

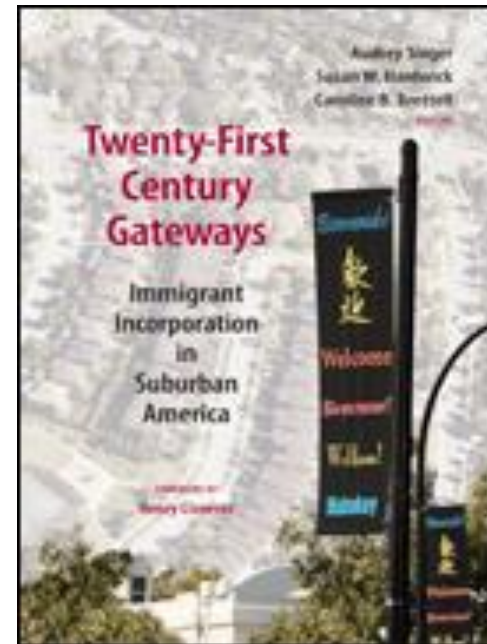
Regional Economic Development through Immigrant Integration: The Philadelphia Experience

Presentation to Global Great Lakes
Detroit, MI

June 6, 2013

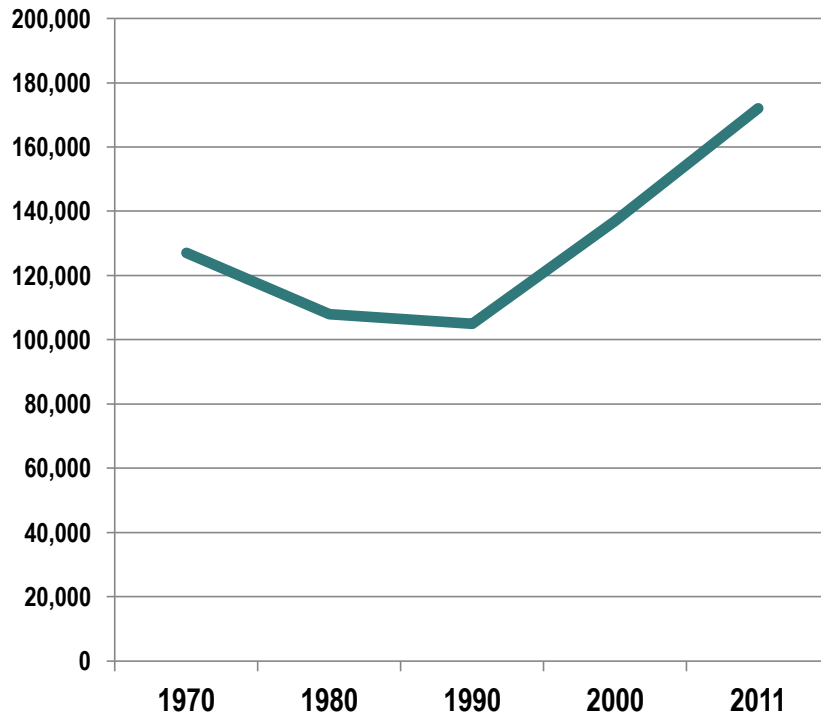
The Local Picture

- Philadelphia is a “Re-Emerging Gateway” for immigrants
- More than **500,000** immigrants in the region; more than **170,000** in the city
- Local immigration is notable for its racial/ethnic diversity, and for the high levels of college education (**38%** of immigrants vs. **32%** of US-born adults)

