



Natalie J. Kraner

Senior Public Interest Counsel

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In addition to helping run the pro bono program firmwide, Natalie maintains a substantive practice as a litigator, applying her extensive experience in complex and appellate litigation to achieve widespread law reform for low-income and other marginalized persons by challenging unjust and unlawful practices.

Natalie focuses in particular on juvenile and criminal justice efforts through impact litigation and legislative and executive advocacy. She also oversees the firm's asylum docket, where she participates in precedent-setting appeals in state and federal courts and defends victims of persecution from deportation.

In addition, Natalie manages and participates in signature initiatives through which the firm provides representation to:

- Children in immigration proceedings
- Victims of persecution in asylum proceedings
- Survivors of domestic violence seeking orders of protection and custody of their children
- Veterans in disability hearings
- Low-income individuals in bankruptcy proceedings
- Tenants trying to avoid eviction
- Low-income entrepreneurs who need business advice
- Low-income inventors who need assistance with patent applications
- Adults seeking to become legal guardians to children in their care
- Nonprofit organizations seeking counsel and assistance in corporate and governance matters

EXPERIENCE

- > Assisted in researching and writing a report for the Legal Services Corporation on innovative, model pro bono programs and practices around the nation.
- > Led a litigation team challenging the practice of administrative transfers from juvenile detention facilities to adult prisons without due process; secured the return of one young man from adult prison to the juvenile facility where the court had originally placed him, which laid the groundwork for establishing a right to counsel and other due process protections in such proceedings.
- > Obtained asylum for a number of minors who fled from San Pedro Sula in Honduras, the city with the highest murder rate in the world.
- > Participated in managing a firmwide hotline to answer questions from voters during the 2012 presidential election. Assisted callers in three states, including New Jersey, where the demand for assistance was overwhelming in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.
- > Represented a same-sex couple seeking custody of their twin daughters in a 34-day trial that spanned more than a year. The court awarded custody to the fathers, holding that they were better prepared than the birth mother to raise children who would be proud of themselves and their family.
- > Represented leading national immigration organizations as amici and achieved a Supreme Court of New Jersey victory on behalf of immigrant children that clarifies the distinct roles of state courts and federal immigration officials in protecting minors from deportation to homes where they have no fit caretaker.
- > Represented leading national Latino and Asian organizations in an amicus brief to the Supreme Court of the United States demonstrating that an Arizona law requiring documentary proof of citizenship to vote impeded registration by naturalized citizens in violation of federal law. Helped persuade the Court to invalidate the law.
- > Represented legal New Jersey residents of Latino descent in a federal constitutional challenge to nonconsensual, warrantless, predawn raids of their homes by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) as part of its "Operation Return to Sender." Withstood repeated motions to dismiss and defended an interlocutory appeal on qualified immunity in the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. Ultimately settled on terms favorable for the clients.
- > Served as a Lowenstein fellow at Essex-Newark Legal Services representing tenants in eviction cases. Briefed and argued a precedent-setting appeal holding that recipients of federal housing subsidies are entitled to a hearing before the termination of their benefits.

- > Successfully advocated for the passage of a juvenile justice reform bill, which reduces the number of youth subject to incarceration in adult prisons and eliminates solitary confinement as a form of punishment in juvenile facilities in New Jersey.
- > Achieved a Supreme Court of New Jersey victory that reversed the criminal conviction of a young man serving a 64-year sentence based upon a confession that was obtained in violation of his constitutional right to remain silent.
- > Helped draft an amicus brief to the Supreme Court of the United States on behalf of 28 prominent Latino and Asian organizations. The court issued a decision protecting the voting rights of naturalized citizens.
- > Represented 21 church-state scholars in an amicus brief to the Supreme Court of the United States arguing that the Establishment Clause prevents the government from allowing for-profit corporations to shift health care costs to their employees by claiming a religious exemption from the Affordable Care Act's contraception mandate.
- > Briefed and argued a criminal appeal involving the admission of an involuntary confession.

HONORS & AWARDS

- > **New Jersey Super Lawyers (2019)**
Recognized for work in Appellate
- > **New Jersey Rising Stars (2013-2018)**
Recognized for work in Appellate, Legal Aid/Pro Bono and Civil Rights
- > **National Legal Aid & Defender Association (NLADA): Beacon of Justice Award (2020)**
Recognizing the firm's pro bono efforts in support of immigrants fighting unlawful deportation, family separations, and wrongful denial of Special Immigrant Juvenile Status

NEWS & INSIGHTS

Publications

- > October 5, 2020
"Residential Evictions: What Tenants Need to Know," *Lowenstein Sandler LLP*
Catherine Weiss, Natalie J. Kraner, Christina Holder
- > October 5, 2020
"Residential Evictions: What Homeowners Need to Know," *Lowenstein Sandler LLP*
Catherine Weiss, Natalie J. Kraner, Christina Holder
- > October 5, 2020
"Residential Evictions: What Homeowners Need to Know (Spanish)," *Lowenstein Sandler LLP*
Catherine Weiss, Natalie J. Kraner, Christina Holder
- > October 5, 2020
"Residential Evictions: What Tenants Need to Know (Spanish)," *Lowenstein Sandler LLP*
Catherine Weiss, Natalie J. Kraner, Christina Holder
- > April 2, 2020
"2019 Pro Bono Report," *Lowenstein Center for the Public Interest*
Catherine Weiss, Natalie J. Kraner, Christina Holder
- > April 2, 2019
"2018 Pro Bono Report," *Lowenstein Center for the Public Interest*
Catherine Weiss, Natalie J. Kraner
- > March 28, 2018
"2017 Pro Bono Report," *Lowenstein Center for the Public Interest*
Catherine Weiss, Natalie J. Kraner
- > October 2017
"Preventing Unjust Eviction," *New Jersey Lawyer*
Natalie J. Kraner, Catherine Weiss
- > July 2016
"51-Jurisdiction Survey on Juvenile Solitary Confinement Rules," *Lowenstein Pro Bono Reports*
Natalie J. Kraner

In the Media

- > June 24-25, 2020
The American Lawyer, Law360, Bloomberg Law, Above the Law, The Global Legal Post, and Lawyer Monthly note the formation of the **Law Firm Antiracism Alliance** (LFAA).

