



International Institute of San Francisco



Whose Democracy Is It?

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

Whose Democracy Is It, Anyway?

Dorrie Runman
President

It has been one hundred and forty years since President Abraham Lincoln stood before a small gathering in Pennsylvania and reminded his listeners that our nation was conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Our founding documents – the Constitution and the Bill of Rights – make no distinction between native-born citizens and non-citizens when it comes to the civil liberties we cherish. Those *inalienable* rights are not conferred by any human or government to its citizens, but are *endowed by our creator*. In other words, our Constitution recognizes that such rights belong to all humanity on earth, irrespective of place, time, gender, civil status, or religion—much less the state of one’s immigration paperwork.

This is not such a radical notion. Even the earliest religious doctrines of Judaism and Christianity admonish, “Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.” [Exodus 23:9]

Although we preserve this government by the people, we fail to preserve its most important legacy. We have seen again this year how the current administration would like to backpedal that legacy, in furtherance of its own geopolitical agenda. We have witnessed a stunning reversal of civil rights and human rights in the name of national security. We have seen men and women “disappeared” from our streets; the fingerprinting and registration of selected men on the basis of gender, age, religion and national origin; the detention of many individuals without charge; the denial of basic rights (blankets, food, water, communication with an attorney); even beatings and physical torture of detainees (which was captured on video tape). Next we want to create a temporary legalization program for those who perform the meanest of labor, but with no hope of representation, residence, or citizenship.

How can we conclude that democracy is only meant for some and not for others? How can we create a class of

permanently disfranchised residents? Government by the people is the very heart of our national life. Our nation was born in a fight against taxation without representation. America’s self-interest requires that legalization of undocumented immigrants include a path to citizenship. Our self-interest requires us to acknowledge that all people deserve to enjoy those fundamental, inalienable rights that we cherish for ourselves.

The International Institute of San Francisco, along with hundreds of organizations worldwide, stands firm in its commitment to preserving the rights and dignity of all people. We continue to bring services, resources, and information to immigrants and refugees in our communities. We seek to gather all together in furtherance of the civic participation and civil rights of everyone among us. The programs undertaken by our dedicated staff serve the people’s most basic needs: learning our language, tutoring, service to seniors, and medical, legal, and social services. The Institute’s programs are forging avenues to fuller community participation, one person at a time. We are very pleased to present you with this year’s Annual Report for 2003.

International Institute of San Francisco

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Has Democracy Become a Spectator Sport?

Margi Dunlap
Executive Director

Every year, at our annual staff picnic in the Fall, I am amazed at the athletic prowess of our caseworkers, program directors, teachers, and office managers. We even agreed last year to buy our own volleyball set. At the International Institute, we have people who run marathons, coach soccer and volleyball teams, and take power walks every day at lunch. Our newest employee is a triathlete. This is an organization that goes to the gym.

I am troubled about how to teach our newcomer clients about what democracy really is. Maybe we need to think about democracy as a contact sport. We all have to make contact with our ballots for anything to change.

Every plane that deports people back to another country is financed by deductions from our paychecks.

FINANCIAL STATUS

July 1, 2002 through June 30, 2003

Income	
City, State & Other Government Contracts	\$898,877
Other Revenue (Grants, fees, donations)	595,312
Total Income	\$1,494,189
Expenses	
Staff	\$1,285,347
Occupancy Costs	100,232
Operating Expenses	128,029
Total Expenses	\$1,513,608
Net Deficit	\$(19,419)

We teach in our community wellness program that it is unhealthy to be sedentary. Exercise is not only good for our bodies, but a great idea for other activities as well. Without exercise our rights get flabby and weak.

And during times when things look pretty grim for immigrants, we have to exercise our power and our voice as advocates for the rights of immigrants. Immigrants can't vote until they naturalize, can't naturalize until they speak enough of the language to take the citizenship test, and can't even take the citizenship test until they jump through a number of other hoops. Those of us who see our country's history in today's immigrant populations have to exercise for them as well.

When I say exercise your power and your voice, I mean daily exercise. Talk to your neighbors, the people you bump into in the laundry room, the people who are waiting at the bus stop, the other parents at your children's school, and the members of your own family who live in other parts of the country and think you may have been exposed to some odd political contagion because you have chosen to live in the Bay Area and work for immigrant rights.

