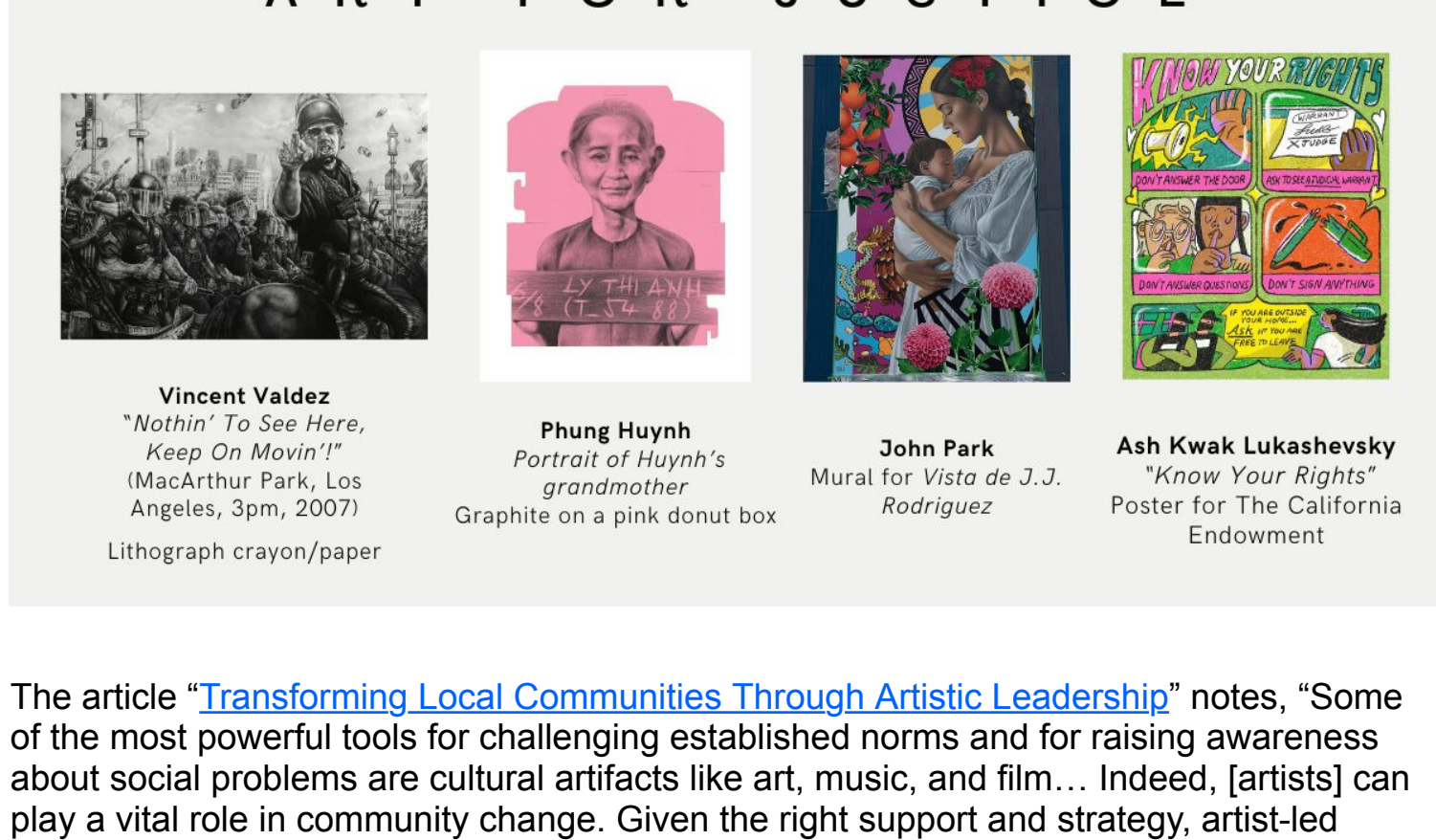


Dear Belinda,

Happy August! We hope you've been enjoying your summer and have had time to unwind. Rest is resistance. The fight for justice isn't over and it's important to take time to recharge. This month, we are featuring our third annual **#ArtForJustice** campaign on social media, a series celebrating impactful artists — with a focus on BIPOC, women, LGBTQIA+, disabled, indigenous, and older artists — who use their creativity to inspire hope and promote socioeconomic justice. Below are a few examples of artists we've featured.



