



Massachusetts
Immigrant & Refugee
Advocacy Coalition

2023



ANNUAL REPORT

www.miracoalition.org

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“Today’s event makes clear how far Massachusetts has come in expanding immigrant and refugee rights but it also shows how much more work is left to do.”

~ Elizabeth Sweet

Immigrants’ Day at the State House 2023

To our supporters
LETTER FROM MIRA’S
Executive Director

Dear MIRA Supporters,




We hope you enjoy reading the MIRA Coalition’s 2023 Annual Report on our progress in championing immigrant rights during this year. We were proud to complete a deep strategic planning process in 2023, and approve a four year plan to guide the work of the organization through 2027. That planning process took into account input from our member organizations, funders, board and staff members.

Parallel to that planning effort, we invested in strengthening MIRA Coalition’s staff team during 2023, by creating a new leadership team and key positions to guide the organization’s work. We created the first Political Director role for MIRA to bring together federal and state advocacy, organizing and policy work into one department. And as MIRA slowly expanded the scope of our work over the years beyond our advocacy work, it became clear that staff restructuring was also needed to bring our growing slate of programs under one roof. A new Membership Coordinator position was created to help manage the day-to-day needs of the coalition members. Citizenship, training, membership, and the New Americans Integration Program were united under the leadership of a new Senior Director of Programs. And we invested in our amazing team at MIRA by providing training, stronger benefits and other identified needs to support staff retention.

These internal changes helped us to meet the ever increasing demands for our work during 2023. We were able to launch a substantial new initiative, the Immigrant Assistance Services program, in the Spring of 2023. This state-funded program works with Emergency Assistance shelters to provide newly arrived immigrants with support services, including case management and legal assistance. We continued to advocate for all immigrants, and celebrated a huge success winning in-state tuition equity for all who graduate from Massachusetts high schools, regardless of their immigration status. As we look forward, we believe that these programs, our commitment to investing in the MIRA team, and our strategic plan will all serve to support our growth in the coming years. Thank you all for continuing to support our efforts to build an inclusive Commonwealth for all.



Liz G. Sweet (she/her)
 Executive Director

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We are MIRA

- Our Work And Impact

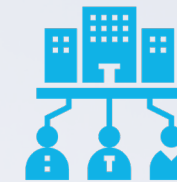
The MIRA Coalition is New England's largest organization dedicated to promoting the rights and inclusion of immigrants and refugees. With over 140 member organizations, including grassroots groups, refugee resettlement agencies, service providers, faith-based organizations, and civil rights advocates, MIRA represents a broad, multicultural, and multilingual community.

As a prominent statewide coalition, MIRA unites these diverse voices to advocate for immigrant justice and influence pro-immigrant policy changes. By bringing organizations together, MIRA amplifies their collective power and impact.

MIRA supports its members in several key ways:



Information & Strategy: provides timely updates, expert analysis, and strategic guidance on immigration issues, helping members navigate complex legal and policy landscapes.



Stakeholder Engagement: connects member organizations with legislators, funders, and other stakeholders to discuss current immigration issues and trends.



Public Education: creates accessible materials to explain legal and policy matters to the public, including immigrant communities.



Training & Workshops: offers workshops and training on immigration law, leadership, organizing, and communication, often with discounts for members.



Policy Development: listens to its members and their communities to shape a policy agenda that reflects their needs and concerns.



Media & Outreach: assists with media outreach, messaging, and creating promotional materials to enhance the visibility of its members' work.



Statehouse Advocacy: facilitates access to state legislators, notably through the annual Immigrants' Day at the Statehouse, where members can directly engage with policymakers.



Technical Assistance: provides technical support and referrals on benefits access and immigration-related issues.



Campaign Support: organizes and supports campaigns at the local, state, and federal levels to drive policy changes that benefit immigrants.



Leadership Development: offers leadership training and development opportunities, helping members to become effective advocates and organizers.



Communication Coordination: ensures efficient communication between staff and members, as well as among members, through a dedicated membership coordinator.

Through these efforts, MIRA strengthens its member organizations and builds a powerful, united front for immigrant rights and inclusion in New England.

New STRATEGIC PLAN

The 2023 Fiscal Year saw a number of significant structural changes for MIRA and the way that we work. Work began before the start of 2023 with the arrival of Liz Sweet as the organization's new Executive Director in January 2022 and is anticipated to be a multi-year effort to improve the ways that we work both internally and with our membership.

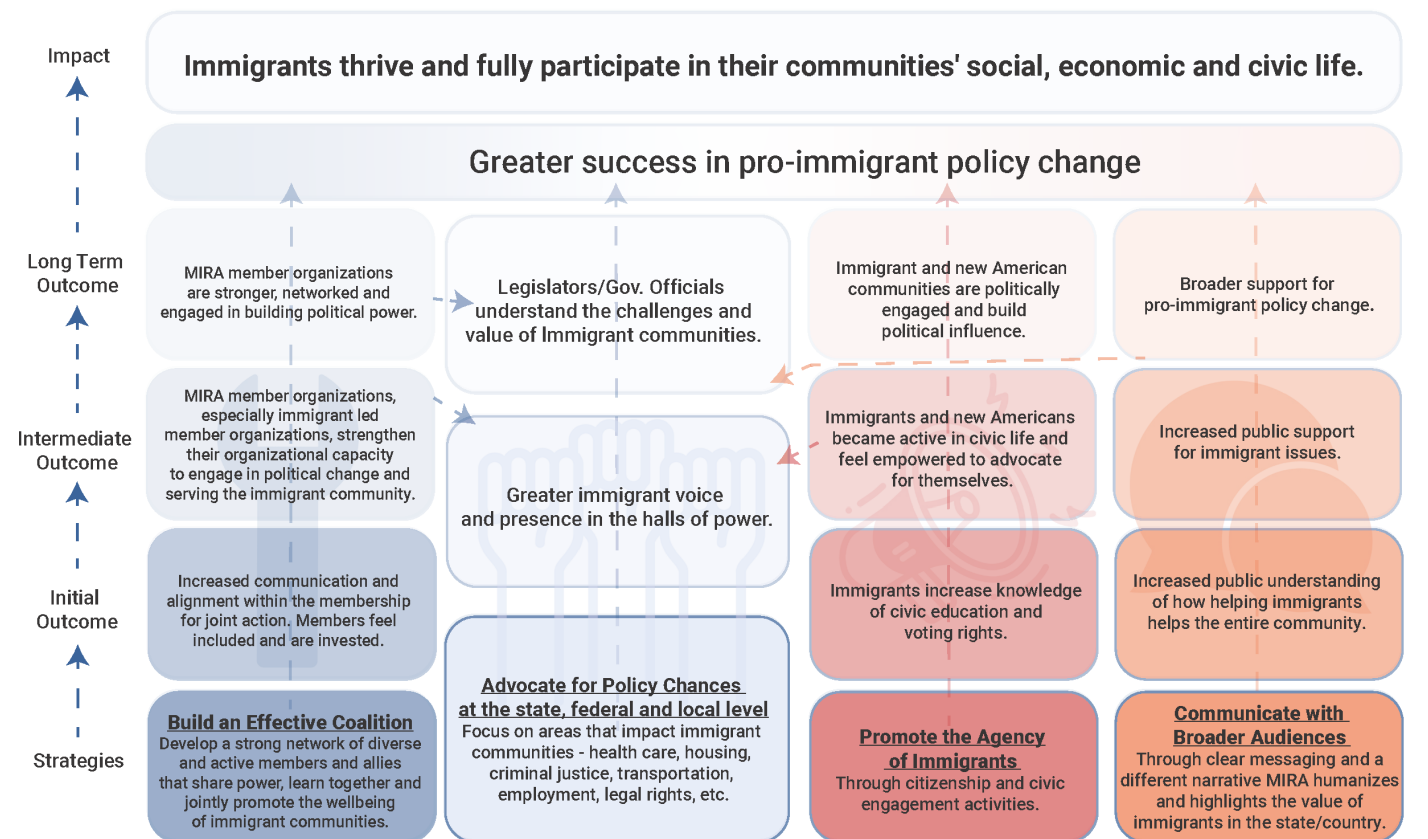
Key to these efforts was a staff restructuring and the creation of new senior leadership positions.

