to see my parents. And I did, and I will always thank them for their sacrifice to reunite our family. We were reunited. Grew up with all my family being undocumented and my mom, a garment worker. That's what she began to do work here. My father, a construction worker, most of his life, he was a roofer. And then one day, my mom in her garment factory, the work site was raided. And my mom too was picked up in the way that you see now. But in a different, everything is at the scale that you just, I don't think can be compared. But certainly my mom was detained, deported back to Mexico. And as a child, I remember that very vividly. I'm the oldest and I always will remember my dad being so concerned about what was happening because it was not only was my mother picked up, but friends and family, his sister, my uncle, all were picked up and taken. And so... I always tell people I never understood immigration law. I just understood that somehow we had something of fear in this country and it was always about migra. It's like, they're gonna come and get you and so you live like that. But when my mom came back, my dad went to a community-based organization, the International Institute of Los Angeles that recently celebrated, I think, its 110th birthday and he went there. This organization is also a founding institution for CHIRLA, by the way, and he got support and help and they were able to find a way by which our family was able to legalize our status. My aunt and uncle then legalized under the amnesty program. I was 15 years old at that time. I knew how to use a typewriter and I helped a lot of uncles, aunts, cousins submit their legalization documents. And that changed our lives. It changed the trajectory of my life. Unlike my mom and my dad, I was able to graduate from high school. I went on to college. It was in college that I really understood about our immigration laws. And then I understood that it wasn't about just my family. It was about a whole community. I was a volunteer for CHIRLA that's how I got involved at CHIRLA. I became, I was volunteer. And I was, uh, graduated from college at Occidental and I was going to go on to get my master's at Yale. But during that time, 1995,

uh was also at the height of proposition 187 here in the state of California, one of the most anti-immigrant propositions and everybody doesn't believe me when I tell them in 1994 and 95. California was the most anti-immigrant state. And even young people who, this is ancient history, right? They can't even imagine California not being progressive and pro-immigration. But instead of going on to get my master's, I got a deferment for a year, and that year has transformed into 30. And we have, in those years, we have transformed California in such a way that this federal government feels that it has to attack California, Los Angeles. And this entire region for being a sanctuary for immigrants. And it's not about being a Sanctuary. It's about affirming the rights that people have that if they pay taxes in a state, if they paid taxes in the county, therefore they should have access to the services that they pay for and that they are residents. And so for me, it was in terms of my journey, it's the work I do is very personal, but I also. Understand it's not unique and the families and the people that I've met over all these years. It just demonstrates that it's a community that is incredibly resilient, incredibly willing to sacrifice for a better opportunity for the next generation to come, who love the people they work with and who really invest in the places they arrive to. And for me also at CHIRLA, with we're a membership-based organization. Going back to philanthropy, we are a dues-paying membership organization, so we have over 51,000 members. Many more now, because in the last couple months, more people have become members, and they support the organization, and they believe in the mission of the organization. So our members come together, we plan campaigns together, and with them, we've been able to advance driver's license, access to higher education with our immigrant youth in the high schools and in colleges, our immigrant youth leaders. We've been able to fight for healthcare for all. We can say that the state of California, we have an opportunity for entrepreneurs independent of their immigration status to open up businesses and get licenses for those businesses. And we've been unable to also ensure that our young people have access to financial aid so that they continue their education, opened up dream resource centers and colleges and high schools. And I think that advancement of what a state can be, a country can be and a vision, it's a different vision, right, is what's being attacked here. But I think that because we know that we can win these things and our ultimate fight is the legalization of our 14 million brothers and sisters who live and work in this country, that we are also part of creating a country in which it's not just about including immigrants and that's why our mission at CHIRLA is to create a just society fully inclusive of immigrants. So also that whatever we win is not exclusive to immigrants, but is actually opening up opportunities for everybody else.

Grace [00:49:26] What is your advice to donors if they see immigration enforcement in their communities?

Angelica Salas [00:50:12] Well, number one, document. You also have a network. So I think it's really important not to underutilize your networks or your platforms. For me, it's also you have a voice. So many donors are also individuals of great wealth. So how do you use your voice? How do you provide your stance and where you stand in this moment, right? And to me, it's important to note that. My husband came from El Salvador. So he went through a civil war. He saw death squads. I mean, he lived through the moments of death squads in his home country and just so many things. And we reflect together a lot about this moment. He always reminds me, and it stays in my mind all the time, that a person of justice is not the job they do. It is who they are. So when we think about the individuals that are part of philanthropic institutions, the donors, it's about who we are. And if we're people of justice, if we are people who want to advance a positive and better vision for this country and really a different reality of inclusion, then we have to use our ability to speak before others and to promote those visions. And I think that this is not a moment to be polite and kind and not to offend. And then sometimes it's like, oh, well, we're not going

to speak about this because you know, we want to make sure that no waves are created. The waves are created, there is a tsunami. And I think that what we need to do is to fortify the boats to survive that tsunami and the structures that actually give people shelter and protection. That is, I think what I would just say in this moment and also to tap into all the resources. So that means it's not just your grant making but it's your investments, your every single avenue by which you can make a difference. Tap into it. This is the emergency. I think this is a defining moment for our country in terms of civil rights, in terms of constitutional protections, in terms of what will our country look generations forward. I want us all to be able to come out of this moment and say, we did the most we could. Maybe we weren't able to do it all, but we did the most that we could with that that we had, you know, and I think that is what we all have to then focus on and that from our vantage and from our relationships and our networks that we're actually adding and advancing for the protection of some of the most vulnerable people in this country.

Grace [00:52:49] Angelica, thank you so much for joining us. We're grateful for your work.

Angelica Salas Of course. Thank you so, much for having me.

Phil [00:52:56] We appreciate all that you're doing.

There are a slew of resources about effective giving on The Center for Effective Philanthropy's website, cep.org, as well as givingdoneright.org, where you'll find all of our episodes and show notes.

Grace: You can also send us a note at gdrpodcast@cep.org.

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