About the Authors

Robin Dalton is the Director of Legal Services at End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin, where she oversees both the legal education and the direct legal services teams. The educational team provides regular legal education and resource development for domestic violence agencies and allied community partners, including courts and lawyers with legal questions related to domestic violence. Within the direct legal services office, Robin leads a team of legal staff and attorneys providing representation to survivors of domestic and sexual violence in cases involving family law, protective orders, and immigration matters. Her own family's journey both roots and fuels Robin's commitment to immigrant justice. As a second-generation immigrant, with her father arriving from Thailand and her maternal grandmother from New Zealand, she carries a multigenerational perspective on migration. That understanding deepened when she built her own family with a partner who immigrated from Honduras, raising a child who embodies the second-generation experience. These connections fuel her advocacy every day. Robin's legal career has centered on civil rights—from internships at the Wisconsin Innocence Project and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund to her direct support of immigrant survivors under the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) and the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). She has organized free clinics for individuals under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and for naturalization applicants, and she has mobilized Wisconsin volunteers to provide legal aid at the Artesia detention center in New Mexico, where families faced inhumane conditions and due-process violations. Her leadership includes previously serving as chair of the American Immigration Lawyers Association's (AILA) U/T/VAWA Committee, president of the Wisconsin Asian American Bar Association, and member of the State Bar of Wisconsin's Board of Governors. Robin has been recognized with the YWCA Woman of Distinction Award and the AILA Presidential Commendation for Exemplary Service.

Kari Niesen-LaScala is a Staff Attorney at End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin, where she provides training, advocacy through systems change, and legal technical assistance. Her work includes presenting legal trainings on any topic that affects survivors; drafting and maintaining legal guidance for victim services agencies; and providing legal answers to

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advocates, other attorneys, and community partners who serve victims of domestic violence. Those experiences involve supporting agencies who are assisting immigrant survivors navigating complex legal systems. Kari has represented survivors in immigration matters such as petitions for lawful permanent residence, naturalization, U nonimmigrant status, and Special Immigrant Juvenile Status. Before joining End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin, Kari served as the Associate Director at Wisconsin Health Literacy, where she led development and implementation of health literacy interventions designed specifically for underserved populations, such as people who do not speak English as their first language. Earlier in her career, she practiced law at Pro Bono Advocates in Chicago (now named Ascend Justice), representing clients in all phases of divorce litigation and obtaining orders of protection, grounding her work in the immediate safety and legal stability of survivors. Kari holds a B.A. in journalism and psychology from Northern Illinois University (NIU) and a J.D. from NIU College of Law. Her career reflects her dedication to bridging access to justice gaps for vulnerable, underserved communities.

Gricel Santiago-Rivera is the owner of Santiago Family Law and Mediation Services, LLC. Gricel's current practice focuses on guardian ad litem (GAL) work in family law, guardianships, restraining orders and injunctions, and CHIPS and JIPS cases. Before starting her solo practice, Gricel worked for 18 years at RISE Law Center, where she concentrated on family law and protection orders and served immigrant victims of domestic and sexual violence, stalking, and human trafficking. Throughout her years in practice, Gricel has served hundreds of immigrants from more than 25 different countries. She has provided representation in divorces with international child custody issues under the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and has helped clients navigate issues related to international travel with minor children. In her current practice, she continues to be committed to social justice by advocating for the best interests of those who are most vulnerable. A native of Puerto Rico, Gricel moved to Wisconsin in 1993 to attend the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Shortly after, it became clear to her there was a systemic gap in services for immigrants in Wisconsin. This prompted Gricel's desire to work for immigrant justice, which she continues to do to this day. Moreover, Gricel has two children who are second-generation immigrants on their paternal side. These connections inform both her practice and her everyday life. Gricel holds a B.A. in Comparative Literature from the University of Puerto Rico, M.A.s in Comparative Literature and Spanish from the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and a J.D. from the University of Wisconsin Law School. During

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law school, Gricel had internships at the Legal Assistance to Incarcerated People Project, the Wisconsin Innocence Project, and the Dane County District Attorney's Office. Gricel is a frequent presenter at State Bar of Wisconsin programs on family law and GAL issues and is a newly elected member of the Family Law Section Board (term to begin July 1, 2026). Gricel has been recognized for her prior work as a board member of UNIDOS, receiving the Community Shares of Wisconsin Liesl Blockstein Community Leadership Award, and was nominated for an Athena Award from the Business Forum for her work at RISE Law Center.

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