



## Juneau World Affairs Council Forum 2023:

### ***Immigration, Detention and Power: Addressing Bias and Prejudice***

Experts examine problems, conflicts, and solutions to address bias and prejudice in immigration, including paths to healing and reconciliation.

**Sponsored by:** UAS, Coeur Alaska Kensington Mine, Ramada by Wyndham.  
**Poster Original painting by Inari Kylaenen**

## Schedule

### Friday, October 13, 2023

(5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.)

#### **Session I:**

5:00-6:00 p.m. | UAS Egan Lecture Hall

*"The Challenges Faced by Children Arriving to the U.S."*

-with **Prof. Warren Binford**

With record numbers of children and families arriving to the U.S., it is critical to understand why so many children are leaving their home countries, why they are coming to the U.S., and the challenges they face once they arrive. From family separation to child detention to labor trafficking, this talk will be grounded in research that finds extraordinary strength and resilience in the children who cross the U.S.-Mexico border and the reasons why those advantages often disappear within two years in the U.S.

#### **Reception**

6:00-7:00 p.m. | UAS Glacier View Room

Join us in welcoming our guests.

### Saturday, October 14, 2023

(10:00 a.m.-5:15 p.m.)

#### **Session II:**

10:00-11:00 a.m. | UAS Egan Lecture Hall

*"Reclaiming our Sense of Humanity After the Weaponization of Public Health Through the Use of Title 42 at the U.S.-Mexico Border."*

-with **Dr. William Arrocha**

On March 20, 2020, the fundamental right to seek a better life in the U.S., including seeking asylum under international and domestic law, was denied at the U.S.-Mexico border. Migrants were turned away and "expelled" back to their home countries or Mexico. These expulsions were carried out under a little-known provision of U.S. health law—section 265 of Title 42—which the former Trump administration invoked to achieve its long-desired goal of shutting the border to those who the former president considered as "vermin" who would "infest our country." Over 2 million individuals were expelled, losing their dream of a better life. Although Title 42 is no longer in place, new restrictive policies seem to keep the border closed for most migrants searching for a safe haven. It is essential to orderly management of migration flows; however, the former should not be based on prejudice and fear from those who still see the U.S. as a beacon of freedom and opportunity.

## **Saturday, October 14, 2023 (continued)**

### **Session III:**

11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. | UAS Egan Lecture Hall

*"Migration, Power, and Bias: a Local Response to a Global Reality."*

-with **Heidi Cerneka**

This presentation will address the global reality of power and immigration through a grounding in the reality on the ground in El Paso, Texas. In other words, bias and power issues are not unique or exclusive to the U.S. southern border, although we live with them daily at the Texas border. The world population is moving and shifting. It has since recorded history, and is going to continue. How do we respond for a more just world and stronger global community, and how we do that from our local reality in El Paso?

### ***Lunch break***

12:30 – 1:30 p.m. | UAS Campus

### **Session IV:**

1:45-2:45 p.m. | UAS Egan Lecture Hall

*"Establishing Compassionate Immigration Policy and Practices."*

-with **Ari Cowan**

This multimedia presentation explores compassion's role in developing and executing practical, humane, and effective immigration policies and practices. Using a new, demonstrated public health-based model, we will explore the role individual and collective power dynamics play in the cultivation and practice of bias and prejudice directed toward immigrants. We will also consider ways of overcoming these shortcomings using demonstrated compassion-based approaches. (A list of online resources related to this presentation will be provided.)

### **Session V:**

3:00-4:00 p.m. | UAS Egan Lecture Hall

*"From the Frontlines to the Headlines: Perspectives on U.S. Immigration Law and Policy."*

-with **Dr. Mara Kimmel**

This presentation will discuss the complexity of working with immigrants and refugees - an overview of terms, legal frameworks, and unique challenges created by trauma, language access, and the lack of available resources (including lawyers) to help. Dr. Kimmel will also speak about what local communities can do using Welcoming America and Welcoming Anchorage as examples of international, national, and local initiatives designed to promote integration and belonging.

