

San Mateo County Immigrant Forum
Meeting Notes
6/16/2022

1. Welcome & Introductions: Emily Smith & Jennifer Llamas

- a. Thank you to all for joining us on Zoom. The Immigrant Forum will be held virtually until further notice.

2. USCIS Updates: Nina Sachdev, Community Relations Officer, USCIS

- a. Engagements, <https://www.uscis.gov/outreach>
 - TPS Afghanistan, June 16 at 11am PST
 - Overview of T visa, U visa, VAWA Self-Petition, July 27 at 11am PST
- b. TPS Afghanistan – official USCIS messages went out in English, Dari and Pashto
 - For Afghan nationals that continually resided in the US since March 15, 2022
 - 18 months of TPS status
- c. Afghan Exemptions for Terrorism-Related Inadmissibility Grounds (TRIG)
 - Announcement: <https://www.uscis.gov/newsroom/all-news/dhs-and-dos-announce-exemptions-allowing-eligible-afghans-to-qualify-for-protection-and-immigration>
 - TRIG Situational Exemptions: <https://www.uscis.gov/laws-and-policy/other-resources/terrorism-related-inadmissibility-grounds-trig/terrorism-related-inadmissibility-grounds-trig-situational-exemptions>
- d. Public Charge Resources Webpage Update
 - <https://www.uscis.gov/green-card/green-card-processes-and-procedures/public-charge/public-charge-resources>
- e. Immigrant Military Members and Veterans Initiative
 - USCIS will accept and consider, on a case-by-case basis, parole requests from noncitizen current and former military service members and family members who are outside the United States so that they may return to the United States to better avail themselves of U.S. legal counsel and systems and gain access to certain veterans' benefits.
 - Dept. of Homeland Security webpage: <https://www.dhs.gov/immvets>
 - USCIS information: <https://www.uscis.gov/military/discretionary-options-for-military-members-enlistees-and-their-families>

3. Legal Updates: Alison Kamhi, ILRC

- a. DACA – Yesterday was the 10th anniversary of DACA
 - Temporary program for youth who came here at a young age, went to school, meet certain other criteria
 - Legality challenged many times, still winding its way through courts
- b. Enforcement Priorities
 - Biden's enforcement priorities – categories of who to prioritize for apprehension, detention, deportation – vacated by Judge Tipton in Southern District of TX. Doesn't mean that anyone has to be deported. Likely will be appealed. Practice alert

https://nipnlg.org/PDFs/practitioners/practice_advisories/crim/2022_15June-Tipton-judgment-quick-takes.pdf

- c. Title 42
 - Still in effect, subject of litigation
- d. Public Charge – Supreme Court rejected attempt to revive Trump rule. The public charge rule is officially dead. ILRC press release on topic: <https://www.ilrc.org/supreme-court-dismisses-gop-led-lawsuit%E2%80%99s-attempt-defend-trump-era-public-charge>
- e. Military veterans: ICE announced new policy to take military service into consideration when determining whether to take immigration enforcement action against someone. This is part of larger policy to provide coordinated support to veterans and their families.
- f. Certain immigration application forms out for comment – naturalization application and work authorization was out for comment too.

4. COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP WITH IRC IN SAN JOSE AND OAKLAND: Elgiva Wood, Community Sponsorship Manager, International Rescue Committee (IRC)

- a. Community Sponsorship means refugee resettlement in the community. Has been successful in Canada and U.S.
- b. Various models: sponsor circles, Support Teams. IRC is piloting Co-sponsorship model in Bay Area.
- c. Co-sponsorship = community group partners with resettlement agency. Community group assists with taking on most of the core resettlement services like applying for SSN, finding housing, furniture and household items, school enrollment, health appointments, and other core services, etc. Overseen by IRC.
- d. People being served now are in regular resettlement program: refugees, SIV (Special Immigrant Visa holders). Receive Reception and Placement services for 90 days. Once refugees have been here for a year they can apply for a green card. SIVs arrive with permanent resident status.
- e. Responsibilities of Co-Sponsorship group:
 - Sign non-legally binding agreement with IRC
 - Background checks for all members of co-sponsorship group
 - Group must have at least 6 members.
 - Group must fundraise \$2500 for assigned case and \$2500 for IRC co-sponsorship program, plus additional donations/in-kind goods
 - Group performs resettlement services for client over 90-day resettlement period
 - 6-month commitment (extendable to 12 months)
- f. IRC provides training and guidance to co-sponsorship team. Also:
 - Monitor progress in providing services according to agreement with Dept of State
 - Maintain client case file
- g. Steps to become co-sponsors:

