

Winston Secures Long-Awaited Asylum for LGBTQ+ Honduran

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Our client came to the United States at the age of 20, after suffering years of persecution and violence in Honduras specifically because she is a lesbian. At one point, gang members brutally beat her, breaking her clavicle. The threats and violence against her continued to escalate until she was forced to flee Honduras.

She crossed the U.S. border into Texas on May 14, 2014, and promptly filed an asylum application. Four months later, she represented herself in a removal proceeding in San Antonio and the judge denied her request for asylum due to perceived issues of credibility and the judge's determination that her claims of persecution were based on violence to the general public as opposed to her being gay. She appealed and her case was referred to the National Immigration Justice Center. Winston & Strawn began representing her shortly thereafter.

Winston represented her on appeal, and in March 2015, the Board of Immigration Appeals granted her a de novo hearing and she was released from immigration custody and relocated to New York City, where she now lives.

Following a series of delays, prompted first by a federal government shutdown and then the pandemic, our client finally got her day in court in February of this year. The immigration judge agreed that our client had credibly testified to the abuse she suffered on account of her sexual orientation and granted her application for asylum and the government waived appeal, allowing her to permanently remain in the United States.

"We have been honored to represent our client in what has been a long journey to asylum. Since living in the United States, she has been able to start to overcome her past abuses and we are happy that the grant of asylum will afford her the opportunity to continue to build a better life here," said Lauren Duxstad, New York Associate.

The Winston team working on this matter includes New York Partner Aldo Badini, Associate Lauren Duxstad, and Law Clerk Maggie Brown.

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