### **Session VI:**

4:15-5:15 p.m. | UAS Egan Lecture Hall

**Panel Discussion** -with all five of our guest speakers, taking questions from the audience and each other.

## Speakers



**Professor Warren Binford** is an internationally recognized children's rights scholar and advocate. She is the inaugural W.H. Lea for Justice Endowed Chair in Pediatric Law, Ethics, & Policy at the University of Colorado, where she is Professor of Pediatrics (with tenure) in the School of Medicine and Professor of Law (with courtesy) in the CU Law School. Professor Binford has published over 80 academic articles, essays, book chapters, and op-eds and given more than 100 media interviews to outlets including the New York Times, CNN, The New Yorker, the BBC,

and many others.

Between 2017 and 2020, Professor Binford participated in numerous site visits at the U.S.-Mexico border where thousands of children arriving to the U.S. were kept by the U.S. government, including at the Wal-Mart in Brownsville, Texas, the tent city in Tornillo, Texas, and the Clint Border Patrol Facility outside of El Paso. She was part of the team of lawyers and doctors who discovered over 350 children being held at the Clint facility in a warehouse, a loading dock, and concrete cells in June 2019. In 2021, she co-published *Hear My Voice/Escucha Mi Voz*, based on the children's sworn testimonies collected during that site visit. The book has received at least 37 awards and distinctions.

Both a Fulbright Scholar in 2012 and the inaugural Fulbright Canada-Palix Foundation Distinguished Visiting Chair in Brain Science and Child and Family Health and Wellness in 2015, Professor Binford holds a B.A., *summa cum laude* with distinction, and an Ed.M. from Boston University and a J.D. from Harvard Law School.



**Dr. William Arrocha** is an Associate Professor at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies. His research focuses on international migration and human rights. His latest co-edited book, *Migrations and Diasporas: Struggling Between Inclusion and Exclusion*, published by Emerald, UK (2023), provides a means for understanding the plight of migrants and diasporas as they move through a world divided between those committed to welcoming them into their communities and those who perceive them as a problem or threat. Among a lengthy list of publications

focusing on the need to ensure the fundamental rights of migrants, he also co-edited, with Steven W. Bender, *Compassionate Migration and Regional Policy in the Americas*, published by Palgrave Macmillan (2017). He has consulted with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Association of Caribbean States and has been an advisor to the governments of Mexico and Canada.



**Heidi Cerneka** is an immigration attorney who works on migration, women, and human trafficking in El Paso, Texas (with Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center) and São Paulo, Brazil (with the Instituto Terra, Trabalho e Cidadania). Her 22+ years of living in Africa, South America, and Central America inform this focus, which bridges advocacy for justice-involved women, migration, and human trafficking. She is a Maryknoll Lay Missioner, bringing a faith perspective to her advocacy and challenging dehumanizing structures. Her work connects her to Guatemala, Kenya, Mexico, Brazil, and the Mexico-U.S. border, where she continues to learn from activists and migrants each step of the way.



**Ari Cowan** is the Director-General of the International Center for Compassionate Organizations (ICCO), headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky. For his work to end violence, Mr. Cowan received the National Public Health Award from the United States affiliate of the international physician organization that received the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize. He was cited — along with Nobel Prize recipient and former President Jimmy Carter and 1980 Nobel Prize recipient Adolfo Pérez Esquivel (among others) — for his assistance in bringing the first public edition of The International Bill of Human Rights to publication. The acclaimed science-fiction author Philip K. Dick called Mr. Cowan “a new and original thinker.”



**Dr. Mara Kimmel** is Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Alaska and has a long career in Alaskan public policy, focused on rights and justice in northern communities. She has been on faculty at the Seattle University School of Law, the University of Alaska Anchorage and Alaska Pacific University. Mara has worked as an immigration attorney and as an advocate for tribal subsistence rights. Previously, Mara has been involved with several Anchorage-based initiatives focused on equity, resilience and combatting human trafficking. She serves on the national board of directors for Welcoming America, on the regional advisory board for the Anti-Defamation League, and as a board member and co-founder of the Alaska Institute for Justice. Mara has a PhD from Central European University, a JD from the University of Minnesota School of Law, a Masters’ degree from the University of Alaska Fairbanks and a Bachelors’ degree from the University of California Berkeley.