

**San Mateo County Immigrant Forum**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**6/15/2023**

**1. Welcome & Introductions: Megan Gosch**

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

**2. USCIS Updates: Jesse Castro, U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services, USCIS**

- a. USCIS Grant Program is open and accepting applications.
  - i. Apps are due July 28, 2023
  - ii. Grants also include opportunities for creative and innovating approaches to preparing immigrants for naturalization.
  - iii. Click [here](#) for more information.
- b. Certain Afghan National applications for Re-Parole will be fee exempt.
  - i. Applicants will be able to self-file.
  - ii. They can also apply for EAD card on the same form.
  - iii. Click [here](#) for more information.

**3. Legal Updates: Alison Kamhi, Legal Program Director, ILRC**

- a. [TPS Extensions](#)
  - i. El Salvador - extended from Sept. 10, 2023, through March 9, 2025
    - a. Continuous residence date: Feb. 13, 2001
  - ii. Honduras - extended from Jan. 6, 2024, through July 5, 2025.
    - a. Continuous residence date: Dec. 30, 1998
  - iii. Nepal - extended from Dec. 25, 2023, through June 24, 2025.
    - a. Continuous residence date: June 24, 2015
  - iv. Nicaragua - extended from Jan. 6, 2024, through July 5, 2025.
    - a. Continuous residence date: Dec. 30, 1998
- b. [EOIR Language Access Memo](#)
  - i. From EOIR Director David Neal to immigration judges (IJ)- good intentions
  - ii. Sets out standards for an IJ to determine best language
    - a. IJs need to establish the best language at first hearing and subsequent hearings. Respondents shouldn't be encouraged to move forward in a language they don't speak fluently.
    - b. Focus on indigenous languages
  - iii. Directs IJs to facilitate access to written documents/resources and make accommodations in filing deadlines where resources are not available outside of court/in detention centers in the applicant's best language.
    - a. "In determining reasonable filing deadlines, an immigration judge should consider the noncitizen's proficiency in speaking and writing English."
- c. AB 1261 – bill in CA to increase access to U visa certifications.
  - i. <https://legiscan.com/CA/text/AB1261/id/2828237>

#### 4. Mission Asset Fund (MAF): Diana Adame, Campaign & Outreach Manager, Mission Asset Fund

- a. Focus on integrating folks to the US financial system
- b. Programs
  - i. Immigration Loans – affordable way to fund USCIS application fee while building your credit
    1. 0% interest loan to help to pay for USCIS application fee
    2. Low monthly payments over 10 months
    3. Covered filing fees include
      - a. Citizenship (\$725)
      - b. DACA (\$495)
      - c. Advance Parole for DACA (\$575)
      - d. Green Card (\$1,225)
      - e. Temporary Protected Status (\$495)
      - f. Petition for Immigrant Relatives (\$535)
      - g. U Visa and T Visa
    4. Eligibility requirements
      - a. Must be eligible to submit USCIS application for Citizenship, DACA, Green Card, Petition for an Immigrant Relative, TPS, or U Visa
      - b. 18 years or older
      - c. Have a personal email address
      - d. Current government issued ID (e.g driver's license)
      - e. Have a checking account under own name
      - f. Have a Social Security Number (SSN) or Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN)
      - g. You or someone in your household, earns income (e.g wages, benefits, etc.)
    5. Click [here](#) to apply/learn more.
  - ii. Lending Circles Program -- a social lending program.
    1. It provides a zero-interest loan to help consumers build credit and access affordable small-dollar loans.
    2. The program aims to assist low-income consumers in building credit and transitioning into the financial mainstream.
    3. Participants receive mobile-accessible financial education on various topics, including building credit.
    4. Lending Circles is based on an informal saving/lending practice common in immigrant communities.
    5. Participants undergo an online financial training class before joining a Lending Circle.
    6. Most Lending Circles consist of 10 participants with a loan amount of \$1,000.
    7. All participants make equal monthly loan payments ranging from \$50 to \$200.

