

Cynthia Santiago, an attorney in [Southern California](#), won her high school presidential class race the same year [Stephen Miller](#), the current White House Deputy Chief of Staff, lost the class speaker race. More than 20 years later, Santiago is trying to fight Miller's [mass deportation efforts](#).

Santiago, the daughter of immigrants, has been working to [defend immigrants' rights since 2012](#). But having gone to school with Miller, watching [his rise to prominence](#) in President [Donald Trump](#)'s world, and [the actions of the administration he is a senior member of](#), worried her.

"I was very concerned about where his thoughts were going, his views on [immigration](#) and the immigrant communities, his views against diversity in the United States," Santiago told [The Daily Beast](#).

Miller, largely credited as [the architect of Trump's immigration policies](#) during his first administration, has seemingly always abided by right-wing ideals and anti-immigration policies.

Recalling the day she won her class election at Santa Monica High School, Santiago said that Miller was "booed" off stage for giving an incendiary speech about picking up trash.

A [video of the moment](#), posted online years ago, shows Miller on stage asking his fellow students, "Am I the only one who is sick and tired of being told to pick up my trash, when we have plenty of janitors who are paid to do it for us?"

A school newspaper clipping, obtained by *The Daily Beast*, says Miller's microphone was turned off and he was escorted off stage for what school officials said was going "over time."

[Writing for the Santa Monica Lookout](#) in 2002, Miller advocated for all announcements to be written in English only, claimed "very few" Hispanic students were in honors classes, and asserted that the school's political correctness would make Osama bin Laden "feel very welcome at Santa Monica High School."

*The Independent* has asked the White House for comment.

Santiago said that many of Miller's thoughts are "things that he digs from history" and that he doesn't have much of a "perspective of the world we live in today."

But with his status as a close Trump ally, Department of Homeland Security advisor, and deputy chief of staff, Miller is able to bring his thoughts to life.

The California lawyer says she is seeing firsthand how some of [Miller's tactics](#) are impacting immigrants in Southern California.

Santiago told *The Daily Beast* that one of the ways the government is increasing the number of deportees is by taking pending asylum cases marked as "favorable" to court and revoking a person's temporary status.

“I saw [ICE ] taking people from courtrooms, sticking them in the van,” Santiago said.

“The person is basically at an undocumented status with no case pending, and they’re vulnerable to be picked up,” Santiago said. “They have no status, no filing, no case opening.”

But Miller, and the Trump administration, are pushing to deport as many undocumented immigrants as possible to keep good on the president’s campaign promise, in whatever way they can.

*This story was updated on June 13 to clarify that Stephen Miller ran for speaker of the house and Cynthia Santiago ran for student body president.*