While these changes streamlined the way MIRA staff works with each other, we also recognized the need to take a critical look at the ways we work with our members. To this end, MIRA embarked on a strategic planning process from July 2022 to February 2023, developing a framework for FY 2023-2027 that aims to ensure that our work aligns with our stated mission and vision. This will require an assessment of strengths and weaknesses within our approach to the work and clarification around activities and goals for the organization to be better positioned to then guide staff, members, board leadership, and supporters. Because this is an ambitious plan with many moving parts, MIRA also created a new Chief of Staff position to help oversee implementation and hold ourselves accountable.

To achieve a meaningful Strategic Plan, MIRA brought on board a consultant who began by engaging with our members to find out what they think we are doing right, where we need to improve, and what they would like to see from MIRA in the future. This valuable feedback allowed us to lay the groundwork for the Strategic Plan by developing a new [Mission, Vision, and Values](#) and [Theory of Change](#) to guide our work. From there, MIRA developed the [Strategic Plan](#) with specific goals and objectives in four main Strategic Areas: (1) Structure, (2) Membership, (3) Messaging and Communication, and (4) Racial Justice.

As ambitious as this Strategic Plan is, it is just the beginning of MIRA's vision for the future. We are committed to implementing this in an realistic manner and will be developing a work plan and operational plan to guide our implementation through 2027.

MIRA's Theory of Change



STATE LEGISLATIVE and POLICY ADVOCACY

Here in Massachusetts, MIRA Coalition advocates with and for immigrant communities to create and support state policies that improve the lives, opportunities and safety of immigrants and refugees in Massachusetts. States are often the most effective engines of policy change where immigration issues are concerned, and we have much to be proud of this year.

2023 began a new 2-year state legislative cycle, complemented by the inauguration of a new Governor with longstanding ties to our state's immigrant communities, creating favorable conditions for passage of pro-immigrant legislation.

LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

In 2023, MIRA and the Tuition Equity Coalition won the historic

passage of the Tuition Equity Act after more than 20 years of advocacy work. The Tuition Equity Act extends eligibility for in-state tuition rates and state financial aid to Massachusetts "Dreamers"—undocumented students who have attended and graduated from Massachusetts high schools.

In January, MIRA worked with legislative allies to introduce the Physician Pathway Act, filed for the first time this session, would address acute physician shortages in under served communities by mobilizing the expertise of experienced, internationally trained physicians who face daunting structural barriers to physician licensure here.

2023 Legislative Highlights

JANUARY



MIRA worked with legislative allies to introduce the Physician Pathway Act.

Left-to-right: Dr. Deeb N. Salem, Dr. Elisa Tristan-Cheever, Dr. Saira Asjad & MIRA's Director, State Government Affairs, Amy Grunder

MARCH



Governor Maura Healey and House Speaker Mariano delivered resounding support for our work at MIRA's 27th annual Immigrants' Day at the State House.

JULY



MIRA and the Tuition Equity Coalition won the historic passage of the Tuition Equity Act after more than 20 years of advocacy work.

mobilizing the expertise of experienced, internationally trained physicians who face daunting structural barriers to physician licensure here.

MIRA also worked with coalition allies to refile and support other MIRA priority bills that would expand immigrant access to state information and services (Language Access and Inclusion Act), comprehensive health insurance coverage (Cover All Kids), and court and police protection (Safe Communities).

In March, Governor Maura Healey and House Speaker Mariano delivered resounding support for our work at MIRA's 26th annual Immigrants' Day at the State House. This was MIRA Coalition's first in person IDSH after several years of virtual lobbying, and it was inspirational to see the Hall of Flags filled with immigrant advocates!

STATE BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

2023 was a banner year for many of MIRA's budget priorities. Our advocacy ensured the successful passage of the Tuition Equity Law, which was adopted as an amendment to the FY24 budget. MIRA also won significant funding for programs and services serving immigrants and refugees in 2023, including:

Support services for new arrivals. Throughout FY2023, MIRA pressed the state legislature to allocate funds to address the unfolding humanitarian crisis in Massachusetts, especially to cover the cost of services provided by uncompensated community organizations to new arrivals in emergency shelters throughout the state, including legal services, transportation, interpretation and translation, and more. Through a succession of budget and other appropriations,

our advocacy helped secure nearly \$50M in FY23 for coordinated wrap-around services for newly arrived immigrants.

Credentialing for internationally-educated nurses.

We also won funding for the Welcome Back Center for Internationally-Educated Nurses at Bunker Hill Community College, to expand their programming. Since its establishment in 2005, the Center has helped over 600 internationally-educated nurses from 125 countries return to their profession here.

Funding for Citizenship programs, English classes, and Job Training.

MIRA also helped secure \$60.5M for adult English classes, \$3M for vocational training and placement for refugees and immigrants, and \$2M for citizenship programs.



MEMBERSHIP OUTREACH

AND IMPACT:

A Year of Growth and Connection

In 2023, MIRA took significant steps to deepen its engagement with communities across the state, focusing on building strong, reciprocal relationships that empower both local organizations and the broader immigrant community. Through strategic initiatives, regional dialogues, and targeted advocacy efforts, MIRA has amplified its impact and reinforced its commitment to serving and supporting immigrant communities.

A NEW ORGANIZING STRATEGY

MIRA launched its first-ever organizing team and strategy, bringing together the Field, Lead, and Digital Organizing teams to create a dynamic two-way relationship model. This model not only allows MIRA to support and serve community groups but also ensures that these relationships are mutually beneficial. By engaging with MIRA's advocacy agenda and strategy, community groups can actively participate in shaping policies that affect their lives. This approach has laid the foundation for a more collaborative and impactful movement.

