

Immigrant entrepreneurs inspire

What's more valuable than a Nobel Peace Prize nomination? For one immigrant entrepreneur, it's the Barry M. Portnoy Immigrant Entrepreneur Award. After a two-year, pandemic-induced hiatus, the Barry M. Portnoy Immigrant Entrepreneur Award Benefit returned on March 8, 2022.

Through the COVID-19 crisis, this year's honorees faced obstacles that previous awardees had not dreamt of. Despite this, they managed to keep their businesses thriving and even started new businesses.

Meet our 2022 honorees below.

Neighborhood Business Award:



Jitka Borowick from the Czech Republic

Founder, Nové Yoga and Cleangreen
on Cape Cod, MA

Jitka is known throughout the community not only as a talented entrepreneur and job creator but also for her generosity in offering her "time, talent and treasure" to community causes.

Life Science Business Award:



Avak Kahvejian from Canada

General Partner, Flagship Pioneering
in Cambridge, MA

Avak is a leader in the local Armenian community as well as an inventor and serial entrepreneur. He has co-founded 12 biotech companies and counting.

Business Growth Award:



Roger Magalhaes from Brazil

Founder, Shades in Place and Trading
Up Consulting, LLC in Franklin, MA

Roger has grown not only his own window treatment business but also helped countless others start and grow their businesses through his mentorship and training programs. Attendees came from across the United States to honor him at the Awards Benefit.

High Tech Business Award:



Ling Chai Maginn from China

Founder, Jenzabar, Inc. and All Girls
Allowed in Boston, MA

Ling has received many accolades for her business success and humanitarian work. She was even nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for her leadership in the 1989 Tiananmen Square uprising. She says the one nearest and dearest to her heart is the Barry M. Portnoy Immigrant Entrepreneur Award.

Connect with us!



New research from The ILC highlights contributions of immigrant essential workers

Throughout the pandemic, immigrant essential workers have been vital to helping all Americans stay safe, fed and healthy. While foreign-born people make up just 14 percent of the U.S. population, they are 18 percent of the essential workforce.

The latest research report from The Immigrant Learning Center's Public Education Institute, *Immigrant Essential Workers During the COVID-19 Pandemic*, shows that much of the weight of the pandemic in the United States was born by immigrants who received little to no support from the government in return.

The report draws on interviews with more than 30 policy experts and immigrant essential workers across the country. The report also features in-depth research on the extraordinary challenges and contributions of immigrant essential workers. We can learn from their experiences to better prepare for the future, rejecting policies that failed frontline workers and building on effective local initiatives.

The ILC's Public Education Institute is committed to giving immigrants a voice through creating and sharing original research. You can explore the report or read the executive summary at <https://www.ilctr.org/essential-report/>.

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[This report] breathe[s] life into the forgotten narratives of these workers.

— Sahan Journal

Physicians:



29%
immigrants

Meat processing workers:



31%
immigrants

Home health aides:



36%
immigrants

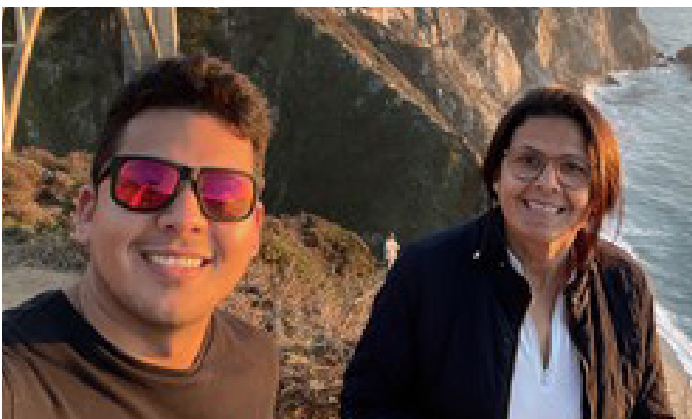
Fast food workers:



48%
immigrants

Why Jerson wishes The ILC was in every city

Like many of The ILC's donors, Jerson donated because he wanted to support our immigrant and refugee students. Unlike most of The ILC's donors, one of those students is his mother.



