



# New American Stories

Issue 49, August 2017

Even though our immigration system currently favors family unification, separation from loved ones is a very common part of the immigrant experience. Every time I speak with a student and they casually mention the years they spend apart from spouses, parents and children, I am reminded of the tremendous sacrifice they make to be here.

Jefna and her younger sister left Haiti in June 2015 to join their father and five sisters in the U.S., leaving behind their mother. They came hoping for a better education and a brighter future.

Her sister learned English quickly in a U.S. high school, but Jefna, who was 20 and a high-school graduate, struggled with the language. Fortunately, she found The ILC and started classes in Sept. 2016. Her English swiftly improved. She particularly liked being in class with students from many countries, so she wasn't tempted to speak Haitian with her classmates.



As her English improved, Jafna got a job in a clothing store and was even able to help translate for some French-speaking customers from Morocco. She is well on her way to creating the brighter future she seeks. Jefna moved on from The ILC in April and entered a training program for health-related careers.

Thank you for your ongoing support that makes stories like Jefna's possible.



## **Diane Portnoy**

Founder and CEO

The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc.

P.S. I hope to see you at our [25th Anniversary Gala](#) on Oct. 28.

## Thank You!

Countless supporters help The ILC give immigrants a voice. Here is a heartfelt thank you for some recent acts of kindness:

**Andrew Koppel** for remembering The Immigrant Learning Center in his will.

**Mark Correia** for his birthday fundraiser on Facebook. Happy belated birthday to you, Mark.

**Susan Dosick** for volunteering to take our staff photo.

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## Top 25 Countries

Students and staff at The Immigrant Learning Center really are a global community right here in Malden, MA. Since the founding 25 years ago, the school has served students from 118 countries.

In honor of the 25th anniversary, we've compiled a list of the top 25 countries of origin for The ILC students.



- |                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| 1. Haiti       | 6. Vietnam   |
| 2. China       | 7. Russia    |
| 3. Morocco     | 8. Colombia  |
| 4. Brazil      | 9. Turkey    |
| 5. El Salvador | 10. Algeria  |
|                | 10. Ethiopia |

[Click here](#) to see the full list and photos of all this diversity represented at our annual International Day celebration.

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## About Us

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 at [www.ilctr.org](http://www.ilctr.org) or Facebook page [ImmigrantLearningCenter](#).