



# *Giving the Gift of Language*

WINTER 2011-2012

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## NEW AMERICANS

On September 22, 2011, for the first time, The ILC and the City of Malden co-sponsored a Swearing-In Ceremony for new citizens at the Malden Senior Center. Ninety-five immigrants from 42 countries took the Oath of Allegiance during the court proceeding presided over by Judge Robert B. Collings, magistrate judge of the U.S. District Court, District of Massachusetts.

Members of the Malden High School Band welcomed the new citizens and their families as they gathered in the auditorium at the Center, which became a federal court when the Malden Police Color Guard and Judge Collings entered. Judge Frank J. Bailey, a member of The ILC Board of Trustees, delivered the keynote address, and Arthur G. Koumantzels, ILC board chair, led the new citizens in the Pledge of Allegiance. Malden Mayor Richard C. Howard congratulated the new citizens, and Diane Portnoy, founder, president and CEO of The ILC, shared childhood memories of becoming a U.S. citizen.

ILC teacher Jeantilus Gedeus sang the national anthem at the start of the ceremony, and a chorus of ILC students sang *America The Beautiful* at the conclusion. Volunteers from MIRA (Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy) Coalition registered new voters in the lobby as they exited.

A video of the Swearing-In Ceremony can be viewed on our website at [www.ilctr.org](http://www.ilctr.org).

### *The following ILC students became citizens between June 1 and October 31, 2011*

Yamina Hachem Danoune, Algeria

Galina Izotova, Belarus

JeanRemy Dasne, Haiti

Parminder Kaur, India

Ilham Hammouti, Morocco

Wilton Lorenzo, Dominican Republic

Monica Hernandez, Colombia

Zaira Nadirashvili, Georgia

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO



It was my distinct honor and pleasure to welcome 95 new Americans during the Swearing-In Ceremony for new citizens, which included two ILC students. It brought back memories of being eight years old and going with my parents to Boston to watch them become American citizens. They were so happy and proud. A few months later we went back to Boston City Hall where I received my citizenship papers.

Since opening the school in November 1992, 7,000 immigrants from 109 countries have learned English. Most have been able to achieve their goals such as finding jobs, starting a business, entering a training program, going to college and becoming U.S. citizens. Their stories of bravery and drive are truly inspiring.

Immigrants come to the United States for many reasons. Some come to follow the American Dream. Others meet an American, marry and come here to start new lives. However, so many that I have met come here with nothing more than the clothes on their backs and stories of war and persecution in their homelands. For the first time in their lives they experience freedom, safety and hope. This was certainly true for my parents and me. As Holocaust survivors who lost their entire families, America represented a place to build a new life. I'm sure you also have an ancestor, or maybe it's you, that took that chance to create a better life, and collectively they and their descendants have created this incredible United States.

The ILC Public Education Institute reinforces the positive impact immigrants have on the country, the economy and our communities. Research clearly shows that immigrants are twice as likely as the native-born to be entrepreneurs. They open small storefront businesses that revitalize neighborhoods as well as midsize companies that create jobs and technology companies that generate millions in revenue. Forty percent of the Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants or their children. Twenty-five percent of the country's technology companies were founded by an immigrant.

Immigrants are hard workers, who are willing to do jobs that the native-born refuse to do such as picking crops. They pay more than their fair share of taxes, and they are consumers whose buying power also creates jobs. Immigrants bring vitality and skills to the U.S. economy whether in tech centers of Silicon Valley or the farmlands of the Midwest. We need more of both.

Thank you to all our friends for your belief in our students. Your support is an investment in the future of this country. I hope you will consider making a contribution to The ILC perhaps in honor of one of your immigrant ancestors.

