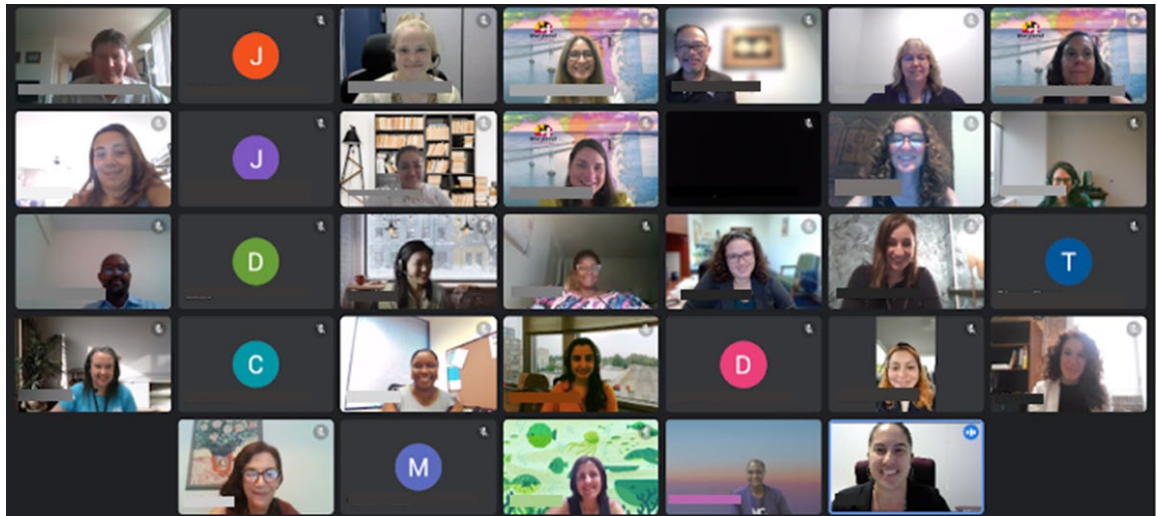




MARYLAND Skilled Immigrant *Task Force*



ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2022 & 2023

July 2021 – June 2022 & July 2022 – June 2023

The cover image is of Task Force members attending the last meeting of FY22 virtually on June 22, 2022.

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OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Created in 2016, the Maryland Skilled Immigrant Task Force (Task Force) is a consortium of stakeholders that seek to leverage skills that internationally trained professionals bring to the United States to meet local job market demand.

Skilled immigrants, also known as internationally trained professionals (ITP) are those who have acquired extensive education and/or occupational experience abroad. Many come to Maryland ready to work, offering great benefits to local industry, including global skills, multilingualism, workplace diversity, and cultural knowledge.

Unfortunately, prior to securing employment in their professional fields, skilled immigrants/ITPs may experience significant challenges including limited English language proficiency, costly credential evaluations of their foreign degrees, complex licensing and recertification processes, lack of professional networks, and lack of knowledge on alternative career pathways.

The Task Force consists of representatives from the Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS), the Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor), community colleges, refugee resettlement agencies, American Job Centers (AJCs), the Governor’s Office of Community Initiatives, and other immigrant-serving organizations. A full list of Task Force organizational members can be found on page 5.

The Task Force believes that the State of Maryland can lead the way in creating a win-win environment in which immigrants secure jobs matching their professional and educational backgrounds while helping the business community more readily meet its workforce needs.

This report covers years six and seven of the Task Force, from July 2021 through June 2022 and July 2022 through June 2023.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Skilled Immigrant Task Force collaborates across organizations to advance workforce system accessibility and career opportunities for foreign-trained individuals in Maryland.

SKILLED IMMIGRANT DEFINITION

A work-authorized foreign-born and foreign-trained worker with at least (2) years of formal or informal education, training, or on-the-job experience that has led to special skills, training, knowledge, and/or abilities for certain types of work.

GOVERNANCE

The Task Force is co-sponsored by two state agencies: DHS and MD Labor.



