

JUAN F GECEM

Capstone Project

05.04.2023

ENLACE

WHY THIS PROJECT?

As an immigrant myself, I well-remember how difficult it was for my family when we first arrived in the U.S. We had no friends or family here, no English, and no one to point us in the right direction.

For survivors of torture, their needs are even more complex and urgent when they arrive in the U.S. and they are often left without any way to find services to support them on their journey.

With that in mind, I wanted to create a way for survivors to safely and independently access the resources they need.

01

ROLE

This was a solo effort. I was responsible for all research, ideation, wire-framing, prototyping, and user testing.

02

USERS

Clients: SOTs (Main) & other migrants

Staff: WINGS staff

03

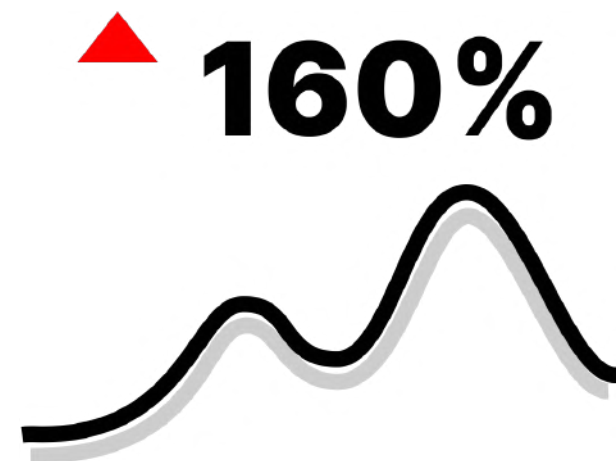
TIME FRAME

8 weeks

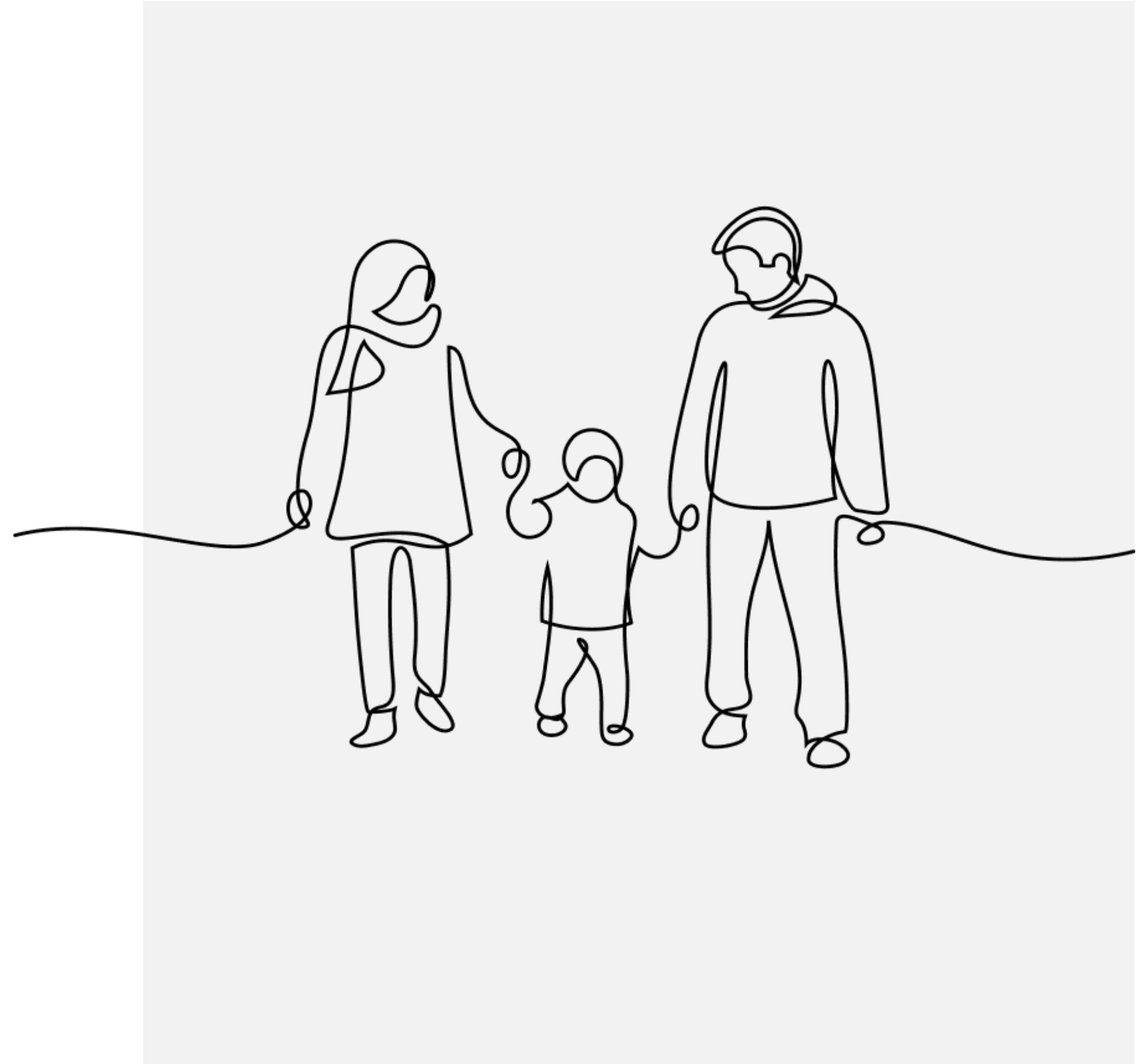
03.16.2023 - 05.04.2023

THE SITUATION

An estimated **3 million** refugees have arrived in the United States since 1975 and it is estimated that up to **44%** of these refugees have been subjected to torture or other forms of violence.



The number of survivors of torture (SOTs) in the United States increased by 160% from 2017 to 2020.



PROBLEM STATEMENT

How might we create a process by which survivors of torture are able to find and access available resources from community organizations, so that they can heal, build self-sufficiency, integrate into their communities, and thrive?



WHAT IS IT?

This app aims to create a safe space for survivors of torture in New Mexico to access the resources they need while also building self-sufficiency

GOAL

- Provide a safe and accessible platform to access information, resources, and support for survivors of torture
- Connect SOTs with relevant organizations and support their journey towards healing and recovery

STRATEGY

01

COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

Research similar apps and organizations in the market to understand how they function and what gaps exist in the current market

02

QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS & PERSONAS

Conduct in-depth interviews with newcomers, and SOTs in particular, to gain insights into their needs, pain points, and expectations from this app

Create user personas based on the insights gathered from user interviews and journeys

03

LOW TO HIGH FIDELITY PROTOTYPE

Develop interactive prototypes to test the usability and functionality of the app

04

USER TESTING

Conduct usability testing to ensure the app is easy to navigate, understand, and use

THE COMPETITION 01 [Link](#)

ANALYZING THE COMPETITION

The ABQ Coordinated Resources Guide and USA Hello provide information on some resources, with severe gaps. There aren't any real competitors when it comes to providing a directory of services/resources to survivors.

Review: 7 related resources
Result: No direct competitors
Closest competitors:



	Population served	Strengths	Gaps	Takeaway
USA HELLO	Refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants and welcoming communities	National network, partnered with UNHCR, provides access in several languages, informed and created by target population, website and app	Very few local or current resources listed for many parts of the U.S., not tailored to local populations/resources/needs	A great resource for a few metropolitan areas, but not applicable to many local populations and needs.
CRG	Anyone looking for any kind of supportive resources	Extensive list of local resources for all populations and needs	Specific only to the Albuquerque, New Mexico, area, dysfunctional website with outdated information, no connection or access assistance	Large list of local New Mexico resources, but not available nationwide and with severe access barriers on the platform

INTERVIEW FINDINGS 02

[Link](#)

Qualitative Interviews

- **Participants:** 3 WINGS staff members, 5 WINGS clients (SOTs)
- **Criteria:** Research Permissions, Screeners, Consent forms, & Informational Interviews (45 to 90 minutes)

- **Vulnerability and difficulty trusting**
Survivors have experienced complex human-caused traumas and therefore often struggle to build/maintain interpersonal relationships.
- **Lack of knowledge**
Survivors often aren't aware of what services and programs exist to support them.
- **Not meeting eligibility requirements**
The majority of community programs and resources aren't available to survivors who are asylum seekers, due to funding eligibility guidelines.
- **Language barrier**
Many survivors do not speak English when they arrive in the U.S. and as a result face barriers to healthcare, education, employment, community, access to services, and every other aspect of life.

