

Living 'Illegal': The Human Side of the Story

by **Teresa A. Statler** 

Authored by four Georgia and Florida academics, *Living "Illegal": The Human Face of Unauthorized Immigration* is the story of immigrants' lives—how they manage to live day-to-day in the shadows, often in anti-immigrant communities, as well as how they enrich those same communities. The authors have chosen to focus on undocumented Mexicans, Guatemalans, and Brazilians; the book is an eye-opener in setting forth their daily struggles. For an immigration lawyer, however, there is little that is new or surprising here with regard to the authors' portrayal of those living under the radar of local and immigration authorities.

Refreshingly, the authors make it clear that immigrants enter the United States illegally because there is no "line" in which to stand to obtain a visa legally. They mention the backlogs in the family preference categories and how this has contributed to illegal immigration. They also note that "ultimately, when enough people from a single area make the choice to migrate, a network of micro connections forms and this network perpetuates further migration"—including how immigrant churches of varying denominations

have become a unifying force both for the immigrants and for communities at large.

The most interesting chapter, "Migrants Mobilize: Finding a Voice in Local and National Debates," focuses on: (1) Jupiter, FL's new center for day laborers and how that came about in a town that was quite polarized on the issue of immigration; and (2) the young DREAMers in Gwinnett County, GA, who created a "Trail of Dreams," a nonviolent civil protest in the form of a five-month walk from Miami to Washington, D.C.

In conclusion, the authors state that "ethical and moral principles" should guide lawmakers in enacting "intelligent and humane" immigration legal reform. They urge political leaders and elected officials to overcome the racism and xenophobia that has been evident at various times in our nation's history, including the present, and to "take special care not to



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WHAT'S HAPPENING!

KLASKO, RULON, STOCK & SELTZER, LLP celebrates its 10th anniversary with relocating to a larger office at 1601 Market Street in Philadelphia.

Mid-South Chapter member **L. PATRICIA ICE** has received a community service award from the Magnolia Bar Association for her immigration work in Mississippi.

Central Florida Chapter member **ELIZABETH RICCI** has successfully represented, pro bono, Vietnam-era veteran Mario Hernandez in his plight for U.S. citizenship.

Southern California Chapter member **KWANG-YI GER GALE** has joined the business immigration practice group at Tonkon Torp LLP in Portland, OR.

repeat the mistakes of the past and succumb to the temptation of scapegoating immigrants."

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