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*Diane Portnoy*  
*President and CEO*

## **The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. celebrates 20 years of giving immigrants a voice.**

MALDEN, Mass, October 23, 2012 / On Saturday, October 20, 2012, The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. (ILC) and 262 guests from as far away as Seattle celebrated its 20th anniversary in style at the Royal Sonesta Hotel in Cambridge. Guests enjoyed a gourmet meal and danced to music by the Hip Pocket Orchestra.

The ILC began operations in 1992 with three staff members offering free English language classes to 60 immigrants and refugees. Today, with a staff of 30, it serves more than 900 immigrants and refugees a year and educates the public about the value that immigrants bring to this country.

In reflecting on the more than 7,100 students who have learned English at The ILC over the past 20 years, Diane Portnoy, founder and CEO, said, “The Immigrant Learning Center is a community where people from all over the world with different cultures, religions and skin colors come together to learn English and how to navigate our very complex health, education and economic systems. They also learn there is much more that brings us together than tears us apart.” In closing, she thanked all of The ILC’s supporters saying, “On behalf of myself and all our students, thank you as we celebrate not only The ILC and its students, but also I’d like to thank all immigrants and this United States of America.”

This evening was also an opportunity to celebrate the recently created Institute for Immigration Research with George Mason University and to launch The ILC’s first book *Immigrant Struggles, Immigrant Gifts*. Attendees each received a copy of the book, which is being published by GMU Press and will be available soon at Amazon.com and Barnes and Noble.

The president of George Mason University, Dr. Angel Cabrera, addressed the guests saying, “We [at George Mason University] are committed. We want to go on that journey with you to remind people that what makes this country great is to continue to keep our doors open to hard working people from around the world.”

### **About The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc.**

The Immigrant Learning Center, Inc. (ILC) of Malden, Mass, 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 program provides 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 the website <http://www.ilctr.org> and Facebook page <http://www.fb.com/ImmigrantLearningCenter>.

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