DHS is Maryland's primary social service provider, serving more than one million residents annually. Through its 24 local departments of social services and other social programs, DHS actively pursues opportunities to assist people in economic need, provides preventive services, and protects vulnerable children and adults. Within DHS' Family Investment Administration is the Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees (MORA), which provides support and services to federally recognized refugees and other humanitarian immigrants including asylees, certified Victims of Trafficking, Special Immigrant Visa holders from Iraq and Afghanistan, Cuban and Haitian entrants, and certain Amerasians.

MORA has helped more than 40,000 refugees and eligible humanitarian immigrants make Maryland their home through a statewide network of public and private organizations. MORA provides funding for transitional cash assistance, employment services, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, vocational training, health case management, and other supportive services. MORA partners assist individuals to become independent, contributing members to the national and local economy through several transitional services aimed at helping individuals achieve social and economic self-sufficiency. For more information, visit MORA's website at <https://dhs.maryland.gov/maryland-office-for-refugees-and-asylees/>.



MD Labor is Maryland's job development agency. It supports the economic stability of the state by providing businesses, the workforce, and the public with high-quality, customer-focused regulatory, employment, and training services. MD Labor consists of the Office of Financial Regulation, Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing, Division of Unemployment Insurance, Division of Labor and Industry, Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL), Maryland Racing Commission, and the Family and Medical Leave Insurance.

DWDAL oversees the state's adult education programming (general/family literacy and numeracy, high school diploma pathways, English as a Second Language, and correctional education), the AJCs and labor market information. DWDAL is responsible for implementing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in Maryland. WIOA was signed into law on July 22, 2014, and took effect July 1, 2015. It addresses the needs of both businesses and jobseekers and establishes a workforce system that relies on strong, cross-sector partnerships. The Maryland WIOA State Plan is available here: <https://www.labor.maryland.gov/wdplan/>.

MEMBERSHIP

The Task Force is a robust network of multi-sector stakeholders, including service providers, educators, and both the public and private sector. Sixth and Seventh-year membership included representation from the following local, state, and national organizations:

- ALLEGANY COLLEGE
- ANNE ARUNDEL COMMUNITY COLLEGE
- ANNE ARUNDEL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
- ASIAN AMERICAN CENTER OF FREDERICK
- ASYLUMWORKS
- BALTIMORE ALLIANCE FOR CAREERS IN HEALTHCARE
- BALTIMORE CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
- BALTIMORE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
- CARROLL COMMUNITY COLLEGE
- CARROLL COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
- CASH CAMPAIGN OF MARYLAND
- CENTRO DE APOYO FAMILIAR
- CENTRO HISPANO OF FREDERICK
- CHESAPEAKE MULTICULTURAL RESOURCE CENTER
- CHIN UP GLOBAL
- COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF BALTIMORE COUNTY
- DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (STATE OF MARYLAND)
- DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (STATE OF MARYLAND)
- EMMA'S TORCH
- EMPLOY PRINCE GEORGE'S INC.
- ETHIOPIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
- FREDERICK WORKFORCE SERVICES
- GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY INITIATIVES (STATE OF MARYLAND)
- GOVERNOR'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (STATE OF MARYLAND)
- HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE
- HOWARD COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM PROJECT LITERACY
- HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
- IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE OUTREACH CENTER
- INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE
- LASOS (LINKING ALL SO OTHERS SUCCEED)
- LATINO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER
- LITERACY COUNCIL OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY
- LOWER SHORE WORKFORCE ALLIANCE
- LUMINUS NETWORK FOR NEW AMERICANS
- LUTHERAN IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE SERVICE
- LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA

- MARYLAND INFORMATION NETWORK
- MARYLAND STATE LIBRARY AGENCY
- MAYOR’S OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT
- MAYOR’S OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS
- MONTGOMERY COALITION FOR ADULT ENGLISH LITERACY
- MONTGOMERY COLLEGE
- MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
- MONTGOMERY COUNTY GILCHRIST IMMIGRANT RESOURCE CENTER
- MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICE OF COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS
- MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS HEADSTART PROGRAM
- OFFICE OF THE BALTIMORE COUNTY EXECUTIVE JOHNNY A. OLSZWESKI, JR.
- PATHFINDERS
- PRINCE GEORGE’S COMMUNITY COLLEGE
- PRINCE GEORGE’S DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
- SOLUTIONS IN HOMETOWN CONNECTIONS
- STREETWISE PARTNERS
- UPPERSHORE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
- UPWARDLY GLOBAL
- WELCOME BACK CENTER OF SUBURBAN MARYLAND
- WESTERN MARYLAND CONSORTIUM
- WORLD EDUCATION SERVICES GLOBAL TALENT BRIDGE
- WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