8. In the first month, one participant receives \$1,000, and each month thereafter, the next borrower in line receives the loan until everyone gets a chance.
  9. Loans are distributed electronically.
  10. The organization records and reports monthly activity to major credit bureaus to help participants build credit.
  11. Eligibility requirements
    - a. 18 years or older
    - b. Have a personal email address
    - c. Current government issued ID (e.g driver's license)
    - d. Have a checking account under own name
    - e. Have a Social Security Number (SSN) or Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN)
    - f. You or someone in your household, earns income (e.g wages, benefits, etc.)
  12. Click [here](#) to apply/learn more.
- iii. Business Microloan – loans to support small business owners and entrepreneurs in California.
1. 0% interest rate, allowing you to borrow up to \$2,500 for any business-related expenses.
  2. Benefit from affordable monthly payment options.
  3. Build your credit history.
  4. Gain access to comprehensive online financial education resources.
  5. This opportunity is currently **available exclusively in California**.
  6. Eligibility requirements
    - a. 18 years or older
    - b. Live in California
    - c. Have a business that you're looking to start, run or grow
    - d. Have a checking account in your name
    - e. Current government issued ID (e.g driver's license)
    - f. Have a Social Security Number (SSN) or Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN)
    - g. You or someone in your household, earns income (e.g wages, benefits, etc.)
  7. Click [here](#) to apply/learn more.
- iv. Resources
1. Charlas Financieras – online interactive sessions discussing different financial topics, tools, and tips to help you in your financial journey.
    - a. Offered both in English and Spanish
    - b. Click [here](#) to register/learn more.
  2. Online Financial Coaching
    - a. One-on-one meetings over the phone or Zoom with a financial coach for personalized financial guidance.

- b. Address specific areas such as credit building, budgeting, and debt repayment.
  - c. Sessions conducted over the phone or through Zoom.
  - d. The service is provided **free of charge**.
  - e. Click [here](#) to make an appointment.
- 3. MyMAF Mobile App
  - a. Allows you to access financial education, tools, and resources to develop personalized action plan and track your financial journey
  - b. Available in English and Spanish in the Apple App Store or Google Play.
  - c. Click [here](#) to download/learn more.
- v. Questions? Contact:
  - 1. Diana Adame -- [Diana@missassetfund.org](mailto:Diana@missassetfund.org)
  - 2. Email – [programs@missionassetfund.org](mailto:programs@missionassetfund.org)
- vi. Stay connected:
  - 1. Website: [MissionAssetFund.org](http://MissionAssetFund.org)
  - 2. Facebook: [@MissionAssetFund.org](https://www.facebook.com/MissionAssetFund.org)
  - 3. Twitter: [@MAFpajarito](https://twitter.com/MAFpajarito)
  - 4. Instagram: [@MissionAssetFund](https://www.instagram.com/MissionAssetFund)

## 5. Office of Community Affairs (OCA) Updates

- a. Updated digital versions of the Immigrant Resources Guides will be available next week.
  - i. Paper copies will be available end of June or early July
- b. June is Immigrant Heritage Month, and OCA wants to celebrate by shining a light on immigrant stories. Share your own story using this [link](#), and join us in honoring the rich heritage of immigrants.

## 6. Agency Update Roundtable

- a. Irma Acosta – Catholic Charities
  - i. A new program coming soon aims to help folks affected by the recent storms which could not receive federal/state assistance—more information next meeting.
- b. Maria Rosas – KARA
  - i. Virtual drop-in support group in Spanish every other Thursday for any loss till September 7, 2023, from 6 pm – 7:30 pm
  - ii. For more information contact Maria Rosas at 650-313-2485, text 408-320-9033, or email [maria@kara-grief.org](mailto:maria@kara-grief.org)
    - 1. To sign up, click [here](#).
- c. Cesar Meza-Esveile – Multicultural Institute NFO
  - i. Open house
    - 1. When: Thursday, July 20, 2023
    - 2. Where: 533 Warrington Avenue, Redwood City, CA 94063
    - 3. For more information, email [eduardo@mionline.org](mailto:eduardo@mionline.org)

4. Click [here](#) to RSVP.