PERSONAS [Link](#)



YOSVANI
SOT

From Cuba and wants to learn more about WINGS and its services to meet his urgent and complex needs



LUIS ALBERTO
ASYLEE

Venezuelan, recently granted asylum, and desperately seeking immigration legal services for family reunification



MARIANNA
CASE MANAGER

WINGS staff with a high caseload, needing to streamline her processes and use her time wisely

PERSONAS

SOT
WINGS client



Yosvani

Yosvani is an asylum seeker from Cuba. Due to peaceful political protests, he was jailed for three years and experienced severe torture while imprisoned in Cuba. After his release, he traveled through Central America and Mexico to reach the U.S./Mexico border where he was held in detention for three months before being released in New Mexico. He was connected with the WINGS program through a friend. Yosvani needs emergency housing assistance as he is currently unhoused. He has not filed his asylum application yet and needs to urgently speak with an attorney. He is also facing food insecurity and has financial needs as he waits a year or more for his work authorization.



I am starting a new life in this country and I need help finding ways to provide for myself and my family



Survivors of Torture

Asylum seekers and people without documentation, Cuban/Haitian entrants, those with Temporary Protected Status, and other types of immigrants and refugees

GOALS

- Learn more about WINGS services
- Meet immediate psychosocial needs
- Work with WINGS to orient to other community resources

TASKS

- Find and learn more about WINGS
- Receive wrap-around WINGS services to meet needs
- Stabilize mental health and social needs

PAIN POINTS

- Not fluent in English
- Doesn't know WINGS, other area resources, or how to use the transit system
- Unable to find work (aside from odd jobs) while waiting for his work authorization
- Unable to provide proof of income to secure an apartment

Thinking

- Worried
- Anxious
- Confused
- Overwhelmed
- Mistrustful

Hearing

- Voices of family members or friends who don't fully understand what they're going through
- negative news about torture or other traumatic events

Feeling

- Frustrated
- Angry
- Afraid
- Isolated
- Helpless

Doing

- Searching for information online
- Seeking out support from others who have gone through similar experiences
- Feeling like they can't trust anyone

Seeing

- A difficult and uncertain journey ahead, with a lack of clear direction or guidance

PERSONAS

Asylee

WINGS client



"I feel lost here. Everything is so different, and I don't know how to make sense of it all."



Luis Alberto

Luis Alberto is originally from Venezuela. He been granted asylum and released from immigration detention, but he currently has no money, clothes, phone, food, or housing. He is in urgent need of basic life necessities, as well as comprehensive case management, legal services, and integration into the local Venezuelan community.

Luis Alberto is experiencing extreme anxiety due to his current situation, as well as the fact that his wife and four children still remain in danger in Venezuela.

GOALS

- Find an immigration attorney
- Become securely employed
- Apply for family reunification to bring his family to the US

TASKS

- Find an immigration law firm
- Submit application for family reunification
- Begin working and saving money in order to bring family to the U.S.

PAIN POINTS

- Language barrier
- Doesn't know area resources or how to use the transit system
- Not currently connected to the local Venezuelan community
- Anxiety levels are impeding his daily functioning

Thinking

- I don't know anyone here, and everything is so unfamiliar.
- I just want to provide for my family and give them a better life."

Hearing

- Racial slurs and comments in grocery stores
- Concerning and violent news from home and his country of origin

Feeling

- Guilty for leaving family behind or for not being able to protect them
- Overwhelmed by emotions

Doing

- Relies primarily on nonprofit organization around town for assistance and information
- Spends time on the phone with his family, and searches for job opportunities online.

Seeing

- An overwhelming and desperate situation in a place that isn't welcoming or safe for him
- Absolute uncertainty about the future

Migrant

Newcomers of any immigration status who have come to the U.S. from another country of origin, for any reason

USER JOURNEY Link



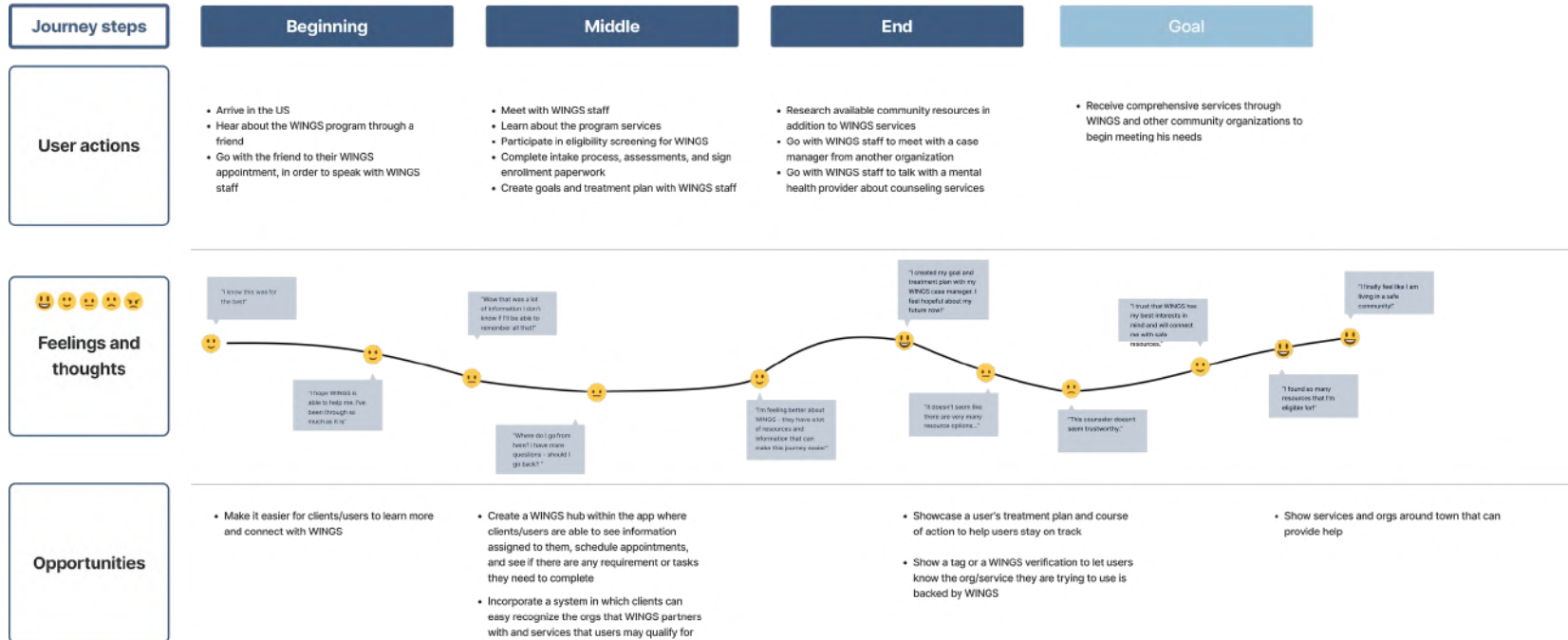
Yosvani SOT
Age: 45-65
Time in the USA
6 months

Scenario

Yosvani is from Cuba and has been in the US for 6 months. Due to his immigration status, he is not employed and cannot provide proof of income to apartment managers. He is currently unshoused.

