

LAW & SOCIAL POLICY

★ LEGACY AWARD ★

PRESENTED BY ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FUNDERS

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Make The Road New Jersey to Receive 2024 Law & Social Policy Legacy Award

\$10,000 awarded to organization working to build the power of immigrants and low-income workers

WASHINGTON — Economic Opportunity Funders (EOF) today named [Make the Road New Jersey](#) (MRNJ) the recipient of the 2024 Law & Social Policy Legacy Award.

Established in 2020, the annual award recognizes organizations defending and advocating for low-wage workers' rights and aims to increase knowledge of this work in the philanthropic community.

MRNJ was selected based on its strong record of advancing systemic change for immigrants and low-wage workers in New Jersey through litigation, policy advocacy, education, and community organizing. MRNJ builds the power of immigrant and working-class communities to achieve dignity and respect. Each year, the organization mobilizes tens of thousands of people to take action in support of immigrant and workers' rights policies in New Jersey and beyond. Founded in 2014, the membership-based organization has won more than 18 campaigns that have helped more than one million New Jerseyans out of poverty.

"We are incredibly honored to be the 2024 recipient of the Law & Social Policy Legacy Award," said Sara Cullinane, director of Make the Road New Jersey. "On behalf of the members of Make the Road New Jersey who fight day in and day out to win respect and dignity in the workplace and in their communities, we thank the Economic Opportunity Funders for this important recognition."

MRNJ was one of 11 strong nominations for the \$10,000 award. Nominees were evaluated on three criteria: significance, collaborative approach, and systemic impact.

MRNJ's work spans each of these categories. It has significantly improved the lives of immigrants and low-wage workers, involves direct and sustained collaboration with community members and leaders, and has transformed the state's system to raise labor standards and expand access to economic opportunity for all residents.

"The selection committee was inspired by Make the Road New Jersey's people-centered approach to achieving victories for the state's low-wage workers and immigrant community," said Cema Siegel, co-director of EOF. "MRNJ combines powerful community and workplace organizing with legal strategies to win groundbreaking change led by immigrants and working class people of color. Their work is a true testament to the systemic change that's possible when you build the power of a community."

MRNJ members choose the policy campaigns and priorities for the organization each year and have played a key role in winning more than a dozen pro-worker and immigrant policies since 2014. In 2023, MRNJ fought to pass the first-in-the-nation comprehensive Temp Workers' Bill of Rights. This historic state law ensures that staffing agencies provide only safe and free transportation to and from worksites, requires transparency from staffing agencies and their corporate clients on terms of work, prohibits predatory fees charged to temp workers by their employers, and requires temp workers receive pay and benefits equal to that of their direct-hire coworkers.

MRNJ also organized to win a landmark investment in legal defense of detained immigrants facing deportation – the largest initial investment towards universal representation for detainees of any state in the nation. Currently, the state allocates more than \$8.1 million in aid to provide families with critical legal services.

MRNJ will be recognized and receive the award at EOF's [2024 Annual Budget and Tax Briefing](#). The \$10,000 [Law & Social Policy Award](#) will be given by EOF with support from the [Public Welfare Foundation](#) annually until 2030 as a part of its legacy investment in advancing workers' rights. Previous winners of the award include the New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty (NMCLP), Northwest Workers' Justice Project (NWJP), and Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Inc. (CDM).

Learn more about MRNJ at www.maketheroadnj.org and @maketheroadnj.

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Established in 1992, [Economic Opportunity Funders](#) is a network of national, regional, and local level funders working to advance economic equity and opportunity in the United States. We believe in building an economy that works for all, regardless of race, ethnicity, immigration status, education, income, religion, gender identity, disability, or age. We support a strong public sector and policies that create a healthy, fair, and just economy where opportunity and prosperity are broadly shared.

EOF focuses its work on three key and intersecting areas: poverty and opportunity, protecting and supporting workers, and tax and budget policies. We provide a platform for funders to share information, exchange ideas and best practice, and collaborate around identified areas of interest.