The article "[Transforming Local Communities Through Artistic Leadership](#)" notes, "Some of the most powerful tools for challenging established norms and for raising awareness about social problems are cultural artifacts like art, music, and film... Indeed, [artists] can play a vital role in community change. Given the right support and strategy, artist-led efforts can empower communities to craft desirable futures, make social issues visible beyond the community, and promote long-term investments in local transformations."

Follow our social media accounts at the bottom of the news digest and see the inspirational works from the artists we're highlighting!

Our Work Changes Lives: Landmark Tenant Victory

"Mali," a tenant in Los Angeles originally from rural Thailand, faced unimaginable hardship while living in a rent-controlled apartment. With only a fourth grade education and earning a living by recycling bottles and cans, she was vulnerable — but resilient.

In 2018, her apartment was placed into the Rent Escrow Account Program (REAP), a city program for substandard housing. Instead of making repairs, her landlord hired a "fixer" who harassed Mali for months. While Mali was at court seeking a restraining order, the landlord removed all her belongings and stored them in his own home. The next day, he stripped the apartment of its kitchen, bathroom, carpet, and even the front door.

With nowhere safe to live, Mali hid in a neighbor's unit and later lived in a closet, using plastic bags for basic needs. A neighbor helped her file a complaint, prompting emergency repairs — but the landlord changed the locks and refused to give her a key until LAPD intervened.

When Mali replaced her essentials, the landlord dumped some of her belongings in the common area — then tried to evict her for "leaving trash." Bet Tzedek defended her, and the eviction was dismissed.

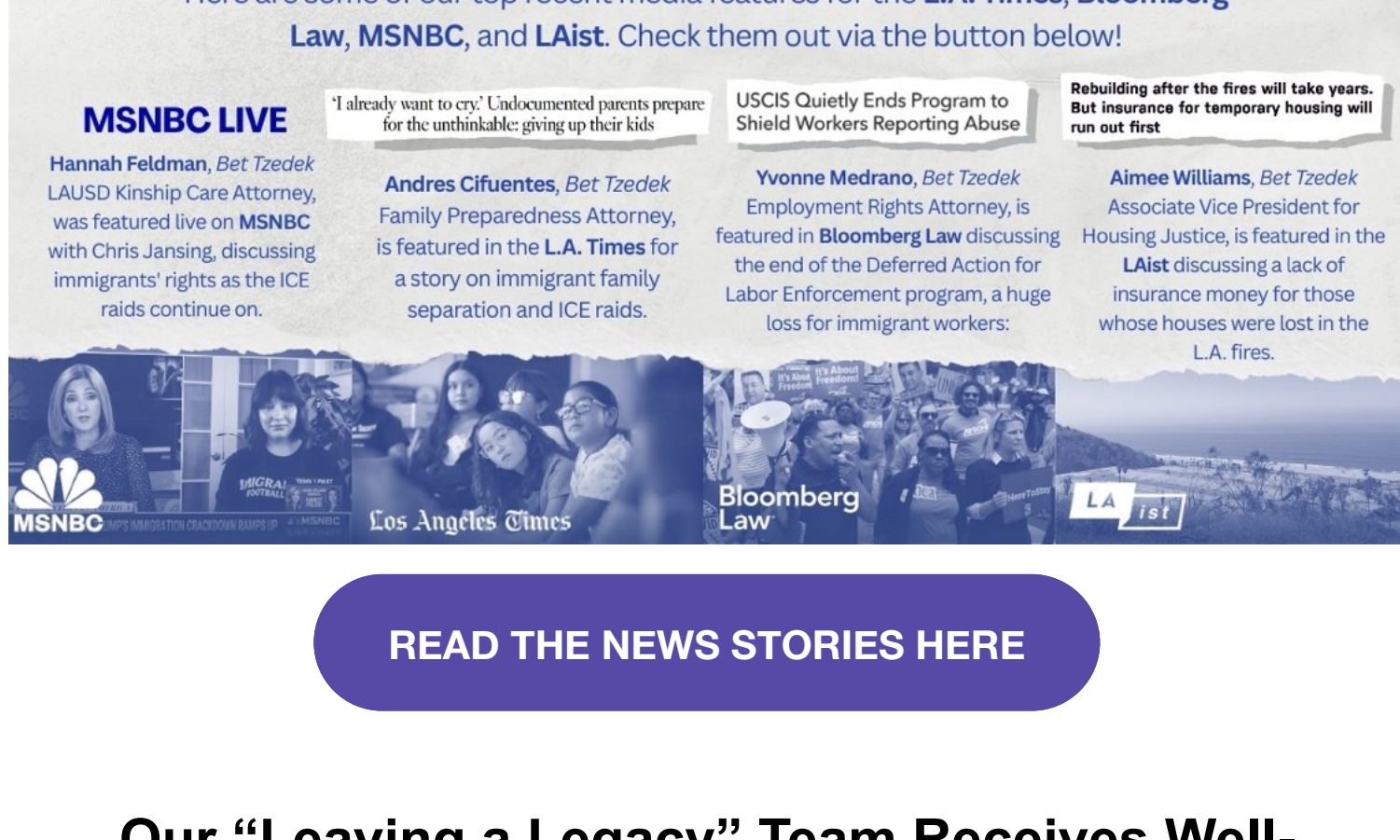
The harassment didn't stop. The landlord sought a permit to "reconfigure" the unit, which would have forced Mali out. Bet Tzedek, with pro bono counsel, filed a lawsuit. Over five years, the landlord cycled through three attorneys — one was even disbarred. Ultimately, the court entered a default judgment in Mali's favor.