- Form a group (faith-based, neighbors, friends, co-workers, etc) 6+ members
- Start raising money (\$5000 total)
- Each person must submit volunteer application to IRC
- Submit background check
- Schedule and attend trainings
- Sign co-sponsorship agreement
- Send funds to IRC office

h. FAQs

- What is the time commitment involved? A: Depends on situation of clients, and roles of team members in co-sponsorship group. Team should expect that during first 30 days they will be pretty busy, equivalent of full-time case worker during that time.
- What means do refugees have when they arrive? A: It is not an expectation that co-sponsors will co-sign leases, pay rent, provide monetary assistance or give free housing. Clients will receive one-time payment provided by federal government.
- Why does IRC ask co-sponsors for money? A: It is a new program, it contributes to helping build infrastructure, we are hoping that by 2nd year of program we will be 50% self-sustaining. The funds help other clients as well. By using this model you get the expertise of the resettlement agency. Recently have a donor who offered to match contributions!
- Can I sponsor Ukrainian refugees? Not yet. The government so far has only announced private opportunities of Ukrainians through the Uniting for Ukraine program. That could change.

5. Office of Community Affairs (OCA) Updates

- a. Reminder: you can find local & USCIS events on our community calendar on the Immigrant Services webpage: <https://www.smcgov.org/ceo/community-resources>
- b. Immigrant Inclusion Survey: we hope to have preliminary results to share next month.
- c. Welcoming Video: submit a "[Welcoming Video](#)" by June 30! Please encourage clients you work with to also submit a video. More information can be found on the webpage.
- d. Immigrant Heritage Month Events: Every Wednesday evening this month, tune in at 5pm on San Mateo County's Facebook page for live virtual events.

6. Agency Update Roundtable: All

- a. **Maria Rosas, Kara**
 - KARA support group for Spanish speaking clients that have lost a father, mother or paternal/maternal figure. Family member can live in country of origin (don't need to live in U.S.). Serve all of the peninsula.
- b. **Dr. KaRyn Holder-Jackson, ACCEL**

- Just completed new 3 year strategy. CA Adult Education program is going through several changes. One change is to expand more into our communities. Offer high quality, in-demand program where jobs are waiting in the end. Goal to engage more with community members and CBOs, collaborate and work together.
- c. **Judith Guerrero, Coastside Hope**
- Continue to do taxes for people looking to apply for ITIN numbers.
 - Has been hard to get an appointment with Mexican consulate recently.
 - o Can schedule one online. They need to create an account with the consulate in order to make an appointment.
 - o Other orgs have had success calling on Fridays, which is when they open the appointments.
- d. **Cony Fuentes, Una Vida Counseling Center**
- Grand opening for Una Vida on June 30 from 5-6pm. Will be in new office on Veterans Blvd in RWC.
 - Preparing our Night of inspiration. Sept. 22 6-9pm in Domenico's Winery. Live auction. Fundraiser for One Life office. Funds raised are for clients who can't afford mental health services.
- e. **Beatriz Sanchez, San Mateo County Libraries**
- Spanish book club will begin on August 18, hosted by NFO Library at Senior Center across street.
 - Summer Learning Program going through August 31. Grand prize will be \$1000 scholarship for winner from each branch.
 - Redwood City PAL Music Festival, Sat June 18:
<https://redwoodcitypal.org/music-festival>
 - Summer Learning: <https://smcl.org/blogs/post/take-the-2022-summer-learning-challenge/>
 - Leyendo Juntos:
<https://smcl.bibliocommons.com/events/6299372058568df727318417>
- f. **Stephanie Perez, Catholic Charities**
- Pausing consultations for month of July, starting again in August
- g. **Christine Medeiros, Red Cross**
- Red Cross has central clearing house to assist with family search request for Ukrainians. Family member must have stayed in Ukraine in order for us to assist. Family must have been in contact within this year.
- h. **Sylvia Navarro, Libre Project**
- Know Your Rights adult workshop on Wednesday, the 29th.

