Center for New Americans
A Community-Based Education and Resource Center for Immigrants and Refugees in Western Massachusetts

Welcoming & Serving Immigrants
Since 1992

2021 ANNUAL REPORT
OUR MISSION

Center for New Americans (CNA) is a community-based, non-profit adult education center that provides the underserved immigrant, refugee and migrant communities of Massachusetts’ Pioneer Valley with education and resources to learn English, become involved community members and obtain tools necessary to maintain economic independence and stability.
These transitions required creativity, flexibility, a commitment to fostering community, and a receptiveness to feedback—from students, colleagues, and volunteers. They also could not have happened without the unwavering guidance of our board of directors, the advocacy of our W. Mass legislative leaders, the collaboration of many community partners, and generous funding from state agencies, private foundations, and loyal individuals.

Much has been written about how the pandemic experience inspired people to reflect on where they had been, where they wanted to go next, and what makes sense for the present. A few staff members left Center for New Americans this past spring. We appreciate their years of service and many contributions. We have been fortunate to welcome new colleagues whose perspectives and experience will help us to continue to evolve.

This report is offered in gratitude to everyone who joined us this year in welcoming and supporting immigrants.

With appreciation,

Laurie Millman
ACCESS, INCLUSION, AND COLLABORATION HAVE ALWAYS BEEN CRITICAL for the success of Center for New Americans (CNA). We are all facing new struggles with little time to adjust. Time itself feels altered in our collective experience. As the pandemic continues to teach us all new lessons and present serious challenges, we continue our work guiding our students and citizenship clients as they navigate new territory and cultures.

Giving our students access to learning and communication opportunities is paramount to their success. Remote models for learning reduce time, childcare, and transportation barriers. CNA offered remote learning opportunities before the pandemic, improved these services, and will continue to offer them in the future. Remote offerings will not replace in-person services and teaching. However, they undeniably provide access to opportunities in ways that address students’ needs.

It is important for Center for New Americans to make every effort to have our staff and board of directors reflect the voices and experiences of our students and citizenship clients. Our current board members have business, hospitality, immigration law, education, and technology backgrounds. Similarly, all but one arrived in the U.S. at varied life stages and from different parts of the world. Inclusion at every level helps us to realize the power of diversity.

Our success is fueled by our staff, volunteers, and community partners. Collaboration is key to our ability to move forward and provide for students and citizenship clients throughout the region. In the following pages, you will see highlights of the efforts of all the people who work together to make positive changes in the lives of others. At CNA, we know that we can only create possibilities and opportunities when we work together.

Sincerely,

J Vaughn
Board Chair
Center for New Americans
CENTER FOR NEW AMERICANS’ BOARD OF DIRECTORS PROVIDED STEADY GUIDANCE throughout the second year of the pandemic, meeting regularly, assessing challenges and risks, and supporting new initiatives. Center for New Americans’ board includes veteran members, immigrants, former clients, and a wealth of skills and expertise.

From left to right: J Vaughn Chair, Anne-Marie Demetz, Roger Webb Treasurer, Antonio Pagán

From left to right: Aleksandra Peryeva, Shardool Parmar, Victoria Maillo de Aguilera
WELCOMING & SERVING IMMIGRANTS IN 2021
Providing access during the second year of a global pandemic

“Center for New Americans has not stopped its efforts towards our learning despite the pandemic. CNA’s Board of Directors and teachers help us with much dedication and personal effort. Furthermore, they have helped us with accessing class materials to be able to study.”

FIDEL & LUISA

Even as the global pandemic exposed and exacerbated inequities—in digital access, healthcare, the workplace—Center for New Americans focused on enhancing access. We embarked on a multi-year, staff-wide Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiative. Our conversations reminded us that fostering access is at the essence of our mission. Our W. Mass political leaders applied a similar lens to their legislative agenda. Since many immigrants were not eligible for the government’s stimulus checks, they allocated emergency relief funds which we were fortunate to receive and distribute through payment of people’s rent, utilities, and heating bills.

Classes in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Teaching writing, practicing dialogues in pairs, exploring local colleges, and many other class activities require more preparation for classes online than for classes in our three centers. Meeting with an advisor to prepare a job application, welcoming legislators and writing class poems are all less immediate online.