*The ILC students, staff, board members and volunteers wish you a healthy, happy new year.*

  
Diane Portnoy

## ILC Students Become U.S. Citizens



*Monica Hernandez came to the United States from Colombia to join her husband. She spoke no English, and she found that people in America are not always nice to immigrants.*

*Then Monica found The ILC. She studied in the ESOL 4 and 5 classes and took part in The Immigrant Theater Program. It was through The ILC that she found her first job at T.J.Maxx. Today, Monica is a business teller at Citizens Bank in Malden and is hoping to become a customer service banker. Most importantly, Monica was able to celebrate her citizenship with her son, Nicholas, (pictured above) at the September 22nd ceremony.*

*After two careers, two master's degrees and a lifetime of achievements in her native country, Galina Izotova's latest achievement was becoming a U.S. citizen on September 22 at the Malden Senior Center.*



*Galina grew up in Belarus in the former U.S.S.R. She received a master's degree in space technology and started a career at the Minsk International Airport. Later, she moved to Siberia with her husband and launched a successful engineering consulting company.*

*Galina moved to the United States to join her daughter and came to The ILC to study for the citizenship exam. She plans to continue classes as she wants "more, more, more English" with the hope of eventually studying architecture.*

# SCHOOL NEWS

## ILC Staff



John Saylor and Linda Altvater, pictured above, joined The ILC teaching staff in September. Linda wanted to work with immigrants and saw The ILC sign on the building. John, with the same motivation, found The ILC through our website.

Linda knows how hard it is to learn another language having studied in France, and John “feels the gravity of how important this place is.” Both are dedicated to their students. Linda, a family literacy as well as an ESOL 3 teacher, says, “I love the students. It’s my motivation for staying up at night getting ideas.” John, who teaches ESOL 2, adds, “A large part of my job is giving students the confidence and courage to come to school every day and to keep them engaged so they want to come tomorrow.”

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In other staff news, The ILC sends former teacher Doreen Eramian best wishes for her new life with her husband and daughter in San Francisco. She will be missed.

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## Internship Program

Started in 2011, The ILC Internship Program offers opportunities to college and university students to receive credit toward a degree while volunteering as ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) tutors at The ILC.

Presently, there are three students from the University of Massachusetts Boston who come to the school twice a week to help in the computer lab, family literacy and conversation classes. The ILC advertises at local colleges and universities for interns. Holly Jones, ILC guidance counselor who administers the program, is pleased with its success.

## ILC Students

### *Marketplace of the World*

Students in The ILC’s Theater Program presented three performances of *Marketplace of the World* in August at the Malden Senior Center. Kathleen Klose, director of The ILC Theater and Literacy Programs, helped the students create a combination of songs, stories and dances that showcased their cultures and customs. From a mock bullfight to a song celebrating a father’s love for his child, the performance shared the students’ love for their native countries and their pleasure in working together in their new country.

According to Kathleen, the Theater Program productions help students gain confidence by practicing their English while performing together. “This school becomes a very important part of their lives because they are out there struggling and often feel isolated. When they are at school, they are with people going through the same thing.” In turn, ILC Theater Program productions let audiences experience the rich cultures and traditions of the students’ native lands.



*Pictured above from the left: Dominique, Clauvice Kemtchouang, Guerd Myrtil and Carmel Thermitus singing a Cameroon song about a father’s love for his newborn child.*

## Window Arts Malden

Window Arts Malden matches local artists with downtown businesses to create an annual three-week juried art exhibit in Malden Center storefronts. Window Arts Malden is organized by volunteers and has received support from the Malden Cultural Council, local businesses and the office of Malden Mayor Richard C. Howard. The ILC participates each year by displaying art work in the front window. ILC students and volunteers whose works have been displayed are: Shu Zhen Xu, China; Nezha Bahlouli, Morocco; Catherine Wong Hsu, China; Rita Armstrong, Brazil and Susan Dosick, U.S.

## FOCUS ON FUNDERS

The logo for Skadden, featuring the word "Skadden" in white serif font on a red rectangular background.

### Louis A. Goodman, Partner

Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, Boston

“Our law firm became involved with The ILC because of Diane Portnoy’s enthusiasm for the school’s mission of giving immigrant adults English language proficiency. The ILC’s mission resonated with a lot of the lawyers here. Personally, as the grandchild of immigrant Jews from Eastern Europe, I appreciate the important work of The ILC. Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom is one of the country’s largest law firms with 2,000 lawyers worldwide. As a business, we want to make sure our charitable contributions are used effectively, and The ILC is very well managed. I personally applaud The ILC’s efforts to explain to the public that immigrants and immigrant entrepreneurs have a positive impact on the economy. People can come from anywhere and create a better life in America. The ILC makes it possible for immigrants to succeed in this country and give back to it.”