REGIONAL MEETINGS: LISTENING AND LEARNING

To better understand the unique challenges and opportunities within different regions, MIRA hosted a series of regional meetings in Worcester, Framingham, East Boston, and Lowell. These in-person dialogues were crucial in informing MIRA about the capacities of local organizations, the pressing issues they face, and the policy priorities that should be at the forefront of MIRA's advocacy efforts in the upcoming legislative session. The insights gathered from these meetings are guiding MIRA's strategic planning and helping to align its efforts with the needs of the communities it serves.



MIRA staff members pose with some of our incredible leaders from our MIRA members at one of our Regional Meetings.



MIRA's Regional Meeting in Worcester, Massachusetts.

IMMIGRANTS' DAY AT THE STATE HOUSE 2023

Immigrants' Day at the State House (IDSH) 2023 was a milestone event for MIRA, with more than 200 participants and 15 lobby meetings conducted throughout the day. This year's IDSH was particularly notable as it was the first-ever multilingual event, reflecting MIRA's commitment to inclusivity and accessibility. Participants from diverse linguistic backgrounds were able to fully engage in the day's activities, advocating for their communities in a powerful and unified voice.

DRIVER'S LICENSES: EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

In response to the new driver's license law, MIRA organized 11 clinics and workshops across eight cities in the state. These events were designed to inform, educate, and assist community members with their applications, providing vital support through a multilingual team and resources. By collaborating with community-based organizations, MIRA ensured that accurate information was disseminated, and that residents were empowered to navigate the application process with confidence.

TUITION EQUITY: ADVOCATING FOR STUDENTS

MIRA's commitment to education equity was demonstrated through its facilitation of the Tuition Equity Working Group. This initiative kept members accountable during the advocacy campaign, ensuring that the voices of directly impacted students were heard. MIRA collected testimonies from students and engaged with school counselors and parent associations to educate students and their families about the new tuition equity law. This work has been instrumental in making higher education more accessible to immigrant students across the state.

ELECTORAL ENGAGEMENT: BUILDING POLITICAL POWER

Understanding the importance of civic engagement, MIRA held 11 voter registration volunteer action days, where 509 new American citizens were registered to vote. These efforts are crucial in building political power within immigrant communities and ensuring that their voices are represented in the democratic process. By empowering new citizens to participate in elections, MIRA is helping to shape a more inclusive and representative political landscape.

CONCLUSION

MIRA's membership outreach and impact over the past year have been marked by a commitment to building strong, reciprocal relationships with communities across the state. Through strategic organizing, regional dialogues, and targeted advocacy efforts, MIRA has not only supported community groups but also empowered them to actively engage in the fight for immigrant rights. As MIRA looks ahead, it remains dedicated to deepening these connections and amplifying the voices of immigrant communities in Massachusetts.



Immigrants' Day at the State House 2023 group picture.



Hosting Driver's License clinics at Brazilian Workers Center (BWC).



Tuition Lobby Day, MIRA's staff & volunteers pictured with Brazilian Worker Center (BWC) staff and Massachusetts State Senator, Liz Miranda.

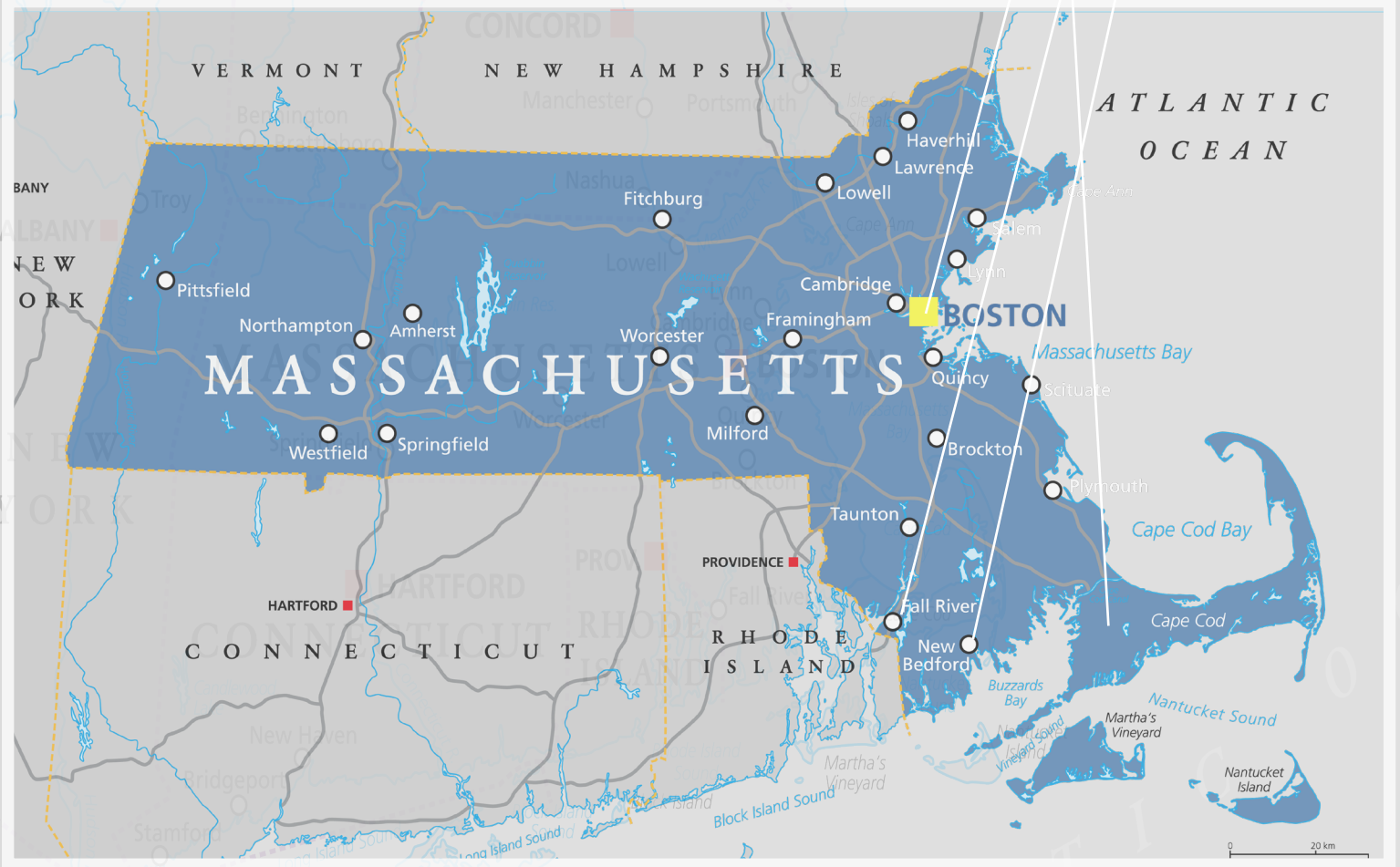
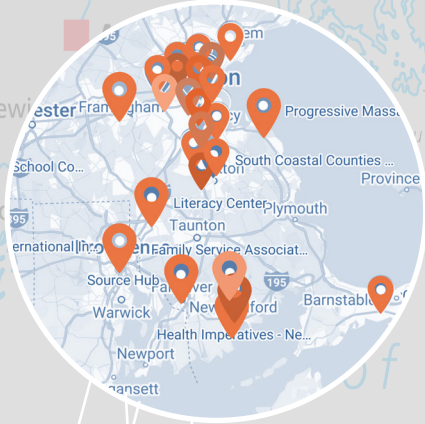


MIRA's awesome volunteers at one of our Voter Registration events.