We have to take some responsibility for the times we're in. Did we forget that democracy means us, too? Have we been intimidated by the wealth and power of the people who are making decisions about whom we fight, and where we spend our money? Every bullet that kills an Iraqi or Israeli or Palestinian child has a few pennies of our tax dollar in it. Every immigrant waiting in detention to find out if she has suffered enough to be granted

asylum is fed and housed, however badly, by our tax dollars. Every plane that deports people back to another country is financed by deductions from our paychecks. Someone said the other day that if we deported 650 people every day for the next fifty years, we could "expel" the "illegals." Now wouldn't that be a silly way to spend our tax dollars? There must be a solution that is about democracy, one that transcends pride and ownership and punishment. Isn't this democracy bigger than that?

If we exercise, we might be able to communicate that it is.

The changes in our world this year have changed me. Our clients inspire me, their determination to build new lives, to take any work they can get, to keep their families together, to endure the feeling of being powerless because they believe in the future of their children. Every week, when I edit "Immigration Matters," our electronic news summary, I read about high-achieving class valedictorians who can't go to college because their parents came here to work and begin again without the right papers. Can you imagine what California would be like if we had had an immigration station on our eastern border when the first pioneers managed to make it that far? We'd all be speaking Spanish, for one thing.

We are a nation of immigrants, and it's about time we exercised, don't you think?

Can you imagine what California would be like if we had had an immigration station on our eastern border when the first pioneers managed to make it that far? We'd all be speaking Spanish, for one thing.

Family Unity = Strong Democracy

Ildar Hafizov

Director, San Francisco Immigration and Citizenship Program

Every year thousands of people come to the United States to reunite with their families, to look for new economic and employment opportunities, or to find save haven from persecution and torture. They work and study hard; they pay taxes and raise their children; they learn new culture and share their cultural values in their new home country that was known for many years as “the land of immigrants”. They study English and History of the United States. They navigate complex laws and become proud US Citizens. They vote and become active members in their communities. They are us, our parents, or grandparents.

All of us at San Francisco Immigration and Citizenship Program are honored and excited to be able to help people

Recent changes in immigration law, such as Special Registration, brought many scared, worried, and confused people to our office for consultations.

with variety of services and classes that our program offers. Here is what Mr. L, our client, says: “I think all my family members were, at some point, clients of International Institute. We came here as refugees about 20 years ago and IISF staff members helped us to resettle in San Francisco. We studied English and learned about our new home in IISF classrooms. Then we got help in applying

for permanent residency and US Citizenship. Later on your staff helped my brother to reunite with his wife. And now, with your help, I am petitioning for my fiancée overseas!”

Our Program continues to focus on family-based immigration. In 2003 we helped more than 2,000 people in San Francisco, Marin County and East Bay with visa petitions, adjustments of status, citizenship services and much more. Recent changes in immigration law, such as Special Registration, brought many scared, worried, and confused people to our office for consultations. Our staff members helped a number of new and current clients from El Salvador to re-register for extension of Temporary Protective Status.

Carlota Garcia and **Helen Boikan**, our clerks, translated dozens of documents from Spanish to English and reviewed hundreds of old cases. **Danielle Bolden**, our Staff Attorney, represented many clients at Naturalization, Adjustment and NACARA interviews and also in immigration court. Our English and citizenship classes, taught by **Ella Rozman**, continue to be very popular among Russian-speaking senior refugees. Our volunteers, **Oksana Demina** and **Azita Rahim**, worked with a number of Violence Against Women Act cases, allowing victims of domestic violence to obtain green cards independent of the status of their abusers. Ms. D, our client, says: “After my former husband abused me and my daughter and kicked us out of our house, I thought that my life was over. I didn’t know what to do, where to go, or who to talk to. My English was not good at the time and I didn’t know if I had any rights. Staff at International Institute helped to find shelter, gather documents and apply for my Green Card. Since that time I was able to get a job, my own place to live, and kindergarten for my daughter.

I am happy and alive again!”



Staff of the San Francisco Immigration Program



San Francisco immigration specialists, organizers and teachers always provide quality assistance.

