

# T VISA SYMPOSIUM

October 12, 2018

Kansas City, MO



## Speaker Bios

### *Helen Tarokić*

***NC Board-Certified Immigration Law Specialist, Helen Tarokić Law PLLC***

Helen Tarokić assists people of all cultures and backgrounds to successfully resolve or complete immigration law cases. Based in Wilmington, North Carolina, she is a board-certified immigration specialist. A member of AILA for over 11 years, Ms. Tarokić's years of experience in business, family, naturalization and humanitarian cases made it possible to open her own firm in 2011. The dedicated support staff are not only passionate about their clients, but they are also involved in the community. They participate in events, make donations, and promote educational contests for young adults, including the American Immigration Council's National Multimedia Competition. Ms. Tarokić has spoken on T Visas at various conferences through the AILA Carolinas chapter; on law practice management and paralegal training as well as naturalization at various AILA conferences, including the AILA National Annual Conference (National Harbor, MD and Washington, DC); on I-140 ability-to-pay issues (AILA National, Vancouver); and on I-9/enforcement issues via the AILA Carolinas Chapter. She has held Chapter roles in the New Member's Division and as Carolinas ICE Liaison. The mother of two small children and manager of Helen Tarokić Law PLLC, Ms. Tarokić is constantly focused on law practice management, training, hiring, case and deadline management, and ensuring that associate attorney(s) are prepared and able. A former immigration paralegal, Ms. Tarokić has also been a current and former associate and brings multiple perspectives as a result.

### *Emma Buckthal*

***Supervising Immigration Attorney, Erie County Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project, Inc., Buffalo, NY***

Based in New York, Attorney Emma Buckthal focuses her law practice on representing low income immigrants, especially survivors of serious crimes like domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking. She also frequently represents unaccompanied minors. In her role as supervising immigration attorney at the Erie County Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project, she serves as the non-profit attorney representative on the Western District of New York Human Trafficking Taskforce and Alliance, and as part of the Western New York Coalition of Farmworker Serving Agencies. She is a frequent speaker on human trafficking and on the intersection of immigration and domestic violence.

**Stephanie Morales**

***Immigration Project Attorney, Immigrant Legal Services Program of the Volunteer Lawyers Network***

Stephanie Morales is the Immigration Project Attorney with the Immigrant Legal Services Program of the Volunteer Lawyers Network (VLN) in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In her role at VLN, she recruits, trains and provides legal support to volunteer lawyers, conducts community outreach and education, oversees several legal clinics, and develops and implements efficient systems to enhance client services. Prior to joining VLN, Stephanie was in private practice for over six years at The Bortel Firm, LLC, a small immigration firm that focused on family-based and humanitarian forms of immigration relief, including T and U visas and asylum. In her role at The Bortel Firm, Stephanie gained extensive experience with T visas, representing hundreds of labor trafficking victims and their families through all stages of the T visa process. She also mentors volunteer attorneys representing trafficking victims. She received her J.D., magna cum laude, from the University of Minnesota Law School in 2011, focusing on immigration and human rights. Prior to law school, Stephanie worked as a public school teacher, teaching ESL, English and Spanish. She is fluent in Spanish, having studied the language throughout college and receiving intensive instruction at La Academia de Español while living abroad in Quito, Ecuador.

**Christine Ladner**

***Assistant Saline County Attorney, Salina, KS***

A career prosecutor, Christine Ladner was an Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Litigation Division of the Kansas Attorney General's Office from 2009 to 2016. Her case load included human trafficking, sex offenses, child abuse, child homicides, and the civil commitment of sexually violent predators. Prior to her work in the Attorney General's Office, she was Chief Deputy in the Shawnee County District Attorney's Office in Topeka, KS. She started her career in the Sedgwick County District Attorney's Office in Wichita, where her focus area became sex offenses and crimes against children. She has tried over 170 felony jury trials to verdict and appeared in over 40 of the 105 counties in Kansas.

Ms. Ladner served as chair of the Attorney General's Human Trafficking Advisory Board from 2010 to 2013 where she assisted in developing a comprehensive legislative package to combat human trafficking. She has presented trainings for judges, prosecutors, law enforcement, sexual assault nurse examiners and victim advocates on human trafficking, sex offenses, child maltreatment and litigation-related topics. Ms. Ladner tried the first aggravated human trafficking case in state district court in Kansas in 2008: *State v. Williams*, 299 Kan. 911, 329 P.3d 400 (2014). She has testified numerous times before legislative committees on human trafficking and other criminal justice issues.

A native Kansan born and raised in Leavenworth, Ms. Ladner is a graduate of the University of Kansas and Washburn Law School. She resides in Lawrence with her husband and three children.