How did we get through this year? Teachers shared each new discovery. Volunteer classroom assistants helped with break out rooms so students could work in small groups. Local foundations made generous awards; local businesses, like YES Computers, bent over backwards to support our program. Our technology team members traveled across 3 W. Mass counties to deliver tablets and hotspots to students and demonstrate how to use them. As students’ schedules evolved, Center for New Americans also evolved, adding evening classes, and then adding in-person classes once it was possible to return to our buildings.

Thank you for everything and for supporting and believing in all the students” ANA SOFIA
Citizenship and Immigration Legal

“Today was a big day for me, a dream came true, after a long, stressful, and painful process it finally happened! I had my citizenship interview today and I passed it! I want to thank God, all the beautiful angels in heaven watching over me, my family, my friends, and Center for New Americans!”

GLENYS, FORMER STUDENT, CITIZENSHIP CLIENT

The aftermath of the 2020 presidential election was dramatic. One positive outcome was the easing of some barriers. The revised rule of public charge, which led many immigrants to refrain from using Mass Health, was abandoned, as was the longer citizenship test.

The more welcoming tone, which coincided with a cautious re-opening of some public spaces, resulted in a flood of requests for assistance with legal permanent residence, employment authorization, and petitions to reunite families. We developed and implemented more robust systems. One of the most effective was the scheduling of monthly citizenship clinics staffed by volunteers. We have been so touched by the willingness of so many volunteers to mask up, venture into our center, and spend a couple of hours with our citizenship applicants helping them to complete their applications.

Nursing Assistant Training

We were happy to teach this spring’s nursing assistant course in person. Many of our students trained as nurses in their home countries. Still, as English language learners who must read a complex text in a language that is not their own, they find the class challenging.

It took many hands to make this course successful. Our partnership with Smith Vocational & Agricultural High School and adult education director, Lorena Turner, gave us access to a state-of-the-art health technology suite. Co-teachers Holly Quigley, RN Instructor, and Marise Lyra, ESOL instructor, collaborated to deliver a rigorous and supportive training. RN volunteers joined them on several Saturdays to make sure all students received individual guidance and coaching through the clinical practice. We were happy to see some of our graduates hired by Cooley Dickinson Healthcare.
Center for New Americans is a “community-based” organization: we serve our W. Mass community of immigrants, we extend our reach and capacity through our W. Mass. community of volunteers, and we work together to create a community of welcome, support, and safety.

Pandemic restrictions made volunteering more challenging, but did not deter most of our loyal volunteers. Volunteer tutor and citizenship coaches met with students and clients on zoom, joined online classes as classroom assistants and anchored breakout rooms, picked up food at Survival Centers and delivered it to students, helped students learn to drive. Volunteers also came into our building, masked, to support our monthly citizenship clinics, meeting with applicants to help them complete citizenship applications.

Events

Our seasons are punctuated by events which have become annual traditions. The 30 Poems in November! Reading & Celebration, Immigrant Voices: A Celebration of Arts, the July naturalization ceremony, and our end-of-semester gatherings spotlight our students’ and clients’ successes and contributions, highlight our services, and offer welcome opportunities to celebrate as a community. Of course all of these events had to be adapted to pandemic realities this past year.

More than 60 writers shared their poems at our virtual Reading in December. Sarah Sullivan, 30 Poems Event Chair and the evening’s host, helped us to recognize and acknowledge the tremendous display of literary talent.

Many students participated enthusiastically in our annual performance, Immigrant Voices. Hosted by Biani Salas and Tabitha Muriithi, who served as the evening’s MCs from the stage of the Shea Theater, the event featured videos created by students who enthusiastically showcased their country’s artistic traditions, often taking advantage of technology to include family and friends from their home countries.

Happily, U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services reinstated oath ceremonies in June, just in time for our 13th annual July naturalization ceremony on the grounds of the Northampton Courthouse. Although it poured, Judge Katherine Robertson, Northampton Mayor David Narkewicz, our colleagues, board members, volunteers, and political leaders welcomed the new U.S. citizens in yet another memorable event.
Center for New Americans is grateful for the steadfast support of public and private funders who supported our efforts to engage students in classes, connect them to community resources, continue our immigration legal work, and provide emergency relief aid to those who were not supported by government funds. We gratefully acknowledge our W. Massachusetts legislative delegation for advocating for funding on behalf of W. Massachusetts residents.

