The 2014 ILC Immigrant Entrepreneur Awards Dinner

Now in its third year, The 2014 ILC Immigrant Entrepreneur of the Year Awards shines a light on the valuable contributions of Massachusetts immigrant entrepreneurs. More than 200 guests attended the celebration at the Royal Sonesta Hotel in Cambridge, MA, on May 8, 2014. All 35 nominees were outstanding examples of Massachusetts entrepreneurs who, as noted by ILC Founder and CEO Diane Portnoy, “revitalize depressed neighborhoods, create new technologies, make life-saving discoveries, create jobs, pay taxes and help form the backbone of this country.”

Following is the list of winners:

- Neighborhood Business: Rosa and Nisaury Tejeda and Victoria Amador from the Dominican Republic, founders of Tremendous Maid LLC in Jamaica Plain
- Business Growth: Fitzroy Alexander from Grenada, founder and owner of Traditional Breads, Inc. in Lynn
- High-Tech: Dr. Fauzia Khan and Mansoor Khan from Pakistan, founders of Alere Analytics in Lowell
- Life Science: Josef von Rickenbach from Switzerland, chairman and CEO of PAREXEL International Corp. in Waltham

More information on the nominees and winners and photos from the event can be seen on The ILC website at: http://www.ilctr.org/events/immigrant-entrepreneur-of-the-year.
MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER AND CEO

The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. (ILC) is located in Malden, but, thanks to loyal and generous supporters, its influence is felt far and wide. Over the last 21 years, The ILC has helped 8,000 immigrants and refugees in 81 Massachusetts communities learn English. Throughout Eastern Massachusetts, these students have become successful workers, parents and community members. Learning English improves every aspect of their lives from going to the grocery store, going to the doctor’s office, opening a bank account, talking to their children’s teachers, taking public transportation and filling out a job application.

The stories in this News Update will show some of the ways The Immigrant Learning Center interfaces with the community, including going out to local schools and businesses, and inviting in health educators and government officials. The ILC Public Education Institute broadens The ILC’s reach further with an Awards Dinner for Massachusetts immigrant entrepreneurs and online workshops for educators and community members nationwide. The Institute for Immigration Research, a joint venture between The Immigrant Learning Center and George Mason University, also has a national audience for its research on the economic impact of immigrants in the U.S.

These stories illustrate the three ways The Immigrant Learning Center gives immigrants a voice. Through free English language classes, public education and research, The ILC makes a difference in the lives of immigrants in Malden, throughout Massachusetts and across the U.S. Your support makes this possible.

Diane Portnoy

VOLUNTEER PROFILE

One way The ILC makes the most of limited resources is through the support of a dedicated group of classroom volunteers. Under the direction of ILC teachers, these volunteers spend from one to four days a week helping foreign-born adults learn English reading, writing, grammar and conversation skills and increase their understanding of American culture.

Norma Staples is a shining example of an ILC volunteer. When she came to The ILC five years ago, she said she wanted to volunteer simply because, “I have love in my heart that I want to share.” Although she has developed progressive peripheral neuropathy that makes it increasingly difficult for her to walk, her commitment has not diminished. She now comes to the school two or more days a week with a walker and the same cheerful disposition. Thank you Norma.
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STUDENT PROFILES

Saddiqa
Saddiqa is one proud mom. This spring, she attended three graduation ceremonies. Her daughter Jaila graduated from UMass Boston, daughter Laila graduated from Bryn Mawr, and her son Bilal graduated from Malden High School with plans to attend UMass Amherst.

Before graduating, Laila, Jaila and Bilal each participated in a program for low-income teenagers called Summer Search that sent them to Minnesota, Colorado and Peru, respectively. As Saddiqa explains, the program “opens their mind.” This May, Laila, Bilal and Saddiqa spoke in front of 750 people at a ceremony for Summer Search. Saddiqa says her experience at The ILC helped her speak with confidence.

This is a scenario she could barely have imagined growing up in Afghanistan where the Taliban prevented girls from attending school. The only education she has ever received was in The ILC’s Literacy Program, and now she is giving back by volunteering in the classroom two days a week. She has lingering health issues from her experiences in the war that prevent her from working, but she comes to The ILC faithfully every week.

For more stories about how students like Rudy and Saddiqa are helped by your support, go to www.ilctr.org and sign up for the email newsletter.

Rudy
For the past two years, ILC Founder and CEO Diane Portnoy has co-chaired the Anti-Defamation League’s “A Nation of Immigrants Community Seder.” This March, one of the featured speakers was a current student at The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc.

Speaking in a new language in front of a large group of strangers is just the latest challenge Rudy has faced bravely. He lost his mother when he was eight years old, and he still draws inspiration from her memory. In 2013, he left Haiti to join his siblings in the U.S.

Rudy is studying English at The ILC so he can get a job and continue his education. Before the earthquake in Haiti, Rudy was studying to become an engineer. Since his experience with that tragedy, his new goal is to become a nurse.

