



Founded 1992

Diane Portnoy  
Founder and CEO

# Giving Immigrants a Voice

FALL 2016

## Meet the new Americans you helped

Your support of The Immigrant Learning Center helps to share the privilege of citizenship with new Americans through two levels of citizenship classes and an annual swearing-in ceremony in Malden each autumn. Here are recent examples of students who became U.S. citizens with your help.

### Mimose

Education is important to Mimose, but her family could not afford to send her to school in Haiti. Her only education was some night classes while working in a baseball factory in her early 20s.

She wanted better for her children and sent her eldest daughter to live with the girl's father and attend high school in the U.S. Sadly, her father was abusive, and she was placed in foster care. Once she was old enough to live on her own, her younger sister came to live with her. Eventually, Mimose was able to get a visa and live with her daughters in the U.S.



Mimose reached her long-awaited goal of becoming a citizen with your help.

Today, the youngest daughter is a lawyer, the eldest works in a hospital and is a foster parent, and Mimose studies English at The ILC. After her English improved, Mimose became certified to help her daughter care for her foster child. Next, she studied in our citizenship class. Writing was a challenge for her. She practiced over and over in class and will always remember writing,

"George Washington was the first American president" on her citizenship exam. Mimose became a U.S. citizen just in time for her daughters to take her to Mexico for her 60th birthday using a U.S. passport.

### Sulyman

Sulyman is from Eritrea, a country with a long and complicated history of conflict with its neighbor, Ethiopia. Although the war between these nations officially ended in 2000, it did not bring peace. Ongoing disagreements over the border often become violent clashes.



Sulyman, on left, registered to vote just after becoming a citizen.

To escape the violence and the prospect of being drafted into life-long military service, Sulyman decided to take a risk. For three days, he walked at night and slept during the day until he reached the border and surrendered to the Ethiopian military. He lived in a United Nations refugee camp for years and finally made his way to the United States in 2011.

He came to study English at The ILC in 2014. As his English improved, he gained a promotion at Whole Foods. He studied in our citizenship class and, thanks to his hard work and your support, Sulyman became a U.S. citizen on October 13. He registered to vote the same day.

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Diane Portnoy

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# In their own words ...

## Honoring my heritage

Timothy Bonang has been supporting The Immigrant Learning Center since 2005. In July, he became a monthly donor. He now has the peace of mind knowing that every month his donation is automatically charged to the credit card of his choice. Without any effort, he can be part of the ongoing work of giving immigrants a voice. In his own words:

“The ILC’s mission of ‘...giving a voice to immigrants...’ resonates deeply with me. My grandparents immigrated separately to the United States in the early 1900s. They met, married, started a family and despite having limited education, through hard work, diligence and great faith, they achieved their American dream of owning a large home filled with happy and healthy children located in a vibrant community. They were very proud to become U.S. citizens. It is with them in mind that I am honored to support the excellent work of The ILC.”

To start your own recurring donation, simply go to [www.ilctr.org](http://www.ilctr.org), click the “donate now” button and follow the instructions.

## Investing in the future

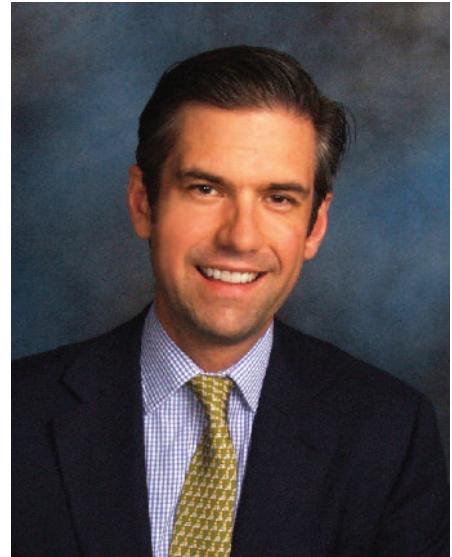
The ILC is grateful to our many corporate sponsors that help give immigrants a voice. UBS sponsors the annual Golf Classic. In the words of Robert Crowell, managing director:

“The Immigrant Learning Center provides a much-needed community resource giving immigrant and refugee adults the English classes they need to create successful lives in America. What makes the Center so unique is that it offers high-quality English programs free of charge. UBS is proud to invest in America’s future by supporting the mission of The ILC.”

