

# COMMON CONCERNS

A Publication of the International Institute of San Francisco

## PLATICA!

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On February 5, two hundred forty-two people showed up for the International Institute's monthly Citizenship Platica at the Fair Oaks Community Center in Redwood City. A Platica is an informational meeting about applying for United States citizenship, and for the past two years these meetings have been held monthly. At first, thirty or forty people would come, but then times



As many as 200 people per session go to work on their application forms.

changed, the new immigration law was passed, welfare reform was passed, and it became clear to the people who get assistance on immigration matters from the staff of our Redwood City Office that becoming a United States citizen was no longer something to put off. Attendance at the sessions continues to grow. With the help of the Peninsula Community Foundation and the S.H. Cowell Foundation, the International Institute will be there to provide expert assistance in this important process.

If you've never been to a Platica, maybe you should drop by. Monica Regan, Citizenship Coordinator, could always use more help. Call her at 415-780-9696. And anyone who has doubts about the seriousness with which immigrants approach this new task would have them dispelled by the scene at the community center on those Wednesday nights. People begin filtering into the large multipurpose room well before the start of the meeting, so they are sure to get a seat at one of the many tables. Each table is staffed by a bilingual volunteer who has been trained to recognize the potential obstacles to a completed application: travel outside of the

country for more than six months, not being able to speak enough English, other things.

It's the English requirement that halts the process of many applications. Before, when there was an eighteen-month backlog at the INS, people would submit their applications anyway, believing they could practice English all the time and be ready when their interview came up. Not any more.

What happens now is a different kind of backlog: the INS moves forward quickly but the FBI is very slow doing the fingerprint clearance. People scheduled for off-site interviews with INS officials right at Fair Oaks Community Center often learn at the last minute the FBI hasn't approved their fingerprint cards.

But that doesn't stop the crowds who know they are eligible for citizenship and want to get the ball rolling. People bring their children and their documents and the money for their photographs and fingerprints and fees. They listen during the



Filling out the N-400 isn't easy.

presentations, make notes from the words on the screen up front, and watch the staff acting out the questions they might be asked by INS officials. After a day's work, people are tired. The children get hungry, and mothers unwrap snacks and give bottles to babies. As time passes, the bigger children go outside, run around, play games in the parking lot. After the presentations, the papers are passed out, people stand in line for fingerprints, for pictures. The Platica takes the whole evening. Sometimes when there is a very large group, it's after ten o'clock when staff and volunteers finish up their work.

By the end of the evening, everyone will know what to do next. Several people will take away with them all the knowledge they need to complete their applications and send them in themselves. For many, the next step is a follow-up meeting at Fair Oaks, where their naturalization papers are reviewed for errors and finalized before being sent to the INS. Others learn where they can practice their English or join a class. For a few, there is a referral to an attorney.

There is always a sense of accomplishment when the last applicant leaves and the group of workers tidies up the room and gets ready to turn out the lights. It's very satisfying to know that a very specific step has been taken, one that is likely to improve the lives of the people who spent the evening with us at the Platica. ■



Group processing relies on the commitment of trained and willing volunteers, supervised by accredited immigration representatives.

# Past, Present, Future

MARGI DUNLAP

It has been a year of defining events for the International Institute and the people we serve. In April, we will leave the home at 2209 Van Ness that has been part of our institutional identity for forty-five years, and move to 657 Mission Street, Suite 500. The new space promises easy access to our clients and increased efficiencies for our program operations and central headquarters. We'll be within walking distance of partner organizations and funders, and closer to the center of community activity.

The passage of sweeping immigration and welfare reform laws by the 104th Congress, and the success of Proposition 209 at the ballot box in California are clear indicators of the continuing negative public mood toward immigrants and poor people. Kathleen M. Sullivan, a prominent immigration lawyer and a member of our board, describes these changes in detail in another part of this report.

These legislative actions signal, in a deep way, the end of a generous era in our country's history. We find this very troubling. At the same time, none of us could do this work unless we had an abiding confidence in the resilience of our compassion as a people. I am encouraged

by the creative tension that resonates between abstract policy and specific practice when I look back at the year that has passed.