**ORGANIZATIONS**

$100,000+
Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts
Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
Massachusetts Office for Refugees & Immigrants

$10,000–$99,999
Amherst Community Development Block Grant
Northampton Community Development Block Grant
The Beveridge Family Foundation
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Center for New Americans works in close partnership with public schools, community health centers, public libraries, survival centers, career centers, resettlement agencies, faith-based organizations, local governments, and many other organizations. Our experience reinforces the adage that it really does “take a village” to welcome and integrate newcomers into a new community.

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2021 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

CENTER FOR NEW AMERICANS MANAGED TO MAINTAIN, ADAPT, AND EVEN EXPAND our English classes and immigration legal support during the second year of a global pandemic thanks to the generosity of our community. From government agencies to private foundations to neighbors and friends, our community recognized the tremendous need and responded with an outpouring of support. As a result, we were able to retain staff, lend technology, distribute emergency relief to mitigate the challenges of the pandemic for immigrants, migrants, and refugees in W. Mass.

### FY21 Funding Sources

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<th>Source Type</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<td>Contributions</td>
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<td>Misc. Income</td>
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<td>Emergency Funds</td>
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<td>Citizenship &amp; Immigration Services</td>
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<td>General &amp; Administrative Services</td>
<td>133,700</td>
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<td>Development Services</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>$983,472</td>
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Hilary Salik
Eri Salvador
Cynthia Samuels
Emily Samuels
Michele Jasmin Sanders
Deanna Scarfe
Stan Schapiro
Rhonda Schienle
Deborah Schifer
Jane Schneeloch
Paul Schroeder
Olivia Sears
Michele Sedor
Irv & Linda Seidman
Barbara Seneman
Joni Sensel
Lara Sergienko
Patricia Serrentino
Sudha Setty
Melissa Shaak
Laura Shakan
Garth Shaneyfelt
Jean Shappee
Mary Ellen Shaughan
Joanne Shea
Jacqueline Sheehan
Julia Sheetz-Willard
Carol Shelton
Brandy Sieber
Ben Sigelman
Stephanie Silverman
Judy Simpkin
Kellie Sims
Samuel Sinek
Bonnie Singer
Ted Sink
Runa Skar
Karen Skolfeld
Janet Slabich
Lindsay Slabich
Deborah Smith
Anna Smith
Carol Smith
Irena Smoluchowski
Lisa Smulyan
Cindy Snow
Violet Snow
Caroline Soter
Keegan Soule
Judith Souweine
Penelope Sperance
Michiko Spector
Regine Spector
Joel Spira
Amy Springer
S Darlene Spurgeon
Vati Sreiberg
Phyllis St. George
Ilene Stahl
Mary Stanton
Sheena Stapleton
Zevey Steinitz
Stephanie Shafran
Linda Stevenson
Alya Stoffer-Koloszyc
Robin Stolk
Amber Stoner
Sheryl Stoodley
Dorothy Storrow
Marjorie Stout
Brienne Sullivan
Kathryn Sullivan
Robert G. Sullivan
Cynthia Suopis
Felice Swados
Lanette Sweeney
Renee Sweeney
Robert Sweeney
Joan Swerdlow-Brandt
Thomas Syan
Elisabeth Tals
Jay Taneja
Jacomo Tarry
Ann Taurick
Harriet Teichert
Adrienne Terrizzi
Nina Thayer
Jennifer Theiss
Peg Thibbitts
Gail Thomas
Molly Thomas
Barbara Thompson
Fungai Tichawangana
Rebecca Tippens
Martha Tirk
Marlynn Tomb
Vera Tsoni
Richard Tracey
Russ Traunstein
Helena Trey
Jessie Tropp
Cynthia Turnerbull
Susan Turner
Sue Twiggs
Patricia J. Tyrer
Barbara Upton
Anne Urban
Jane Urban
Tony Vacca
Jovonna Van Pelt
Peter Van Pelt
Marilyn & Stan VanderWeide
James Vaughn
Richard Vaughn
Ruth Van Goeler
Laurie Wagner
Patrick & Patty Wagner
Linda Wallack
Nicole Walsh
Abigail Warren
Thomas Wartenberg
Lisa Weckerle
Beverly Weeks
Steven Weinstein
Johanna & Josh Weinstein
Vivien Weiss
Ann Wetherbee
Sally Whaling
Janice Wheeler
Jan Whittaker
Debbie White
Cassandra White
Nightwing Whitehead
Joannah Whitney
Mary Whitney
Maryanna & Robert Whittmore
Anne Wiley
Pamela Wilkinson
Horace Williamson
Robert Willford
Sarah Wing
Peggy Winnett
Carol Winters
Janet Wirth-Cauchon
Mary Witt
Ellen Wittlinger
Melissa Wlostoski
Sophia Bonnie Wodin
Elizabeth Wolf
Virginia Euwer Wolff
Teresa Wong
Heidi Woodals
Andrea Wright
Mary Wyse
Gerald Yelle
Anne Yeomans
Jane Yolen
Marci Yoss
Reed Young
Dana Young
Bettie Zakon-Anderson
Susan Zarchin
Susie Zeiger
Bob Zimmermann
Mark Zimmerman
Susan Zimmerman
Jennifer Zolot
30 Poems in November!

