

**Jack Wasserman Memorial Award**  
***For Excellence in Litigation in the Field of Immigration Law***

**2015 Recipient:**       **Trina Realmuto**  
                                  **National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild**  
                                  **Boston, MA**

Trina Realmuto has been seeking justice for immigrants by defending their rights in federal court throughout her career. As an associate at Van Der Hout, Brigagliano & Nightingale from 1997 to 2001, she concentrated on removal defense and complex federal court litigation. Subsequently, while living abroad, she represented noncitizens seeking visas to the United States. In 2003, she began a long association with the American Immigration Council's legal department, playing an instrumental role in many of the Council's litigation efforts. Since 2009, Trina has been with the National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild, where she serves as Litigation Director. In this capacity, Trina engages in a range of impact litigation, including affirmative and class action suits, amicus briefs, and individual representation.

In 2005, Trina and Beth Werlin co-lead a national litigation effort to strike down a regulation barring noncitizens outside the United States from exercising their statutory rights to pursue reopening or reconsideration of their immigration cases. Together, they succeeded in striking the regulation in seven circuits, and, to date, all but one court of appeals have invalidated the regulation

In 2006, Trina and a small litigation team began an eight year effort to render a Ninth Circuit-wide class of noncitizens eligible for adjustment of status; the suit ultimately settled in 2014, *Duran Gonzales v. U.S. Department of Homeland Sec.*, 712 F.3d 1271 (9th Cir. 2013). Collaborating with the NYU Immigrant Rights Clinic, Trina served as co-counsel in *Nat'l Immigration Project of the Nat'l Lawyers Guild v. United States Dep't of Homeland Sec.*, the Freedom of Information Act litigation that revealed the Solicitor General's misrepresentation to the Supreme Court about the existence of a DHS policy for returning prevailing litigants. In 2014, Trina spearheaded the organization of a nationwide litigation team that sued on behalf of mothers and children detained in Artesia, New Mexico.

Trina has successfully represented amicus curiae in removal-related cases, including challenges to immigration judge jurisdiction over bond proceedings (*Matter of Cerda Reyes*, 26 I&N Dec. 528 (BIA 2015)), immigration judge jurisdiction over adjustment applications covered by INA § 204(j) (*Perez-Vargas v. Gonzales*, 478 F.3d 191 (4th Cir. 2007)), unauthorized restrictions on certain foreign physicians seeking to adjust status (*Schneider et al. v. Chertoff*, 450 F.3d 944 (9th Cir. 2006)), and the retroactive application of the reinstatement of removal statute (*Valdez-Sanchez v. Gonzales*, 485 F.3d 1084 (10th Cir. 2007)). Trina regularly mentors attorneys who are litigating reinstatement cases, challenging particularly serious crime findings, seeking judicial stays of removal, filing motions to reopen, trying to return their client to the U.S., and fighting expedited removal, and frequently represents amicus curiae in these types of cases.

In recent years, Trina has engaged in litigation challenging negligence, abuse, and misconduct by immigration officers and state police. She has successfully represented individuals seeking compensatory and injunctive relief under the Federal Tort Claims Act, *Bivens*, and Section 1983 for racially motivated arrests, excessive force, unlawful detention, and wrongful deportation. Throughout her career, Trina has authored numerous litigation-focused practice advisories. She also is an active member of the Supreme Court Working Group.