This year more than one hundred immigrants from Latin America, China, and Former Soviet Union participated in Pedestrian Safety workshops designed and facilitated by program staff members. Prior to the workshops we designed a Pedestrian Safety Handbook, that received very positive feedback from both immigrant groups and pedestrian safety advocates. The Handbook is currently being published by San Francisco Department of Public

Health in English, Spanish, Chinese and Russian languages.

We have also hosted number of free, informational workshops that provided immigrants with basic understanding of US immigration system, requirements for permanent residency and US Citizenship. Workshops also focused on immigrants' rights and responsibilities and educated them about legal services offered at IISF.

San Francisco Immigration and Citizenship Program Statistics January–December 2003

1. Number of Office Visits	2,167
2. Number of Telephone Contacts	7,820
3. Attendance at Informational Workshops and Community Trainings	670
Citizenship Workshops	94
Citizenship Interview Preparation	126
Voter Education Workshops	85
New Immigration Legislation and Procedures	175
Other Immigration and Citizenship Topics	78
Pedestrian Safety Workshops	112
4. Clients Assisted with INS Procedures	1,084
Adjustments/Removal of Conditional Status	86
Citizenship Procedures (N-400, N-600, Acquisition)	94
Visa Petitions	56
VAWA Cases	5
Consular Processing (Packet 3&4)	29
Affidavits of Support	122
Work Authorization	119
Advance Parole/Travel Permit	14
FOIA/FBI requests	21
Replacement of Green Card (I-90)	6
Temporary Protective Status	67
Visa V	14
Legalization	13
Miscellaneous	58
Translation of Documents	84
Letters/Inquiries	296

List of Volunteers

Oksana Demina

Morton Park

Azita Rahim

Maria Urquiaga

The Human Impact

Danielle Bolden
Staff Attorney

This year U.S. immigration law has experienced fundamental changes that have had significant effects on our clients and the services provided by the International Institute of San Francisco.

On March 1, 2003, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) officially began operations, permanently dissolving the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) as a governmental entity. Many immigration services formerly provided by INS are now offered by U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS), a separate bureau within the DHS. USCIS administers immigration benefits, including providing citizenship, asylum and refugee services. Additionally, enforcement functions, such as Border Patrol and Inspections, are now conducted by Customs and Border Protection (CBP). All investigation, detention and removal functions are completed by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Special Registration: Many clients are especially concerned about and affected by the requirements of Special Registration, a program mandating certain immigrants to register with NSEERS, the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System. Amidst national protest, immigrant men from nearly two dozen, primarily Middle Eastern, countries registered at government offices around the United States. DHS now requires that adult men entering the U.S. on non-immigrant visas (student, tourist, business visas, etc.) comply. U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, refugees and asylum applicants are exempt from registration. At this time

nearly 200,000 individuals have been registered through NSEERS.

In December of 2003, DHS issued a new interim rule suspending certain registration requirements. Many advocacy groups were hopeful that Special Registration had ended. Unfortunately, the only significant change in Special Registration procedure is the suspension of annual re-registration and other minimal changes. All other requirements remain in effect. Noncompliance may result in denial of admission to the U.S., denial of immigration benefits, criminal prosecution, and/or removal proceedings.

Consular Interviews: Consular posts have significantly altered current non-immigrant visa application procedures. As of August 1, 2003, almost all visa applicants are required to attend personal interviews before being given permission to travel to the U.S. This new rule significantly increases processing times for clients or family members traveling as students, tourists or for business.

Driver's License Law: Former Gov. Gray Davis signed into state law a bill permitting undocumented immigrants to obtain California driver's licenses, attend driver's education classes and purchase automobile insurance. Newly elected Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signed a repeal before the state law was enacted. Threatening to bring the issue to California voters for a referendum, Gov. Schwarzenegger commenced a special legislative session for the repeal almost immediately upon taking office.

The DREAM Act could provide many hardworking and deserving youth with a chance to attain their educational goals. Please write your Representatives in support of the DREAM Act!

We believe Congressional attempts to enact new federal legislation greatly impacts the lives of our clients in important and meaningful ways.