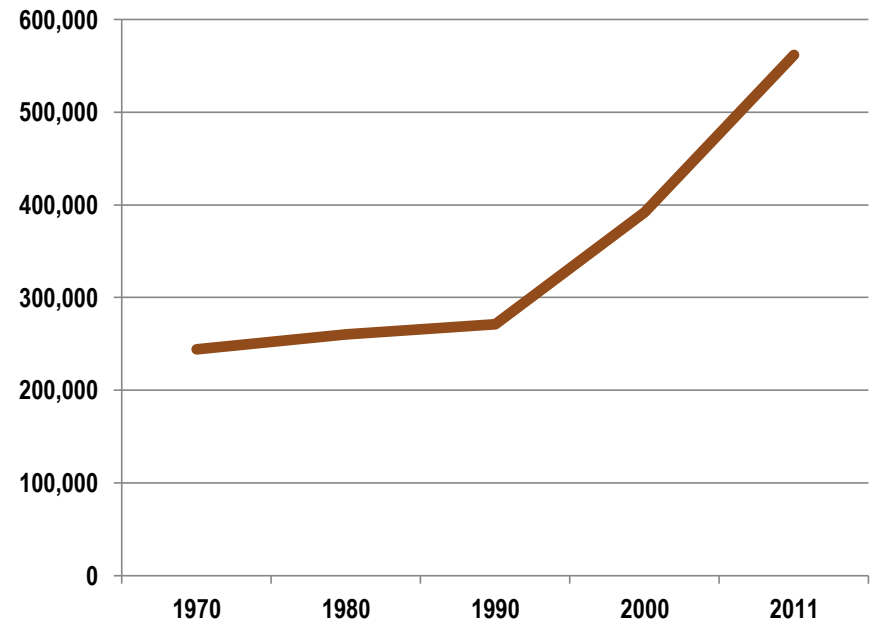


Over Time, Increasing Immigration in City & Metro Area

City of Philadelphia Immigration Growth



Greater Phila Metro Area Immigration Growth



Source: US Census Bureau.

Without Immigrants, No Net Growth in City

“Immigrant Surge: Why Area Grew”

The Philadelphia Inquirer

March 13, 2011

“Among its peer regions, metropolitan Philadelphia has the largest and fastest growing immigrant population.”

*Brookings Institution, Recent Immigration to Philadelphia:
Regional Change in a Re-Emerging Gateway. (2008)*



“This is Not a Misprint:
Philadelphia’s Population is Up”

March 10, 2011

Many Factors Contributed to This Growth

*Today, we'll focus on the
Welcoming Center.*



*Connecting immigrants, employers,
and communities*



What We've Done: Some Accomplishments

- Placed **2,000** legally work-authorized immigrant jobseekers in employment
- Assisted **300** entrepreneurs in launching or improving their businesses
- Helped **400** adults to learn English, civics, or prepare for the GED exam
- Published **14** major publications, (including **Career Guides** and **How to Start a Business** guides), plus **2** research studies and **11** detailed data snapshots



*Small Business Dev. Coordinator
Herman Nyamunga*



*Intercultural
Communication
Specialist
Chan Mi Jung-Pyles*



*Director of Employment
Yana Chernov*

How We Got Here: The Process



*Welcoming Center Founder
Anne O'Callaghan*

Founder Anne O'Callaghan's contribution: Seeing the nonprofit immigration services landscape through a physical therapist's eyes.

- Evaluate the problem
- Develop a treatment plan
- Know that improvement will be incremental
- Use benchmarks to gauge progress

Step 1: Assess the Landscape



- We began by **gathering data** about the region's demographics, existing service providers, and gaps.
- We looked to New York, Chicago, Boston for ideas.

Step 2: Review and Analyze the Data

- Our founder began this work with no existing Welcoming Center programs -- and thus no vested interest in a particular finding.

Three major findings:

- **New workers were needed** to replenish PA's aging workforce
- Immigrant jobseekers had **no specialized workforce services available** to them
- English was vital for employment, yet **no comprehensive list of English classes** existed



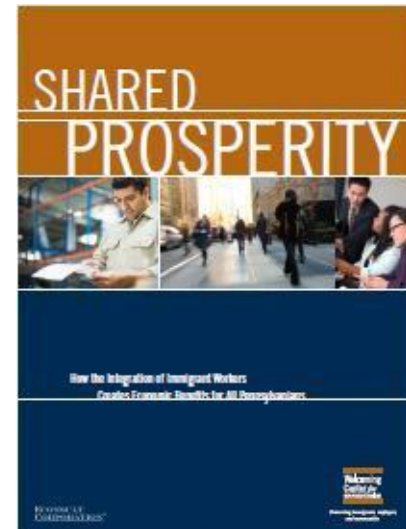
Step 3: Share Our Findings

- We reached out to policymakers, practitioners, and others.
- The conclusion: There was a **serious lack** of workforce and economic development services for immigrants, and no organization stepping up to remedy it.



Central Insight in Founding of Welcoming Center: Use an Economic Development Lens

- **Immigrants** are not burdens or victims; they are **assets**.



