Pre-Session Material for Movement Work in Native America: NoDAPL

Scenarios for Discussion

Scenario Number 1:

You have traveled to volunteer your time, perhaps as a Legal Observer or support volunteer with the legal team of a movement. Most, like you, are far from their home jurisdiction. As the days pass, you see more and more activists arrested. Before long, your team begins to notice that this is a jurisdiction with a very small bar of defense attorneys.

Question A:
What challenges does this pose to arrestees and what strategies might your team explore?

Scenario Number 2:

You are volunteering with the small, temporary office coordinating movement defense. You may be providing direct representation to some activists, or you may be offering other support based on your skill sets. How do you begin to address the following issues?

Question B:
The broader community is openly aggressively, and pervasively hostile to the movement. How does that impact your client advocacy? How do you approach the courts?

Question C:
Your small office has become a hub for broader, wrap-around services to meet the needs of deep/pervasive state oppression of the movement. What boundaries do you draw around services, if any?

Question D:
What steps do you take when physical safety is an issue?

Question E:
You know that the movement is heavily surveilled by both state and private actors. How does this impact client representation? What particular challenges does this raise and how would you guide your team in this circumstance?