STRUCTURE

Task Force members meet monthly either virtually or in-person, on the fourth Wednesday of the month, for stakeholder organizations to continue to build relationships, share ideas, and discuss best practices. The meetings also highlight the resources of non-Task Force member organizations in Maryland and nationally to continue to enhance the knowledge of Task Force members to support their work with ITPs.

In addition to monthly meetings, workgroups consisting of small groups of members work on tackling specific issues. Workgroups are temporary and active for a predetermined window of time so that participants can gauge their availability based on workload at their primary organization. Deliverables and group goals are clearly outlined on a schedule that is feasible, and the groups are intentionally staffed with appropriate representation from relevant member organizations to ensure that the group can effectively accomplish its task. Workgroups are determined through group discussion during monthly Task Force meetings.

YEAR SIX IN REVIEW

OVERVIEW

In year six (July 2021 – June 2022), due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, meetings were held virtually to continue working on immigrant integration and inclusion. The Task Force played a critical role in providing comprehensive health resources for immigrant communities. Five meetings were held virtually, and the Task Force made progress on action items and formed several new workgroups to take on new activities.

GOALS AND ACTION ITEMS

To adhere to the above mission and in accordance with the insights of Task Force members, the following three goals guided the Task Force in year six:

1. *Partnerships and Visibility*
Strengthen partnerships and increase visibility of the Task Force and of the challenges facing internationally trained professionals.
2. *Resource Documents and Barrier Reduction*
Develop tangible tools and resources that service providers or jobseekers can use to reduce or remove barriers to employment for internationally trained professionals.
3. *Business Engagement*
Explore and conceptualize business engagement opportunities that will benefit internationally trained professionals and Maryland’s business community.

Each goal listed above is related to a menu of suggested action items. Throughout the year, the Task Force chose action items on which to focus efforts, either by creating a workgroup or having DWDAL or MORA staff fulfill the task. The table below details the goals, potential action items tied to each goal, and accomplishments. The following chart outlines goals, actions items, and accomplishments.

Action items highlighted in **red** indicate progress or completion on that specific item, and those in *italics* indicate a workgroup was created to address that item.

Goals	Potential Action Items	Accomplishments
	1. Create a catalog of success stories highlighting how partnerships and resources stemming from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The “Celebrating New Americans” section of the New Americans page on Labor’s site

<p><i>Goal #1: Partnerships and Visibility</i></p>	<p>the Task Force have increased immigrant integration into Maryland’s workforce system.</p> <p>2. Make at least two joint presentations at conferences/convenings regarding cultural competency, language access, and/or Task Force information, partnerships, and resources.</p> <p><i>3. Expand Task Force membership generally.</i></p> <p>4. Continue site visits to expand connections among Task Force members and at other relevant organizations to bolster partnerships and referrals.</p> <p><i>5. Learn about best practices in other states and see how to incorporate these into Maryland.</i></p>	<p>continued to highlight success stories during Hispanic Heritage Month 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Membership Expansion workgroup accessed current members’ participation and began discussing other organizations to invite. • Participation in the Office of New Americans (ONA) Network and the Skilled Immigrant Integration Program (SIIP) continued to learn about the New American initiatives around the U.S. ONA is a national network of 19 states that have established statewide Office of New Americans with the aim of supporting this population in their states. SIIP is a program of World Education Services, which supports cities, regions, and states in advancing the inclusion of internationally trained and experienced immigrants and refugees.
<p><i>Goal #2: Resource Documents and Barrier Reduction</i></p>	<p><i>1. Create a Career Pathways Guide for a specific occupation based on employment data/immigrant needs and disseminate guide accordingly.</i></p> <p><i>2. Explore the possibility of hosting career or resource fairs for immigrants.</i></p> <p>3. Create a DEI Workgroup.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Task Force created a Career Pathways Guide workgroup and identified 6 occupations in healthcare for this project. • The Resources and Job Fair Workgroup hosted a virtual job fair for New Americans in Sept 2021. • The Resources and Job Fair Workgroup hosted a virtual Statewide Apprenticeship

