Thirty-Four outstanding Massachusetts entrepreneurs nominated for The 2015 ILC Immigrant Entrepreneur of the Year Awards

MALDEN, Mass, March 30, 2015 / Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker will join 200 business and community leaders in honoring 34 immigrants from 24 countries who founded businesses in more than 20 Massachusetts communities and were nominated for The Immigrant Learning Center’s Fourth Annual Immigrant Entrepreneur of the Year Awards. The nominees represent outstanding business leaders from across the commonwealth in four business categories: growth, neighborhood, high-tech and life science.

The 2015 winner in each category will be announced at the Immigrant Entrepreneur of the Year Awards Dinner on May 7, 2015, at the Royal Sonesta Hotel in Cambridge, Mass., with master of ceremonies, Dr. J. Keith Motley, University of Massachusetts Boston chancellor and special guest Governor Charlie Baker. Ticket and sponsorship information is available at http://www.ilctr.org/events.

Business Growth

Nominees in Business Growth had at least 20 percent revenue growth between 2011 and 2014. These immigrant entrepreneurs help to energize the economy in Massachusetts and the United States. The nominees for 2015 ILC Immigrant Entrepreneur of the Year in Business Growth are:

Venkat Kolluri, Chitika Inc./Cidewalk, Westborough from India

Ravi Meruva, IconSoft, Burlington from India

Helene and Thomas Stohr, swissbakers, Allston and Reading from Switzerland

Paolo Volpati-Kedra, Sauces ’n Love, Inc., Lynn from Italy

Neighborhood Business

Small businesses are the lifeblood of many neighborhoods. They provide needed goods and services as well as specialty items. They also increase local commerce by attracting customers from surrounding communities. The nominees for 2015 ILC Immigrant Entrepreneur of the Year in Neighborhood Business are:

Elias Audy, Cypress Automart, Brookline from Lebanon
Alberto Calvo, Stop and Compare Supermarkets, Chelsea and Lynn from Cuba

Martin Carrera, La Veracruzana, Amherst and Northampton from Mexico

Javier Diaz, Rincon Caribeno, Hyde Park from Dominican Republic

Ahmed Egal, Car Service Boston, Boston from Somalia

Ruth Francis, P&R Ice Cream and Restaurant, Mattapan from Jamaica

Andres Gutierrez, JP's Massage Therapy Center, Jamaica Plain from Colombia

Hong Lui, A Friendly Inn at Harvard, Cambridge from China

George V. Markos, Brother's Deli, Lynn from Greece

Anthony O. N. Ngethe, Nursecare Transportation, Methuen from Kenya

Ky Nguyen, Kingston Station, Boston from Vietnam

Damaris Pimentel, Ultra Beauty Salon, Jamaica Plain from Dominican Republic

Gladys Ruiz, Little Children Schoolhouse, Brookline from Peru

Carlos Vargas, Vargas & Vargas Insurance, Dorchester and Stoughton from Portugal

Tania Vega, River Grille, Hyde Park from Brazil

Yolanda Villami, Alpha Travel Agency, Worcester From Colombia
High-Tech

Technological breakthroughs are often made by immigrants. The nominees in the high-tech category have each made remarkable contributions in their fields, and they contribute to Massachusetts’ reputation as a top ecosystem of innovation. The nominees for 2015 ILC Immigrant Entrepreneur of the Year in High-Tech are:

Mahmud Awan, Tech Man International LLC, Charlton City from Pakistan

Dries Buytaert, Acquia, Boston from Belgium

Semyon Dukach, SMTP, Inc., Cambridge from Russia

Joshua Feast, Cogito Corporation, Boston from New Zealand

Vasu Ram, Content Raven, Marlborough from India

Rama Ramakrishnan, CQuotient, Cambridge from India

Dinesh Wadhwani, ThinkLite LLC, Natick From Ghana

Anita Worden, Solectria - A Yaskawa Company, Lawrence from India

Life Science

According to The Immigrant Learning Center’s research, 26 percent of biotechnology companies in New England have at least one foreign-born founder. These founders not only create jobs, they make significant breakthroughs that impact the health and well-being of us all. The nominees for 2015 ILC Immigrant Entrepreneur of the Year in Life Science are:

Bela F. Asztalos, Boston Heart Diagnostics, Framingham from Hungary

Laxman Desai, Toxikon Corporation, Bedford from India

Krishna Menon, Cellceutix Corporation, Beverly from India

Derrick J. Rossi, Moderna Therapeutics, Cambridge from Canada
Purnanand D. Sarma, Taris Biomedical, Lexington from India

About The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc.
The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. (ILC) of Malden, MA, is a not-for-profit organization that gives immigrants a voice in three ways. The English Language Program provides free, year-round English classes to immigrant and refugee adults in Greater Boston to help them become successful workers, parents and community members. The Public Education Institute informs Americans about the economic and social contributions of immigrants in our society, and the Institute for Immigration Research, a joint venture with George Mason University, conducts research on the economic contributions of immigrants.

For more information, visit the website http://www.ilctr.org. The ILC can also be found on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr.

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