Expectations

- Get in touch with WINGS and learn more
- Gain information on available resources and supports
- Access benefits and resources through WINGS and other community organizations to meet his needs



YOSVANI'S JOURNEY

Connect with and learn more about WINGS and its services



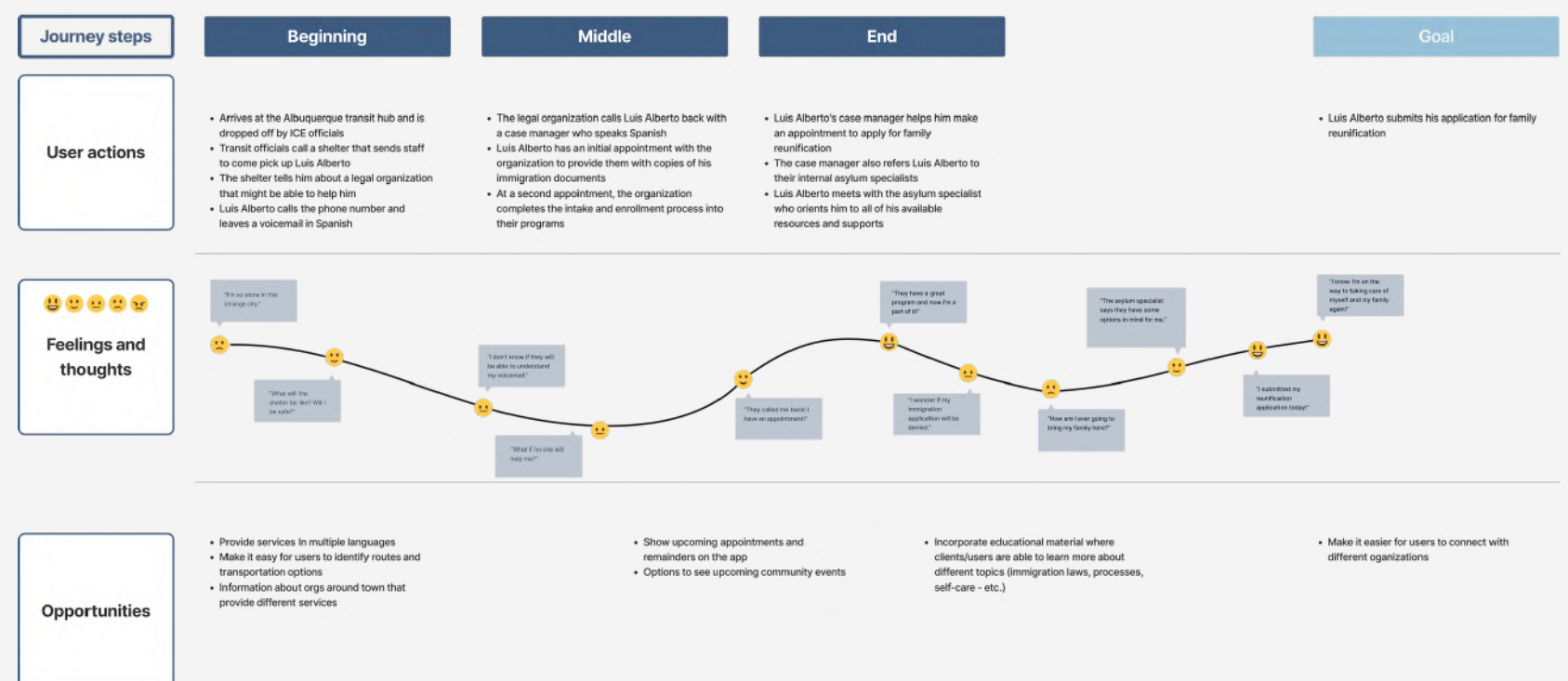
Luis Alberto Asylee
Age: 30-52
Time in the USA
3 weeks

Goal

Luis Alberto's main goal is to find immigration legal services in order to become self sufficient and be able to reunite with his family back in Venezuela. He is recently released from detention and does not have any possessions, resources, or knowledge of the area.

Expectations

- Find an affordable immigration attorney
- Learn about the local area and resources

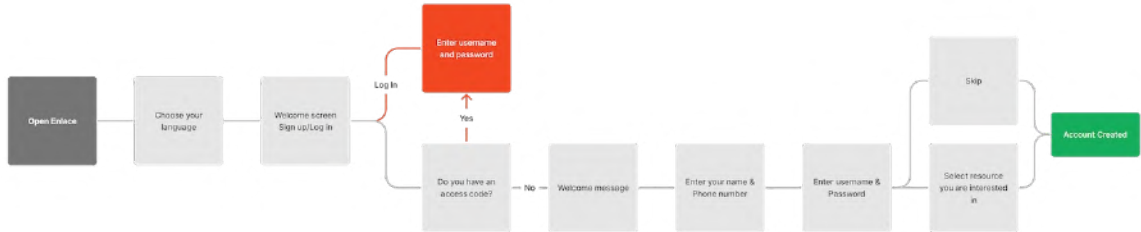


LUIS ALBERTO'S JOURNEY

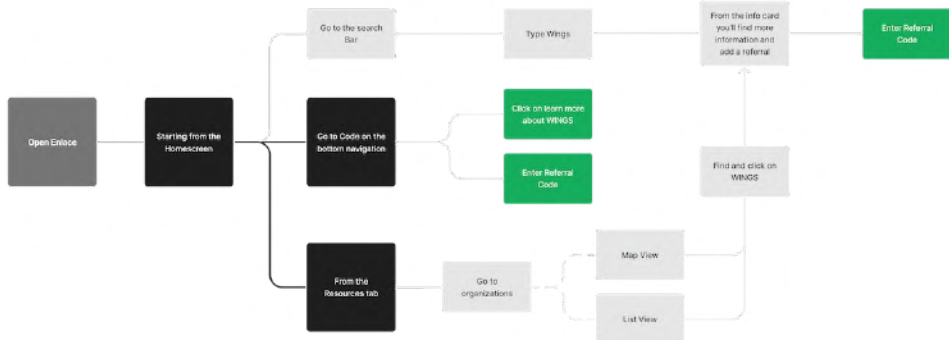
Find and qualify for immigration legal services for family reunification