DREAM Act: The DREAM Act is one of the most promising bills in Congress this year. Currently a Senate bill, the DREAM Act legalizes the status of many undocumented children and youth who meet specific requirements. The Act allows states to offer in-state tuition to immigrant children and assist many in realizing their educational dreams by making college tuition more affordable. The Act would also grant conditional permanent resident status to many immigrant youth meeting certain residency requirements. Conditional status is removed if young people fulfill certain requirements, such as graduate from a two-year college, pursue a BA or serve in the U.S. Armed Forces. A similar bill is being introduced in the House of Representatives. The DREAM Act could provide many hardworking and deserving youth with a chance to attain their educational goals. Please write your Representatives in support of the DREAM Act!

CLEAR Act: The CLEAR Act, introduced to the Senate in 2003, requires state and local police to enforce federal immigration laws or lose certain critical federal funding. Local law enforcement, already strapped for resources, would undertake enforcement responsibilities currently handled by federal immigration officers. Local police may be required to report or detain undocumented persons during routine traffic stops and criminal investigations. Passage of the CLEAR Act would encourage the use of racial profiling, violate civil rights and alienate immigrant and refugee communities, who might fear immigration repercussions when reporting illegal activity as either victims or witnesses. The CLEAR Act has dramatic and dangerous consequences for crime reporting and for public safety. Please write your Representatives opposing the CLEAR Act!

Hard Work, Shared Values

Sheryl Bergman

Director, San Mateo County Programs

“Hello. Thank you for calling the International Institute in San Mateo County. This is Reyna. How may I help you?”

“Hi. I’m a U.S. Citizen, and I applied for my wife and children to come join me here. I just got a letter from the U.S. Citizenship and Information Services, but I don’t understand exactly what it is telling me to do. Can you help me?”

“Sure. You can come to our office on a Tuesday or Thursday morning, and our immigration caseworkers will help you with the next steps. Remember to bring your paperwork with you.”

—Typical phone conversation in IISF Redwood City Office

Why do newcomers come to our office seeking assistance? Because the laws and procedures governing the U.S. immigration system are complicated and ever changing, and our clients want to ensure that they are following the steps exactly as they are supposed to. They need some help in navigating the complex process of adjusting their status and working towards U.S. Citizenship.

During the past year, the San Mateo County Program served 4,941 families. We helped mothers to reunite with children who were separated by borders and bureaucracy; we assisted newlyweds in their quest to live in the same country; and we prepared hundreds of people to become U.S. Citizens. The outcome? Stronger families and healthier communities. Everyone benefits.

Immigrants come to the United States because they share core values of freedom, democracy, civic participation and a strong work ethic. Economic, cultural and intellectual contributions of immigrants to the United States, and

particularly to the Bay Area, aid in developing diverse, vibrant, healthy communities. Immigrant families volunteer in their communities, make charitable contributions, promote family values, attend college, teach children,

“The presentation by the Immigration Caseworkers gave me a more complete conception of what our immigrant clients go through. I never truly understood it before.”

Social Service worker who participated in the Institute’s training on Immigration Law and Procedures.

and work hard at their jobs. Here are some facts:

- One-third of the population of San Mateo County is foreign-born.
- Four of every ten Californian children live in a household headed by an immigrant.
- Immigrants add about \$10 billion each year to the U.S. economy.
- During their lifetimes immigrants contribute roughly \$1,800 per person more in taxes than they receive in benefits.

Who are the people we serve? Here are a few glimpses at their lives (names are changed in accordance with our confidentiality policy):

Mr. G. was tortured in his home country of El Salvador, twenty years ago, during the time of the civil war there. His “crime” then was trying to keep his family alive and safe, during perilous times. Electrodes were attached to the most sensitive parts of his body, and then electric shocks were applied. He was beaten repeatedly on the head. They nearly suffocated him with an airtight hood. Mr. G. recently had his



Students take a break from English Language – Civic Participation classes, where they learn about U.S. government and history and study to become U.S. citizens.



