

## Honduran Human Rights Activist Is Granted Asylum

AUGUST 29, 2022

Attorneys from Winston & Strawn won asylum for a Honduran man who has defended peasant farmers and the environment in Honduras alongside his mother—a well-known and openly persecuted activist.

Our client fled to the United States in December 2018 because he feared for his life after his family was threatened and two family members were murdered. Our client's mother led numerous protests against a transnational mining company accused of polluting the major source of drinking and agricultural water in their hometown of Tocoa. Consequently, she and her family, including our client, have been subjected to surveillance, harassment, death threats, and violence.

For example, in 2016, our client's half-brother was assassinated shortly after his mother was warned against running for Mayor of Tocoa against a candidate who supported the mining companies and wealthy landowners. A few months later, her ex-husband was gunned down while at home. And in 2018, the Honduran military accused our client's mother of being a criminal—despite her having no criminal record—and identified her children by name and published the address of their family home.



*Our client celebrates his grant of asylum with his family and legal counsel. From left: our client's mother, co-counsel from Sheppard Mullin, our client, our client's father, Houston Associate Renee Wilkerson.*

To this day, our client's mother is subject to ongoing persecution but has chosen to stay in Honduras to fight for human and environmental rights. Our client, however, decided to leave Honduras because he "could not live a normal life because of [his] crippling fear of death." In 2019, shortly after he arrived in Houston, Winston helped him file for asylum and in May of this year, his request was granted. Our client currently lives and works in Houston, where his sister also lives.

The Winston team that worked on this matter included Senior Paralegal **Gloria Martinez**.

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