I think of a meeting last summer with the Harvard Business School Community Partners. The HBS Community Partners program chooses non-profit organizations seeking assistance with issues and problems that may benefit from the perspective of business, and matches Business School alumnae with organizations for a year of volunteer consultation. The people who volunteered to help us with a public relations strategy were all immigrants, from Finland, India, China, and Australia. I was sitting with this group, listening to them describe studies that defined the life cycle of organizations, learning about potential hazards faced by established organizations: failure to be objective about competition, complacency, lack of interaction with the experimental edges of the market. Unwillingness to take risks. I looked out the window, possibly to reassure myself that the International Institute was not like IBM, and below I saw the early morning downtown crowd. As many as half of the residents of San Francisco are foreign-born, more than half are "minorities," (a local oxymoron) and they were dashing to their jobs in suits and shined shoes. In the room where I sat, I was the only person who had been born in the United States. But I was certainly not the only person who was making it work. In the meeting, people from all over the world were talking in the abstract, and downstairs, on the street, people from all over the world were getting ready to keep accounts, sell products, invent software, make coffee, design buildings, repair roads, paint murals, schedule appointments, hire nurses, develop websites, translate overseas faxes, and go about their day.

During this same period of time, I was working on an organizational history for our national affiliate, Immigration and Refugee Services of America, a partnership of thirty-six immigrant-serving organizations

around the country, born out of the International Institute movement after the First World War, and including partner organizations from Travelers Aid Societies, YMCAs, and others. In the research, I was relishing the individual and particular stories of assistance provided over the years that helped newcomers negotiate the turbulent task of becoming American, learning English, finding a job. I looked at photographs from close to a century of citizenship ceremonies, of the celebrations of music and food and costume that make this community a truly multinational place. I was proud to read of the role we played in defending the rights of non-citizens over the years, and the experience fueled my own commitment to keep on keeping on.

In the archives, the San Francisco Institute's Annie Clo Watson's correspondence didn't speak of transcendent policy; it spoke, over and over again, of specific people who were being treated unfairly by immigration laws that failed to take their specific circumstances into consideration. Chinese women who couldn't naturalize despite having four or five or six American-born children. Italian American fishermen who were deprived of their livelihood by being kept from the waterfront. Japanese Americans who had their property confiscated illegally after Pearl Harbor. Mexican workers whose wives were destitute in Mexico because the labor program did not allow them to accompany their men north. With each letter, she named names and made specific requests. There is a quality of certainty in her voice in these letters, a conviction that

## INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SAN FRANCISCO

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Margi Dunlap, Executive Director.

compassion and equity would prevail in the responses she received.

The International Institute of San Francisco has a proud and accomplished history, and we are also an established organization facing all the challenges identified by the studies shared by the Harvard partners. And during the meeting I saw that we could have a dynamic future, and that it would have to be governed by some very different assumptions from the ones that shaped our first eighty years.

More than any other change, the fact that San Francisco is a truly multiracial and multiethnic community cannot be confused with the fact that it is also a community with a significant proportion of immigrants. Issues of race and issues of migration may have their points of overlap, but they are not the same thing. In San Francisco, there are as many third and fourth generation Asians and Latinos as there are people whose roots are in Europe. And we shouldn't assume that the interests of immigrants and the interests of people of color are always in synch. Proposition 209, for example, was a very tough call for many members of the Asian community, who felt they were being deprived of access to local schools and universities because they were limited to proportional representation when in fact they met entrance requirements in greater numbers than that.

What we must assume is that the challenges facing immigrants, whatever their race, are lived out in a context, this community, that has its own complex and creative tensions arising from differences of opportunity and culture and economic class that we, in Northern California, have a tradition of working to resolve and transcend. And it isn't easy work, at a time

when voters would prefer to believe that we have solved a lot of problems that any of us who have spent time in the Tenderloin lately know we have not solved at all.

Another assumption that worked for us in the past and might not work so well in the future is the belief that immigrants should heartily embrace the practice of representative democracy that has an individualistic identity as its root, and values about public debate and majority power as its branches. We have wanted immigrants to become more like us, so they would fit in. But we should pay special attention. Studies, specifically those done by Alejandro Portes at Johns Hopkins University, show that a family-centered identity, as is found in immigrant communities, instead of an individualistic one, which increasingly dominates US popular culture, produces lower high school drop-out rates and greater success at self-reliance in immigrant young people. Lara Shalov's survey of San Francisco youth, *The Same Boat*, which she did for the Institute this year, showed that the longer immigrant young people have been in this country, the more negative feelings they have about American culture. They see it as self-centered, complacent, lazy, lacking respect for others. We have to question the assumption that the values of rugged individualism that built our society are the best values for our community today. We need to nurture, and spend some time with, the notion that a broader identity, built on family and community and an image of the common good, might also have worth.