Soon both mother and daughter will be citizens.

interview appointment with an official from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS, formerly INS), as he is seeking to obtain permanent resident status under a law known as NACARA. The official insisted that Mr. G. recount the specific details of his torture, and doubted his case due to his confusion on certain facts (to exactly which fingers were the electrodes attached; how many blows to the head did he suffer). IISF Accredited Representative Jacqueline Raine has helped to

“Thank you for helping me to immigrate my husband to the United States. My two children are entering adolescence, and they need their father’s support and guidance. Now our family will be whole again.”

Immigration client

prepare Mr. G’s case. Together, they have worked to compile the strongest evidence possible for his case, and hope that Mr. G. will not be re-traumatized during his USCIS interview which requires the retelling and reliving of his torture.

Mrs. S. has four children and eight grandchildren living in the United States. All have become U.S. Citizens. Mrs. S. made an appointment with IISF Citizenship Coordinator Maria Barraza-Calderon, because she, too, wanted to naturalize. Despite her 70 years of age, Mrs. S. diligently attended English and Citizenship Preparation classes all year long, learning more about U.S. Government and History than most high school students know. She passed her Citizenship Interview, and proudly attended her swearing-in ceremony. Mrs. S. told us that becoming a U.S. Citizen was the biggest accomplishment in her entire life, and she is excited to vote in the next election.

Mr. A. is a farmworker in the rural San Mateo Coastside. He was the first to sign up when IISF offered English

“I just passed my Citizenship Interview! The International Institute’s English and Citizenship classes really prepared me well.”

- English Language/Citizenship Preparation student

classes there earlier this year. “I never had the opportunity to go to school back in Mexico. Now, I want to learn English so that I can communicate more effectively with my employer and with the teachers in my children’s school.” Thanks to a new grant IISF secured from the California Department of Education, Mr. A and twenty other adults are taking English Language-Civics Participation classes in their rural community.

While every story is different, they all contain common threads: immigrant families are working hard, and they strive to make the community a better place for all our children. The first steps are the hardest, and that’s why we provide much-needed assistance with immigration and citizenship procedures. Together, we can build a strong, safe democracy for all of our families.

San Mateo County Staff List

Maria Barraza-Calderon, *Citizenship Coordinator*

Larry J. Beat (Jerry), *English teacher*
Sheryl Bergman, Director, *San Mateo County Program*

Clarisa Eakin, *Program Assistant*

Jacqueline Raine, *Immigration Program Coordinator/Accredited Representative*

Maria Reyna Cabral, *Office Administrator*
Carlos Rodas, *Clerk*

Marisa Singer, *Immigration Caseworker*

Sacha Steenhoek, *Accredited Representative/Immigration Caseworker*



Victoria Gutierrez proudly holds her “diploma” after graduating from the first cycle of Citizenship classes in Redwood City.

San Mateo County Program

Immigration and Citizenship Services Report for Fiscal Year 2002-2003

1. Number of Office Visits	4,038
2. Workshops, Presentations and Community Trainings (# of participants)	1,303 total
Citizenship Workshops	341
Citizenship Interview Preparation	91
Voter Education	262
Immigration Laws and Procedures	
For Community Members (in Spanish)	480
For Service Providers (in English)	129
3. Clients Assisted with Immigration and Citizenship Procedures	2,463 total
Citizenship	163
Work Authorization	318
Visa Petitions	215
Adjustment of Status	130
Consular Processing	83
Affidavits of Support	232
Freedom of Information Act Requests	152
VAWA (Violence Against Women Act)	8
Family Unity	13
Waivers	3
Replacement of green card	102
Temporary Protective Status	130
Miscellaneous	47
Other Procedures:	
Declarations	105
Translation of Documents	344
Letters and Inquiries	418

Active Wellness for Bosnian Leaders

Yin Yan Leung
Director, Health Programs

With ongoing funding from The California Endowment, the Bosnian Community Wellness Program (BCWP) is entering its third year of program activities.

The goal of BCWP is to improve the health and well-being of Bosnian refugees. As a measure of social equality and quality of life, the health of a community represents society’s collective democracy. Inequities and barriers that prevent access to health care and other vital services in a democratic society are problems which we must address. The BCWP is working to address some of these challenges through various services and community capacity building.