We are producing this annual report in the spring of 2022, after a groundbreaking 30 Poems in November! in the fall of 2021. Nevertheless, since this is our 2021 Annual Report, this report acknowledges events from the Fall of 2020, when the entire event was conducted online. Our event chair, Sarah Sullivan, was undeterred by the pandemic challenges. She helped to engage approximately 100 writers, sending a variety of daily poetry prompts, organizing online workshops, and cajoling writers to write and raise in equal measures. Aidín Martinez signed on as Student Spokesperson. In that capacity, she visited English classes and shared her experiences writing poetry in her English class, and she attended writing workshops to share her experience as a Center for New Americans student. Many writers participated in our online Reading in December and many of their supporters joined as audience members. The following list acknowledges writers for the contributions they generated.

$1,000+

Elsa Phillippi Cline
Patricia Crosby
Mary Ellen Kelly
Patricia Lee Lewis
Paul Redstone
Sarah Rossmassler
Mary Ellen Shaughan
Sarah Sullivan
Virginia Sullivan
Gail Thomas
Kester Warlow-Harry
Joannah Whitney
Jane Yolen

$500–$999

Jean Blakeman
George Cernada
Amy Dryansky
Howie Faerstein
Anita Gellers
Tzivia Gover
Madlynn Haber
Terry S. Johnson
Becky Jones
Phyllis Katz
Valerie Linet
Ellen Miller-Mack
Laurie Millman
Linda Neas
Nerissa Nields
Jayne Pearl
Lindsay Rockwell
Emily Samuels
Deborah Schwartz
Lanette Sweeney
Adin Thayer
Tommy Twilite
Yenna Yi

$100–$499

Doug Anderson
Joan Axelrod-Contrada
Robin Barber
Therese Carr
Linda Castronovo
Martha Cohen
Mary Cowhey
Lori Desrosiers
Amelia Durban
C.D. Finley
D. Dina Friedman
Hillary Gardner
Nora Glass
Rochelle Goldfarb
Jette Goldman
Michael Goldman
Maceo Golossi
Samantha Grossman
Amy Horowitz
Peg Johnson
Tamara Kaplan
Michael MacDonald
Shoshana Marchand
Melissa Miller
Alison Murchie
Katharine Nelson
Lesléa Newman
Rose Oliver
Poemas par la salud y bienestar
Laura Pravitz
Philip B. Price
Jendi Reiter
Carol Rinehart
Brooks Robards
Adrie Rose
Colby Rossmassler
Cassie Platt Sanderell
Jodie Shapiro
Lindsay Slabich
Leah Stanton
Fungai Tchiwangana
Sharon Tracey
M. Underwood
Arianna Valocchi
Isabell VanMerlin
Teresa Wong
Gerald Yelle

$1–$99

Alice Barrett
Julie Cavacco
Carolyn Howard-Johnson
Amy Mitrani
Tzynia Pinchback
Laurie Pollack
Deidre Purcell
Dorothy Riehm
Smith Writers for Equity and Justice
Alexandra Standish
Laura Torracco
Elizabeth Wolf
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