MIRA COALITION MEMBERS

- ACLU of Massachusetts, Inc.
- Action For Boston Community Development (ABCD)
- ADL New England
- African Bridge Network
- Agencia Alpha
- Alianza DV
- AllWays Health Partners
- American Friends Service Committee
- American Jewish Committee
- Amplify Latinx
- Ascentria Care Alliance
- Asian American Civic Association -
- Asian American Resource Workshop
- Asian Community Development Corporation
- Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence (ATASK)
- Berkshire Immigrant Center
- Boston Area Rape Crisis Center
- Boston Center for Refugee Health & Human Rights
- Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center
- Boston Education, Skills & Training (BEST) Hospitality Training
- Boston Missionary Baptist Community Center
- Brazilian Womens Group
- Brazilian Workers Center
- Cambodian Mutual Assistance Agency
- Cambridge Community Learning Center
- Cambridge Health Alliance
- Casa Myrna
- Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Boston
- Catholic Charities of Fall River
- Catholic Charities of Springfield
- Catholic Charities Worcester
- Center for American Islamic Relations
- Center for Labor Education and Research (Jobs with Justice)
- Center for New Americans
- Chelsea Collaborative (La Colabortiva)
- Chinese Progressive Association
- City of New Bedford
- Coalition For A Better ACRE, Inc
- Coalition for Social Justice
- Community Action Agency of Somerville
- Community Action Committee of Cape Cod & Islands
- Community Economic Development Center
- Community Legal Aid, Inc
- Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries
- Dominican Development Center
- Dorcas International Institute of Rhode Island Inc.
- DOVE, Inc.
- East Boston Ecumenical Comm. Council
- Elizabeth Freeman Center
- English for new Bostonian
- Enroot
- Family Aid
- Family Service Association
- First Literacy
- Greater Boston Legal Services, Inc.
- Greater Lawrence Community Action Council
- Greater Portland Immigrant Welcome Center
- Haitian American Chamber of Commerce Massachusetts
- Haitian-Americans United (HAU)
- Health and Law Immigrant Solidarity Network
- Health Imperatives
- Health Law Advocates, Inc.
- Health Care For All (HCFA) Massachusetts
- Greenroots
- Immigrant Family Services Institute (IFSI)
- Immigrants Assistance Center
- International Institute of New England
- Iranian Association of Boston
- Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation
- Jane Doe Inc.
- Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action
- Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston
- Jewish Family Service of Metrowest
- Jewish Family Service of Western Massachusetts
- Jewish Vocational Service
- Jewish Voice for Peace
- Jones Library, Inc.
- Justice Resource Institute, Inc.
- La Alianza Hispana
- La Comunidad, Inc
- Latinos for Education
- Latinos Unidos en Massachusetts (LUMA)
- Lawyers for Civil Rights
- Lowell Alliance
- Lowell Center for Hope and Healing
- Lowell Community Health Center
- Lynn Community Health Inc.
- MA Appleseed Center for Law & Justice
- MAPA Translations & Language Solutions
- Mass. Association of Teachers of Speakers of Other Languages (MATSOL)
- Massachusetts Association for Community Action (MASSCAP)
- Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corps
- Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministry (MBMM)
- Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) Social Service
- Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Inc.
- Massachusetts Parents United
- Massachusetts Senior Care Association
- Massachusetts School Counselors Association
- Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition
- Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers (MAPS)
- MassCOSH
- Merrimack Valley Project
- Metro-West Workers Center CASA
- Metrowest Legal Services, Inc.
- Muslim Justice League
- Neighbor 2 Neighbor
- Neighborhood of Affordable Housing
- New American Association of Massachusetts
- New England Bangladeshi American Foundation (NEBAF)
- New England Justice for Our Neighbors
- New England Justice for Our Neighbors
- North East Justice Center (an affiliate of Northeast Legal Aid)
- Northeast Justice Center, LLC
- Northeastern School of Law
- Jewish Family Service of Western Massachusetts
- Pathway for Immigrant Workers
- Pioneer Valley Project
- Pioneer Valley Workers Center
- Plymouth Congregational Church
- Political Asylum Immigration Representation Project (PAIR Project)
- ProGente Connections
- Progressive Massachusetts Inc.
- Project Bread
- Project Citizenship
- Quincy Asian Resources (QARI)
- Reach Beyond Domestic Violence, Inc.
- RIAN Immigrant Center
- ROCA, Inc.
- Rosie's Place
- Saheli Inc
- SEIU 1199
- SEIU 32BJ
- Shut Up Until you There
- Sisters of Saint Joseph
- Source Hub
- South Coastal Counties Legal Services
- Southeast Asian Coalition of Central Massachusetts
- St Mark Community Education Program
- Student Clinic for Immigrant Justice (SCIJ)
- The Family Center at Community Connections of Brockton
- The Literacy Center
- The Right Question Institute
- The Right To Immigration
- The Women's Center
- Unitarian Universalists Mass Action
- Watertown Citizens for Peace
- Whittier Street Health Center
- Worcester Refugee Assistance Project

OUR 100+ MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS ARE THE HEART AND SOUL OF OUR COALITION. They keep MIRA staff alert to challenges and developments on the ground; ensure that we consider diverse viewpoints, including underrepresented voices; guide our policy agenda; and help us mobilize immigrants, refugees and allies across the Commonwealth to effect change.



NEW ARRIVALS ADVOCACY *and* NEW ARRIVALS WORKING GROUP (NAWG)

Massachusetts has always been a destination for immigrants, as it has welcoming policies and a vibrant immigrant population. In 2022, the Commonwealth began to see a large increase in the number of newly arrived immigrants arriving in Massachusetts, primarily Haitians escaping increasing instability in Haiti. With the third largest Haitian community in the nation, Massachusetts is the top

destination for Haitian families who have legally entered the US for protection, following the devastating earthquake and assassination of the Haitian President in August 2021. By fall of 2022, the Commonwealth was seeing at least three times as many Haitian arrivals as they had seen in fall 2021, a number which continued to increase exponentially throughout FY23.

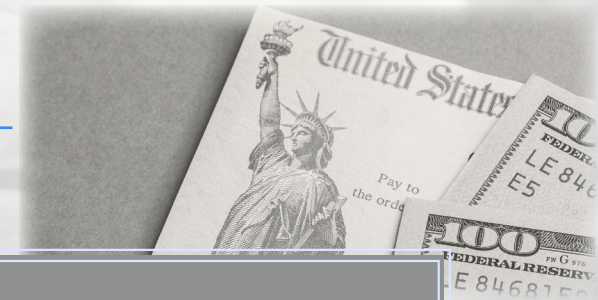
On September 14th, 2022, 48 migrants from Venezuela were flown on private planes to Martha's Vineyard under false premises by Florida Governor DeSantis. All of them had lawfully entered the United States at the border seeking asylum, as is their right under both international and U.S. law. MIRA assisted with the response to this political stunt, and held both a legislative and a public briefing to connect the event to the larger moment.