I find it interesting that so much of what the conservative Congress is preaching in the abstract (family values, responsibility, a strong work ethic) is in evidence in the immigrant communities that have been singled out and short-changed by new legislation.

Public debate and majority power also come with assumptions that the past year has called into question for immigrants. Proposition 209 prevailed in California, though not in the City of San Francisco itself. The facts of current workplace demographics, of failed schools in poor neighborhoods, of less than equitable representation of Latinos, Asians, and women in decision-making roles in business and government were no match

for the simplicity of the message and the incongruous conviction of the messenger. Who is this majority that approved this proposition? Has there been an election in California in the last twenty years where a true majority of citizens actually voted? We have to assume that we have failed somehow to teach democracy when such a small percentage of the adult population goes to the polls. We have to do better.

At the International Institute, even as we grapple with the irony and incongruity of this new world and its changed operating assumptions, we will continue to make our investment not as much in policy as in practice. Last year, we helped over 12,000 people, and 1,300 of our clients became US citizens. Once an immigrant becomes a citizen, all the rights guaranteed by the constitution are assured. We teach our clients that exercising those rights, especially the right to vote, is a duty that should be taken seriously.

We may not have a perfect country, but it's still the best there is, and with new citizens who believe in work and fairness and family, it will only get better. ■



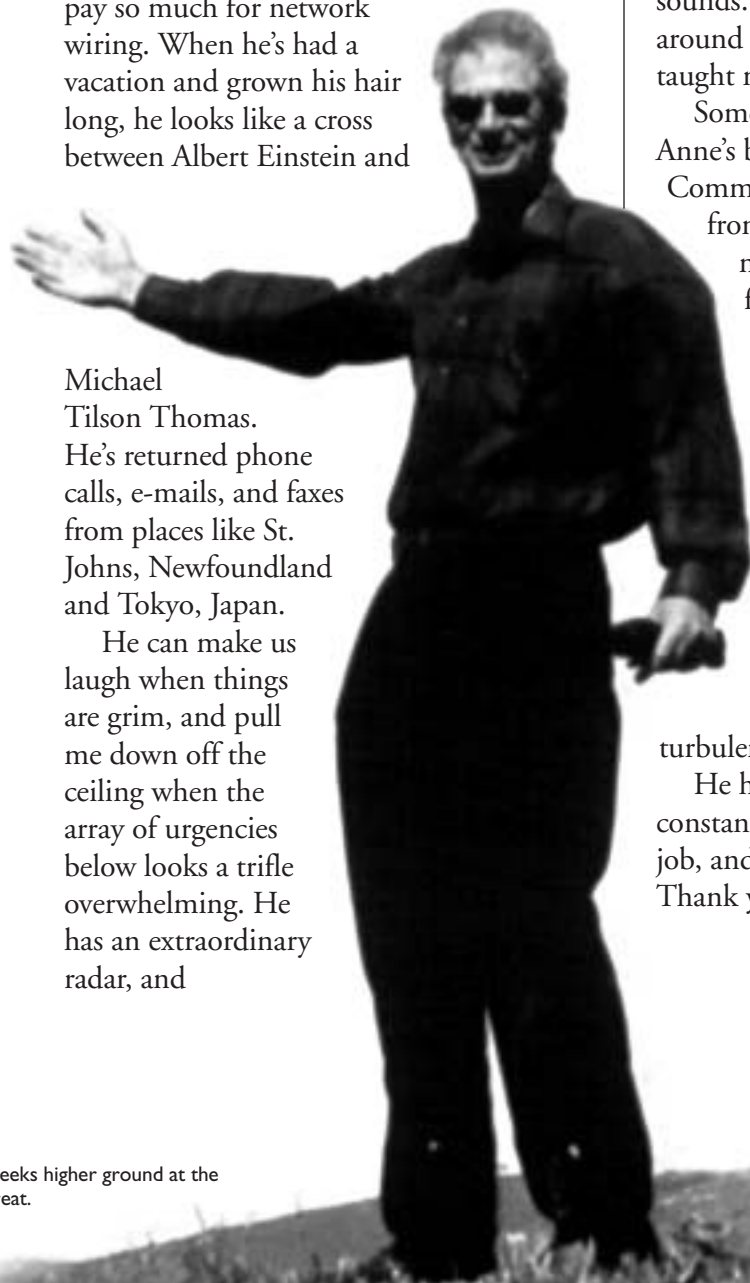
The old homestead of the International Institute of San Francisco at 2209 Van Ness. For those of us who love this old building, we are happy to share that it will be lovingly restored to its former glory by buyer Andrew Meieran.