		Resource Fair for New Americans in Nov 2021 during National Apprenticeship Week.
<p>Goal #3: Business Engagement</p>	<p>1. Create a short video by interviewing employers' experiences of hiring skilled immigrants (why hire immigrants, success stories, etc).</p> <p>2. Honor the year of employers(s) championing the hiring of immigrant talent in Maryland.</p>	

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Many of the accomplishments of the Task Force's sixth year were related to specific action items tied to the three goals. A further discussion of these accomplishments can be found below.

Partnerships and Visibility

The "Celebrating New Americans" section on the New Americans page of the MD Labor webpage continued to highlight the contributions of New Americans across Maryland during Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15).

Daysi Flores - EARN Maryland Program - Asian American Center of Frederick (AACF) – Success Story - Workforce Development and Adult Learning

Daysi Flores is 26 years old, and she moved to the United States from Honduras in 2017 together with her husband and baby girl. Due to her limited English proficiency and responsibilities as a mother, she was not able to look for a job immediately. Her husband worked hard to support the family, even as available opportunities were not well paid. Daysi had a good education from her country - a bachelor's degree in business psychology and an elementary teacher diploma - but her lack of language skills held her back. After some consideration, she decided to take an English as a Second Language (ESL) class at the Montgomery Literacy Council and has been attending it ever since.

In 2018, she volunteered to help at the Asian Indian Center of Montgomery County, where she heard about AACF and the EARN Maryland grant program. She immediately applied for the Community Health Worker (CHW) training program and attended both parts of the training together with her baby girl. She found time to volunteer for AACF outreach programs, such as ZINCA, Awareness and Tobacco Cessation. She traveled with a group of other CHW trainees to the National CHW Conference in Las Vegas and volunteered to help with interpreting for the AACF Maternity Program for Hispanic women. Shortly thereafter, she applied for the next EARN Project Training for CHW Interpreters. She says that her baby girl can work as an CHW interpreter too after attending so many classes.

Several months ago, Daysi received an offer from the Asian Indian Center and started her first part-time job as a CHW there. She understands how difficult her life was when she had to study and take care of her baby, but she had a good and supportive husband who helped her a lot, and now she can help him provide for the family. Daysi says that education is the right way to start a long trip to success and that she is very grateful that the CHW program was free and accessible to her.



DID YOU KNOW?

- 643,171** The Hispanic population of Maryland constituted 10.6% of the state's total population as of July 1, 2019.
- 9** The number of counties in Maryland with a population of 100,000 or more Hispanic residents in 2019 - counties: Annapolis (442,795), Baltimore County (462,076), Charles (132,111), Frederick (173,267), Harford (172,715), Howard (148,676), Montgomery (215,775), Prince George's (177,727), Baltimore City (316,642).
- 4,432** The number from 2018 to 2019 of the number of Hispanics in Prince George's County, the highest area in the population during this period.
- 29** The median age of the Hispanic population, up from 38 in 2010.

MORE STATS

- **78%** of households are family households.
- **78%** speaks English well, **1%** doesn't speak English, and **2%** speaks a language other than English or Spanish.
- **40%** of Hispanics have some college experience in 2019. Up from 38% in 2010.
- **40%** of Hispanics have some college experience in 2019. Up from 38% in 2010.
- **Median and Poverty:** \$74,611 median household income in 2019, up from \$68,876 in 2010; 11.7% poverty rate in 2019, down from 13.7% in 2010.

TALENTED MINDS

The next time you slide your pencil or pen onto your alert product, or click of papers, give a nod to Mexican inventor and revolutionary Victor Octavio. The mind behind the pencil clip also invented the electric tracing system, making your train continue to work just let your (delimited) Ears!

Carolina Sundergill - EARN Maryland Program - Asian American Center of Frederick (AACF) – Success Story - Workforce Development and Adult Learning

Carolina Sundergill's experience with the EARN Maryland (EARN) Community Health Worker (CHW) Training Program is unique. After completing her associate's degree where she was the president of her country.

