

MILESTONES

ORGANIZATION TIMELINE

FORMAL STARTING POINT

In September 2011, a wave of terror and racism swept Alabama when the state legislature passed the harshest anti-immigrant law in the country, HB56. The coalition formally started after years of local meetings and organizing.

2011

2012–PRESENT

SELMA JUBILEE

ACIJ participates annually in the Bridge Crossing Commemoration. In 2014, the coalition planned the events and invited labor leader Eliseo Medina, who became the first Latino inducted into the Civil Rights Footsoldier Hall of Fame.

FIRST ANNUAL IMMIGRANT LEADERSHIP RETREAT

Annual Statewide convening of immigrant leaders established. Members of the immigrant leadership council met to evaluate their work, celebrate victories, and strategize for the future.

2012–PRESENT

2012–PRESENT

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS WORKSHOPS

ACIJ held Know Your Rights workshops statewide, covering topics such as Family Safety Plan Design, Power of Attorney letters, notary services, and assistance with federal tax ID applications and renewals.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Announced lifetime organizational membership at the Alabama State Conference of the NAACP.

2014–PRESENT

2014

DIRECT ACTION AT ETOWAH COUNTY DETENTION CENTER

On March 24th, ACIJ immigrant leaders staged a non-violent civil disobedience at an ICE detention facility in Gadsden, Alabama. Seven undocumented activists chained themselves to the Etowah Detention Center doors, were arrested, and later released.

CHILDREN'S ACTIONS IN DC

ACIJ participated in numerous conferences and non-violent actions in the nation's capital. National partners organized civil disobedience events featuring affected children and youth advocating for comprehensive immigration reform.

2014

2014

HUNGER STRIKE

More than a dozen immigration rights supporters participated in a hunger strike from June 25 to June 28, surviving only on water. They visited Rep. Spencer Bachus's office daily, culminating in a surprise prayer vigil outside his home.

LAUNCHING OF ALABAMA VOTA

ACIJ launched "Alabama Vota", Alabama's largest ever non-partisan Latino voter engagement program in anticipation of the 2014 mid-term elections.

2014–PRESENT

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US SUPREME COURT IN SUPPORT OF DAPA AND EXPANDED DACA

ACIJ sent over 50 activists, including friends from Mississippi and Tennessee to join the thousands of immigrant activists rallying outside the US supreme court while the case was deliberated.

2016

2016

KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER YOUTH SUMMIT

ACIJ youth participated in this youth summit where young activists from around the country learned strategies for enacting social change.

"FAMILIES BELONG TOGETHER" IMMIGRATION RALLY

Members of ACIJ took part in the "Families Belong Together" immigration rally held at Big Spring Park in Huntsville. This event protested the current administration's zero-tolerance border policies.

2018

2018

DEFENSORXS COMUNITARIXS (COMMUNITY DEFENDERS)

This program held in partnership with GBM and Adelante, focused on empowering immigrants not just to be prepared and defend their rights, but also how to inform their communities.

HARD TO COUNT: 2020 CENSUS

As part of the Alabama Hard to Count Collaborative for the 2020 census, ACIJ led census outreach initiatives in Latinx immigrant communities in northern and southern regions of Alabama.

2019-2020

2019-2026

ABRAZANDO NUESTRAS RAÍCES

In early 2019 with the encouragement of our Leadership Council, we initiated a family reunification program called Abrazando Nuestras Raíces (Embracing Our Roots).

"GATHERINGS" WITH BLACK IMMIGRANT LEADERS

Along with many immigrant partners, "Gatherings" were organized, uniting over 40 immigrant leaders from various African and Afro-Caribbean communities, including Haiti, Jamaica, Kenya, Ghana, Senegal, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone.

2019-2020

2020

COVID SPANISH HOTLINE

ACIJ volunteers operated a statewide hotline to provide bilingual immigrant-friendly resources for COVID testing, food, and financial assistance.

COVID RELIEF FUND

ACIJ community leaders launched a fund to support immigrants who were left out of COVID economic relief.

2020

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COVID VACCINE CLINICS

ACIJ launched COVID vaccine clinics at local immigrant-owned stores and vaccinated over 900 people.

2021

2023–PRESENT

IMMIGRANT ADVOCACY DAY

The first legislative day in Montgomery focused on immigrant rights, where participants learn how to effectively communicate with their representatives and take action.

IMMIGRANT ADVOCACY COALITION

We discuss legislation that could affect or is affecting immigrant communities. Since 2024, our coalition has stopped 18 anti-immigrant bills from passing in Alabama. The coalition also plans our annual Immigrant Advocacy Day.

2024–PRESENT

2025–PRESENT

COMMUNITY PROTECTION NETWORKS: MIGRA WATCHES

The establishment of Migra Watches took place in Birmingham, Auburn, Mobile, Baldwin, and Montgomery. Additionally, foundational work was laid in Huntsville, Tuscaloosa, and Russellville.

AL RAPID RESPONSE MUTUAL AID FUND

This fund was created to meet the urgent needs of immigrant communities affected by ICE—covering legal representation, emergency travel, childcare, and other essentials.

2025–PRESENT

2025–PRESENT

FREE LEGAL CLINICS

Clinics where you can receive assistance from a lawyer and draft powers of attorney. In addition, we offer a list of pro bono attorneys and organizations in Alabama and neighboring states for those seeking legal representation.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE BOARD OF IMMIGRATION APPEALS ACCREDITATION

Because of this accreditation, ACIJ can offer basic immigration legal services to people across Alabama and help to defend the rights that the law gives them.

2025–PRESENT

2026–PRESENT

SEMILLAS DE JUSTICIA

A free leadership development program designed to give people the knowledge, tools, and confidence to help keep their communities safe and to serve as the lifeline of compassion and care they deserve.

M.O.R.E. SOLIDARITY

We launched the sister program of "Seeds of Justice" to transform community members into civic engagement leaders in Alabama. This interactive program aims to build community, foster new connections, and develop skills.

2026–PRESENT