# The Whitney Legacy

MARGI DUNLAP

**W**ells Whitney has been President of the International Institute's Board of Directors for close to three years. As he steps down in March, in deference to our term limit requirements, I owe him a special thank you. If you have been reading our Annual Reports for the last few years, you've seen his official President's Messages. This time, I want to tell you about a different side of Wells.

Wells is a physicist, but he doesn't require that we address him as Dr. Whitney. He can make new technology into a friendly accomplice, and add long columns of figures in his head without losing track of the bigger picture in which the results of his arithmetic belong. He helped me build a computer from scratch and understand why we shouldn't have to pay so much for network wiring. When he's had a vacation and grown his hair long, he looks like a cross between Albert Einstein and



Michael Tilson Thomas. He's returned phone calls, e-mails, and faxes from places like St. Johns, Newfoundland and Tokyo, Japan.

He can make us laugh when things are grim, and pull me down off the ceiling when the array of urgencies below looks a trifle overwhelming. He has an extraordinary radar, and



Wells Whitney and Larry Siskind at the board of directors retreat in Glen Ellen.

can detect from the pitch of the voices in a meeting room if he should make a joke or revise the agenda to surface whatever the real, concise, specific issue is inside the sounds. With my penchant for circling around a point before I get to it, he has taught me to cut to the chase.

Sometimes he brings Tucker, his wife Anne's big yellow dog, to Executive Committee meetings so we can benefit from a canine perspective. Tucker is multiethnic, pure dog, adopted from the SPCA by Anne and soon found to be in need of a little remedial socialization, which obviously worked, because now Tucker sits adoringly at Wells' feet and eases the dog deprivation of city-bound cat owners like me.

Wells has shared his home for meetings, his place in Glen Ellen for our retreats, and his unfailing good judgment and balanced perspective through some pretty turbulent times.

He has been kind and committed and constantly accessible as I learned my new job, and he has truly helped me grow. Thank you, Wells. ■

# Returning the Favor – Natasha's Story

STACY TOLCHIN

**B**y working with newcomers at English in Action, Natasha Kosarev is able to help others understand English, American culture, and convey that difficulties will ease as people grow more accustomed to the US.

Natasha works with immigrants from China, Japan, Mexico, Poland, and the former Soviet Union. Their experiences as new arrivals, regardless of origin, are similar because of language and cultural barriers. Natasha has a long history of volunteering. She is not able to work in a traditional job because of a disability, but it is still important for Natasha to spend her time returning the generosity she has received in San Francisco. When she arrived here almost five years ago, she felt a warm reception from Americans whom she befriended and who taught her English. She has been volunteering with the English in Action program at the Institute for almost two years, where she has the opportunity to help other newcomers learn English and become oriented to their new environment.

Natasha emigrated from the Ukraine with her husband, mother, son, and daughter-in-law. In the Ukraine, Natasha was a librarian teaching linguistics and her husband was one of the leading nuclear physicists who went to Chernobyl after the explosion. Natasha's husband was aware of the dangers from the nuclear disaster which would put their family, as well as all families in close proximity to the explosion, in danger of exposure to contaminated water and livestock. The family moved to San Francisco in search of a healthier environment and the excitement of new opportunity.

Natasha arrived in the US without a word of English, which was the hardest part of her resettlement. She was eager to learn but unable to communicate. She says her soul was hungry. She quickly befriended some Americans and while learning English, began volunteering at the San Francisco Main Library. From there she moved to the Institute, where she had previously been tutored in English. Natasha volunteers so that others may experience a similar positive welcome. She knows the difficulties of living in a new

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Natasha Kosarev with Kathy Stahlman.

environment and being unable to understand language and customs. Natasha's mother, who is 78, also volunteers at the Jewish Community Center where she is learning English and studying to become a citizen.