The outcome: \$400,000 for emotional distress, \$800,000 in punitive damages, \$77,000 in attorney's fees, plus civil penalties, statutory and treble damages, and injunctive relief.

This case is a powerful reminder of the importance of legal advocacy and community support in protecting vulnerable tenants. Mali's courage and persistence — and the legal team's dedication — led to a landmark victory.

Bet Tzedek in the Media as Thought Leaders

Bet Tzedek is frequently featured in the news as **experts in our industry**. Some recent highlights include interviews and features in **MSNBC**, **L.A. Times**, **Bloomberg Law**, and **LAist**. Our attorneys and legal experts discuss everything from immigration rights and safety amid the ICE raids to insurance companies not fairly compensating those who lost their homes in the L.A. fires. Take a look at the various features below!



Bet Tzedek is Frequently Featured in the News!

Here are some of our top recent media features for the **L.A. Times**, **Bloomberg Law**, **MSNBC**, and **LAist**. Check them out via the button below!

MSNBC LIVE
Hannah Feldman, Bet Tzedek LAUSD Kinship Care Attorney, was featured live on **MSNBC** with Chris Jansing, discussing immigrants' rights as the ICE raids continue on.

"I already want to cry." Undocumented parents prepare for the unthinkable: giving up their kids

Andres Cifuentes, Bet Tzedek Family Preparedness Attorney, is featured in the **L.A. Times** for a story on immigrant family separation and ICE raids.

USCIS Quietly Ends Program to Shield Workers Reporting Abuse

Yvonne Medrano, Bet Tzedek Employment Rights Attorney, is featured in **Bloomberg Law** discussing the end of the Deferred Action for Labor Enforcement program, a huge loss for immigrant workers.

Rebuilding after the fires will take years. But insurance for temporary housing will run out first

Almee Williams, Bet Tzedek Associate Vice President for Housing Justice, is featured in the **LAist** discussing a lack of insurance money for those whose houses were lost in the L.A. fires.

MSNBC **Los Angeles Times** **Bloomberg Law** **LAist**

READ THE NEWS STORIES HERE

Our "Leaving a Legacy" Team Receives Well-Deserved Award

Congratulations to the members of Bet Tzedek's [Leaving a Legacy](#) program! The program received a **National Association of Counties Achievement Award**, presented annually to recognize innovative, effective, and replicable county government programs that improve services for residents. As noted by our colleagues at the L.A. County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, our primary partner in this program, "This recognition is a testament to the impact of our collective work and the strong partnership behind this initiative."