A Different Approach to Immigration Services

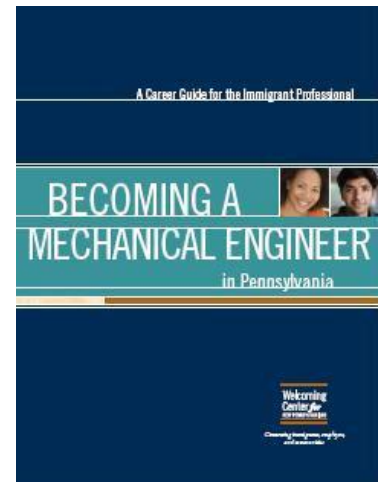


- Multiethnic – not specific to any one group
- Not faith-based (those groups already existed)
- Regional, working actively in suburbs as well as city
- Committed to non-duplication of services (and funding!)
- Keen interest in empirical data, statistics, and evaluation

Outcomes First

Then Figure Out the Services That Lead You There

- “**No one thrives without a job**” – employment services
- “Why is it so hard to figure out how to get a city permit?” ***How to Start a Business*** guides
- “Why does it take years for a skilled immigrant to navigate the re-credentialing process?”
Career Guides

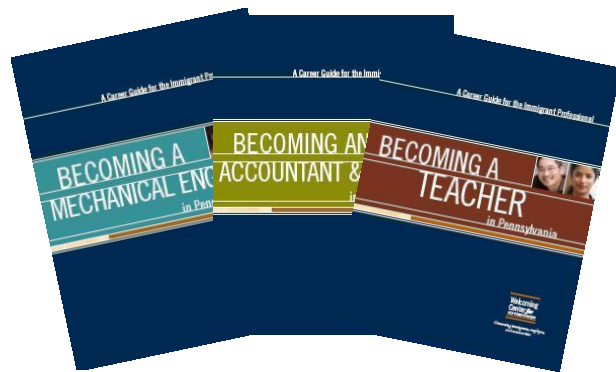


Becoming Re-credentialed in a Professional Field



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.

Learning English

- Many immigrants arrive in the US already speaking English
- Others are getting their first “real world” experience of a language they learned from books
- The Welcoming Center offers **English, civics, and GED classes**



Resource: ESL Class Database www.welcomingcenter.org/immigrants/learn-english

Launching a Small Business

From retail shops to pharmaceutical research companies, **immigrant entrepreneurs** are a crucial ingredient in the economic vitality of the Philadelphia region.

Importantly, our small business services are open to US-born entrepreneurs as well.

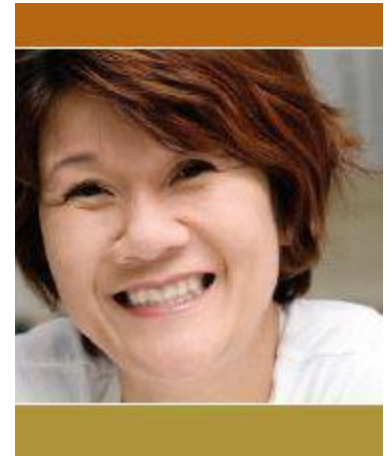


An Example: English for Entrepreneurs

Merchants in small retail businesses who have limited English skills may be more isolated.

EFE builds practical skills, such as:

- Increased competence and confidence in communicating
- Strategies to resolve misunderstandings and defuse conflict
- Improved customer service skills
- Increased cultural sensitivity and positive community interaction



How We Are Funded

- Federal Workforce Investment Act Title I funds (*distributed through state Department of Labor & Industry and local Workforce Investment Boards*)
- Federal & state adult education funds through WIA Title II, AEFLA (*distributed through state Dept. of Education*)
- Federal Community Services Block Grant and related funds (*through state Dept. of Community & Economic Development; city Dept. of Commerce*)
- Private foundations, corporate support, and individual donors



Where We Are Heading



Continuing to Gather & Analyze Data

to measure impact on individuals, communities, and our region

Improving & Expanding Services

through new partnerships and use of technology

Building a Global Community, Locally

by cultivating our alumni as ambassadors, advisors, donors

Sharing Our Expertise

We provide **consulting services** to municipalities, chambers of commerce, business associations, and others who seek to **improve regional economic vitality** through immigrant integration.



WELCOMING CENTER for NEW PENNSYLVANIANS



Welcoming
Center *for*
NEW PENNSYLVANIANS

*Connecting immigrants, employers,
and communities*

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