This year Natasha's family will have been in the US as permanent residents for five years, and they are beginning the citizenship process. Natasha says she wants to become a citizen because she feels she is an American now, and would be proud to share in all that being a citizen offers. She says she feels like she was born to live in this country. Under welfare reform, Natasha will also lose her SSI if she does not become a citizen, which has been her sole income because of her disability. Natasha repays this income by volunteering her time at the Institute, giving something back to the community by helping other newcomers. Her mother is in a similar position, with the added danger of losing her housing if she remains a legal permanent resident. When they become citizens, both Natasha and her mother will continue to volunteer with service agencies.

When questioned about her plans for the future, Natasha says she wants to volunteer at the Institute indefinitely. She continues to be a source of support and inspiration to newcomers and citizens alike. ■

## A Founder's Thoughts on Citizenship

“. . . To effect a change of political status from that of citizen or subject of her native country to full citizenship in her adopted country has now become a major importance to the welfare of a foreign-born woman. It is not her fault, nor is it ours, that the ruthless combination of immigration, deportation, and naturalization laws have turned the possession of citizenship into a new kind of social insurance. It is a fallacy to suppose that aliens do not pay taxes and that therefore they should be denied certain civil rights and protections that citizens enjoy. Aliens pay the individual's share in every rent paid and every pound of food purchased and every yard of cloth worn. It should be pointed out to them that if they plan to make their home in America, it is a matter of self-protection to proceed to acquire citizenship. It is shocking to us to regard citizenship as a protection necessity, and it is no less shocking to the idealistic man or woman from another land to perceive that citizenship has become a material necessity quite apart from its theoretical values, its ethics, and its idealism. The cold fact seems to be that aliens have increasingly suffered discrimination because they were aliens, and that the temper of conditions now indicates that this is going to be more severe rather than less. . . . If, in the process of awakening the foreign communities to the absolute importance of becoming U.S. Citizens, some spark of idealism might be put back into the often awesome but uninspiring process of becoming a citizen, you would have a task sufficiently challenging to appeal to any committee or staff. . . . I do want to urge renewed attention to this whole matter of naturalization for the women of your communities. Its importance to their own welfare and freedom of action and to that of their families cannot be exaggerated.”

— Edith Terry Bremer, 1930



Stacy Tolchin, Executive Assistant.



Monica Regan, Citizenship Coordinator for San Mateo; Jacqueline Winant, San Mateo Site Supervisor; and Marina Castillo, San Francisco Citizenship Coordinator.

# The New Immigration Law: How It Hits Home

KATHLEEN M. SULLIVAN

In 1996, Congress passed two laws that could have a significant impact on family-sponsored immigration in California. The "Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996," known as IIRIRA, will make it much more difficult for United States citizens and permanent residents ("green card" holders) to reunite with their close family members.

In addition, the Welfare Reform Act, passed last summer, eliminates important public benefits for elderly permanent residents, many of whom are the parents of US citizens. The interpretation of these laws is constantly evolving and very complicated. At the end of the day, however, these changes could eliminate immigration eligibility for many International Institute clients.

One of Congress's stated goals in passing IIRIRA, the 1996 immigration act, was to make US citizens and permanent residents more responsible for the maintenance of relatives whom they bring to the United States. For many years, US citizens or residents who wished to immigrate close family members have been required to sign an "affidavit of support," promising to support the immigrant family member once he or she arrives in the United States.

IIRIRA makes these affidavits of support legally enforceable against the US sponsor. If immigrant family members receive public benefits at any time before they either become US citizens or earn 40

quarters of Social Security wages, the government agency providing such benefits may go to court to collect reimbursement from the US sponsor.

More importantly for the International Institute, IIRIRA also raises the threshold income that US sponsors must meet before they can make an affidavit of support for a family member. For example, prior to IIRIRA, a US citizen with a husband and a child who wanted to immigrate her second child would have had to show annual family income of approximately \$15,600, or 100 percent of the poverty level as defined by the federal government. Under IIRIRA, the same citizen must show \$19,500 annual family income, or 125 percent of the federal poverty level.

