Making an IMPRINT:
Skilled Immigrants in Pennsylvania

June 2013
An Overview: What this Snapshot Includes

- Defining skilled immigrants: Pennsylvania’s opportunity
- Data & demographics
- Barriers and opportunities for skilled immigrants in Pennsylvania
- Introducing IMPRINT
The Pennsylvania Landscape

- Pennsylvania is home to over 720,000 immigrants.
- Among immigrant adults, more than 1 in 3 have a college degree.

*Now, we’ll take a closer look at these 217,000 college-educated immigrants.*
PA’s Immigrant Population Growth: An Upward Trend

- A remarkable **36%** of immigrants in PA have bachelor’s or graduate degrees, compared to **26%** of US-born Pennsylvanians.
- This includes both graduates of US colleges and institutions abroad.

Skilled Immigrants Too Are a Growing Population

Pennsylvania’s Skilled Immigrants by Year of Arrival in the US

Who Are Pennsylvania’s Skilled Immigrants?

More Than Half of Skilled Immigrants in Pennsylvania Come from Asia & the Middle East

- 52% from Asia & Middle East
- 25% from Europe
- 12% from Latin America & the Caribbean
- 7% from Africa
- 4% from Other

Half Have a Graduate or Professional Degree

Among all adult African immigrants in Pennsylvania, 40% have a college or graduate degree.

“Other” includes Canada and Australia.

Like US-Born Colleagues, Many Work in “Eds & Meds”

Half of Pennsylvania’s Skilled Immigrants Work in These Industry Categories

- Hospitality (restaurants)
- Education (colleges and universities)
- Education (elementary and secondary schools)
- Healthcare (hospitals)
- Healthcare (not specifically classified)
- Healthcare (physicians' offices/clinics)
- Management and public relations services
- Information Technology (computer and data processing services)
- Administration of environmental quality and housing programs

## Specific Occupations with High Numbers of Skilled Immigrants in PA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Skilled Immigrant Employees</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject instructors (HS/college)</td>
<td>14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers and administrators</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer software developers</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physicians</td>
<td>11,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer systems analysts and computer scientists</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountants and auditors</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered nurses</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisors and proprietors of sales jobs</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school teachers</td>
<td>3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical scientists</td>
<td>3,000</td>
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</tbody>
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But Not All Skilled Immigrants Have Found Opportunity

- More than 1 in 4 skilled immigrants with earned income in PA earn less than $30,000 per year.

- Overall, the Migration Policy Institute estimates that 32,000 skilled immigrants in Pennsylvania are un- or under-employed.

What Are Barriers to Professional Employment?

- International educational credentials not recognized by US employers
- Difficulty finding professional-level English classes and building language skills
- Limited knowledge of American business culture and interviewing style
- Opaque and confusing pathways to professional licensure

See how these barriers affect Pennsylvania residents in the following case examples.
Zakia was born in Morocco and educated in Ukraine. She speaks Russian, French, and Arabic – and English.

But when she came to the US, she spent 6 months searching for employment – any employment.

With our help, she obtained a first “survival job” and then a position in a dental office.

Today, Zakia uses all four of her languages on the job in Northeast Philadelphia – and her Indian-born employer is mentoring her as she prepares for her board exams.
Semere was born in Ethiopia, where he graduated with a degree in engineering and worked as a civil engineer.

Three years later, he moved to the US – only to find himself struggling to break into his field.

With our help, he made a successful first step into American employment, and is now studying for his exams as a Professional Engineer.
Anne was born in Ireland and educated at Trinity College, Dublin.

A fully qualified physical therapist when she arrived in the US, it nevertheless took her 3 years to obtain permission to sit for the licensing exam.

Ultimately, she had to travel to North Carolina for the exam, then obtain a license by reciprocity.

Anne never forgot the challenges she had overcome. More than 30 years later, she founded the Welcoming Center to help other ambitious newcomers do the same.
A Resource for Immigrants in PA: The Welcoming Center

• The Welcoming Center is an independent nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

• We see ourselves as an economic development organization rather than a social services agency.

• Our mission is to promote immigrant participation in the Philadelphia area's political, social, and economic life.
Skilled immigrants can obtain help via:

- Employment services for eligible work-authorized adults
- Career mapping and re-credentialing consultation
- English and citizenship classes
- Small business development advice
Our Approach

With our help, skilled immigrants get the tools they need to build professional careers.

Keep reading to learn how our experienced team helps immigrant jobseekers crack the code of American business culture.

Yana Chernov
Director of Employment Placement
Professional-Level “Soft Skills” Training

We start with a 2-hour interactive workshop covering:

• Interviewing techniques: body language, eye contact, and American-style “bragging” about accomplishments

• Resume development, including how to explain international experience in terms that make sense to US employers

…and much more.

*Keep reading for more about how we assist skilled immigrant jobseekers.*
Becoming Re-credentialed in a Professional Field

Immigrant engineers, doctors, and accountants who seek to practice in the US typically undergo a lengthy process:

It often takes **3-5 years**.

The Welcoming Center has published **Career Guides** for popular professions to help skilled immigrants plan their career pathways.
Advanced English Instruction

- Many immigrants arrive in the US already speaking English.
- Others are getting their first “real world” experience of a language they learned from books.
- Our experienced instructors help skilled immigrants to acquire the language skills they need to succeed in the US.
Finding Alternative Pathways for Talent

For some skilled immigrants, launching a business is the solution to labor-market frustration.

We provide practical guidance for aspiring entrepreneurs.
Building National Attention for Skilled Immigrants

The Welcoming Center is a founding member of IMPRINT, a national coalition of organizations focused on skilled immigrant integration.
IMPRINT is a national umbrella organization specialized in skilled immigrant integration. IMPRINT is *not* a direct-service organization. Its activities include:

- Disseminating promising practices
- Creating and distributing resources for practitioners
- Advocating for effective policies to support skilled immigrant workforce integration
- More at: [www.imprintproject.org](http://www.imprintproject.org)
Early this year, IMPRINT’s Steering Committee Selected Pennsylvania as the national coalition’s focus for state-level work in 2013-14.

The Welcoming Center’s track record of accomplishment was a key factor in the decision.
What’s Next?

- Visits to **Harrisburg** and **Washington** to raise awareness of skilled immigrant issues and advocate for effective policies and services.

- Expanded Welcoming Center program offerings, including a brand-new *Introduction to the US Healthcare System* course for immigrant health professionals in Fall 2013.

- **Continued research** to better understand the needs and opportunities presented by skilled immigrants.
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