### Joanne Seymour and Brian Ruh

Joanne and Brian have been ILC donors for many years. The relationship began in 1994 when Joanne left the corporate world and became an ILC volunteer. She recalls how the very effective teacher she assisted fully engaged students who were enthusiastic about learning English. She also remembers the “warm environment” fostered by the directors and staff that permeated the school, which made students feel safe, respected and valued. Joanne was later hired as an English teacher and was elected to the Board of Trustees.

There are several reasons why Joanne and Brian make donations to the school year after year. Joanne explained, “We appreciate the passion and professionalism of ILC staff in carrying out the school’s mission, which would be valued by any corporation. Secondly, we have seen that ILC funds are very efficiently used, which means that most of our investment goes directly to support ILC programs and student services. Lastly, while The ILC is a local program in Malden, its impact reaches out into Greater Boston and beyond. As students become more English-proficient, they become part of their communities, which benefits the local economy and culture. We also feel that ILC students’ progress in the U.S. often translates to their abilities to impact their homeland families and communities in a number of positive ways.”

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## BOARD NEWS



On September 1, 2011, ILC Board Trustee Richard A. Davey, Jr. became the state’s new secretary of transportation, appointed by Governor Deval Patrick. The ILC congratulates Rich and wishes him every success on his new position.

The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. (ILC) of Malden, MA is a not-for-profit organization that helps immigrants and refugees become successful workers, parents and community members through direct service programs and public education. Our direct service programs provide free year-round English classes to immigrant and refugee adults in Greater Boston. The ILC further supports immigrants through the Public Education Institute, which informs Americans about the economic and social contributions of immigrants in our society. For more information, visit [www.ilctr.org](http://www.ilctr.org).

# SPECIAL EVENTS

## 2011 Autumn Benefit

Save The Date  
Monday, June 4, 2012  
The ILC Golf Classic



Two hundred guests enjoyed a festive evening at the Museum of Science on October 19. Using the museum's new exhibit, *A Day in Pompeii*, as a theme, The ILC Autumn Benefit committee used flame-colored flowers and candles to decorate the reception area and dining room. Guests were invited to view the exhibit with electronic guides and were treated to an Italian dinner provided by Wolfgang Puck Catering. Diane Portnoy welcomed the guests, and strolling musicians went from table to table performing requests. The evening ended with a video of The ILC-sponsored Swearing-In Ceremony for new citizens followed by an immigration-based quiz created by The ILC's Public Education Institute. Winners of the quiz took home the vivid flower arrangements.

The ILC is looking forward to a spectacular 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration next year!



*Vaia I. and Arthur G. Koumantzelis*



*Carlos and Abby Flores, Sandra Bornstein and Warren Heilbronner*



*Diane Portnoy and her son, Adam*



*Michele and John Popeo*



*Debra and Joe Morea*



*Richard A. Davey, Jane E. Willis and Joanie and Bruce Mackey*



*Ann and Bill Sheehan*



*Dr. Susan L. Cahill and Honorable Frank J. Bailey*



*Susan and Michael Haley*

# SPOTLIGHT ON IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS

## First Immigrant Entrepreneurship Month Proclaimed!

*“To be able, in these times when anti-immigration is everywhere, to [proclaim] an immigrant entrepreneurship month is so positive. It makes me feel so proud.”* Javier Marin, former owner, Hispanic News Press and founder, MasTV



*Pictured from the left: Marcia Hohn, Jill Cheng, Gov. Deval Patrick and Vinit Nijhawan*

On October 21, 2011, Governor Deval Patrick announced the first Immigrant Entrepreneurship Month in Massachusetts from October 14 to November 14. This proclamation was a key recommendation from The ILC Conference on Immigrant Entrepreneurship last November. It was realized through the efforts of The ILC Public Education Institute working with the Governor’s office and partner organizations.

Governor Patrick emphasized the significant contribution immigrant entrepreneurs make to the Massachusetts economy saying, “Latino and Asian businesses alone employ 50,000 people and generate more than \$7 billion in sales here in the Commonwealth.”

Marcia Hohn, director of The ILC Public Education Institute, spoke about the depth and breadth of immigrant entrepreneurs from storefronts revitalizing neighborhoods, to growth businesses creating jobs, to high-tech powerhouses fueling the state’s innovation economy. She then introduced three entrepreneurs who had participated in the Institute’s work: Jill Cheng, Javier Marin and Vinit Nijhawan.