Making it to the United States was a difficult process for Carolina and her family. She experienced her parents' resistance and jealousy as they sought the best for her and her siblings despite being recognized by a limited English proficiency. Soon after immigrating, she got married and gave birth to a daughter, almost simultaneously. She began seeking English by enrolling in college as a Second Language (ESL) courses offered by every organization she could find, but her parents were not supportive. She couldn't work because her daughter was too little, but she was learning a lot. When she moved to Carolina that she was completing her education (too old, and had a nest) research, her parents was angry. "Why didn't you just do those are the opportunities that are in front of you?"



When Carolina's daughter started school last year, Carolina came to the Asian American Center of Frederick (AACF) and volunteered her evening hours to help and learn. I saw the board about the AACF EARN CHW Project and applied to the program. After getting accepted by the board, I started training. Carolina began working part-time as a volunteer CHW and interpreter for AACF customers.

She started doing more. She signed up for another CHW/Community Interpreter training offered through the EARN program. Being a CHW trained gave Carolina the opportunity to interact with other high-achieving participants and experienced CHWs. AACF personnel also helped her connect with the Frederick Memorial Hospital Office for Community Interpreter Services.

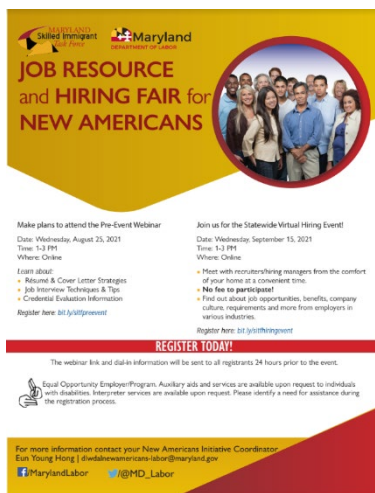
"The training program often seemed to me very hard," Carolina explains, "and I often found myself challenged by stereotypes and stigma, even within my Hispanic and community." One of her favorite quotes captures the driving force behind her pursuit of education: "I can't offer the luxury of being 'comfortable'." Her advice to students is something that she learned from her mother: "Ask questions. It's better to stay ignorant for five minutes than to stay ignorant for the rest of your life." Carolina's dedication to her continued professional development is paying off. One month ago, she became a full-time anthropologist at Frederick Memorial Hospital as a CHW and Spanish Community Interpreter.

Continuing the action item from year five, the Membership Expansion Workgroup was formed in year six to access the current membership and brainstorm ideas about other partners that would be an asset to the Task Force and who would benefit from being members.

Resource Documents and Barrier Reduction

The Career Pathways Guide Workgroup, conducted labor market research to identify six healthcare occupations to focus on:

- Pharmacist,
- Pharmacy Technician,
- Registered Nurse,
- Medical Assistant,
- Occupational Therapy Assistant, and
- Physician Assistant.



The Resources and Job Fair Workgroup successfully hosted a two-part virtual *Job Resource and Hiring Fair for New Americans*. To support the effort, the Maryland Department of Labor worked with a 3rd party vendor to translate the marketing flyer into 10 languages: Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, French, Hindi, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

Part one of the event was a Pre-Event Webinar on August 25, 2021, that featured information on résumé and cover letter strategies, job interview tips and techniques, and credential evaluation. Presenters included Tom Dezell, Assistant Director for the Professional Outplacement Assistance Center (POAC) at DWDAL, MD Labor; Senay Gebremedhin, Program Manager for

the World Education Services (WES); and Liz Rodriguez, Regional Business Solutions Consultant (Harford & Cecil Counties-Susquehanna Region) at DWDAL, MD Labor. Simultaneous interpretation services were provided in American Sign Language, Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, French, Japanese, Korean, Spanish and Tigrinya during the event in which 213 job seekers attended, representing 57 countries. Participants learned information to support their job search and the agency learned how to effectively offer simultaneous interpretation in a virtual setting to enhance services for multilingual customers.

