



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** May 15, 2023

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### **ASISTA's Cristina Velez Named NGO Lawyer of the Year by the Federal Bar Association Immigration Law Section**

ASISTA is pleased to announce that Legal & Policy Director Cristina Velez was awarded the 2023 NGO Lawyer of the Year Award at the Federal Bar Association (FBA) Immigration Law Conference last week in Arlington, VA.



Cristina joined ASISTA in April 2022, and in just one year has made a significant impact on ASISTA's members and on the field, lending her expertise and passion on issues from criminalization to reproductive justice for immigrant survivors of gender-based violence, and much more.

“Cristina is being given this award in recognition of her long-standing commitment to immigrant survivors of trauma and gender-based violence,” FBA Immigration Section Chair, Kate Goettel, said. “Cristina joined the Immigration Law Section Board this year and has brought her deep-seated expertise on these issues to the board.”

Kirsten Rambo, ASISTA's Executive Director, noted, “This is a very well-deserved honor, and a terrific recognition of Cristina's tremendous and ongoing contributions to this movement.

Cristina's deep well of knowledge, experience, and dedication to the work on behalf of immigrant survivors is well known, and we at ASISTA are delighted that she has received this formal recognition of her impact. We are fortunate to work closely with Cristina on behalf of immigrant survivors.”

Congratulations, Cristina, on being the FBA Immigration Law Section's NGO lawyer of the year!

Pictured: FBA Immigration Section Chair Kate Goettel & ASISTA Legal & Policy Director Cristina Velez.

Established in 2008, ASISTA is a national leader in the movement for safety and justice for immigrant survivors of gender-based violence. ASISTA's founders helped write the immigration provisions of the federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act (TVPA), affording legal status to hundreds of thousands of survivors and their children since 1994. With over 2,500 members nationwide, ASISTA's work is focused on 1) providing expert case consultation, training, and resources to attorneys and advocates navigating the complex immigration system on behalf of survivors of gender-based violence, including intervening in specific cases as needed; 2) pushing for federal, state and local policies that ensure safety and justice for immigrant survivors; and 3) coordinating lawsuits to prevent the government from unfairly deporting survivors of violence. To learn more about ASISTA's work, [click here](#). Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), & [LinkedIn](#).

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