

PENN STATE LAW

# Immigration Roundtable

Experts and Community Leaders in State College

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**February 24, 2012**

**Noon - 3:00 p.m.**

**Penn State Law Clinics**

**Innovation Park • Building 329 • Suite 118**

LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED

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Build connections among research and service organizations who work with or conduct research about immigrants and immigration; raise awareness of resources available among the local community of scholars and service providers.

RSVP to Professor Shoba Wadhia • [ssw11@psu.edu](mailto:ssw11@psu.edu)

*Co-Sponsors: Penn State Law Center for Immigrants' Rights  
and Penn State Population Research Institute*



**Immigration Roundtable**  
**February 24, 2012****Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia**

Clinical Professor and Director, Center for Immigrants' Rights, Dickinson School of Law  
Pennsylvania State University

Professor Wadhia is the founder/director of Penn State's Center for Immigrants' Rights, an immigration policy clinic where students produce practitioner toolkits, white papers, and primers of national impact on behalf of client organizations. Prior to joining Penn State Law, Professor Wadhia was deputy director for legal affairs at the National Immigration Forum in Washington, D.C., where she worked on issues surrounding the creation of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and "post 9-11" executive branch policies impacting immigrant communities. Professor Wadhia has been honored by the Department of Homeland Security's Office for Inspector General and Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, and in 2003, she was named Pro Bono Attorney of the Year by the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee. She has also been an associate with Maggio Kattar, P.C. in Washington, D.C., where she litigated asylum, deportation, and employment-based immigration benefits matters.

Professor Wadhia serves on the ABA Commission on Immigration and is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers' Guild.

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**Jennifer Van Hook**

Director, Population Research Institute  
Pennsylvania State University

Jennifer Van Hook is Professor of Sociology and Demography and Research Associate of the Population Research Institute at The Pennsylvania State University. She conducts demographic research on the settlement and incorporation patterns of US immigrants, with one strand of her work focusing on illegal immigration. Her work also focuses on the social, economic, and health assimilation of immigrants and their descendants.

Dr. Van Hook received her Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Texas at Austin, and has held positions at the Urban Institute and Bowling Green State University before joining the faculty at Penn State. She serves on the Board of Directors of the Population Association of America and the Census Scientific Advisory Committee.

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**Victor Romero**

Maureen B. Cavanaugh Distinguished Faculty Scholar and Professor, Dickinson School of Law  
Pennsylvania State University

A native of the Philippines, Professor Romero teaches and writes in the area of immigrant and minority rights. Professor Romero joined the faculty in 1995 after working in private practice and as a law clerk to a federal judge in California. Professor Romero has served as President of both the South Central Pennsylvania Chapter of the ACLU and the NAACP of the Greater Carlisle Area. A former Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at University Park, Professor Romero was also a visiting professor of law at Howard and at Rutgers-Camden.

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**Melissa Landrau-Rodriguez**  
Director, College Assistance Migrant Program  
Pennsylvania State University

Melissa Landrau-Rodriguez was born and raised in Carolina, Puerto Rico. It was also in Puerto Rico where she started her college education at the University of Puerto Rico, transferring later to Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. After graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Sociology, she completed master-level courses in Human Development & Family Studies. She later accepted a full-time position as Program Coordinator for the Office of International Students and Scholars, where she coordinated a federally-funded program for students from Central America.

For the last ten years, Melissa has directed the College Assistance Migrant Program, a federally-funded program designed to secure the college success of students with migrant or seasonal farmworker backgrounds at Penn State. In this role, she continues providing guidance to students, by offering direct counseling and developing successful initiatives to recruit and retain migrant students. She completed a Master's of Education in Higher Education and is currently a doctoral student in the Language, Culture and Society program, in Curriculum & Instruction, at Penn State.

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**Suresh Canagarajah**  
Director, Migration Studies Project, Department of Humanities  
Pennsylvania State University

Early career, consisted of research on English/Tamil bilingualism in Sri Lanka, exploring how local people develop code alternation strategies and mixed codes to negotiate the conflicts inherent in identity and community membership. Other research explores the challenges for multilingual scholars in English academic communication. More recent work considers the new forms of globalization that lead to fluid discursive and linguistic practices between communities. Currently, Suresh is transcribing interview data collected from Tamil immigrants in London, Toronto, and California to understand the new identities in English for diaspora communities.

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**Phil Jones**  
Director, Church World Service

An active career of social justice and peacemaking has brought me to a focused understanding and deep regard for all of human kind and the earth that supports us. As farmer, minister, activist, lobbyist, father, spouse, friend and colleague I have been given opportunity to speak, witness, and live within the framework of my faith - to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with my God.

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**Justine Andronici**  
Director, Civil Legal Representation Project  
Centre County Women's Resource Center

Ms. Andronici is a feminist attorney and activist who has been working in the women's rights movement for well over a decade. Currently, Ms. Andronici is serving as the first-ever domestic violence attorney at the Centre County Women's Resource Center in Pennsylvania, running the Civil Legal Representation Project and representing local victims of domestic violence. She also continues her affiliation with Katz Marshall & Banks, LLP a leading Washington DC based plaintiff's employment law firm in the new capacity of Counsel to the Firm. Drawing upon her extensive professional background as a grassroots leader and activist, as well as her legal experience, Ms. Andronici also regularly serves as a women's rights legal and policy consultant for national feminist organizations, including the Feminist Majority Foundation.