Video recording of the Pre-Event Webinar can be found at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J7fs_2mfF2Q

Part two of the event was the Virtual Hiring Fair on September 15, 2021, which featured a panel of 13 employers. Participating employers included Washington Metro Transit Authority, Selective Demolition, Amazon, Catholic Charities, Erickson Senior Living at Riderwood, High's, M&T Bank, YMCA, Sheppard Pratt, University of Maryland Medical System, Donohoe Hospitality Services, Vitalis Healthcare, and Howard Community College. The participants learned about job opportunities, benefits, company culture, requirements and more from the employers as they presented their respective businesses. Simultaneous interpretation services were provided

in American Sign Language, Amharic, Arabic, Farsi, French, Korean, Mandarin, Russian, Spanish, and Tigrinya during the event in which 256 job seekers attended, representing 77 countries.

Video recording of the Hiring Fair can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bE1F5ieSNmw&t=1510s>

Date	Monday, November 15, 2021
Time	12:00 PM
Where	Online
Topics	<p>Goals</p> <p>Increase workforce service accessibility and job opportunities through the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program (MATP) for New Americans in Maryland.</p> <p>Match client interests and skills with apprenticeship opportunities provided by sponsors in various industries.</p>
Presenters	<p>Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program (MATP) presenters: Chris MacLarion, Director for Apprenticeship and Training, MD Labor Jeffrey W. Smith, Program Manager for Apprenticeship and Training, MD Labor</p> <p>The following sponsors participated:</p> <p>Steamfitters Union Local 602</p> <p>Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare</p> <p>IEC Chesapeake</p> <p>The Finishing Trades Institute of Maryland, Virginia, Washington D.C. and Vicinities</p> <p>ABC Greater Baltimore The Construction Education Academy</p> <p>Howard Community College</p>
Interpretation Services Provided (during the registration process, language interpretation was available)	<p>Korean</p> <p>Spanish</p> <p>Farsi</p>
Attendees	74 clients registered 14 staff/participants including providers and interpreters (40 content)

Additionally, the Resources and Job Fair Workgroup hosted a virtual *Statewide Apprenticeship Resource Fair for New Americans* on November 15, 2021, during National Apprenticeship Week. The goal of the event was to increase workforce service accessibility and job opportunities through the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program (MATP) for New Americans in Maryland, and match client interests and skills with apprenticeship opportunities provided by sponsors in various industries. The presenters were Chris MacLarion, MATP Director, MD Labor and Jeffrey W. Smith, MATP Program Manager, MD Labor. The following sponsors participated: Steamfitters Union Local 602, Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare, IEC Chesapeake, The Finishing Trades

Institute of Maryland, Virginia, Washington D.C. and Vicinities, ABC Greater Baltimore - The Construction Education Academy, and Howard Community College. Interpretation services were provided in Farsi, Korean, and Spanish which were requested during the registration process by participants. Forty jobseekers attended, representing 19 countries.

YEAR SEVEN IN REVIEW

OVERVIEW

In year seven (July 2022 – June 2023), monthly meetings were held virtually, and additionally in-person meetings resumed, to continue working on immigrant integration and inclusion. Eleven meetings were held with nine being held virtually and two being held in-person.

In year seven, some action items from year six were continued and/or accomplished. New action items were created, and several workgroups were formed to work on the action items.

GOALS AND ACTION ITEMS

The three goals from year six continued to guide the Task Force in year seven:

1. *Partnerships and Visibility*

2. *Resource Documents and Barrier Reduction*

3. *Business Engagement*

Each goal listed above is related to a menu of Task Force member suggested action items. Throughout the year, the Task Force chose action items on which to focus efforts, either by creating a workgroup or having DWDAL or MORA staff fulfill the task. The table below details the goals, potential action items tied to each goal, and accomplishments. The following chart outlines goals, actions items, and accomplishments.

Action items highlighted in **red** indicate progress or completion on that specific item, and those in *italics* indicate a workgroup was created to address that item.