During November and December, 2002, staff trained 15 Bosnian community members to take on leadership roles and continued to work closely with them on improving their knowledge and skills so they can serve as a resource for their personal network of family and friends. These community leaders also work with staff on community building activities and improving language access at San Francisco General Hospital. For limited-English

speaking Bosnians, accessing the various clinics at San Francisco General has long been a challenge due to very limited availability of interpretation services. Through BCWP, community members are more informed about their rights and are documenting their experiences there.

BCWP staff also continue to assist community members with health education and promotion activities, facilitate psychosocial support groups, and staff the Bosnian Community Resource Room. Through practical support, increased knowledge of and access to health and other community resources and information, and assistance with naturalization, participants in our program can feel more a part of American society and feel more empowered during their resettlement in their new country.

As a measure of social equality and quality of life, the health of a community represents society’s collective democracy.

BCWP Staff:

Yin Yan Leung, MPH, BCWP Program Coordinator/Health Programs Director
Senad Kulenovic, Community Health Outreach Worker

Vanja Danilovic-Jones, Community Health Outreach Worker

Bosnian Community Wellness Program Activities

July 2002-June 2003

Health Education Workshops	139 participants in 11 workshop sessions
One-on-One Health Education	98 hours with 84 patients at Refugee Medical Clinic
Resources & Referrals	331 visitors to the Resource Room
	206 hours of resource assistance for 249 community contacts
Social Support Groups	41 sessions involving 367 community contacts
Leadership Development	15 community members trained

Health is in our Hands

Patricia Erwin, Program Manager,
Newcomers Health Program

“Health is in our hands” has become the guiding theme for Newcomers Health Program staff this past year. We all strive to work with community members to assist them in accessing health care, educating them about prevention and treatment of health conditions, and working with them to improve their well-being – all with the goal of taking “health into our hands”, on both personal and community-based levels.

Our clinically-based staff at Refugee Medical Clinic continues to dedicate themselves to outreaching to, educating and providing health assessments to newly-arriving refugees and recently-documented asylees in San Francisco. Our primary populations are Russian-speaking refugees and Chinese asylees. At both Refugee Medical Clinic and Ocean Park Health Center our bilingual and bicultural staff continues to help Russian-speaking, Bosnian, and Chinese patients take their “health into their hands” by bridging cultural and linguistic gaps between patients and their medical providers at these two sites, so newcomer patients may have access to and receive quality health care.

We had the opportunity to help increase access to health care for newcomers by providing trainings on working with culturally and linguistically diverse patients at four public health center sites. We offered these site specific trainings, during which over 130 health care providers and staff were trained, with the overall goal of helping community members take their “health into their hands” by increasing their access to culturally appropriate services.

Our SARS & Beyond project, supported by a grant from the California



Charlene Au conducts a community presentation on SARS and other respiratory illnesses.

We expect that program participants will become more aware of protecting personal and community health through our educational and case management services.

Refugee Health Section to work with Chinese-speaking newcomers to educate them about prevention and treatment of SARS and other air-borne respiratory illnesses, gave us the opportunity to work with this community on a broader level than simply in the clinic setting. Through a community awareness campaign and health education workshops to over 300 community members, we taught this community that they can take their “health into their hands” by taking simple steps such as washing their hands and using Kleenex.

In this past year Newcomers Health Program received another new grant, also from the California Refugee Health Section, to focus on educating refugees and asylees about tuberculosis and the importance of following provider recommendations for treatment. We expect that program participants will become



A bilingual poster for the Chinese community encouraging healthy hygiene habits.

more aware of protecting personal and community health through our educational and case management services.

Thanks to the commitment and dedication of our staff we have successfully worked with thousands of newcomers and accomplished countless activities and objectives. We look forward to continuing to spread the message that “health is our hands” as we help improve the health and well-being of newcomer communities.