Rudy says of his journey, “Anyone who wants to make their dreams come true has to be ready to sacrifice, and if you are ready to sacrifice, you have to know why.... Therefore, sacrifice and dreams are associated with each other. That is why I am ready to take on any circumstances that come my way.”
Ask the nurse

One of the challenges The ILC helps its students overcome is navigating the U.S. health care system. From January through April 2014, Kelly Dumay Tuguinay spent two days a week giving presentations in ILC classrooms and in “ask the nurse” office hours. He was the third student from Salem State University’s Master of Science in Nursing program to spend their practicum at The ILC.

Topics ranged from cancer screening to cold and flu prevention. ILC students learned new vocabulary, asked questions, and some learned about topics like mammograms and colonoscopies for the first time. The subject matter was sensitive, but ILC teacher Marcia Spector says it was very effective because “Kelly wasn’t embarrassed, so no one else was embarrassed.”

ILC students make presentations at Malden elementary school

Four high-level ILC students in the Theater Class were invited by the Linden STEAM Academy in Malden to talk to the four second grade classes as part of the school’s geography and cultural diversity lessons. This was the second consecutive year that ILC students were guest speakers in each of the classrooms. They answered questions about their native country, food and culture; their childhood, families and school experiences; why they came to America; and numerous other questions such as their favorite video game. It was a wonderful opportunity for ILC students to practice English before an audience and for the second graders to learn about other countries and cultures.

Teaching English through theater performance

The Theater Class at The ILC uses an innovative teaching approach that lets students gain public speaking skills while refining their English speaking and writing skills. Often, the plays are written by the students themselves and reflect their personal experiences as newcomers to the U.S. This spring, the Theater Class teacher, Leora Sapon-Shevin, tried a different approach. Instead of an original play performed in public, the students selected two short plays written for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) students and performed them in ILC classrooms.

The student performers and audience alike enjoyed the experience of these short, humorous plays. The Theater Class performed them eight times, and the students had an opportunity to become very confident with the material through repetition. Many of the ESOL classes reviewed the script in advance so they would be sure to understand the dialogue. The laughing and clapping at each performance was a sure sign of comprehension.
SCHOOL NEWS

ILC students attend spring job fairs

Ten ILC students attended job fairs in April 2014 as part of The ILC’s Next Steps program to assist students with employment and education pursuits. Five students attended a job fair at the Doubletree Hotel in Boston sponsored by the Asian American Civic Association. They brought their resumes and spoke with recruiters from Home Depot, Dunkin’ Donuts, Macy’s and other companies. Five other students participated in a job fair at Logan Airport sponsored by AirMall, Inc. They spoke with representatives from various airport shops, restaurants and food concessions.

BOARD NEWS

The ILC welcomes two new trustees: Mahmud Jafri, founder and CEO, Dover Rug & Home in Natick, MA, and Karen Oakley, ILC Director of English Language Programs.

The ILC bids long-time trustee Joseph F. Lawless a fond farewell after many years of faithful, dedicated service. Thanks, Joe, for your commitment to The ILC’s mission.

In loving memory of Patrick Donelan

On the first day The ILC opened, you were there. Your generous support over the years forever changed the lives of ILC students and their families.

Thank you, dear friend. You are sorely missed.
EDUCATING THE PUBLIC

National immigration research

The Institute for Immigration Research (IIR) near Washington, D.C, is a joint venture between The Immigrant Learning Center and George Mason University. Created in 2012 to research the economic contributions of immigrants, it has already uncovered some impressive truths. According to IIR research nationally, immigrants are:

- 16% of the U.S. workforce
- 33% of the pharmaceutical R&D workforce
- 30% of U.S.-based Nobel Prize winners

For more information, visit the IIR website at: www.iir.gmu.edu.

The ILC presents on-line workshops

Free, interactive, online workshops hosted by The ILC Public Education Institute throughout the year give people across the country the immigration research, tools and information they need to better serve their communities, clients and students. In winter 2014, Talking to America About Immigrants and Immigration brought together 285 participants from 40 states to learn from 12 immigration experts. Topics included “New Messaging about Immigrants and Immigration,” “Positioning Immigrants as Assets” and progress on immigration reform. In summer 2014, the third annual workshop for educators was expanded with new content and presenters such as Susan Eaton of Harvard Law School and Jean-Michel Dissard, director of the film I Learn America. Through interactive webinars, instructional videos and group activities, participants in Immigrant Student Success: Models and Tools for K-12 and Adult Educators learn about techniques that capitalize on classroom diversity and activities to promote the success of their immigrant students. For more information, visit: www.ilctr.org/promoting-immigrants/ilc-workshops.

Immigrant heritage celebrated in Boston

The Immigrant Learning Center was pleased to partner with Welcome.us, the city councils of Boston and Cambridge, the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, and the Mayor’s Office of New Bostonians to produce a celebration of Immigrant Heritage Month on Saturday, June 21, 2014, at the Boston Public Library. Celebrated for the first time in 2014, Immigrant Heritage Month is part of a national effort to encourage Americans to reflect on their own heritage and the economic strength and cultural richness that grow from our immigrant origins.

