

Pro Bono and Community Efforts

KEEPING A FAMILY TOGETHER

A native of Montenegro, in the former Yugoslavia, resided and regularly worked in the United States for the past 15 years. The U.S. government initiated deportation proceedings against him because he overstayed his visa and was in the U.S. without authorization. During the hearing, the Immigration Judge recognized that his deportation would result in exceptional and extremely unusual hardship for his wife, stepdaughter, and parents. However, the judge agreed with the deportation ruling, finding that the client allegedly bribed his former wife and gave false testimony and therefore lacked the required good moral character.

VNF appealed the Immigration Judge's decision on behalf of the client. The Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) reversed the decision and held that there was no support in the record to find that his offer of money to his former wife was a bribe. The BIA also held that the alleged false testimony did not preclude good moral character, because it was not given for the purpose of obtaining an immigration benefit (as required by the relevant statute).

Without this victory, the client would have been deported to a country that is no longer the one he left. His wife and step-daughter, both of whom are U.S. citizens and have no ties to the former Yugoslavia, and his aging parents, who also reside in the U.S., would have lost the economic and emotional support that he provides them.

(Above image dramatized - does not portray client)