To learn more about sponsorship opportunities, contact Kathy Smith, ILC director of development, at (781) 322-9777.



Timothy Bonang, long-time ILC supporter, recently signed up for automatic monthly donations.

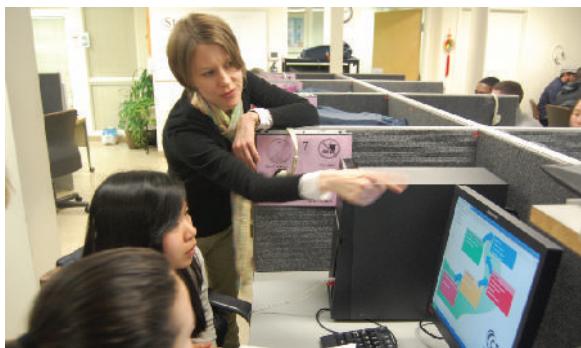


Robert Crowell, managing director of UBS Investment Bank, a loyal ILC sponsor.

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.

## English is the first step on their career paths

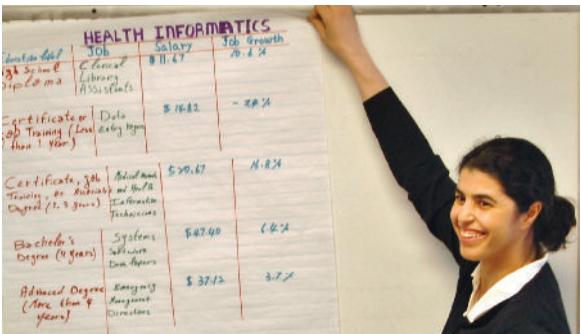
By supporting The Immigrant Learning Center, you help our students become successful workers, parents and community members. Life skills are woven into the curriculum, and one of the most important skills newcomers need is learning how to find a job and pursue a career.



Robbin Kotajarvi, ILC education and career advisor, shows students how to research career information in the computer lab.

Low-level students learn job-related vocabulary and how to read a job posting and complete a simple job application. Upper-level students practice interview questions and write resumes in the classroom. In the computer lab, they learn how to look for job postings on Craig's List and Indeed, and they learn how to research job requirements and career paths. Students also attend job fairs with Robbin that are consistent with their career goals.

All of these work-related lessons help them learn vocabulary, reading, writing and speaking English, and computer skills. One-on-one coaching is also available to students who need a little extra help in reaching their job goals.



Level 4 student Kaoutar presents her career path research to the class.

## Your support reaches students from coast to coast



Business owners Mike and Brunna Peroni describe their experience as immigrant entrepreneurs to a group of Massachusetts educators.

You are providing vital resources to educators in Massachusetts and across the country through The Immigrant Learning Center Public Education Institute.

Once a year for the past five years, The ILC Public Education Institute has offered a free, two-day workshop online for educators. In July, K-12 and adult educators from 35 states heard from 13 experts and collaborated with each other in interactive sessions on strategies to create a culture of respect in classrooms, build relationships with immigrant parents, and empower all students.

Here in Massachusetts, we partnered for the first time with the history department of Boston Public Schools, the Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement and Primary Source to deliver a professional development workshop at The ILC offices in Malden. For two days in August, Massachusetts educators were steeped in immigration data and ideas for interactive lesson planning. The ILC's Denzil Mohammed even led the teachers on a "story tour" of immigrant-owned businesses in Malden so they could hear first-hand the entrepreneurs' journeys to the U.S. At one stop, Brunna and Mike Peroni of Brazil, owners of Peroni's Jewelry, poignantly noted how much it meant to them to raise and educate their children in the United States.

Whether on-line or in-person, you helped these teachers start the school year much better prepared to use immigration as a teaching tool.

# Thank You Donors

*It is with our deepest thanks that we recognize the following community groups, corporations, foundations and individuals that made financial and in-kind contributions to The ILC between July 1, 2016, and October 31, 2016.*

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