The ILC contributed to the celebration in multiple ways. First, The ILC invited local immigrant entrepreneurs to speak. Bettina Hein, founder and CEO of Pixability, Inc. and a nominee for this year’s Immigrant Entrepreneur of the Year Award, and Saul Perlera, owner of Saul Perlera Real Estate and featured in ILC research studies, both made a compelling case for the economic strength of immigrants. Second was an interactive timeline upon which members of the public could indicate the names, dates and reasons for the first people in their family to arrive in the United States. As each dot was added to the timeline, a visual story of Boston’s heritage emerged.
SPECIAL EVENTS

One avid golfer explains why he supports The ILC

Jim Kaloyanides, pictured below, showed perfect golf form during The ILC’s 16th Annual Golf Classic held on June 9 at the Kernwood Country Club in Salem, MA. He had a “once-in-a-lifetime” day on the green making perfect shots and racking up several prize winnings!

Long-time Golf Classic participant Jim Kaloyanides connects deeply with The ILC’s mission to help immigrant adults achieve success in America by learning English as a first step. Jim is a descendant of Greek immigrants. His grandfather came to America through Ellis Island in 1910 to escape persecution. He came to the Boston area from New York because of his job. Jim is the former president and CEO of New England Coffee Company, an award-winning company based in Malden and featured in The ILC’s Immigrant Entrepreneur Hall of Fame. “The ILC does a great job providing free education to immigrant adults who can’t afford to pay for English classes and want to move forward in their lives. With increased English language proficiency, students are able to get jobs, become U.S. citizens and help their children. I wish The ILC continued success.”

More photos from the golf tournament can be viewed at: http://www.ilctr.org/events/annual-golf-classic.
INDIVIDUALS

Valentina Apanasenko and Kuandyk Akhmetzhanov
Pierre Alcime
Linda J. Altwater
Benny S. Ambush
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald J. Artinian
Margaret and Richard Arvedlund
Dr. Susan L. Cahall and Honorable Frank J. Bailey
Mehrnoush Badshahandeh
Mr. and Mrs. Victor N. Baltera
Leslie Belay
Cheryl and Everett Benton
Abby and David Blackman
Patricia Boisvert
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald J. Artinian
Margaret and Richard Arvedlund
Dr. Susan L. Cahall and Honorable Frank J. Bailey
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Mr. and Mrs. Victor N. Baltera
Leslie Belay
Cheryl and Everett Benton
Abby and David Blackman
Patricia Boisvert
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas J. Fitgerald
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Forbes
Mr. and Mrs. Richard W. Fournier
Heidi Diehl
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Forbes
Donna and John Fraiche
Dr. and Mrs. Bruce M. Gare
Jeanthius Gedex
Mr. and Mrs. David Giunta
Karen E. Glover
Dr. & Mrs. Ronald P. Goldberg
Mr. and Mrs. Louis A. Goodman
Susan and Michael Haley
Maureen and John Harrington
Lynne and David Hegarty
Mr. and Mrs. Warren Heilbrunner
Neil C. Higgins
Mr. and Mrs. Paul V. Hoagland
Marcia D. Hohn
Mr. and Mrs. David C. Horton
Priscilla and Frank Hundley
Mr. and Mrs. James Jennings
Mr. and Mrs. Hugh R. Jones
Holly Jones
Joseph Joseph
Helene Joseph
Silja S. Kallenbach
Mr. and Mrs. John C. Kane
Ralph Kaplan
Esther N. Karinge
Lisa and Henry Katz
Jennifer King
Kathleen Klose and Jay Harris
Vai I. Arthur G. Koumantzidis
Kathy Kratz
Sergiy Kurylo
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lajoie
Mr. and Mrs. William Lamkin
Dan LaPage
Mr. and Mrs. James Lavender
Mr. and Mrs. Joe Lawless
Michelle and David Lepore
Jian Rong Li
Diane Lind
Shari and Michael Linskey
Qinghua Liu
Anthony F. LoPresti
Lisa Louden
Peggy and Chuck Louden
Chuck Louden, Jr.
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Lisa Harris Jones and Sean Malone
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Carmen and Marian Nistor
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Mr. and Mrs. Thomas M. O’Brien
Mohamed Osman
Mr. and Mrs. Robert D. Payne
Mary S. Peabody
Marianne Peace
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Pike
Michele and John Pepeo
Diane and Barry Portnoy
Elka and Adam Portnoy
Norma Portnoy
Katherine Pottz
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Raquel A. Wolfe
Judy Chamberlain and Chris Wong
Mark Young and Gary Sullivan
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Zubricki, III
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Zubricki, Jr.

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Nelson Ambush
Flo Averbach
Joan Broude
Ralph Hannabury, Sr.
Terry Dempsey
Pat Johnson
Anne Di Benedetto
Simon and Silvia Katz
Lynda Sue Fitzpatrick
Anne Serino

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Sally Cavanaugh
Adam Portnoy
Susan Haley
Rose Thompson
Peggy and Chuck Louden