
Protesters Attempt to Block First of Trump's Deportations

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"We're living in a new era now, an era of war on immigrants," said Guadalupe Garcia De Rayos' lawyer after her arrest Wednesday.

On Wednesday night dozens of migrant justice activists and family members surrounded an Immigration and Customs Enforcement truck in Phoenix, Arizona, in an attempt to block the deportation of Guadalupe Garcia de Rayos, thought to be one of the first people to be removed under president Trump's [new executive order](#) targeting undocumented migrants.

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Garcia de Rayos, who came to the U.S. from Mexico at age 14, had reported to the ICE office in Phoenix, Arizona, earlier in the day as part of her routine six-month check-in after having been caught up in one of the many workplace raids conducted in 2008 by the notorious [Sheriff Joe Arpaio](#).

But unlike in all the previous interviews over the past nine years, Garcia de Rayos, 35, was arrested and ICE agents who promptly began the process of deporting her to Mexico, where she has not been since leaving 21 years ago.

By evening, dozens of local migrant justice activists and family members had gathered at the ICE building and as a truck carrying Garcia de Rayos and several others emerged, they quickly surrounded it, with one man, Manuel Saldana, tying himself to a wheel of the truck vowing to

"stay here as long as it takes."

[@GadiNBC](#) Man has inserted his arms, leg and body into wheel well of one [#ICE](#) van that prevent it from leaving.. [#GuadalupeGarcia](#) is inside.



"We're tired of folks like Trump coming in and thinking they're going to be able to destroy communities," another protester told the New York Times.

After a tense standoff, broadcast live on Facebook, dozens of heavily armed ICE agents and local police officers arrested six people blocking the van, including Saldana, with the vehicle quickly speeding off under police escort.

[@GadiNBC](#) More people surrounding [#ICE](#) van holding [#GuadalupeGarcia](#) --- quick explainer <https://www.google.com/amp/www.12news.com/amp/news..>



Reaction to the arrest was swift, and as it began to trend on Twitter other protesters took to different parts of downtown Phoenix to block traffic.

[@SantistevanRyan](#) Phoenix resident Hilda Canales stood in front of the light rail with others to protest [#GuadalupeGarcia](#) deportation. [@cronkitenews](#)

By midnight Wednesday, it wasn't clear if Garcia de Rayos had been taken to the border or to immigration detention.

The migrant justice group Puente Arizona, with whom Garcia de Rayos had been active, said they have filed a stay-of-removal request and are expecting a judge's decision sometime on Thursday.

The group is challenging the deportation based on the fact that Garcia de Rayos' original 2008 arrest took place during one of a series of raids by notorious Maricopa County Sheriff Joe

Arpaio which were [later declared](#) racially motivated and unconstitutional.

Garcia de Rayos was convicted and jailed in 2009 for six months on felony impersonation charges for using a fake social security number at her workplace, a local water park.

After a multi-year battle by local migrant justice activists, a 2013 deportation order against Garcia de Rayos was stayed given then-President [Obama's policy](#) of only deporting undocumented migrants who posed "a threat to public safety."

Wednesday's arrest is seen as one of the first to be executed under President Trump's new executive order targeting all undocumented migrants with a criminal conviction, regardless of the severity of the charges.

"We're living in a new era now, an era of war on immigrants," Rayos' lawyer, Ray A. Ybarra Maldonado, told the New York Times.

Garcia de Rayos' arrest also highlights the arbitrary powers Trump's executive order gives immigration officers — whose union was a [prominent endorser](#) of Trump during his viciously anti-migrant election campaign — who now have wide discretion to determine who qualifies for deportation under the new regime.

Trump "has permitted these (immigration) agents to go after immigrants regardless of their ties and contributions to the U.S.," said ACLU lawyer Cecillia Wang in an interview with the New York Times.

Garcia de Rayos, who is married to a fellow undocumented migrant, has two U.S. citizen children who were both present at the protest.

[@GadiNBC](#) This is [#GuadalupeGarcia](#) & her family. Both of her kids were born in the US. She has lived here for 22 years. [#Deported](#)



"It's not fair that my mom might be taken away for providing for my family. working should not be a crime. I'm asked if I'm am ready to have my mom taken away. I'm not scared of (Trump) I'm going to keep fighting to have justice and my mom back," said Garcia de Rayos' 14-year-old daughter Jacqueline.

Garcia de Rayos elder son, Angel, told the New York Times, about the night of her 2008 arrest.

"I was in second grade. I will never forget that night. And I've lived in fear of losing my mother every night since then," he said.

Garcia de Rayos' arrest comes just days after a second Trump cabinet appointee admitted to employing an undocumented migrant.

On Monday Trump's pick for labor secretary, billionaire [fast-food magnate](#) Andrew Puzder,

revealed that he had employed a housekeeper for years who did not have legal status to work in the U.S.

Last month [Wilbur Ross](#), Trump's pick for commerce secretary, also admitted that he had employed someone for years who had not provided proof of legal work status.