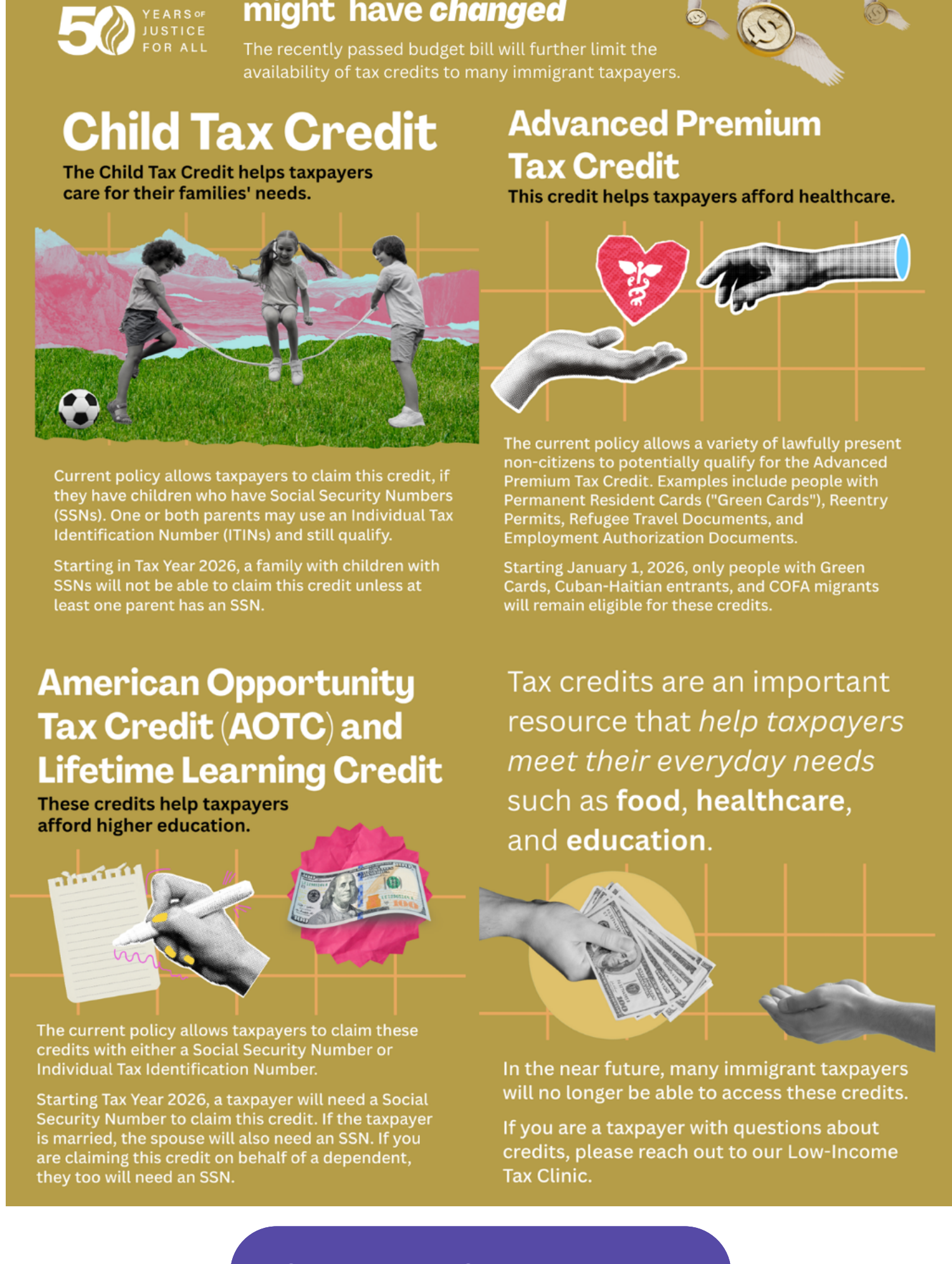
Congratulations **Anna Darr**, **Dominique Sanz-David**, **Bertha Sanchez Hayden**, the members of the estate planning group that envisioned and brought this program to life, and everyone that helped support it along the way.