USER FLOWS

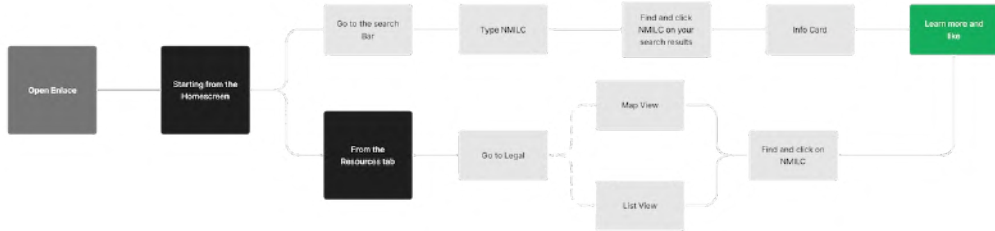
1. Create an account - No code



2. Learn about WINGS and enter your referral code



3. Look for a legal resource you qualify for - NMILC

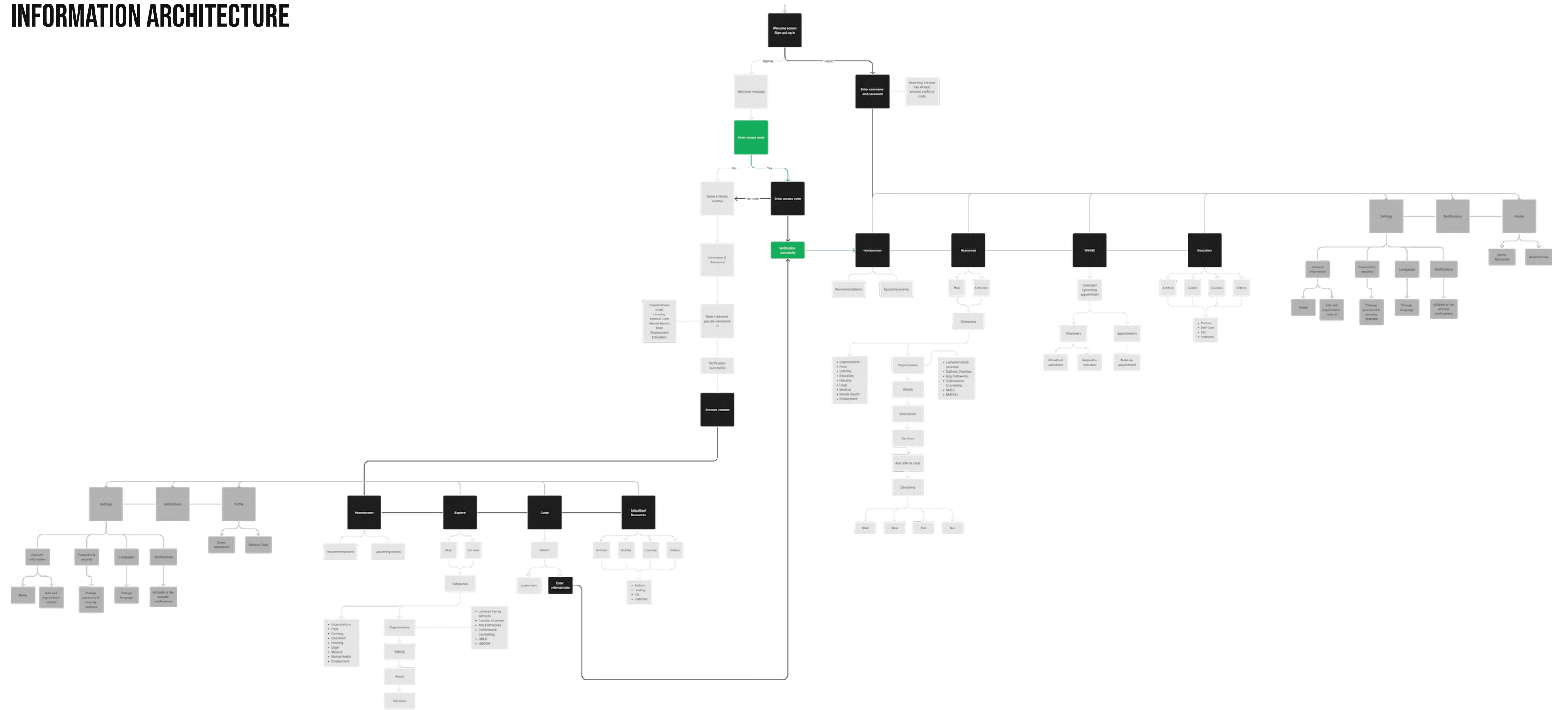


Onboarding
Test the basic onboarding process for user-friendliness

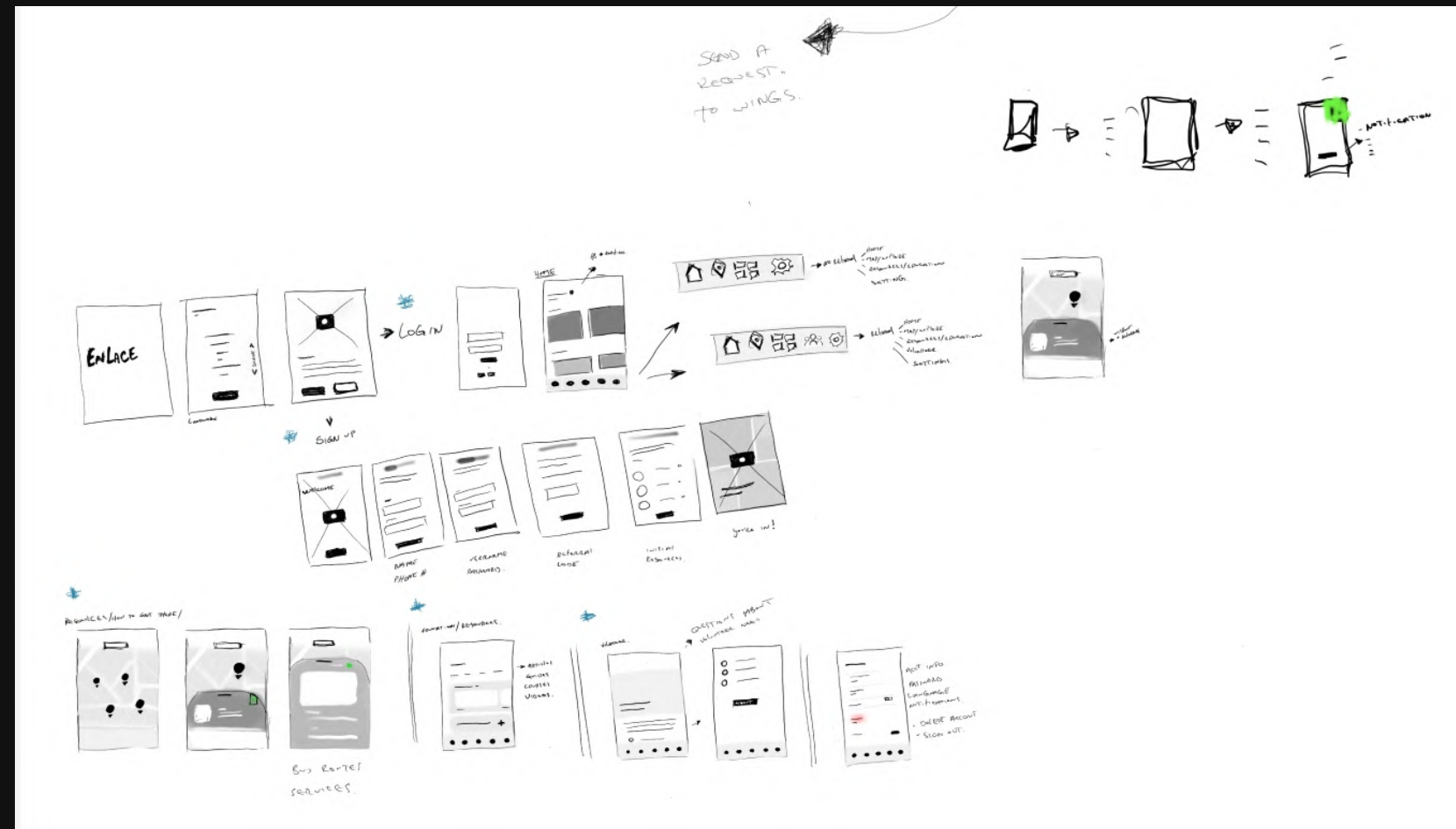
Without a code
Test user abilities to learn about and connect with WINGS

With a code
Test how the use of access codes enhances a user's experience and their discovery of pre-qualified resources

INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

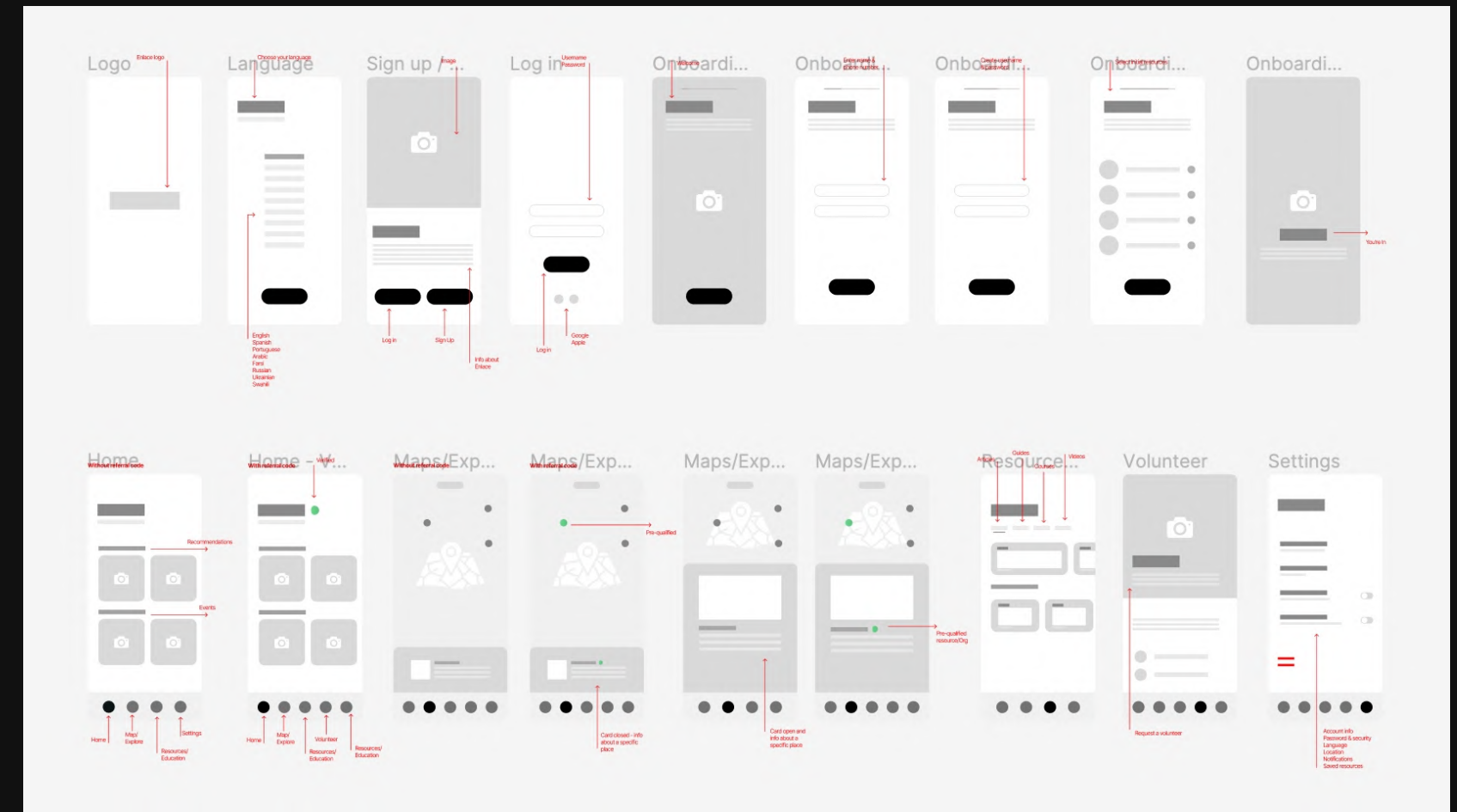


INITIAL DESIGN



SKETCHES

Initial sketches show the possibilities of the app's interface, functionality, and design



WIREFRAME

The wireframe begins to develop the functions and flows of the app's minimalistic layout

LOW-MID PROTOTYPE

[Link](#)

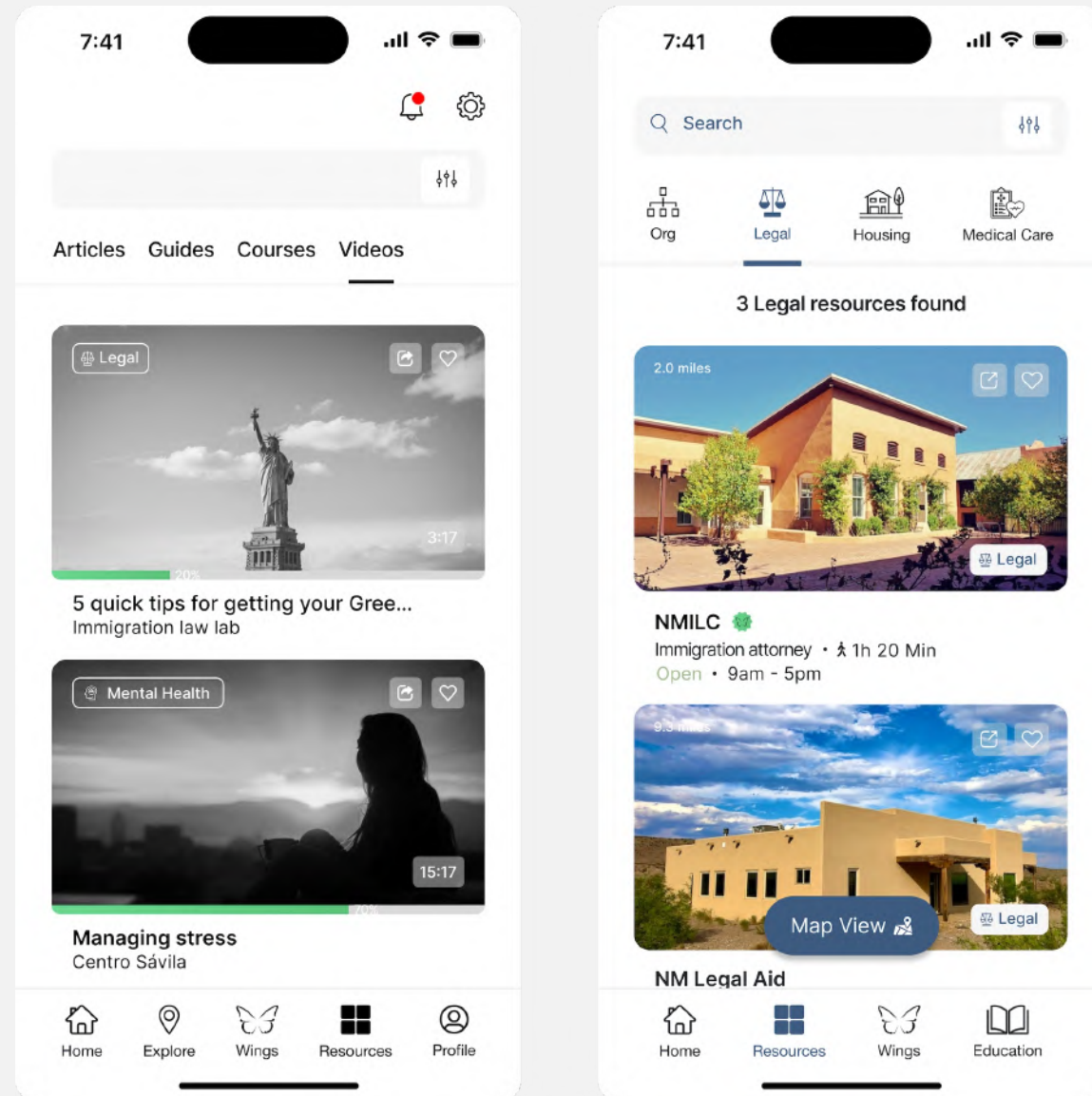
USABILITY TESTING 04 [Link](#)

Participants: 1 WINGS staff member, 4 WINGS clients (SOTs)

Criteria: screeners, consent forms, mid-fidelity prototype, user testing, guided scenarios (15-35 minutes)