Vinit, high-tech entrepreneur and executive-in-residence at Boston University, expressed a motivation that many immigrants share for coming to Massachusetts. “I came here [to Boston] because this was the center of technology entrepreneurship in the world,” he said. “It still is and that’s why I’m still here.”

Jill, owner of Cheng & Tsui Publishers, emphasized, “What this country uniquely provides its immigrants are the freedom and opportunities in a stable and peaceful setting to pursue whatever they want as long as they are willing to work hard.”

Marcia, Jill and Vinit appeared on WHDH Channel 7’s *Urban Update* on November 20, 2011. To see a video of the Immigrant Entrepreneurship Month launch and information about immigrant entrepreneurship activities, visit [www.ilctr.org/promoting-immigrants](http://www.ilctr.org/promoting-immigrants).

## Immigrant Entrepreneur Hall of Fame Coming Soon

Immigrant-founded businesses are represented in every industry and size of business throughout the United States. They create jobs, generate tax revenue, and provide valuable goods and services.

Our lives are touched every day by these immigrants although we rarely notice. To recognize the achievements of immigrant entrepreneurs, The ILC will launch an Immigrant Entrepreneur Hall of Fame on its website in January 2012.

Well-known brands such as Kraft and Levis as well as high-tech innovators such as Google and eBay will be honored. Lesser-known, mid-size companies that have a significant impact on regional economies such as Malden’s own New England Coffee Company, will also be recognized.

Be sure to tour the online Hall of Fame in January, and please share this resource with your friends and colleagues.

# EDUCATING THE PUBLIC

## “I didn’t get here alone.”

The newest report by The ILC Public Education Institute, *Adult Children of Immigrant Entrepreneurs: Memories and Influences*, was published in November. Probing the changing makeup of American college campuses, this report offers unparalleled insight into the journeys of today’s graduate students born to immigrant entrepreneur parents.

Given that immigrants are more than twice as likely as the native-born to start a business in the United States, the Institute investigated this burgeoning demographic as part of its mission to inform the public dialogue on immigrant issues.

This study also reveals that the students feel a deep-seated desire to give back to the immigrant communities into which they were born. As one of the students says, “I didn’t get here alone.”

To read the study, visit [www.ilctr.org/promoting-immigrants](http://www.ilctr.org/promoting-immigrants).



Jeffrey Juarez-Araniva, one of the adult children profiled in *Adult Children of Immigrant Entrepreneurs: Memories and Influences*.

## Marcia Hohn Receives Award from the Office of New Bostonians

Marcia Hohn was recently honored with the Community Champion Award from the Office of New Bostonians at its We Are Boston Gala.

Marcia has more than 20 years of experience in adult learning and systems development. Since 2003, she has worked to educate the public about the positive impact immigrants have on the American economy and communities as the director of The ILC Public Education Institute.

The Gala celebrates Boston’s diversity, immigrant heritage and contributions. The New Bostonians Community Champion Award is given to individuals who demonstrate leadership on behalf of immigrants by fostering greater understanding of the key issues that impact immigrant communities and facilitating increased support for these communities.

## The ILC Shares Expertise at National Conference

Marcia Hohn and Denzil Mohammed were among the 700 professionals who came together to share ideas and support efforts to make the U.S. a welcoming democracy for all at the 2011 National Immigrant Integration Conference in Seattle, Washington, from October 22-24.

Marcia presented *Immigrant Entrepreneurs: Engines of Economic Growth and Job Creation*, which drew from ILC-commissioned research. She later spent time with participants eager to learn more about these research models and findings.

Denzil instructed participants on navigating the wealth of resources to be found on The ILC’s Immigration Research and Information website ([www.immigrationresearch-info.org](http://www.immigrationresearch-info.org)). Participants were pleased to discover such a comprehensive online resource to help in their research and advocacy.

The ILC is a not-for-profit corporation supported by tax-deductible charitable contributions and, in part, by funding from The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Mystic Valley Elder Services, Inc., the Massachusetts Executive Offices of Elder Affairs and the Federal Administration on Aging, and the cities of Malden and Medford, Massachusetts. The ILC admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin or disability.

# DONORS

The ILC gratefully acknowledges the following donors who have made financial and in-kind contributions to the school between July 1, 2011, and November 15, 2011.

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