Goals	Potential Action Items	Accomplishments
<p><i>Goal #1: Partnerships and Visibility</i></p>	<p>1. Make at least two joint presentations at conferences/convenings regarding cultural competency, language access, and/or Task Force information, partnerships, and resources.</p> <p>2. <i>Create a Roadshow presentation about the Task Force to highlight our work locally and nationally.</i></p> <p>3. <i>Expand Task Force membership generally.</i></p> <p>4. Resume in-person meetings to expand connections among Task Force members and at other relevant organizations to bolster partnerships and referrals.</p> <p>5. Learn about best practices in other states and see how to incorporate these into Maryland.</p> <p>Additional Items Suggested for Future Tasks:</p> <p>1. Create a short commercial or announcement about the Task Force</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The New American Initiative Coordinator for DWDAL was able to facilitate nine presentations that highlighted the Skilled Immigrant Task Force as a resource during various engagements. • The Roadshow Presentation Workgroup was formed to create content for a standard presentation that could be delivered by members both locally and nationally. • The Membership Expansion workgroup established a list of organizations to connect with and began outreach.

	<p>2. Partner with the Maryland Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management</p> <p>3. Launch a marketing campaign to highlight internationally trained professionals in Maryland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person meetings resumed with a visit to the Anne Arundel Career Center and a Networking Potluck. • Participation in the Office of New Americans (ONA) Network and the Skilled Immigrant Integration Program (SIIP) continued to learn about the New American initiatives around the U.S.
<p>Goal #2: <i>Resource Documents and Barrier Reduction</i></p>	<p><i>1. Create a career pathway guide for a specific occupation based on employment data/immigrant needs and disseminate guide accordingly.</i></p> <p><i>2. Explore the possibility of hosting career or resource fairs for immigrants.</i></p> <p><i>3. Partner with the local American Job Centers to guide them on ensuring job fairs are accessible to the immigrant and refugee community.</i></p> <p><i>4. Create an entrepreneurship guide for new Americans.</i></p> <p><i>5. Review and update existing resources</i></p> <p>Additional Items Suggested for Future Tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Host a job board on the Task Force’s website 2. Resource sharing event 3. Renewed focus on apprenticeship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Career Pathway Guide Workgroup continued the work to create the 6 healthcare guides. • The Job Fair Workgroup collaborated with a community organization to host a <i>Community Resource and Job Fair</i>. • The Entrepreneurship Guide Workgroup was created.
<p>Goal #3: <i>Business Engagement</i></p>	<p><i>1. Create a presentation about the benefits of hiring internationally trained professionals and ways to connect with the population and present it at local chambers of commerce and workforce boards.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Business Engagement Workgroup began meeting to create this presentation.

	<p>Additional Items Suggested for Future Tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Survey apprenticeship sponsors for hiring needs to strengthen the immigrant/refugee to apprenticeship pipeline. 2. Promote workforce programs to employers to increase the visibility of programming. 3. Develop a program to recognize employers who hire internationally trained professionals. 4. Host a webinar by employers who are employing internationally trained professionals for employers interested in hiring internationally trained professionals. 5. Webinar for employers from the US Dept of Justice’s Immigrant and Employee Rights section on common work authorization documents and laws regarding I-9 verification. 6. Creating a business/entrepreneur network group with regular meetings. 	
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ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Many of the accomplishments of the Task Force’s seventh year were related to specific action items tied to the three goals. A further discussion of these accomplishments can be found below.

Partnerships and Visibility

The New Americans Initiative Coordinator for DWDAL, who helps to co-lead the Task Force, facilitated nine presentations along with Task Force Members, to provide information regarding the work of the Task Force. The presentations were delivered to staff from various AJCs and adult education providers in Maryland, such as the Maryland Community College Association of Continuing Education and Training (MCCACET). Additionally, the New Americans Initiative Coordinator collaborated with staff from several Task Force member organizations, the International Rescue Committee, and Upwardly Global, to present at the International Association of Workforce Professionals (IAWP) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Conference and the 10th Baltimore Immigration Summit hosted by Towson University and the Baltimore Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs. These presentations helped to highlight the work of the Task Force as a resource to support internationally trained professionals’ workforce integration.

Having continued from year six, the Membership Expansion Workgroup met to brainstorm and identify organizations that could benefit from the Task Force and whose membership would enhance the Task Force's work. The Workgroup sought to involve organizations that had a shared mission to support the integration of immigrants and refugees into the workforce system. After brainstorming, the workgroup set out to conduct targeted outreach to invite select organizations to join. These efforts resulted in 20 new organizations and 34 new members joining the Task Force. Currently the Task Force has 117 members from 59 different organizations.