The large majority of International Institute clients work in service-industry or other low-paying jobs. They could effectively be "priced out" of reuniting with their children and spouses under IIRIRA, unless they have a US sibling or friend who also agrees to become legally responsible for the immigrant.

IIRIRA also seeks to make it much harder for persons who have lived in the United States without authorization to become green card holders. Over the last several decades, waiting lists for family immigration have become extremely long (currently up to 15-20 years for certain categories). Some relatives have therefore decided to come to the United States and live here without documents while they wait for green cards.

IIRIRA bars relatives from receiving green cards if they have been illegally in the US for more than six months after April 1, 1997. The bar lasts for three years if the relative has been here illegally for six months to one year, or ten years if he or she has been here for one year or more.

These bars may be waived by the INS in certain compelling situations, but it remains to be seen whether waivers will be issued generously. Also complicating this situation is the scheduled September

expiration of a program that currently permits undocumented relatives who are in the United States to pay a \$1,000 fine and receive their green cards here. Congress has not yet decided whether to extend this program.

Under the worst-case scenario, since the relatives of many International Institute clients are in the United States without authorization, within the next few years a large number of IISF cases could become ineligible to receive a green card when their place comes up in the waiting line.

The welfare reform act also has many harsh implications for immigrants. In particular, this law eliminates immigrant eligibility for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), unless the immigrant is a veteran (or the spouse or child of a veteran), becomes a US citizen, or has worked and paid Social Security taxes for at least 10 years. (Refugees can still receive SSI, but only for five years after arrival.)

Welfare reform impacts International Institute work in at least two major ways. First, every month hundreds of current green card holders now seek information and assistance from IISF on naturalization, since becoming a US citizen is the best way to ensure that a person will receive help from SSI if he or she becomes sick and unable to work.

Second, welfare reform inhibits US citizens from immigrating older relatives. When the parents of US citizens immigrate, they must show that they are not likely to need public benefits. In the past, if such relatives became infirm after several years of living in the United States, they could receive SSI and Medicare.

Now, with SSI/Medicare eligibility eliminated for almost all immigrants, US citizen or resident children are worried that they will not be able to pay the doctors' bills for an elderly parent if he or she becomes ill in the future. These children will soon begin to think twice about immigrating their parents.

With national immigration policy becoming less generous, over the next few years the International Institute will face an even greater challenge to help immigrants achieve the immigration and other benefits to which they remain entitled. ■

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Marina Castillo delivers an inspiring acceptance speech as she receives her Phillip Burton Award from the Immigrant Legal Resource Center.

# Why I'm an IISF Volunteer

MICHELE KEITH

Ever since I was in college, I've tutored children and adults, in English and in other subjects. As well as being enjoyable and fulfilling for me, I knew tutoring was needed. In the past few years, with so many immigrants coming to the United States, the demand for people willing to help newcomers has skyrocketed. Tutors can help with the practice of English, serve as mentors while immigrants prepare for citizenship tests, and act as advisors assisting with completion of financial aid forms, job applications, tax forms, resumes. Volunteers also play another valuable role: as reality-testers who can explain and describe the new world in which immigrant families find themselves.

I live in San Francisco, and I spend a great deal of time in the classroom as a teacher's aide. I see more clearly with every passing day that one of the most essential skills for bettering an immigrant's life in this country is the ability to communicate in English. How can we get to know one another, come to like one another, without a shared language? As I see a rise in violence and intolerance in this country that transcends age, social class, and ethnic background, I believe this trend can be countered by all of us, immigrants and people who were born here, putting more effort into practicing communication in English with each other.

Inability to communicate fosters distrust. It causes isolation in communities of new immigrants, and hinders involvement in the broader community that makes decisions and passes laws and impacts the lives of all residents. One of the most painful parts of the immigration experience is the alienation that occurs between generations in families where the younger members have met and joined the new culture while the older people have remained apart from it because of their inability to speak English.

As a tutor for the International Institute, I became aware of problems facing immigrants. Discrimination, an expedient refugee policy, poor housing, confusing expectations about employment and education, and the challenges of learning so many new rules govern newcomers' lives. More importantly, I learned that much of what I had read about immigrants in the press and heard about on television was simply not true.