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**Judith Kroll**

Director, Center for Language Science, Department of Psychology and the College of Liberal Arts  
Pennsylvania State University

Judith Kroll is a Distinguished Professor of Psychology, Linguistics, and Women's Studies and Director of the Center for Language Science at Pennsylvania State University. She completed her undergraduate work at New York University and her graduate work at Brandeis University. She previously held faculty positions at Mount Holyoke College, Rutgers University, and Swarthmore College. Together with Annette de Groot, she co-edited *Tutorials in Bilingualism: Psycholinguistic Perspectives* (1997, Erlbaum) and the *Handbook of Bilingualism: Psycholinguistic Approaches* (2005, Oxford). She served as a co-editor of *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* from its founding in 1997 until 2001 and its coordinating editor from 2001-2002. She serves on a number of editorial boards, including *Journal of Memory and Language*, *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, *International Journal of Bilingualism*, *Journal of Cognitive Psychology*, and *Psychological Science*. The research that she and her students conduct concerns the acquisition, comprehension, and production of two languages during second language learning and in proficient bilingual performance. Their work, using behavioral and neurocognitive methods, is supported by grants from the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health.

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**Steven Rubin**

Assistant Professor, Department of Visual Art  
Pennsylvania State University

Presently an Assistant Professor of Photography at Penn State University, Steven Rubin worked for many years as a documentary photographer, traveling on assignment in Iraq, Rwanda, Kosovo, Pakistan, Turkey, Chile and Cuba, and throughout the United States. His photographs have been published in magazines, including *The New York Times Magazine*, *National Geographic*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Stern*, *GEO*, *Focus*, *L'Express* and *The London Independent Magazine*, and in numerous books including *Schattenlicht – The Best of Black and White Photography* (published by GEO), and *The Century* (published by Phaidon). His work has been exhibited in venues throughout the United States and featured at the International Festival Visa pour L'Image, in Perpignan, France. He is the recipient of the Leica Medal of Excellence, a New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) Fellowship, a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard and an Alicia Patterson Journalism Fellowship. He was a Fellow with the Open Society Institute, which supported his photographic investigation of the U.S. government's detention of immigrants, and funded his development of *Healing Images*, a program providing digital cameras, instruction and therapy to survivors of torture. A graduate of Reed College in Portland, Oregon, he obtained his MFA in Visual Arts from the University of California, San Diego.

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**Masume Assaf**

Director, Directorate, International Student and Scholar Advising, University Office of Global Programs  
Pennsylvania State University

Masume Assaf has advised international students at Penn State for 25 years. She has served on NAFSA's Board of Directors. (NAFSA is the world's largest nonprofit professional association dedicated to international education.) Assaf was the recipient of NAFSA's Region VIII Award for Outstanding Contributions to International Education in 2005 and received the former Region IX Award for Outstanding Contributions to International Education in 1990. In 2006, she received the Administrative Excellence Award from Penn State.

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**Merrill David**

Executive Director, Global Connections

Merrill David has been executive director of Global Connections for 8 years. She has worked extensively in the human services, education and non-profit sectors – including work as director of ESL Services and Basic Literacy Services at Mid-State Literacy Council; Regional Trainer/Presenter for the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education (PDE ABLE); Lecturer in English at Bucknell University; and director of media relations and program development for Hospital Audiences, Inc. in NYC. She has also taught ESL at the International Center in NYC and here in State College. Some other related work includes that of writer/segment producer for the Bombay Broadcasting Network and the Society for Eastern Affairs in NYC; and playwright of three one-act plays for a UN performance on United Nations World Children's Day in NYC.

On a personal note, Merrill's home life is a study in immigration with a resident alien husband, one naturalized citizen daughter, one daughter born in State College, and Merrill herself from the very foreign land of NYC.

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**Shedra Amy Snipes**

Assistant Professor, Penn State College of Health and Human Development  
Pennsylvania State University

As a bio-cultural anthropologist, Dr. Snipes' overarching interests are in the intersections between biology, culture, and health behavior. To date, Dr. Snipes' research has focused primarily on Mexican immigrant farmworkers, finding that their knowledge of and beliefs about pesticides differ from popular definitions -- a barrier that must be overcome with culturally appropriate interventions to prevent harmful exposure.

Dr. Snipes most recent study, entitled "The Migrant Farmworker Experience: An 'Ethno-Occupational' Health Assessment" targets the most vulnerable of the farmworker community, the migrant farmworker, as they travel from the Texas-Mexico border to find work. This research provides new, highly useful data on cultural notions associated with pesticide exposure, occupational illness, injury, and healthcare access among migrant farmworkers.

Additionally, Snipes' work tests the feasibility of gathering biological samples from migrant farmworkers – a critical factor needed to assess risk in this vulnerable group. Dr. Snipes' history of research provides an important, first-hand account of the migrant farmworker experience through ethnographic observational data collection. Insight gained from her investigations will be used to inform reduction of occupational hazards (pesticides and work-based injuries) among farmworkers through distribution of new, unexplored information specific to the migrant farmworker experience, as well as the development of culturally-relevant community interventions.

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