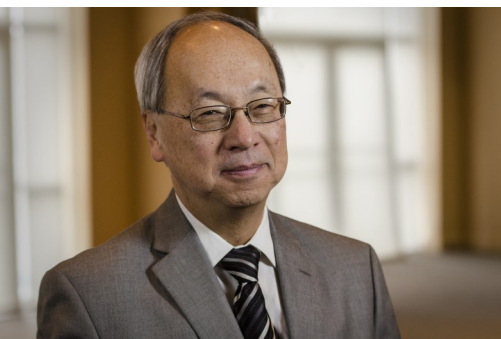


Director's Message



Across Michigan, as well as the United States, celebrations of Immigrant Heritage Month and World Refugee Day

were held on June 20. Such events reinforce our efforts as a welcoming state to New Americans from all over the world who are making Michigan their home. The purposeful integration of New Americans reaffirms our deep appreciation of their significant economic and cultural contributions to Michigan which has made our state what it is today.

I want to recognize Welcoming Michigan, a statewide grassroots immigrant integration initiative of the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center. Welcoming Michigan provides many programs including shared meals, cross-cultural learning, and dialogue opportunities for community members with the goal fostering mutual respect and understanding among native and new Michiganders.

Launched in 2012, Welcoming Michigan's activities and programs have included: film screenings, cooking classes, facilitated dialogues, personal storytelling events, advancing language access, local ID programs, naturalization workshops, ESL chats, training about immigration law, soccer tournaments, multicultural festivals, hosting an annual statewide conference, and leading activities during National Welcoming Week. For more information about events for this year's National Welcoming Week (Sept. 16-24, 2017), please see [Welcoming Michigan's activity sheet](#).

Michigan is proud to be home to the largest number of participants in the national Welcoming Cities & Counties program with 19 locations including: Detroit, Hamtramck, Macomb County, Sterling Heights, Clinton Township, West Bloomfield Township, Troy, Royal Oak, Ferndale, Pleasant Ridge, Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, Lansing, East Lansing, Meridian Township, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo City, Kalamazoo County, and Battle Creek.

While the Welcoming Michigan program is in many communities currently around the state, it's important to continue the growth of such efforts. These 19 communities serve as a wonderful example for other townships, municipalities, and communities to witness the diverse contributions culturally and economically that New Americans make on the places they call home in Michigan. With the continued efforts and collaboration of Michigander's and organizations such as Welcoming Michigan, the Great Lakes State can continue to improve upon its status as a go-to destination for New Americans coming to the United States.

A big "thank you" to Welcoming Michigan for its ongoing collaboration with local governments and community based organizations to provide much-needed support and training for our New Americans and their families as they begin their new lives here.

- Bing Goei

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Commission Spotlight



The Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission (MAPAAC) is one of Michigan's three state ethnic commissions, containing 21 members that are appointed by the Governor. Efforts are made to make the commission representative in multiple ways, taking Michigan geography, ethnic background,

and community representation into consideration. Members represent many of Michigan's South Asian, Southeast Asian, and East Asian communities spread across the state.

The goal of MAPAAC is to be an exemplary commission by adding public value to the State of Michigan and the Asian Pacific American (APA) community, and by fully engaging APAs across the state. MAPAAC initially began in 2005 as the Governor's Advisory Council of Asian Pacific Americans within the Department of Civil Rights. Seeking more permanent representation, the advisory council eventually became MAPAAC in 2008.

After completing a needs assessment in 2015, it was determined that MAPAAC would have three primary focus areas. This included assisting the APA community navigating some of the challenges of living in a new culture and governmental structure such as navigating the American healthcare system. Second, a series of anti-bullying and cultural sensitivity workshops were conducted at many schools and community centers. Finally, local ethnic community centers requested greater resource assistance in conducting events for their community. MAPAAC prefers to act as a sponsor, focusing on empowering local groups rather than holding their own events that may compete with local organizations.

For more information on MAPAAC, please visit http://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-75952_75958--,00.html.

Commissioner Highlight



Dr. Jamie Hsu is the current Chairperson of MAPAAC. Dr. Hsu holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from National Taiwan University and a master's degree and Ph.D. in solid mechanics from Brown University. He's had a very successful career primarily in the auto industry working for General Motors as the executive director of Global Technology Management, among various other roles involving Research and Development and the GM Advanced Manufacturing Technology Center.

After retiring from GM, he was approached by Lawrence Technical University to capitalize on his vast experience to teach MBA courses on strategic planning, management, and technology development.

Though trained as an engineer, Dr. Hsu is a people person at heart. Therefore, in addition to teaching, he is passionate about Asian Pacific American affairs and is very active in empowering, and sometimes sponsoring, the many ethnic organizations in our state to engage with the wider Michigan community. He views his role as MAPAAC Chairperson through the lens of a collaborator and sponsor rather than a competitor. Dr. Hsu is committed to finding unique ways for these organizations to work together to achieve the wider goals of the APA community.