With the end of the COVID-19 health emergency, in-person meetings resumed. This allowed members to increase their engagement with one another to continue building relationships for results. Two in-person meetings were held including activities such as a

site visit to the Anne Arundel Career Center to learn about their programming and a networking potluck (pictured above) that offered an opportunity for members to get to know one another better and build relationships to further the Task Force's goals.

In year seven, the Task Force established a Roadshow Workgroup. This group is charged with the task of creating a presentation about the Task Force that both highlights the challenges ITPs face when integrating into the workforce and presents the opportunities for the Task Force to support ITPs by creating resources and connections for successful integration. Once the presentation is created, it will be presented in forums such as the MD TESOL Annual Conference and the National Immigrant Inclusion Conference.

The New Americans Initiative Coordinator continued to attend the monthly ONA State Network, and the World Education Services Skilled Immigrant Integration Program meetings to continue learning about the new American initiatives around the U.S to benefit Maryland.

Resource Documents and Barrier Reduction

The Career Pathway Guide Workgroup continued to meet and research the information needed for the guides. Additionally, the workgroup connected with the respective health boards for the guides which included the Maryland Boards of Nursing, Physicians, Occupational Therapy Practice, and Pharmacy. The guides are currently under review by the boards and will be published in year eight. Additionally, the Workgroup will review the Engineering Career Pathway Guide created in 2018 for needed updates.



The Job Fair Workgroup connected with the Interethnic Community Outreach team of the Lutheran Church of Saint Andrew in Silver Spring, Maryland about the possibility of jointly hosting a job fair for their community. The Task Force was honored to collaborate with the team and the flier was translated into Amharic and Spanish. The job fair was open to the public and provided on-site activities for children to provide greater access for parents to be able to attend. Additionally, throughout the job fair, workshops were conducted covering résumé writing strategies,

interview tips, digital literacy, American Job Center services, and information about the American Red Cross and IT training. The joint efforts resulted in 34 employers and service providers attending the job fair to provide information to 292 community members. The Interethnic Community Outreach team expressed their interest in making this an annual event, and as such will look forward to possibly collaborating with them again in year eight.

Additionally, the Job Fair Workgroup began to meet to discuss the action item of partnering with the local AJCs to guide them on ensuring their job fairs are accessible to the immigrant and refugee community.

New for year seven, the Entrepreneurship Guide Workgroup was formed to explore the idea of creating an *Entrepreneurship Guide for New Americans*. The fact that 24.4% of Maryland entrepreneurs are immigrants¹ underscores the entrepreneurial spirit of this population and the need to create a resource to provide valuable connections and resources for new Americans looking to start their own business.

To ensure that previously created resources stay up to date, staff from DWDAL and MORA will review and update, as needed, the Resource Guide for New American Jobseekers and the Financial Literacy Guide. This work will continue into year eight and updated versions will be posted on the New Americans webpage on the Labor website:

<https://labor.maryland.gov/employment/newamerwrkforce.shtml>.

Business Engagement

This Workgroup reframed its mission and decided to develop a presentation highlighting the benefits of hiring ITPs and ways to engage with the ITP talent pool. The group expects this presentation to result in new employer connections for ITPs. Workgroup members will connect with local chambers of commerce and workforce boards to present on this issue. This Workgroup will continue into year eight.

¹ New Americans in Maryland by the American Immigration Council: <https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/maryland/#>

LOOKING AHEAD TO YEAR EIGHT

Work on several tasks that began in year seven will continue during year eight, including presenting at local and national events about the Task Force's work, the publication of the career pathway guides in healthcare, and connecting with local chambers of commerce and workforce boards to highlight internationally trained professionals as an untapped talent solution to address their workforce needs. Site visits will also continue during year eight to provide additional opportunities for Task Force members to network, build relationships, and increase partnerships.

In addition, Maryland will continue its work with the ONA State Network and the SIIP Alumni Network to stay informed of best practices in other states.