

## **Asylum for a Survivor of LGBTQ-based Persecution**

Mr. A is a Russian citizen who entered the U.S. in March 2021 and is seeking asylum based on LGBTQ-based persecution he faced in Russia. As a child in a very religious family, it was especially difficult for Mr. A when he realized as a young teenager that he was gay. When he was 15 years old a classmate sexually assaulted him after learning that he was gay and after that he encountered regular bullying in school, including threats, derogatory names, and people throwing rocks at him. He joined the army when he was eighteen. After his army unit discovered he was gay he suffered severe harm, including spitting, shouting, threats, and heavy objects thrown at him. He was attacked by a group of ten to fifteen men, resulting in a concussion, broken nose, and broken lower rib. After the army, Ms. A's siblings learned that he was gay. Most of them accepted him, but one brother attacked him and told the entire family, resulting in threats. In 2017 Mr. A began a relationship with Mr. B, his current partner. They moved in together and suffered death threats and a shooting. Mr. A saw that life in Russia for the LGBTQ+ population was continuing to get worse. He was afraid of what could happen to him and his partner. Mr. A had a tourist visa and escaped to the U.S. His partner will follow soon and they plan to marry. Sanctuary is seeking a pro bono team to represent Mr. A on his journey to obtain asylum. His partner will be a derivative on his asylum application. Mr. A speaks Russian and so the pro bono team will need to include at least one Russian-speaking attorney, or will need to include a Russian-English interpreter. It is best practice to use the same interpreter for every client meeting. Sanctuary has asylum training materials and sample documents for LGBTQ-based persecution cases from Russia, and the team will also have a senior immigration attorney as a mentor on the case. The asylum application must be filed before March 1, 2022, but ideally earlier so that Mr. A can obtain a work permit as soon as possible.