Jerson, left, donated in honor of his mother, Sonia, right, a former The ILC student

Jerson and his parents left Venezuela to escape turmoil in the country. Sadly, Jerson's father succumbed to cancer shortly after reaching the U.S., and his mother, Sonia, was at loose ends. Jerson encouraged her to pursue studying English at The ILC. They were impressed by the breadth of services provided here. "There are no words for how I feel about [The ILC]. It's such an integral approach, not just teaching English but connecting people with jobs when they're available and helping people in other ways," says Jerson. Sonia has been studying hard and her teacher says she's "very dedicated [and] very helpful to other students."

Seeing how The ILC has impacted his mother's life inspired Jerson to donate. "Immigrants should be welcomed wherever they are in the world," says Jerson. "Organizations like this that make people feel welcome are so important ... I wish you were in every city or many cities around the United States because it's such a valuable labor that you do."

Thank you, donors!

It is with our deepest thanks that we recognize the following donors who made financial and in-kind contributions to The ILC between October 2, 2021, and March 13, 2022. Special thanks to our monthly donors, Facebook fundraisers and those who use giving and matching programs through their employers. Please check with your company's HR department for details.

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Join us at The ILC's 23rd Annual Golf Classic



Golf Tournament • Lunch • Dinner
Monday, June 13, 2022 at Pine Brook Country Club



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What you and alt-rock band They Might Be Giants have in common

Alt-rock band They Might Be Giants may be best known for writing the music for the TV show *Malcolm in the Middle*, but we will always think of them as champions of literacy. The band's lead duo, John Flansburgh and John Linnell, are Massachusetts natives and were looking to partner with a not-for-profit that supports literacy when they found The Immigrant Learning Center last year.

The band donated 10 percent of sales from their newest album, *Book*, published with an accompanying art book, from its launch in November through the end of 2021. The more than \$12,000 they raised goes directly to helping our immigrant and refugee students fulfill their dreams of becoming better workers, parents and citizens.

They Might Be Giants' contribution is especially appreciated while traditional fundraising has been disrupted by the COVID-19 crisis. The band said they were excited to support The ILC because the center is "improving the world directly from Malden, Massachusetts. Literacy for all is WHERE IT'S AT."

However you found us, your support of The Immigrant Learning Center improves the world as well. As far as we are concerned, all our supporters are rock stars.

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[The ILC is] improving the world directly from Malden, Massachusetts. Literacy for all is WHERE IT'S AT.

– They Might Be Giants



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Volunteering reveals a “common thread throughout humanity”

As a volunteer with The Immigrant Learning Center, Chloe knows she wasn't just helping people learn English. Her family moved to California from Taiwan when she was a child, and she saw how her father struggled to learn English and feel part of the community. She was happy to help students “access parts of society that can feel out of reach because of the language barrier.”

Chloe helped students in one-on-one online sessions and in a virtual classroom while earning her master's degree in international relations at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. It wasn't merely a one-way relationship. She deeply values the cultural exchange she shared with The ILC students, which she considered not just personally fulfilling but an integral part of her lifelong learning in international relations.

From Chloe's perspective, “The more you get to know people who seem different from you, the more you can see a common thread throughout humanity, not isolated to a country's borders but all things we have in common.”



Chloe volunteered online with The Immigrant Learning Center while earning a master's degree in international relations.

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Giving Immigrants a Voice Since 1992

The ILC students rise to meet multiple challenges

“For many of us, becoming an entrepreneur is not an easy thing, but being an immigrant is probably the most challenging thing in our lives.” The many Immigrant Learning Center students who have become entrepreneurs can relate to this sentiment, which was shared by Ling Chai Maginn at this year’s Barry M. Portnoy Immigrant Entrepreneur Awards (see story on page 1).

By supporting The ILC, you are not only making our students’ lives less challenging, you are enabling some of them to start businesses, including restaurants, dentist offices, barber shops and many others.

Two students in The ILC citizenship classes, Amani and Rachel, achieved their citizenship goal and started new businesses during the COVID-19 crisis.

We can’t wait to see what our students will dream up next. Your continued support can help those dreams come true.



When Amani first moved from Libya to the United States, she struggled to find appropriate clothing for her family of practicing Muslims. She saw an opportunity to help other families like hers and created a shop that provides culturally appropriate clothing and accessories. She credits her classes at The ILC for giving her the ability to confidently chat in English with customers from all over the globe.



Tanzanian American Rachel creates and sells gorgeous head wraps and face masks in traditional Maasai prints. She had the sewing skills, and learning English allowed her to create an online platform for her business.

Rachel said, “It was amazing. I was able to help people have those masks, especially before ... everyone started to do the masks.”