**Marleine Bastien**: (00:01) My name is Marleine Bastien, and I'm the founder and executive director of Family Action Network Movement.

(00:07) Family Action Network Movement is a social advocacy group that provides wraparound services to families, and then organize its membership around issues of importance such as affordable housing, climate gentrification, access to healthcare, which we consider a basic human right, and immigration.

(00:29) So, I've been living here since 1981. I came here as a young refugee. I applied for political asylum, and I did not get it. And as many Haitians who were detained when they came, I was not detained, but many Haitians were detained when they came. They settled in Little Haiti.

(00:50) Little Haiti at the time was a blighted and depressed neighborhood with a lot of drugs and drunkenness and very, blighted. But the Haitian refugees and immigrant have turned it into a very vibrant and dynamic, culturally inclusive neighborhood.

(01:14) And unfortunately, now after living here for so many years, and working hard because Haitians are known to be very hard workers, very entrepreneurial, they have strong belief in education, and most of them came for better lives, not only for themselves, but also for their families.

(01:37) So, of course, living here has been very exciting over the years. As a young refugee who volunteered at the Haitian Refugee Center, two days after I arrived here, I grew up under the Diwali dictatorship. And when I came here, people were basically on the streets every day.

(02:00) At that time, Haitians were detained a mass in complete denial of their basic rights of due process. So, after they settled, of course, they had to find jobs, they have to find schools, employment for themselves and schools for their families. And I was part of that. So I can say that it's been a very, very, very active community because we were on the streets. We had to fight for our rights, we had to fight for our lives. And now we are still fighting. We are fighting to stay because thousands of our members facing deportation to Haiti, and we are fighting to keep the space that we built, which is Little Haiti.

(02:46) But Little Haiti is beautiful. It's wonderful, it's vibrant, it's inclusive, it's sexy. It is very welcoming and warm. When you come to Little Haiti, you are immediately welcome no matter where you are from. And that's what we like about it, and that's what we'd like to preserve.

(03:07) We believe that those who live in this community, they have a right to organize and be their own spokesperson, their own advocate, because we believe that no one can express better what they are going through than those who are directly impacted.

(03:28) So, since our foundation in 1991, we provided wraparound services, but we also organized our members to participate and be active and participate in this so-called democracy that is ours.

(03:48) So, every other week we meet, we have community meetings where our members come to discuss issues of importance. Every other Wednesday, they come to discuss issues pertaining to climate gentrification, climate change. And then if Thursdays, they come to discuss immigration issues because these are issues that are impacting them directly.

(04:06) Also, last night we flew in from DC, from Washington DC where 40 TPS members and their families went to the hill to meet with lawmaker on both sides of the aisles and advocate for permanent fix. Meaning to keep them here, and fight for lawmakers to find a way, so that they can obtain permanent residency trail-basing, a path to citizenship.

(04:31) The TPS recipients have been living here for an average of seven to 30 years. There are truly hundred thousand TPS recipients in the US, and 58,000 of them of are whole Haitian descent.

(04:42) 58,000 of them are of Haitian descent, and then these are people who have been living here for a long time. They are deeply rooted in their neighborhood, in their communities, their employers, employees, their professionals, organizers. They come from all different stratas of our society. And then they contribute socially, politically, and economically, and they all pay taxes.

(05:06) So, it will be very difficult to send the 58,000 people back, including the 30,000 US born children. So, as part of our organizing, we give them the tools, we provide training, so that they can be their own advocate for a permanent fix. And this is the work that we do around issues that are important to them, so that whatever skills that they learn, they can transfer it to other campaigns such as voiding, such as other campaigns pertaining to schools pertaining to choosing your own leaders.

(05:50) These are skill sets that are easily transferable, and that's the better work of our work organizing at the grassroots level because we believe that those who are impacted should be the best spokesperson for issues and situations that have an impact on them.