One major difference between these populations of new arrivals and previous groups is that these new arrivals typically did not have existing connections within the state, and therefore needed more assistance in setting up their lives here in Massachusetts. MIRA responded to this particular moment in a few ways.

MIRA had already established a working group in the fall of 2021 to better coordinate amongst organizations responding to the Afghan evacuation. In the summer of 2022, this group expanded to include organizations and individuals working with all newly arrived immigrants. This group continues to meet every other week, and has an active listeners, where individuals are encouraged to problem solve, share resources, and coordinate work. Over the course of FY23, the new arrivals working group grew from approximately 40 emails on the listserv to approximately 100 emails spanning sectors such as advocacy, housing, healthcare, education, shelter providers, and more. This group collaborated on letters to both Governor Charlie Baker and Governor Maura Healey's administrations urging them to take this issue seriously and better coordinate the State's response

with community based organizations. Members of the new arrivals working group also met with members of the Healey administration with a similar message.

MIRA advocated with both the Healey and Baker administrations directly, sending letters with requests and recommendations informed by conversations with our members to both administrations and meeting with the Healey administration on several occasions. The state policy team also met with House and Senate Ways and Means staff, urging them to include funding for community based organizations serving new arrivals in their supplemental and general operating budgets. This ultimately resulted in a total of \$50 million allocated during FY23 for the response to new arrivals in Massachusetts.



PRE-FY23:

- » Money for IFSI in budgets.
- » Establishment of NAWG.
- » Influx of new arrivals begins.

TIMELINE



EARLY FALL 2022

- » 48 newly arrived immigrants are sent by plane to Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts by Florida's Gov. Ron DeSantis.
- » Legislative and public briefing bringing a larger perspective to the Martha's vineyard moment.
- » Letter to Baker Administration.

LATE FALL 2022:

- » \$20 million put in budget to support new arrivals, to be administered by ORI.
- » Kate Froehlich hired as MIRA's New Arrivals Coordinator.

SPRING 2023:

- » Additional \$8 million in support + general budgets - met with ways and means staff.
- » Continued requests for coordination.
- » MIRA awarded IAS grant in Spring of 2023.

WINTER 2023:

- » Letters sent to Governor Healey administration from MIRA expressing recommendations & hope for coordination.
- » Met with Healey administration to express recommendations, severity of situation & the coordination needed to support new arrivals.
- » IAS RFP released, MIRA applies.



Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey | Photo Source: Boston Globe

Migrants on Martha's Vineyard board buses | Photo Source: CNN News

FY2023

CITIZENSHIP *department*



This year, MIRA's Citizenship Program was awarded a Citizenship & Integration grant from the US Citizenship & Immigration Services. The grant provides additional funding for two years, and allowed us to expand our team by hiring Ananie Boyer - a Haitian-American naturalized citizen - as a Citizenship Program Associate. Ananie brought valuable cultural and language skills to our team. The award also enabled us to formalize our longstanding partnership with St Mark Community Education Program, which provides English and citizenship preparation classes throughout greater Boston.

In FY2023, our Citizenship Program submitted 327 citizenship application (an increase of over 100 from the prior year). Citizenship applicants came from 53 countries throughout the world. During this same time, 356 of our clients took the oath and became naturalized US citizens.

We also assisted 36 DACA holders in renewing their DACA and employment authorization, and provided financial assistance to 10 applicants.

Finally, we launched the New American Changemakers to uplift the voices of newly naturalized U.S. citizens and create more opportunities for civic engagement and participation in MIRA's advocacy work. Participants attended a series of four workshops on topics related to understanding our local, state, and federal government structures, learning about MIRA's key policy initiatives, and gaining skills to successfully advocate with policymakers. We held two cohorts, one in the Fall 2022 and the second in the Spring 2023, graduating 25 Changemakers hailing from 13 countries of origin.

"I wish to take this moment to convey my most deepest gratitude to MIRA Coalition team lead by Attorney Jessica. I had no idea of how to go about the N400, the waiver of application fees and the 100 questions. Thank you so much for your professional guidance I will not have done it without your help, I will live to remember and be ever thankful to you.

Thank you very much Zumm for your assistance in filling up the application form at your office that first day. It was greatly appreciated. Many thanks to Diane and Andria too for reaching out to me whenever I have a question about the application and during my time of change of address and notification of my interview date. All this prepared me very well for the interview. May the lord be gracious to you all for the noble work that you do for the needy. I will definitely not hesitate to refer anyone who will be in need of such service to MIRA Coalition.

~ Jane Githagui | FY23 MIRA Client

356 NATURALIZED CITIZENS

over
2000
NATURALIZED
CITIZENS
since 2014

327 CITIZENSHIP APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED

by people from
53 countries
around the world

36 DACA RENEWALS

and employment
authorization in FY23

25 NEW AMERICAN CHANGEMAKERS GRADUATES

hailing from 13 countries of origin.



"Muchas gracias! De nuestra parte lo hicieron fantásticamente bien!!! Ustedes son los mejores. Estamos muy felices y orgullosos de haberlos encontrado. De hecho, una amiga está tratando de comunicarse con ustedes para ella poder empezar su proceso migratorio.

También nos gustaría de alguna manera devolverle el favor que nos hicieron siendo voluntarias! Me fue muy bien organizado los papeles... He sido secretaria, me manejo muy bien con servicios al cliente y ya he sido voluntaria en este maravilloso país! Aún no manejo bien con el inglés, pero estoy estudiando. Y nada, gracias por todo! Siempre estarán en mi corazón!!! Muchas gracias.

~ Argentina | FY23 MIRA Client

NEW AMERICANS INTEGRATION PROGRAM (NAIP)



The New Americans Integration Program (NAIP) at the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Coalition (MIRA) recruits and trains AmeriCorps members to deliver English as a Second Language (ESOL) instruction, job readiness training, and citizenship services at various community-based organizations throughout Massachusetts.

Each year, from September to August, up to 35 NAIP members undergo comprehensive training and gain valuable experience, evolving into proficient and passionate service providers, educators, and leaders during their eleven-month full-time service at their designated host sites.

To ensure AmeriCorps members can effectively fulfill their roles, NAIP is dedicated to offering the necessary support and training. Throughout the placement year, members engage in a range of activities designed to impart essential knowledge and skills for working with economically disadvantaged immigrant and refugee communities. MIRA aims for AmeriCorps to have a rewarding experience that inspires them to continue making a positive impact on the immigrant and refugee community through their future careers.

“The role of NAIP members—in reaching out to clients, assisting them with applications, gathering missing information and documents, and providing resources for English and civics classes, legal assistance, and benefits—is crucial in helping us serve as many individuals as possible.”

~ Jessica Chicco
MIRA's Director of Training

In the FY23 program year, 13 NAIP members served at seven community-based organizations, including:

- Best Corp Hospitality Training
- Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center
- Boston International Newcomers Academy
- MIRA Coalition's Citizenship Program
- Project Citizenship
- St. Mark Community Education Program
- The Right to Immigration Institute (TRII)

These members provided job readiness training, ESOL instruction, and citizenship services to 1,895 individuals.