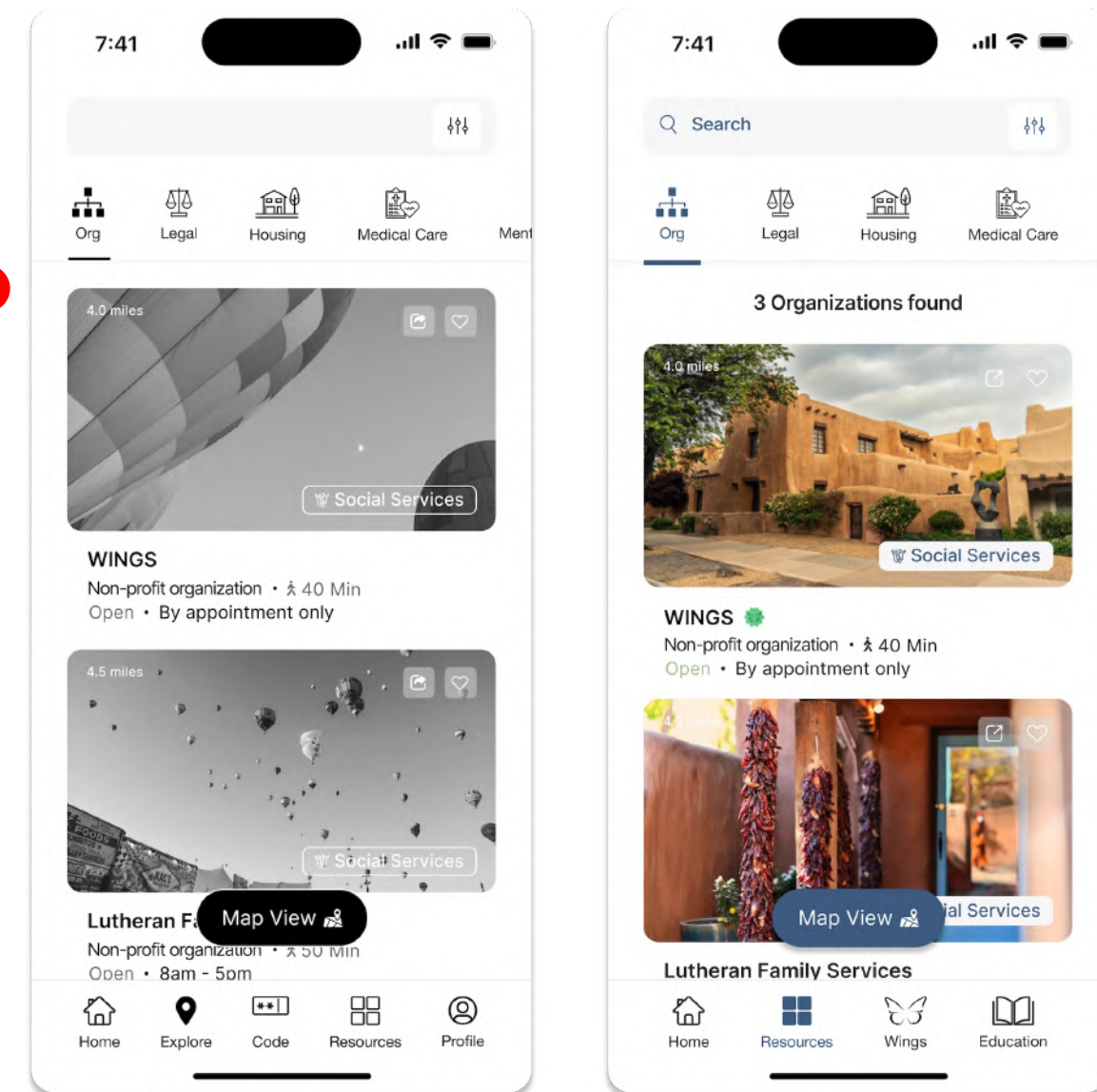


FINDING #1



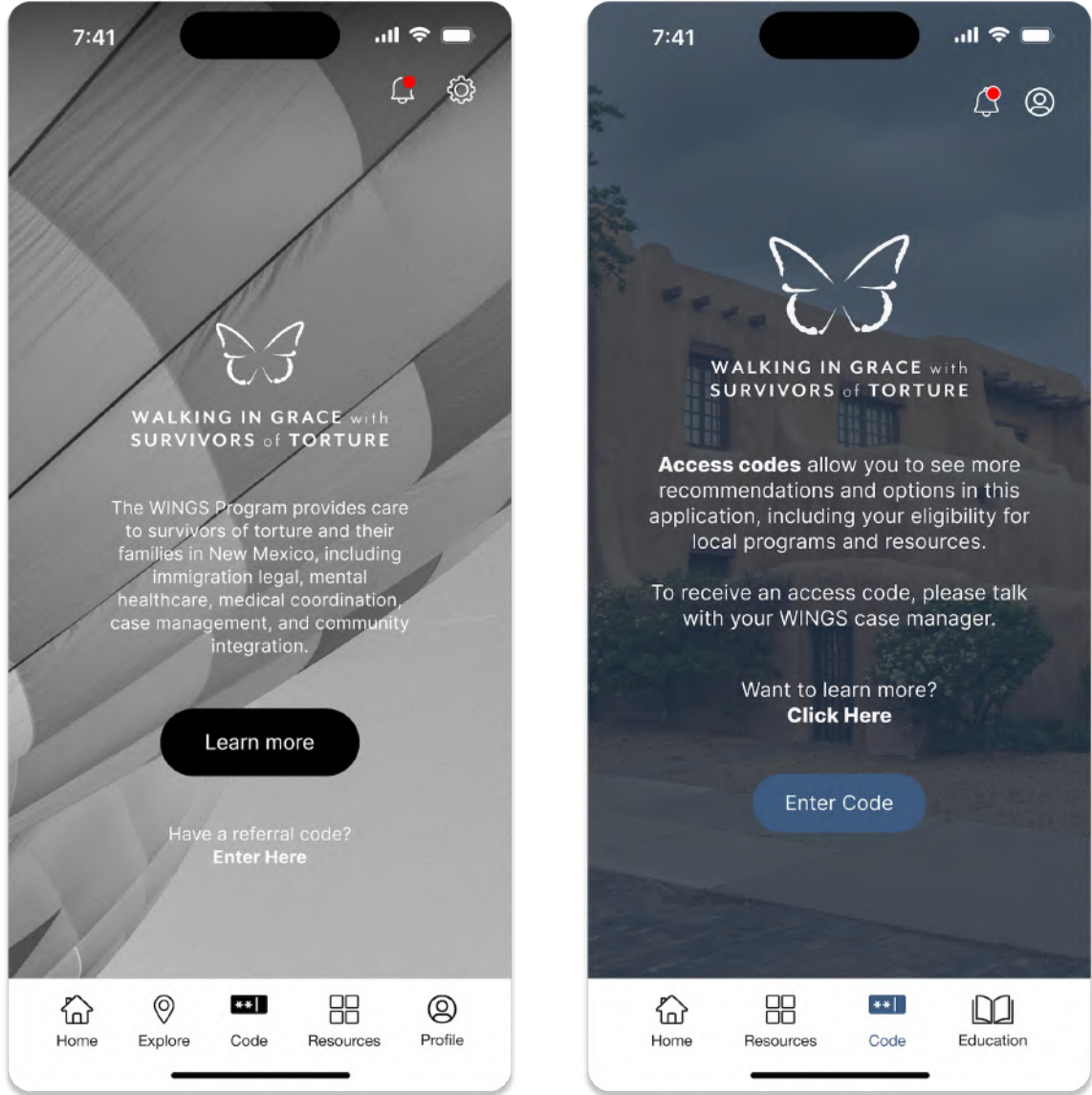
Users' mental models were not well-represented by the options in the bottom navigation panel

FINDING #2



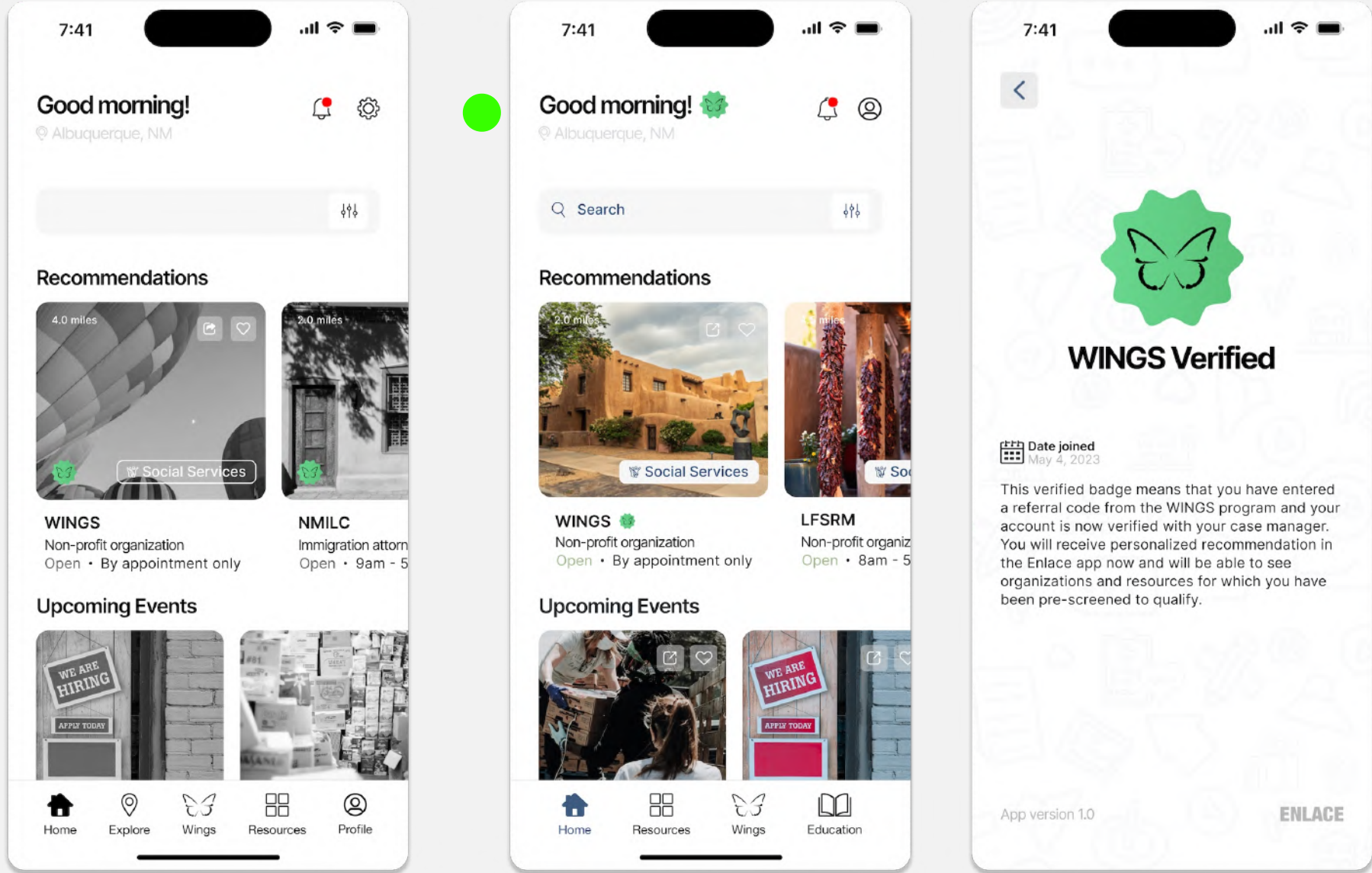
Users' current location was not clear as they explored resources in the app