YouthCares: Strengthening Communities Through Service

Laura Congdon and Jennifer Berger
Directors, YouthCares Programs

This past year brought the highest number of youth applications to our three YouthCares programs than ever. Immigrant teens are eager to develop job skills and experience so they can help support their families financially and get better jobs in the future. At YouthCares, teens develop cross-cultural relationships with their peers and senior citizens, take on leadership skills in the program, and become actively involved in the community. With all of the struggles that immigrants and their families have faced this past year, the teens in YouthCares continue to inspire us and remind us why we do the work we do. This year, 111 teens provided service to 482 senior citizens and mentoring to 144 of their newly arrived peers and younger kids ages 5–13 at YouthCares. Youth participants have created lasting friendships with their peers, provided service and support to senior citizens and youth in their communities and had tons of fun in the process! At YouthCares, we see democracy in action through youth leadership and consensus building in the program. Youth take ownership of the program by identifying what skills they want to gain, instituting new ideas and activities with the seniors and their peers, and evaluating program success. YouthCares gives teens the opportunity to gain job skills and become leaders while at the same time giving isolated seniors a chance to reconnect with the community.



YC teens participating in a Resume Writing Workshop

Examples of new service sites and youth led activities this past year:

New Youth-Led Citizenship Classes: At The John King Senior Center, one of our sites in Visitacion Valley, YouthCares SoMa teens started leading Citizenship classes for Cantonese speaking seniors and continued to teach Computer and Internet skills to seniors. One of our immigration caseworkers, along with youth translators, conducted a Citizenship clinic to evaluate the seniors' eligibility for citizenship before beginning the classes. More than 15 seniors have attended Citizenship Prep Classes and we are clearly filling a need at the site.

Youth tutors teach and mentor younger SoMa kids: Summer school at Newcomer High (the site of our peer-tutoring program) was cancelled this past summer due to funding cuts at the Board of Education. In order to continue meeting the academic needs of youth, we teamed up with Motivational Achievements Together (MAT). MAT provides academic enrichment services to low-income kids in the South of

Market community. Partners in Learning tutors worked with an average of 15 kids per day, ages 5–13, representing Puerto Rican, African American, Mexican and Indian backgrounds. The tutors met three days a week on-site, developing and leading activities for the kids in the following skill areas: writing, vocabulary development, typing, computer skills, and art. The tutors did a great job working with the kids and had valuable experiences as they learned about teaching, classroom management, curriculum development, and how to keep kids engaged in literacy-based activities. This summer was so successful that we were back at MAT this fall two afternoons a week and are hoping to keep this important new tutoring site going in the future.

At YouthCares, we see democracy in action through youth leadership and consensus building in the program.

This summer, we received more than 160 applications for 40 available positions throughout our youth programs.

Intergenerational Art Classes: Last spring, we developed a new collaboration between our YC Richmond Program and Consortium for Elders and Youth in the Arts (CEYA). One afternoon a week, youth and seniors worked with Andre Anisimov, a professional artist who taught them drawing and painting. Together the four youth and eight seniors produced beautiful works of art. There were three generations represented in one family who attended the art classes. This December we celebrated with a “Richmond Community Project Exhibition,” where the artwork was on display at one of the Institute of Aging Sites. The exhibition was open to the community and provided a wonderful opportunity for youth and seniors to see their artwork and catch up.

New Computer Lab in the Richmond District: YouthCares Richmond recently launched free computer classes for seniors living in the Richmond District, housed at the Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church, the site of our weekly youth-led Food Bank. Two of our returning youth participants were instrumental in getting the computer parts donated, putting the computers together, getting them on-line and setting up the entire lab. All YC teens played a huge role in conducting outreach, developing curriculum for the class, and making multilingual announcements at the Food Bank to recruit seniors.

Citizenship and Immigration Issues Facing Youth: Ildar Hafizov, IISF’s Director of Citizenship and Immigration Services, facilitated a workshop on Citizenship and



YC youth engaging in team-building activities during Orientation



YC end-of-cycle picnic at Golden Gate Park

Immigration issues facing youth under 18. This workshop focused specifically on educating youth about the naturalization process and the changing political climate for immigrants and refugees. Through Ildar’s training,

several youth realized that they are eligible to become U.S. Citizens based on their parents’ immigration status.

Financial Literacy Training: This fall, a trainer from Juma Ventures facilitated a workshop on Money Manage-



YC teens and seniors with the Costume Contest Winner at our intergenerational Halloween Party.



