

Immigrant Essential Workers

Critical to Delivering Health Care and Supplying Food



2.8 Million Immigrant Workers in U.S. Health Care are:

- **16.5% of all health care workers**
- 15.7% of registered nurses
- 22.0% of nursing assistants
- 25.1% of personal care aides
- 36.5% of home health aides
- 28.7% of physicians
- 19.7% of surgeons
- 32.0% of psychiatrists



Immigrants Lead in Medical Science

- More than **56% of U.S. researchers** with a PhD in life sciences and medicine are foreign-born.*
- Peter Tsai, an immigrant from Taiwan, invented the **N95 respiratory mask**.
- Moderna and Pfizer, both founded by immigrants, were the first companies to produce **COVID-19 vaccines** in the United States.
- Taiyan Yang, VP at Gilead Sciences, Inc. and an immigrant from Taiwan, was a key figure behind one of the few effective treatments for the novel coronavirus, **remdesivir**.

*Source: National Foundation for American Progress



Houston's COVID Hunter

Born and raised in Mexico City, Dr. Joseph Varón is the chief of critical care at United Memorial Medical Center Houston.

Working seven days a week for more than a year, Dr. Varón adapted a treatment protocol with a 95 percent chance of recovery.

He told a reporter at *The Washington Post*,
“I was meant to do this.”

The Mayor of Houston proclaimed
September 25, 2020,
“Dr. Joseph Varón Day.”



109,000 Immigrant Workers in Massachusetts Health Care are:

- **22.6% of all health care workers**
- 17.1% of nurses
- 34.5% of physicians and surgeons
- 39.3% of workers at nursing care facilities
- 39.8% of home health aides



Immigrants Are **21.6 Percent** of All **U.S. Food Sector Workers** and:

- 28.7% of food processing workers
- 27.6% of agriculture workers
- 20.5% of restaurant and food service workers
- 18.2% of food delivery workers
- 16.6% of grocery and supermarket workers

Immigrants Worker Are Critical in Specific Regions and Industries



In **California**, immigrants are **69%** of agriculture workers.



In **Alaska**, immigrants are **70%** of seafood processing workers.



In **Nebraska**, immigrants are **66%** of meat processing workers.

Immigrants Alleviate Hunger

José Andrés, an immigrant from Spain, is a bestselling author, educator, television personality, humanitarian, chef, owner of nearly 20 restaurants and founder of the not-for-profit **World Central Kitchen (WCK)**.

Since March 2020, WCK has delivered **> 33 million meals in 400 U.S. cities** while providing jobs to restaurant workers and drivers.



Photo Credit: World Central Kitchen/WCK.org

Refugees Learn Resilience The Hard Way

Yassin Terou credits the resiliency he learned being a **refugee from Syria** for getting him through the pandemic.

He owns **two falafel restaurants** in Knoxville, Tennessee, that normally serve 4,000 people a week and employ 30 people.

Last spring, his business dropped by half, but he managed to **keep all his employees**.

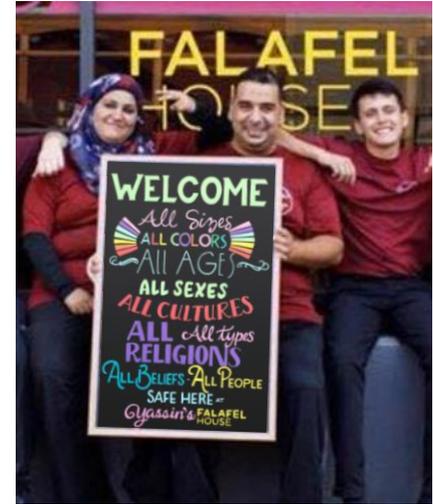


The Hard Way Also Teaches Compassion

Selflessness is another trait Terou chalks up to his refugee experience.

When the schools closed, he provided **free meals to students.**

Even after they shifted to delivery and curbside only, Terou says, "As always, **if you don't have enough to pay for a meal, it's on us.**"



92,500 Immigrant Workers in Massachusetts Food Supply Chain are:

- **26.9% of all food supply workers**
- 21.0% of all grocery store and supermarket workers
- 28.2% of all restaurant and food service workers

The Impact of Immigrant Essential Workers

The Immigrant Learning Center is conducting original research on the impact that immigrant essential workers have had on communities around the U.S. during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To learn more and sign up for updates, go to www.ilctr.org