FINDING #3



The large "Learn More" button interrupted the flow of user experiences

FINDING #4



The meaning of the post-verification icons was not clear to users after entering their access codes

VISUAL DESIGN

FONT FAMILY

Inter

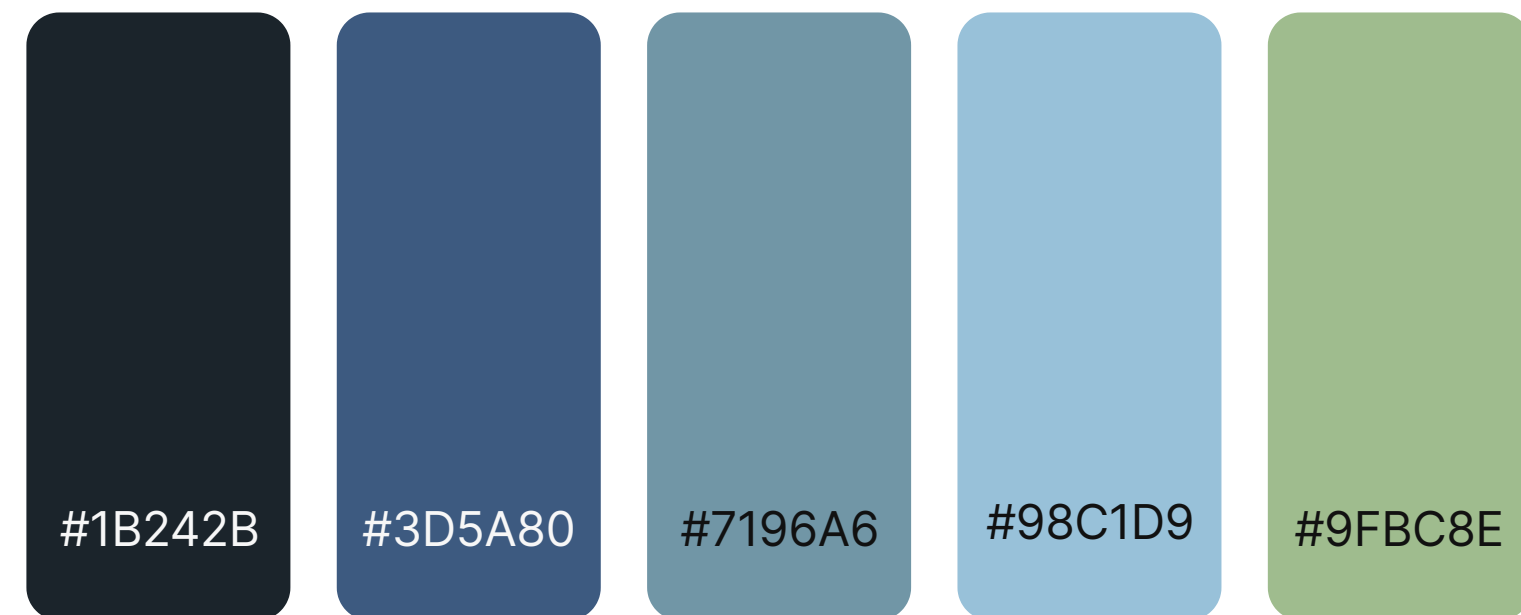
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

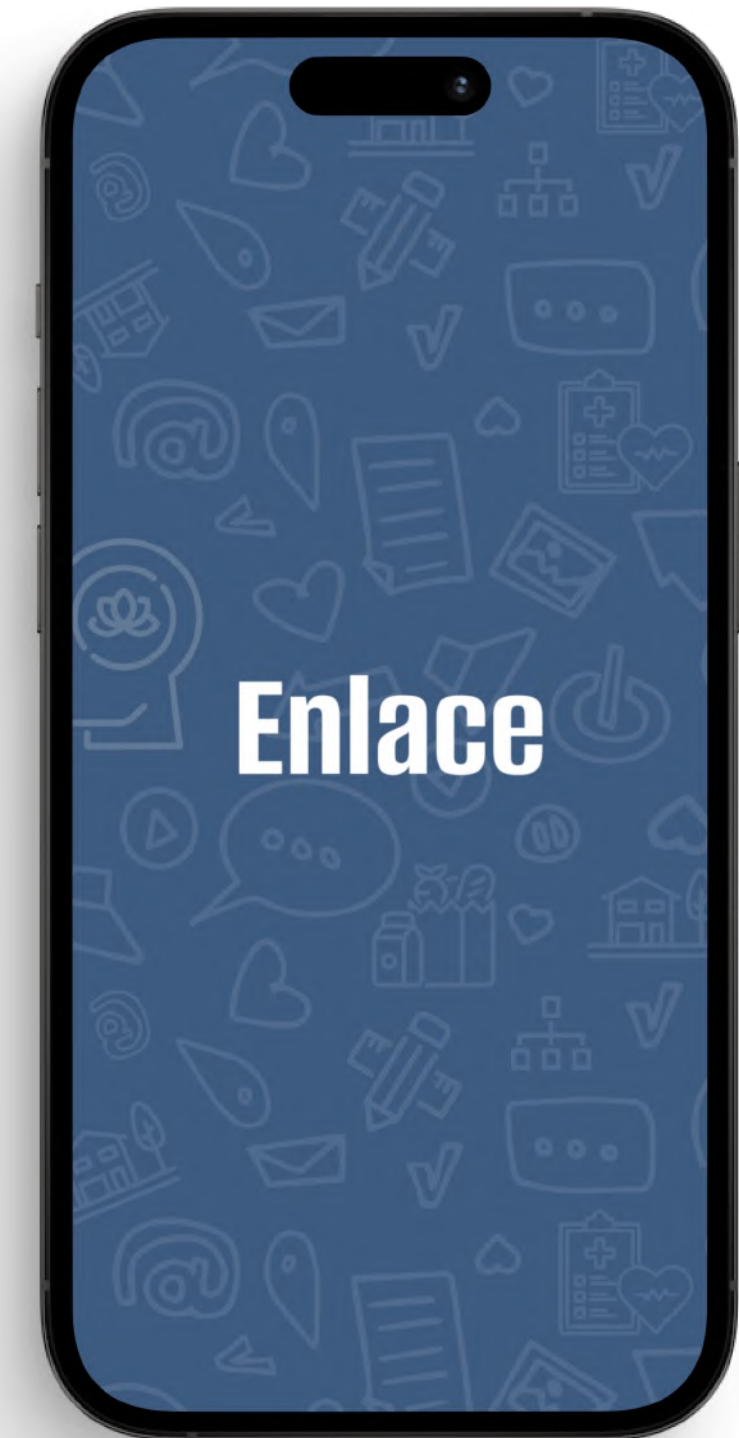
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Aa **Aa** **Aa** **Aa** **Aa** **Aa** **Aa** **Aa** **Aa**
Black Extra Bold Bold Semibold Medium Regular Light Light Extralight