The **Santa Monica Daily Press** shared this victory in an article, "L.A. County Wins National Awards for Four People-First Programs."

READ THE ARTICLE HERE

Be Aware of Upcoming Changes to Your Eligibility for Tax Credits

The recently passed budget bill will further limit the availability of tax credits to many immigrant taxpayers. **Starting January 1, 2026**, only people with Legal Permanent Residency Status, Cuban-Haitian entrants, and COFA migrants will remain eligible for these credits. Starting Tax Year 2026, a taxpayer will need a Social Security Number to claim this credit. If the taxpayer is married, the spouse will also need an SSN. If you are claiming this credit on behalf of a dependent, they too will need an SSN.



BET TZEDEK 50 YEARS OF JUSTICE FOR ALL

Your tax credit eligibility might have changed

The recently passed budget bill will further limit the availability of tax credits to many immigrant taxpayers.

Child Tax Credit
The Child Tax Credit helps taxpayers care for their families' needs.

Current policy allows taxpayers to claim this credit, if they have children who have Social Security Numbers (SSNs). One or both parents may use an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITINs) and still qualify.

Starting in Tax Year 2026, a family with children with SSNs will not be able to claim this credit unless at least one parent has an SSN.

Advanced Premium Tax Credit
This credit helps taxpayers afford healthcare.

The current policy allows a variety of lawfully present non-citizens to potentially qualify for the Advanced Premium Tax Credit. Examples include people with Permanent Resident Cards ("Green Cards"), Reentry Permits, Refugee Travel Documents, and Employment Authorization Documents.

Starting January 1, 2026, only people with Green Cards, Cuban-Haitian entrants, and COFA migrants will remain eligible for these credits.

American Opportunity Tax Credit (AOTC) and Lifetime Learning Credit
These credits help taxpayers afford higher education.

The current policy allows taxpayers to claim these credits with either a Social Security Number or Individual Tax Identification Number.

Starting Tax Year 2026, a taxpayer will need a Social Security Number to claim this credit. If the taxpayer is married, the spouse will also need an SSN. If you are claiming this credit on behalf of a dependent, they too will need an SSN.

Tax credits are an important resource that *help taxpayers meet their everyday needs* such as **food**, **healthcare**, and **education**.

In the near future, many immigrant taxpayers will no longer be able to access these credits. If you are a taxpayer with questions about credits, please reach out to our Low-Income Tax Clinic.

GET HELP FROM BET TZEDEK

What We're Reading: "There Is No Place for Us"

Brian Goldstone's [There Is No Place for Us: Working and Homeless in America](#) offers a gripping, deeply reported look into the lives of working families experiencing homelessness in Atlanta — families who hold full-time jobs yet sleep in cars or extended-stay motels. This insightful narrative resonates powerfully with Bet Tzedek's [Preventing and Ending Homelessness Project](#) (PEHP) team who provide legal services to unsheltered individuals and those at risk, including eviction defense, public benefits access, and record expungement.

Goldstone's work underscores the systemic failures that Bet Tzedek confronts daily: unaffordable housing, wage theft, and the criminalization of poverty. As we advocate for housing justice in Los Angeles, this book reminds us that homelessness is not a personal failure — it's a policy failure. **It's a call to treat housing as a human right, not a privilege.**

JOIN OUR FIGHT FOR JUSTICE: WORK WITH US!

See our job listings below, and share them with your network!

Join the Bet Tzedek Team!

Have a passion for helping underserved residents in the community? Please apply for a chance to take a leadership position with dedicated staff and volunteers who help over 60,000 people per year.

Here are some critical positions we need to fill:

[ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT: JUSTICE FOR TAXPAYERS, WORKERS, AND SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS](#)

[DIRECTING ATTORNEY: HOMEOWNER PROTECTION](#)

[DIRECTING ATTORNEY: ECONOMIC JUSTICE](#)

***See all job listings by clicking the button below**

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PLEASE DONATE

VOLUNTEER

Have anything you'd like us to add to future newsletters? Respond to this email.

[View this email in your browser.](#)

