

## 2018 Distinguished Young Alumna

# Nicole T.S. Cortés, AB '06, MSW '12, JD '12

Co-director, Attorney, The MICA Project



Nicole T.S. Cortés is a co-director and attorney at the Migrant and Immigrant Community Action (MICA) Project. She founded the organization with her law school classmate, Jessica Mayo, in 2011. The MICA Project is a nonprofit organization that works with immigrants to overcome barriers to justice. It utilizes legal services, organizing, advocacy and education to promote the voice and human dignity of immigrant communities. Nicole is fluent in Spanish and works with clients on a wide variety of immigration law matters including deportation defense, asylum, and other humanitarian relief. She heads the MICA Project's outreach efforts to the Latino community in the form of educational presentations and workshops.

While at Washington University, Nicole was engaged with the Immigration Law Society and other student groups focused on public interest law. Her commitment to service developed through work with grassroots organizations in Mexico and Chile, social work practica, and internships with organizations such as Interfaith Legal Services for Immigrants. She has experience working with community partners, coalition building, community outreach, and program coordination and evaluation. She is also skilled at addressing the non-legal needs of her clients in the context of immigration law. Nicole is passionate about challenging and dismantling systems of oppression and working alongside her clients in their journeys toward justice.

Nicole received the Graduate of the Last Decade (GOLD) MSW Award in 2015 from the George Warren Brown School of Social Work and the Gerry and Bob Virgil Ethic of Service Award from the Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement in 2013. She remains involved with the university through service to the Brown School and School of Law. Nicole resides in St. Louis with her two young children Sebastian and Noelia.