LFAA is a coalition of more than 125 law firms (including Lowenstein Sandler) that will unite with other organizations in an ongoing effort to identify and dismantle systemic racism in the law, including in law firms, as well as in government institutions. LFAA aims to leverage the resources of the private bar in partnership with legal services organizations to amplify the voices of communities and individuals oppressed by racism, to better use the law as a vehicle for change that benefits communities of color, and to promote racial equity in the law. *(subscription required to view certain content)* [View Lowenstein's news announcement about LFAA.](#)

> January 10-13, 2020

Natalie J. Kraner, senior counsel for the **Lowenstein Center for the Public Interest**, is featured in **NJ Spotlight** and on **NJTV News** in a segment about Governor Murphy's Task Force for the Continued Transformation of Youth Justice in New Jersey, of which Kraner is an appointed member. At a meeting at Barringer High School in Newark, Kraner and other task force members heard from students, community leaders, and others as part of its mission to create recommendations for making New Jersey's youth detention facilities more therapeutic and to reduce recidivism. Kraner provides statistics on the state's current juvenile justice process: "Data that we reviewed reveals that the number of JJC residents [juvenile offenders] who are currently being denied parole [and who] serve their entire terms approaches 70%. ... That is far higher than both incarcerated adults and incarcerated youth in other states. This has been a trend where that percentage has been increasing over the last 10 years." Kraner also remarks on the current system's racial disparity: "White juveniles [are] significantly more likely to be granted early release than their black counterparts."

> December 20, 2019

Catherine Weiss, partner and Chair, and **Natalie J. Kraner**, senior public interest counsel, of the **Lowenstein Sandler Center for the Public Interest** are both featured in a story in **NJ Spotlight** about the legal and personal struggles families face when they are separated at the border. The story focuses on a mother and her young son, represented by Lowenstein Sandler, who were reunited after a six-week separation in the summer of 2018. This family was brought back together under the preliminary injunction in *Ms. L v. ICE*, a class action challenging family separation. Weiss notes that more than 5,000 children have been separated from their parents since July 1, 2017, including 1,100 who were separated despite the injunction in *Ms. L v. ICE*, which orders family reunification unless a parent is "unfit or presents a danger to the child." Kraner disputes the government's assertion that these ongoing separations protect the child's safety. "We've seen cases where mom or dad had a conviction for a \$5 destruction of property 20 years ago where they're separating the child," she said. "That really has nothing to do with safety."

> May 28, 2019

Natalie J. Kraner is quoted in **NJBIZ** in an article discussing a partnership program for law firms working with the New Jersey Office of the Public Defender to provide indigent clients with pro bono representation. Kraner praises the program for presenting associates with the chance to develop skills in appellate advocacy.

> April 29, 2019

Reuters and **Law360** highlight Lowenstein Sandler's filing of a class action lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey against various federal agencies and their leaders on behalf of young immigrants wrongfully disqualified from receiving Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS). According to the suit, the plaintiffs' SIJS applications were unfairly denied because they were between 18 and 21 years old when they obtained child welfare findings from a state juvenile court, a necessary predicate to applying for SIJS. At least 100 other immigrants in New Jersey are facing similar denials. (The Lowenstein team included: **Catherine Weiss**, **Natalie J. Kraner**, **Craig Dashiell**, **Eric R. Suggs**, **Tracy F. Buffer**, and **Claudia Lorenzo**.) *(subscription required to view certain content)* [View Lowenstein's news announcement about this case.](#)

> November 12, 2018

The Commerce and Industry Association of New Jersey's (CIANJ) **Business Beat** newsletter notes that the Lowenstein Center for the Public Interest received a 2018 Community Leadership Award from HANDS, Inc. (Housing and Neighborhood Development Services, Inc.). HANDS bestowed the award in recognition of the significant legal advocacy the Center has provided to advance HANDS' urban revitalization efforts. [View Lowenstein's news announcement about this transaction.](#)

> May 30, 2018

The **National Women's Law Center** (NWLC) highlights Lowenstein Sandler as counsel in an amicus brief filed by NWLC and 40+ organizations urging the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit to uphold a nationwide court order blocking two federal rules that allow corporations to deny insurance coverage for birth control.

> May 4, 2015

Pro Bono Counsel **Natalie Kraner** is quoted in **The New York Times** regarding a class action lawsuit filed against the state of Illinois to limit the use of solitary confinement as a punitive measure in juvenile correctional facilities.

EDUCATION

- > The George Washington University Law School (J.D. 2005), cum laude, George Washington Scholar; Notes and Projects Editor, *The George Washington Law Review*
- > The College of New Jersey (B.A. 2001), cum laude

ADMISSIONS

- > New York
- > New Jersey