“I have always wanted to work at a non-profit, and joining the NAIP AmeriCorps Program let me fulfill that wish. I love working with my students and supporting them in their journey in a new country. An unexpected benefit is seeing the behind the scenes operations of the organization. I handle intake, recruitment, and conduct assessments for new students, and I enjoy seeing the other side of programs like BEST Hospitality Training.”

~ Hayley Potter
2022 - 2023 NAIP Member



NEW HAMPSHIRE ALLIANCE OF IMMIGRANTS and REFUGEES (NHAIR)



NEW HAMPSHIRE
CONCORD



New Hampshire activists honored International Workers' Day (also known as May Day) by raising up the voices and concerns of NH workers in front of the State House.



Concord Multicultural Festival in New Hampshire | 2022



David Holt
Welcoming New Hampshire Manager

NHAIR, the branch of MIRA that operates in New Hampshire, was established in 2007 following a gathering of immigrant leaders to address the needs of the state's growing immigrant and refugee community. Since its inception, NHAIR has successfully fought against anti-immigrant legislation, strengthened community capacity, and advocated for policies that safeguard the civil and human rights of all New Hampshire residents. The organization works to build power and support leadership in immigrant communities, particularly those with low-incomes, collaborates with labor and faith-based allies, offers training on immigration policy and rights, and leads campaigns to protect immigrants and refugees. NHAIR plays a leading role in the legislative coalition that works on advocacy and policy in New Hampshire, and is an active member of multiple advocacy groups including the Immigrant Support Network, the Immigrant Rights Network, the New Hampshire MLK JR coalition and others.

Welcoming New Hampshire is the core program at NHAIR, and focuses on building relationships and networking opportunities among all the New Hampshire organizations that provide services for, work with, advocate for, are allied with or support

Immigrants in New Hampshire. This includes state and local agencies, with a special focus on immigrants themselves. The program promotes the prosperity of immigrant and refugee communities by connecting these communities with opportunities and creating an atmosphere of inclusiveness.

Director Eva Castillo has been involved with NHAIR for more than 20 years, leading the charge in advocating, lobbying, and collaborating with state and municipal leaders on behalf of all immigrants and refugees. This year she provided cultural sensitivity training to hundreds of law enforcement officers across the state. She was joined in April 2023 by Welcoming New Hampshire Table Manager David Holt. David had an epiphany soon after joining NHAIR that the immigrant community is inter-sectional with every marginalized group that people are organizing around. Immigrants include folks who are low income, elderly, disabled, LGBTQ+, workers, women – the list goes on and on. So he began working to expand the program to include many organizations working with other marginalized groups in New Hampshire including various social justice organizations, refugee-serving organizations, government entities and ethnic organizations.

VISIT NHAIR'S WEBSITE
www.welcomingnh.org

FY23

Highlights:

- » David Holt joined NHAIR as Welcoming NH Table Manager
- » Organized and facilitated a listening session for the immigrant community for planning NH's digital equity plan to implement the Federal Digital Equity Act which could inject up to \$5 million in NH over the next 4 years.
- » Organized and facilitated six Welcoming New Hampshire Table meetings, with guest speakers including speakers from the Department of Health and Human Services.
- » Organized an International Workers day event on May Day
- » Supported, tabled and assisted with local multicultural and LGBTQ+ Pride festivals across the state.

STAFF FEATURE

Catherine Ramirez Mejia

Catherine Ramirez Mejia (she/her/ella) became part of the MIRA team in October 2022 as the Access and Resource Specialist. In this role, Catherine is instrumental in enhancing the organization's expertise on immigrant access to various systems. She leads training sessions, designs resources and tools for diverse audiences, and collaborates closely with the Communications Team and Digital Organizer. Additionally, Catherine provides crucial support and guidance to the Policy Team on state and federal legislative matters related to immigrant access to systems and services.

Before joining MIRA, Catherine was a Program Coordinator and Operations Manager with Connecticut Court Appointed Special Advocates. She holds a Master of Public Policy from Brandeis University's Heller School for Social Policy and Management, with a focus on children, youth, and family policy, as well as immigration policy. Her professional background also includes serving as a data and research AmeriCorps VISTA member with the City of Hartford, Connecticut, where she supported initiatives between state and federal government.



HOW DID YOU BEGIN WORKING FOR THE MIRA COALITION?

I began interning for MIRA Coalition in the summer of 2020, while I was studying public policy as a graduate student. I later began my journey working at MIRA Coalition as the Access and Resource Specialist in fall of 2022.

PLEASE SHARE WITH US YOUR IMMIGRANT STORY.

My immigrant story began when I was two years old which was when my family and I immigrated to the United States from Mexico. I have since traveled from coast to coast in both countries and I feel as though both countries are my home.

WHAT LED YOU ON THE PATH TO ADVOCATE FOR IMMIGRANT RIGHTS?

While in high school, I realized I was ineligible for federal financial aid due to my immigration status. I did not qualify for the same opportunities available to my peers. It was then that I began learning about the immigration policies that directly impacted my family, so that I could one day advocate for change.

WHAT INSPIRES YOU TO CONTINUE THIS WORK EACH DAY?

I am inspired by my late grandmother. I witnessed how my grandmother did not have access to affordable preventative health care and medical services and how she struggled to be understood by medical professionals in her native language.

WHAT ARE SOME HIGHLIGHTS FOR YOU WORKING ON THE TRAINING TEAM?

As the Access and Resource Specialist, I develop and present trainings to community members and service providers around various immigrant-related topics. A highlight of my role is being able to present at conferences and meet immigrants and allies all across Massachusetts.

WITH ALL THE ANTI-IMMIGRANT RHETORIC WE HEAR IN THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA, WHAT MAKES YOU PROUD TO BE AN IMMIGRANT?

I feel proud to be an immigrant knowing that immigrants contribute every day to the U.S. economy, to advances in science, technology, and medicine, and to art, food, and culture.

WHAT ARE SOME WORDS OF WISDOM YOU CAN SHARE WITH OUR GROWING IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES?

I have learned that there is strength and power in sharing your immigrant story and it can help create connections between you and others.

WHAT'S SOMETHING SURPRISING THAT NOT MANY PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT YOU?

That I am left-handed. I forget that only an estimated 1 in 10 people are left-handed because it has been my norm all my life. I have learned to use both hands when bowling, playing mini golf, and using scissors!

“ I feel proud to be an immigrant knowing that immigrants contribute every day to the U.S. economy, to advances in science, technology, and medicine, and to art, food, and culture. ”

~ Catherine Ramirez Mejia
Access and Resource Specialist

STAFF FEATURE

Diane Joly

Diane (Geahnee) Joly (she/her/ela) serves as MIRA's Citizenship Program Manager. Originally from São Paulo, Brazil, Diane worked as a pharmacist before relocating to the U.S. in 2013. In 2018, she joined AmeriCorps and completed a six-month program at the Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers (MAPS), where she later transitioned into a full-time role as an Immigrant Integration Case Worker and Senior Center Coordinator. After completing MIRA's 40-hour immigration law training, she became a DOJ Accredited Representative in 2019. Diane has been dedicated to helping permanent residents become U.S. citizens for over three years, a passion that complements her love for tennis and sushi.