## Unduplicated Client Counts, Continent of Origin

JULY 1, 1995 – JUNE 30, 1996

PROGRAM	ASIA	AFRICA	AMERICAS	EUROPE	TOTAL
Refugee Programs	926	10	0	651	1,587
Refugee Health	139	22	26	357	544
San Francisco Citizenship	551	13	1,142	68	1,774
San Mateo Citizenship	23	16	8,280	133	8,452
English in Action	73	2	0	204	279
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,712</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>9,448</b>	<b>1,413</b>	<b>12,636</b>
% of Total	13.5%	.5%	75%	11%	100%

### Note:

"Asia" includes Chinese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Lao, Tibetan, Mien, Filipino, Burmese, and other immigrant groups.

"Africa" includes Ethiopian, Eritrean, Haitian, Iraqi, Liberian, Sudanese, and other immigrant groups.

"Americas" includes Mexican, Brazilian, Cuban, Salvadorean, Guatemalan, Peruvian, Colombian, and other immigrant groups.

"Europe" includes Russian, Bosnian, Ukrainian, Armenian, Polish, Bulgarian, Romanian, Hungarian, Czech, Iranian, Afghani, British, Irish, and other immigrant groups.

## Financial Status

### INCOME

Federal, State, and other Government Grants	365,320.
Immigration and Refugee Services of America	5,591.
United Way	101,158.
Other Revenue (Grants, Fees, Memberships)	338,809.
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>810,878.</b>

### EXPENSES

Staff to Service Programs	657,545.
Financial Aid to Refugees	3,000.
Operating Expenses (Utilities, Insurance, Supplies)	97,333.
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>757,878.</b>

SAVINGS TO OFFSET PENDING UNITED WAY CUTS	52,910.
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With this in mind, I decided that perhaps I could use my skill as a publicist to help get the truth out, and clear up some of the misconceptions about immigrants. I thought I could help alert immigrants to the opportunities made available through the Institute's programs, and inform people who wanted to make a difference about ways in which they could help with the task. So I applied to become a member of the Institute's Board of Directors.

The Institute's board has some wonderful people: involved, passionate, down-to-earth, dedicated. They care profoundly about the Institute's mission and clients and are determined to help the organization accomplish its goals. They have talent, and just as importantly, they have heart. And now, after a few months, I am beginning to do what I set out to do as a volunteer: spread the good news of the Institute, its programs and its people. ■

## With Continuing Appreciation for the Support and Contributions of:

The Asia Foundation  
 The Atkinson Foundation  
 The Centers for Disease Control  
 Cooper White & Cooper  
 The Compton Foundation  
 The S. H. Cowell Foundation  
 County of San Mateo  
 English Speaking Union  
 Fair Oaks Community Center  
 The Ford Foundation  
 The Walter and Elise Haas Foundation  
 The Immigrant Legal Resource Center  
 Immigration and Refugee Services of America  
 The Jewish Community Endowment Fund  
 The Law Offices of Zuzana Goldstein  
 Northern California Coalition for Immigrant Rights  
 The Peninsula Community Foundation  
 Private Industry Council  
 Raychem Corporation  
 The San Francisco Foundation  
 San Francisco Department of Public Health  
 San Francisco Department of Human Services  
 San Francisco General Hospital  
 Side By Side Studios  
 State of California Department of Health Services  
 The United Way of San Francisco County  
 The United Way of San Mateo County  
 The US Committee for Refugees  
 Wells Fargo Bank  
 David K. Yamakawa, Jr.

*And our Members, Donors, and Friends*

# COMMON CONCERNS

A Publication of the International Institute of San Francisco

SPRING 1997



Lunchtime at the staff retreat at Point Bonita.

# Annual Report 1996

## MISSION AND GOALS STATEMENT

The purpose of the International Institute of San Francisco is to enable immigrants, refugees, and their families to become effective, responsible participants in community life.

## GOALS:

1. To promote, protect, and advocate for the rights of refugees and immigrants.
2. To facilitate the reunion of refugee and immigrant families.
3. To assure that immigrants and refugees have access to public and private resources.
4. To educate the public about the social and economic contributions made by refugees and immigrants.
5. To create awareness in the community of the dynamic, positive impact of immigration.
6. To bridge ethnic and cultural differences, and increase understanding of cultural pluralism.

# COMMON CONCERNS

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