

MAACCE 2011

Serving New Americans: Opportunities and Challenges for unlocking the Employment Potential of Immigrants



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Maryland Council for New Americans

- In December 2008 Governor Martin O'Malley signed an Executive Order establishing the Maryland Council for New Americans to review and recommend new policies and practices to expedite immigrant integration into the economic and civic life of the state.
- The Council represents Maryland geographically, politically and ethnically, with strong participation from the faith, non profit, public and private and philanthropic sectors

“A Fresh Start”

“A Fresh Start” Renewing Immigrant Integration for a Stronger Maryland

The Report of the Maryland Council for New Americans

Submitted to Governor Martin O’Malley in August 2009

Co-Chairs: The Honorable Isiah Leggett Montgomery County
Executive and
Thomas Perez, Secretary DLLR

Workforce Recommendations

- 1. Improve licensing, credentialing and support systems for foreign-trained professionals**
- 2. Strengthen and standardize training and English Language Learning (ELL) systems statewide**
- 3. Increase coordination among public, private, and non-profit sectors to maximize efficiencies**

Improving Licensing, credentialing & support systems for foreign-trained professionals

- A. Target professions in MD experiencing shortages for best practice pilots and fast track reforms
- B. Establish a credentialing office for foreign trained professionals with trained navigators
- C. Provide financial aid to foreign trained professionals who are preparing for qualifying exams in under-served areas or professions with labor shortages

Improving Licensing, credentialing & support systems for foreign-trained professionals

- D. Improve workforce websites by incorporating an immigrant friendly approach. Continue making improvement to MWE (Maryland Workforce Exchange) website to make it more “immigrant friendly”

www.dllr.state.md.us

<http://mwejob.com/>

Strengthen and standardize training and ELL systems state wide

- A. Elevate ELL instruction to an equal level with workforce development and adult education fields
- B. Fully utilize statewide instruction standards
- C. Construct a career development approach for ELLs with a dedicated “guidance counselor” that will put them into clearly marked pathways toward employment goals
- D. Provide an integrated approach to connect learners to a range of relevant opportunities and services including training, networking, transportation, childcare, mental/physical health and social services
- E. Design programs accommodating various points of access and flexible scheduling for real world circumstances of adult immigrants

Increase coordination among public, private, and non-profit sectors to maximize efficiencies

- A. Under the umbrella of a state-level Office for New Americans and sub-cabinet for New Americans, engage a cross representation of State and local level agencies, educational institutions, community-based organizations, industry sectors, employers, and ELL learners in long-term strategic planning so as to best identify and prioritize career training areas and re-credentialing options, advocate for ELL learner needs, and support regional Workforce Investment Boards in local implementation and coordination

Increase coordination among public, private, and non-profit sectors to maximize efficiencies

- B. Expand the mission of the local WIBs to create and support regional teams focused on workforce development
- C. Merge program learners' information from all State databases to ensure accountability and effectiveness of programming and policies through data collection for New Americans
- D. Through StateStat, ensure accountability and effectiveness of programming and policies through data collection for New Americans
- E. Coordinate service delivery so learners can seamlessly transition to education, training and careers
- F. Expand outreach efforts by establishing "Welcome Centers" and "Welcome Booths"

Citizenship Recommendations

- Establish and fund a robust coordinated citizenship initiative for Maryland
- Reduce the financial burden on LPRs pursuing citizenship
- Establish regular community meetings, with Local, State and Federal Government
- Support Comprehensive Immigration Reform at a Federal level

USCIS Outreach

- USCIS Citizenship and Integration Direct Services Grant Program \$8,500,000
- Increases involvement and Outreach
Deneice Jones, Community Relations Officer of
USCIS Baltimore District Office, 410-637-8046
Baltimore.CommunityRelations@DHS.GOV

Financial Services

- Create mechanisms within the State government to assist in reducing frauds and scams that prey on Immigrant Communities
- Provide educational outreach tools to increase understanding, trust, and interpretation of government and law
- Provide linkages to a wide variety of financial service providers

Mortgage Fraud Prevention

- Zenaida Velez-Dorsey 410-230-6365
- Translated brochure about rights and protection under Maryland's New Foreclosure Laws

Governmental Access

- Establish Cabinet-level Office for New Americans
- Track Data concerning New Americans accessing government
- Develop and monitor agencies cultural and linguistic competencies
- Make critical information easily available through New American welcome Centers
- Encourage and support county and municipal “New Americans Initiatives”

Governmental Access

- Summer 2010 Rod Vital joined DLLR as New American Coordinator
- New American Workgroup was established
- Members:

Yolanda Milam; DWADL Special Projects Coordinator

Charlotte van Londen; DWADL ESL Specialist

Deneice Jones Community Relations Officer of USCIS

Baltimore District Office

Rafael Regales; Special Assistant, Office of the Assistant Secretary

Governmental Access

- Regional Training Meeting to increase linguistic and cultural competence
- New American Professional Registry proposed
- Updated language tracking capabilities in Maryland Workforce Exchange
- Streamlining translation and interpretation services

CLOSING

- Thank You