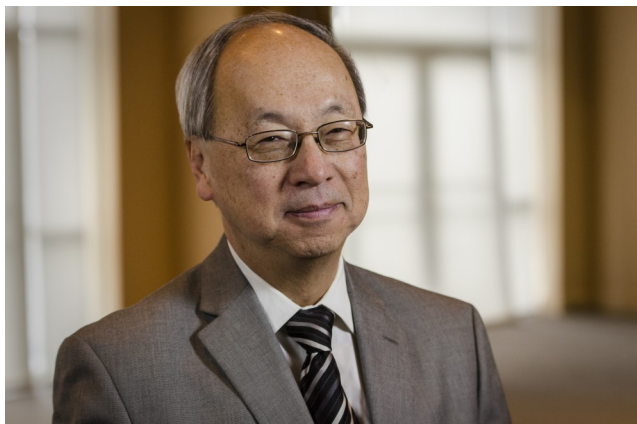


Director's Message



"We are the best Michigan when we are a diverse Michigan – one that is made up of people whose stories and journeys are not identical." This quote is taken from Governor Snyder's statement on DACA last September. The statement is one of acceptance and unity for all Michiganders including Dreamers and immigrants, as they are vital to the continued growth of Michigan's economic and cultural footprint.

It is important to highlight not only this statement from the Governor, but also the statistics and information available that show why the DACA population is so vital to Michigan's economy and future success.

The following study from the New American Economy ["Examining the Contributions of the DACA-Eligible Population in Key States"](#) is a perfect example of the impact that Dreamers have not just in Michigan, but across the United States as well.

Michigan is home to about 652,000 immigrants which comprises about 7 percent of the state's residents. Michigan's immigrant population has increased by 74%, going from 3.8 percent in 1990 to 6.6 percent in the present day.

In Michigan, 92 percent of the DACA-eligible labor force population are employed. This substantial number of New Americans in the workforce fills thousands of jobs within Michigan and has helped contribute to the state's continued growth and economic comeback. The DACA workforce in Michigan has an aggregate income of \$182.8 million. This workforce pays \$13.6 million in State and Local taxes, while contributing \$27 million overall in taxes.

The Dreamers are an important piece of the puzzle in contributing to Michigan's future. I hope that we all can take the Governor's excellent message to heart and continue to celebrate and acknowledge those in the communities we live and work to continue building toward the best Michigan.

-Bing

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Partner Highlight

West Michigan Asian American Association

The West Michigan Asian American Association (WMAAA) was formed via a merger through Asian Health Outreach Foundation and the Asian Professionals Organization. The WMAAA is a Michigan non-profit corporation with goals of creating an active, collaborative Asian community in West Michigan with a focus on healthcare, education, and empowerment.

WMAAA current programs and activities:

- Networking events
- Speaking engagements
- Scholarship program
- Patient navigation system
- Presentations and performances
- Promoting greater awareness of healthcare issues affecting the Asian American community

As an organization, the WMAAA seeks to collaborate with other organizations and leaders from the West Michigan Asian American community, to work towards its mission and vision of building a collaborative, active, West Michigan Asian American community with a focus on healthcare, empowerment and education.

For more information visit the [WMAAA website](#).



State of Michigan Program Highlight

Michigan Seal of Biliteracy

The Michigan Seal of Biliteracy program was launched in 2018 to acknowledge and recognize High School graduates that exhibit language proficiency in English and at least one other world language. The seal may be awarded to any student that has received a high school diploma, a high school certificate of completion or a high school equivalency certificate that has demonstrated high proficiency on acceptable world language assessments and met English Arts requirements for graduation or demonstrated proficiency on validated tests of proficiency for English Learners. Michigan and 27 other states, including the District of Columbia award the Seal of Biliteracy.



To help encourage the study of world language and help students embrace their native heritage and language, the seal was created by the Michigan Department of Education. Students that have earned the seal can easily be identified by employers as someone with strong language and biliteracy skills. The Seal also may serve as an additional tool for colleges and universities to recognize applicants' language abilities for admission and placement.

The Michigan Department of Education recommends that a student's proficiency is tested for the purpose of awarding the Seal beginning his/her second semester of the junior year through the end of the first semester of the senior year. Note that students tested in their senior year may not receive test results until summer of their graduating year. As a result, the Seal will be awarded retroactively following graduation.

The graduating class of 2018 are the first high school students eligible to receive the Seal of Biliteracy.

For more information on the program visit the [Seal of Biliteracy website](#).

[Michigan Seal of Biliteracy Policy](#).

Research Highlight

Chicago Council on Global Affairs

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs has recently published a study called “Ready to Work: Understanding Immigrant Skills in the United States to Build a Competitive Labor Force.” The purpose of this study was to highlight policies and programs to those in the labor field to help maximize foreign-born workers’ contributions to the US workforce.

Some core takeaways from the research include:

- ♦ Immigrants are significant contributors to the US labor force. They currently represent 17 percent of workers and many are in their prime working years, in comparison to an aging native-born working force.
- ♦ Significant portions of immigrants and the native born are currently working in jobs they are educationally overqualified for. When immigrants are educationally overqualified, they earn less than their native-born peers with similar skills and jobs.
- ♦ Foreign-born workers may benefit from greater access to additional education and training, particularly professional licenses and certificates. Post-secondary education and workforce development institutions will be most effective in reaching these workers with programs that are responsive to immigrant workers’ unique characteristics.
- ♦ Findings should be evaluated against the evolving landscape of demographic change, immigration policy, and population shifts to most effectively inform future programs and investments. The US economy’s future vitality depends on its ability to maximize the skills and talents of all workers.

This report also describes the need to continue to seek answers to research questions that identify the challenges and opportunities associated with maximizing the contributions of foreign-born workers.



Research Highlight

Chicago Council on Global Affairs

The data presented in the report illustrates several areas of important research:

- ◆ Understanding detailed characteristics of the immigrant population.
- ◆ Projecting future demands in the workforce and issuing visas based on those projections.
- ◆ Supporting immigrants in their pursuit to obtain US career and education credentials.
- ◆ Meeting the continued demand for low-skilled workers.
- ◆ Making sure “over skilled” workers have job requirements that match their skills.
- ◆ Creating and designing postsecondary training for adult learners.
- ◆ Preparing the immigrant and refugee population for postsecondary education.
- ◆ Improving gender equity in labor-force participation.
- ◆ Responding to geographic distribution.

The complete “Ready to Work: Understanding Immigrant Skills in the United States to Build a Competitive Labor Force” study is available to download at the [Chicago Council on Global Affairs website](http://chicagocouncil.org/ready-to-work).



March 2018 event in Detroit co-sponsored by MONA, Global Detroit, Detroit Regional Chamber, Michigan Economic Center and MichAuto highlighting the Chicago Council on Global Affairs "Ready to Work" report.

Photo Gallery



MONA's Ethnic Cabinet meeting hosted by the Chaldean Community Foundation in March 2018.

ACCESS Executive Director, Hassan Jaber, talking about the importance of the upcoming 2020 Census at MONA's Ethnic Cabinet meeting held in March 2018.



Michigan International Talent Solutions (MITS) "Meet and Mingle" with MITS jobseekers and staff in October 2017.

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 Director Bing Goei accepting an award at the American Arab Chamber of Commerce Building Economic Bridges Gala in October 2017.



March 2018 event in Detroit co-sponsored by MONA, Global Detroit, Detroit Regional Chamber, Michigan Economic Center and MichAuto highlighting the Chicago Council on Global Affairs "Ready to Work" report.



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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, go to www.michigan.gov/mona