HOW DID YOU BEGIN WORKING FOR THE MIRA COALITION?

I got involved with MIRA for the first time back in 2018 when I joined the NAIP program. As a NAIP member I was always in contact with MIRA staff, and got to learn more about the organization. After I completed the NAIP program, I was hired by my host site to provide citizenship services to green card holders, and MIRA was my go to organization whenever I had questions about citizenship and other immigration related issues. When the position opened up with the Citizenship team I jumped right in to apply as the position was exactly what I was looking for. I then joined MIRA as the Citizenship Program Manager in 2021.

PLEASE SHARE WITH US YOUR IMMIGRANT STORY.

I came to the US in 2013 as an Au Pair with a visa to stay for 2 years. I wanted to primarily learn English and have the experience of living abroad. In my first year in the US I met my soon to be husband. When the time came for me to go back home my husband proposed to me and we decided to get married. I applied to change my status, and in 2019 I became a naturalized citizen.

WHAT LED YOU ON THE PATH TO ADVOCATE FOR IMMIGRANT RIGHTS?

After I started working with immigrants and refugees during my time as an AmeriCorps member, and hearing so many stories and the struggles that many immigrants and refugees face, I felt it was my responsibility as an immigrant myself to advocate for those who cannot advocate for themselves, whether it's because of the language barrier, lack of education, or because they just don't know their rights, I wanted them to feel welcome and that they are being represented by someone who truly cares in hope that it will lessen their burden.

WHAT INSPIRES YOU TO CONTINUE THIS WORK EACH DAY?

A few things inspire me. I love seeing a smile on someone's face every time I am able to help them and to see how grateful and thankful they are, but mostly I love seeing the chain reaction when someone gets help and wants to pay back by helping someone else.

WHAT ARE SOME HIGHLIGHTS FOR YOU WORKING ON THE CITIZENSHIP TEAM?

One of the highlights of my work on the Citizenship team is the quality of work that we provide to citizenship applicants. Our legal team is pretty amazing. Another is how many applications we are able to submit every year (more than 400) with such a small team. We also have very dedicated and wonderful interns and AmeriCorps members that help us provide the services that our clients need.

WITH ALL THE ANTI-IMMIGRANT RHETORIC WE HEAR IN THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA, WHAT MAKES YOU PROUD TO BE AN IMMIGRANT?

I am proud to be an immigrant because it shows me that I am resilient and that I am not afraid of the unknown. I left my home country and my comfort zone to build a new life in another nation. Among the strengths that I carry with me, I also bring diversity, language capacity, and the courage to accept different cultures and backgrounds.

WHAT ARE SOME WORDS OF WISDOM YOU CAN SHARE WITH OUR GROWING

IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES? The journey might be bitter, sometimes almost unbearable, but you are not alone. Look for help, get to know your neighbors and your community. Do your best to learn the culture and the language, and hopefully that will make the process a little easier.

WHAT'S SOMETHING SURPRISING MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU?

Something surprising (I think) that not many people know about me is that I roast my own coffee. I got into coffee when I met my husband and drank his freshly roasted coffee for the first time. The flavor was so amazing that it got me hooked. Ironically I come from the top producing country of coffee in the world but I did not like coffee when I was living in Brazil. Once I started roasting my own coffee, I started to experience coffees from different countries with different flavor profiles, and every time I open a new bag of green beans it's a new experience. If you are curious about the process here it is: I buy bags of green beans online where I can read the different flavor profiles and choose the ones that most interest me. Some of my favorite countries are Costa Rica, Colombia, Guatemala and Ethiopia. Then I use a whirley pop popcorn maker to roast the beans, it's like making popcorn but at the end you can get a beautifully roasted coffee. The smell in my house when I am roasting the coffee is amazing. You can also use a coffee roaster machine, but that's less interesting and you have less control. Once the beans are roasted I let them cool down and rest, then I brew freshly roasted coffee every day. I usually roast a batch that lasts for a week.

“ I am proud to be an immigrant because it shows me that I am resilient and that I am not afraid of the unknown. ”

~ Diane Joly
Citizenship Director

FY2023

COMMUNICATIONS

and MEDIA

This year, MIRA has seen continued growth across our social media platforms, with [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#) emerging as our strongest channels. We've experienced better engagement overall, reflecting our community's increasing connection with our mission. To build on this momentum, we are actively developing creative communication strategies informed by analytics.

Additionally, we are expanding our capacity to produce video and podcast content, aiming to reach and resonate with an even broader audience. Both of these initiatives should serve to strengthen our ability to share important information, across social media platforms as well as via our database of email contacts.



13.2K

Facebook Followers
Visits: 5.5k | Reach: 90.8k



6.4K

Twitter/X Followers
Average profile visits per month: 3068
Average impressions per month: 9647



5.2K

LinkedIn Followers
Page Views: 3621 | Unique visits: 1532



3.6K

Instagram Followers
Visits: 2.9k | Reach: 8.8k



11K

Mailchimp Subscribers

FY2023

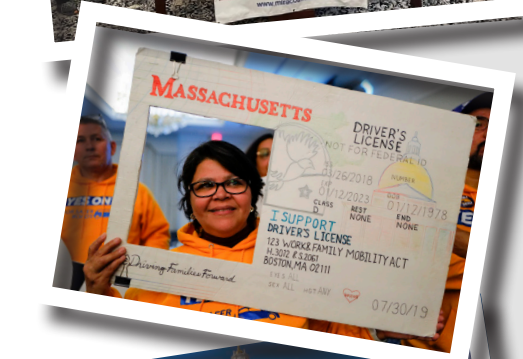
MEDIA PRESENCE

In FY23, MIRA's media presence has been notably strong, with 82 mentions. This consistent visibility positions MIRA as a trusted expert on immigration issues and policy, strengthening our advocacy efforts. Our growing media presence provides a powerful platform to influence public discourse and advance our mission, a platform we continue to expand as a means of centering and amplifying immigrant voices.



JULY 2022

Permanent Licensure for Internationally-Trained Medical Professionals
[Listen Here](#)



NOV. 2023

'This is going to change my life': Undocumented immigrants celebrate approval of Question 4
[Read Here](#)



FEB. 2023

Immigrants Day: Hundreds gather at Boston State House to advocate for in-state tuition, language access and inclusion
[Read Here](#)



MAR. 2023

How these workers help displaced Ukrainians feel at home in Massachusetts
[Listen Here](#)

IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

“ Source Hub is a member of the MIRA Coalition because MIRA does a wonderful job! MIRA is the foundation of all services that we do for immigrants. We need MIRA working on the legislative piece – otherwise, agencies such as ours couldn’t do what we do. Being involved with MIRA keeps us updated about all that is going on, and provides us with learning opportunities. I’m grateful for their ongoing support. MIRA makes it all possible! ”

~ **Fernanda Silveira**

Executive Director | Source Hub - Fall River, MA



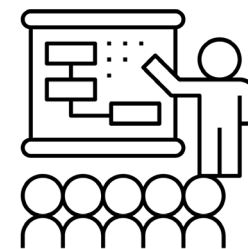
WELCOMING IMMIGRANTS TO U.S. CITIZENSHIP

Over 2000 naturalized citizens since 2014!



TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS:

Educating for empowerment & action



We provided education to more than 1500 individuals in over 50 trainings and community workshops. We had 80 participants in our Winter and Summer Training Series, and more than 90 individuals who completed an intensive 40-hour immigration law training.

“I applied for citizenship because it’s what my deceased father wanted for me. The MIRA team was great! The whole process could have been a daunting experience, but it was made stress-free. Thank You!”

~Nkechima Andalcio
2022 Changemaker Graduate



MEMBERSHIP DATA

Member organizations provide a wide range of services to the immigrant population as well as many other groups. MIRA’s goal is to provide support, training, and resources that will enable our partner organizations to accomplish their objectives regardless of, and often despite, scarcity of capacity or funds.

140+

Coalition member organizations across New England.



EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE & LEARNING

1,895 individuals served by NAIP/ Americorps members

13 NAIP/ Americorps members



“Working at MIRA has been so exciting and rewarding! The MIRA staff, our clients, and our partners are just incredible. I’m applying to law school and thinking of becoming an immigration attorney. This experience has been very validating of my career direction.”

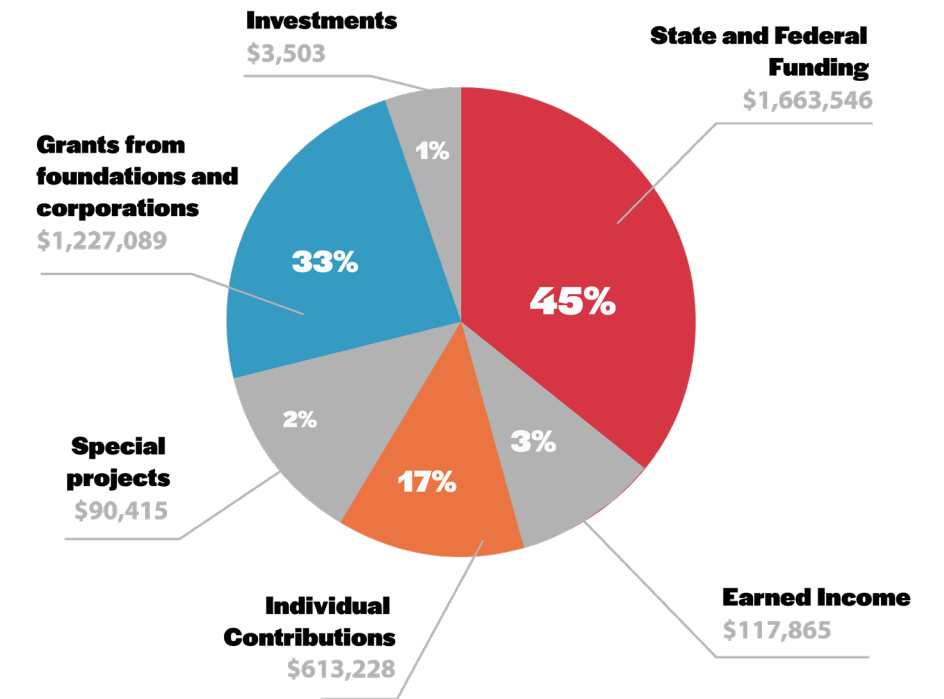
~ Grant Olick-Sutphen | AmeriCorps NAIP Service Member

2023 REVENUE AND EXPENSES

In Fiscal year 2023, MIRA's expenses are split between Programming (53%), Management (41%) and Fundraising (6%). In addition to our advocacy, organizing, education, and direct citizenship services, the State of MA engaged us in a new Immigrant Assistance Services effort. Building out the IAS program significantly expands our direct service capacity as well as engagement with a myriad of community organizations in the year to come.

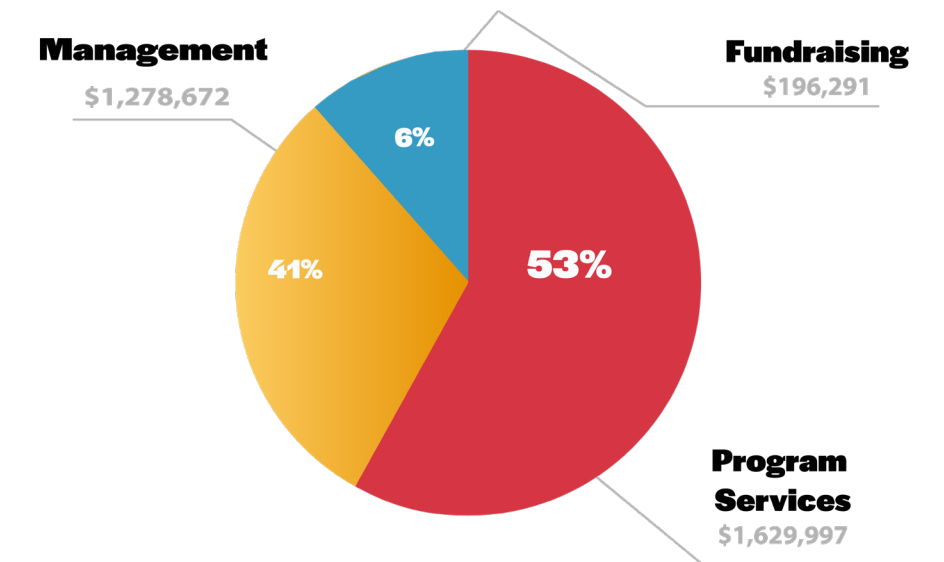
Salaries comprise approximately 70% of our expenses each year. Aside from professional services engaged and supplies needed to deliver programming, the remaining expenses include rent, phone, tech services, and other expenses to 'keep the lights on'. Fundraising expenses reflect the cost of mounting our annual "Give Liberty A Hand" event, and the maintenance of a donor database and research tools to raise funds.

Government contracts became the largest source of revenue this year at 44%. This is followed by Foundation and Corporate support at 33% and from individual contributions at 17%. Earned income at 3% represents community contributions for our services: AmeriCorps member services MIRA provides to partner agencies, workshops and trainings on immigration law we provide to participating organizations and municipalities, fiscal agent fees, and membership support. Special Projects at 2% are linked to fiscal agent activities. The remaining <1% is from bank interests and gains on investments.



Total Revenue: \$3,745,647

- » State and federal funding: \$1,663,54
- » Grants from foundations and corporations: \$1,227,089
- » Individual Contributions: \$613,228
- » Earned income: \$117,865
- » Special projects: \$90,415
- » Investments: \$3,503



Total Expenses: \$3,104,960

- » Management: \$1,278,672
- » Fundraising: \$196,291
- » Program services: \$1,629,997




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Welcoming New Hampshire Manager




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