State of Michigan Partner Highlight

Founded in 1979 as a one-person office in the International Institute of Detroit, the Arab American and Chaldean Council (ACC) has grown from serving 421 clients in its first year to an average of 80,000 people annually today. ACC provides a wide array of services to its clients, ranging from counseling and healthcare (including primary care services to the uninsured and underinsured), to employment training and job placement, and traditional immigrant services such as translation, interpretation and much more. Many of their services are county specific and ACC has 40 outreach offices spread across the Wayne, Oakland and Macomb county areas.

ACC offers youth programming for after-school and summer educational and recreational opportunities at their Youth Recreation and Leadership Center at 62 W. Seven Mile Road. They have also noted a decrease in incoming refugees and an increase in general levels of anxiety in their clients. As such, they are ensuring that refugees and concerned immigrants can get the counseling and support they need.

While ACC's services are indeed tailored specifically to the Arab American and Chaldean community, their services are available for everyone. In this spirit, one of the major developments this year is the opening of a food pantry that will move from serving pre-arranged baskets of food to providing a shopping experience for clients. Utilizing a federal grant for renovations, the pantry is expected to open near the beginning of the new school year.

ACC is holding their 38th annual Civic and Humanitarian Awards Gala on Friday, October 27th. They encourage you to check out their website as more details develop. For more information on ACC, please visit their website at www.MyACC.org.



Arab American and
Chaldean Council (ACC)

Research Highlight

The Baltimore RISE Report

A Case Study on Building Capacity in Local Refugee and Immigrant Workforce Development Services

The Baltimore RISE program and report began out of conversations about the unmet needs of skilled immigrants and refugees, specifically in the area of workforce development. The initial vision for the program was to provide career laddering opportunities for them. The pilot program was comprised of a variety of partners who collectively could leverage public and private resources to engage the immigrant and refugee populations with the ultimate goal of increasing access to workforce development services and increasing economic prosperity.

More specifically, building off a set of recommendations by the Baltimore Mayor's New Americans Task Force, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant and Multicultural Affairs teamed up with the Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees to develop a set of initiatives to leverage existing resources to offer vocational training services. For starters, post-resettlement employment services were moved to a local American Job Center, both normalizing refugee interaction with government services and setting the program up for long-term sustainability. The Refugee Integration, Skills Training, and Employment (RISE) program was then developed with two primary goals: 1) Providing skills training and job placement services for skilled refugees in Baltimore growth industries; and, 2) To Increase the capacity of the Eastside American Job Center to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services to the refugee and immigrant community, including those with limited English proficiency. More generally, the goal was to put refugees and immigrants on the path away from survival jobs and to wealth-building and self-sufficiency.

Working with local resettlement agencies, RISE connected refugees to training for jobs in "high growth industries" which included certifications in both industry and the healthcare field. Most of the training took place at Baltimore City Community College. The job center provided lessons in "job readiness" such as resume and interview workshops, math and literacy development, and access to local job fairs, as well as individual case management. Training workshops were also conducted with many of the service providers in best practices when working with immigrant and refugee populations to better prepare them for future interaction with this community. Designed as a one-year pilot program, the "key deliverables" and results were as follows:

Program Deliverable	Goal	Achieved in Pilot
Program Enrollments	140 Clients	142 Clients
Vocation Training Completions	112 Clients	75
Employment Placements	115 Clients	53 Clients
Full-time Placements	92	50 Clients
Full-time w/ health benefits	74	46
Average hourly wage	\$10.50	\$11.47

Continued on next page

Research Highlight Cont.

While RISE didn't meet many of its targets, the program was generally considered a success. Upon program completion, the RISE administrators developed a wide set of recommendations for various stakeholders interested in enacting a similar program. The real personal impact cannot be forgotten, as the case study includes three individual examples of the value of this job training program. For more information, the case study report can be found at: http://www.lirs.org/downloads/LIRS_Baltimore_RISE_Report.pdf.

Photo Gallery



Mike Zimmer, Manal Saab (from Sorenson Gross Construction Services and Chairperson of the Commission on Middle Eastern American Affairs), Steve Tobocman (Global Detroit), and Paul Feltman (World Education Services.) At the "Harnessing Immigrant Talent" event form May 2017.



Gov. Snyder's Cabinet Director Mike Zimmer giving the keynote address at the event.

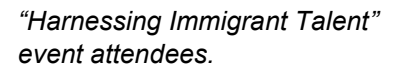


Photo Gallery Cont.



Mission

To help grow Michigan's economy by attracting global talent to our state and promote the skills, energy, and entrepreneurial spirit of our immigrant communities.

MONA Deputy Director, Karen Phillippi, at the Welcoming Interactive with the other State Offices for New Americans from April 2017 promoting that immigrants are welcome here!



Governor Snyder at the Ideal Group Hispanic Leadership meeting.

www.michigan.gov/mona



www.michigan.gov/lara

LARA is an equal opportunity employer/program.



Submissions

We encourage you to submit articles, information, photos, and comments to us – your input is important. If you would like to submit articles for the MONA News Connection, you may submit them via e-mail to NewAmericans@michigan.gov.

For additional information about the Michigan Office for New Americans, visit the MONA website www.michigan.gov/mona.