COLOR PALETTE



LOGO



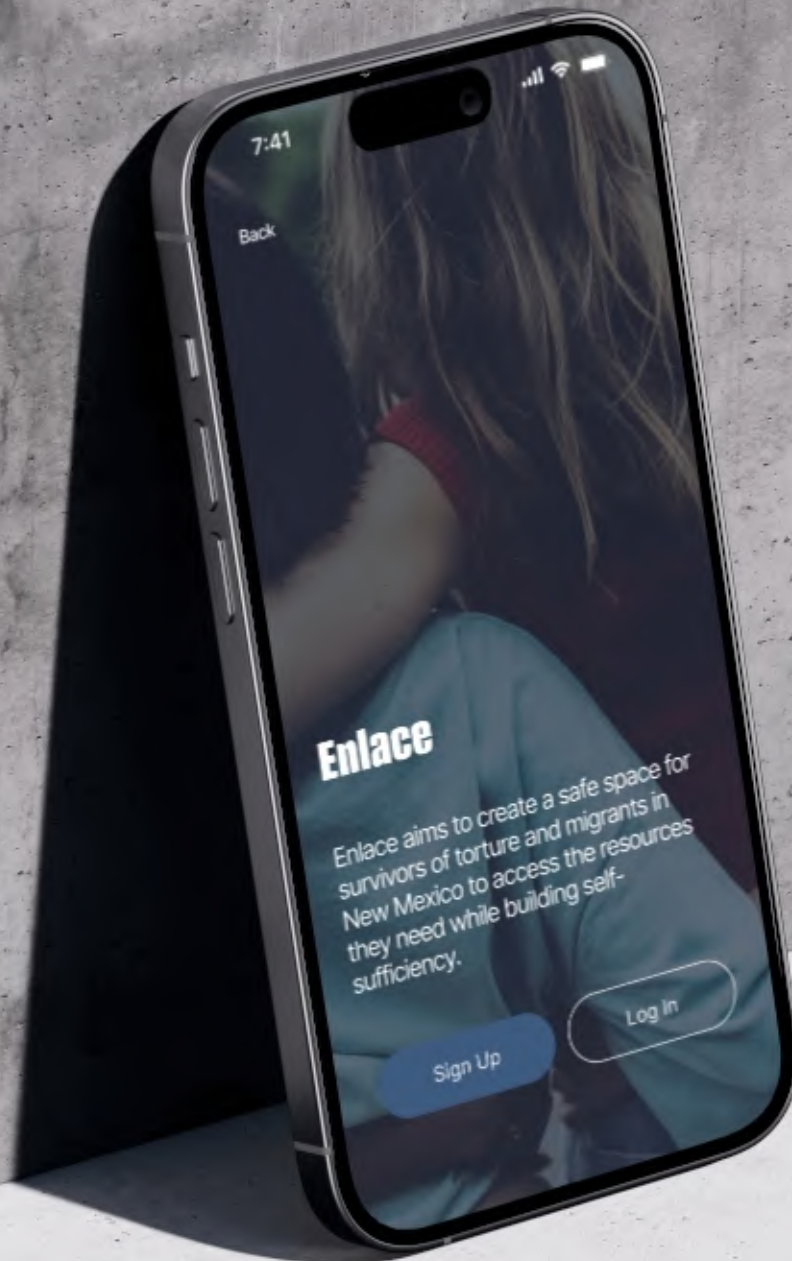
Alumni Sans

Bold • 96px
Logo • Alumni Sans • Letter spacing: 0%

ENLACE IN ACTION

MID-HIGH FIDELITY PROTOTYPE 03

[LINK](#)



This completed prototype is the culmination of eight weeks of development and research

REFLECTIONS

01

WORKING WITH THIS POPULATION

The experience of working with SOTs and other migrant newcomers was humbling and eye-opening, as I learned about their experiences, needs, and goals.

I deeply appreciated the opportunity to be able to provide a tool that will encourage and support them in their journeys.

02

JUST KEEP SWIMMING

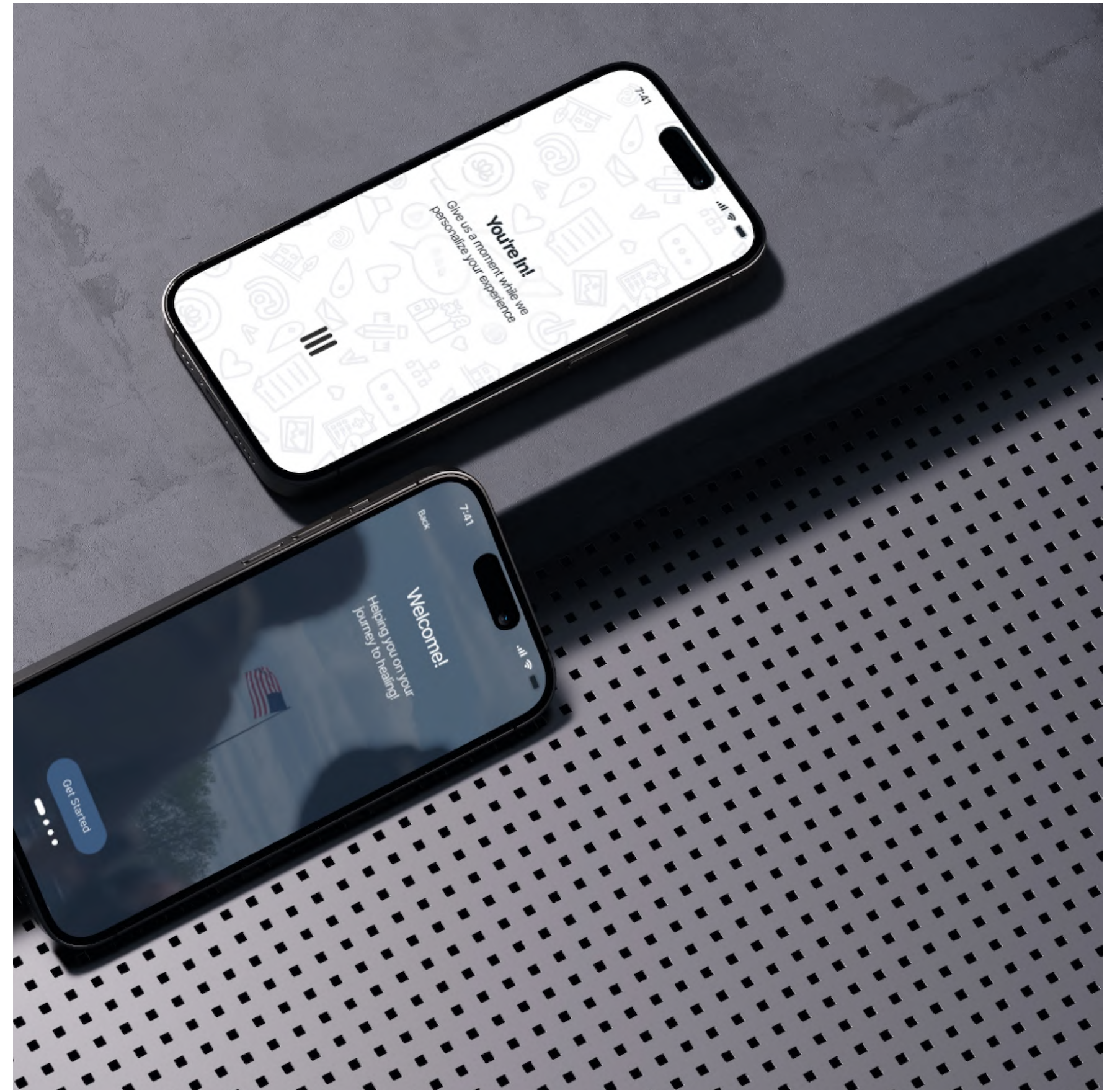
Our best plans often go off-track and this project has taught me the importance of continuing and progressing through difficult situations.

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NEXT STEPS

- Continue to develop and test the app
- Add more organization and services
- Integrate more language groups

Once all testing is completed and the app is refined, I would like to partner with WINGS and launch the app for public use





**MUCHAS
GRACIAS**

FIN

For more information or to learn more about this project, contact me at jgechem@mica.edu

APPENDIX

1. Figma file - **I have created a centralized Figma file were I have compiled all additional documents**

<https://www.figma.com/file/16MJDgdRaut4oU3x1Kjd8R/MUXD-5300.01---Capstone---Work-Station?node-id=62%3A882&t=gW5yN6BNriDh0uwO-1>