Youth from all YC programs come together for an afternoon of outdoor activities

ment and Savings Accounts for all YouthCares teens. Topics covered included: distinguishing wants from needs, short/long term financial goals, and balancing a checkbook. At the end of the training, the youth were offered free savings accounts with Citibank for two years. Since many of the youth do not have bank accounts, this was a wonderful opportunity for youth to begin to develop financial responsibility and independence.

YouthCares in the Press: On November 12, 2003 the San Francisco Chronicle visited the Food Bank in order to report on the YouthCares Richmond Program

and their work at the Lincoln Park Food Bank. An article was published on the front page of the Friday section of the November 29th edition of the paper and included several pictures of youth and seniors. In the article, Pastor Rob Stewart described the YouthCares teens: *“They’re really energetic, they really care about serving the community, and they like the seniors and connect with the seniors.”*

At YouthCares, immigrant teens have the opportunity to make a positive contribution to their community while at the same time gaining much-needed job skills and experience. This summer, we received more than 160 applications

for 40 available positions throughout our youth programs.

At YouthCares, a motivated group of teens from around the world model what it means to be actively involved members of a democracy by making decisions as a group, teaching and supporting one another, and learning from each others’ varied cultures and experiences. From the teens at YouthCares, we can all learn about the importance of working as part of a team and developing the tools and commitment it takes to build a healthy and productive community.

YouthCares

September 1, 2002–August 15, 2003

	YouthCares: South of Market	YouthCares: Richmond	Partners in Learning	Total
Youth Served	36	37	182	255
Seniors Served	232	250		482
Service Hours Provided:	1185	1755	1166	4106
Countries of Origin:				
Youth:				
Russia		11	8	19
Eastern Europe			2	2
Caucasian			9	9
Africa, Ethiopia			2	2
Philippines	9		19	28
USA - African American	4	2	8	14
Latin America, Mexico	5	1	20	26
Middle East			9	9
China and Taiwan	14	22	87	123
Korea, Japan, Mongolia			5	5
Thailand, Cambodia, India, Vietnam.	1	1	10	12
USA - Multi-cultural	3		3	6
Seniors:				
Chinese	163	84		247
Russia, Ukraine, Belarus	4	69		73
Latin America, Mexico	13	7		20
African American	17	4		21
Eastern Europe		5		5
Philippines	24	8		32
Cambodia, Vietnam	2	9		11
Ireland		61		61
Israel		3		3
USA	9			9

YouthCares Staff:

Laura Congdon, *YouthCares Program Director*

Jennifer Berger, *YouthCares Associate Director*

Carolyn Shin, *YouthCares South of Market YouthCares Program Coordinator*

Stella Kang, *YouthCares Richmond YouthCares Program Coordinator*

Lauren Toker, *YouthCares Partners in Learning Coordinator*

Supported By:

Hannah Thompson, *Partners in Learning Program*

Vanessa Carter, *SoMa Program*

Chi-Lan Lieu, *Adult Volunteer*

Carissa Lopez, *Partners in Learning Program*

Melissa Reburiano, *Adult Volunteer*



Youth tutors planning English acquisition activities for their newly immigrated peers at Newcomer High.



YC SoMa participants leading an ice breaker activity during a weekly training

Lina Hu, YouthCares Partners in Learning Program:

“YC PIL changed me from a shy, quiet girl into a confident, open-minded leader”

“At YC PIL I made new friends, learned leadership and communication skills & was given a valuable opportunity to advance my goal of becoming a leader”

Chue Seng Ieng, YouthCares Richmond:

“I joined YC because I wanted to experience new things and get to know new people. I learned a lot about different cultures and how to communicate with seniors.”

Angelica Ortega, YouthCares SoMa:

“Being in YouthCares has opened doors for my future. Through the skills that I’ve learned here like working with others, being more comfortable talking to new people, interview skills and how to write a resume, I got a volunteer position at a hospital that I wouldn’t have had the guts to apply for before. I now have a goal for myself of becoming an Emergency Medical Technician.”

Immigration Matters!

Paul A. Aguilar
Executive Assistant

The Institute began publishing *Immigration Matters!*, an electronic newsletter, in the spring of 2003 as a way to inform people in the United States and around the world about issues affecting immigrants, refugees and asylees.

An aggregation of news stories from around the world, *Immigration*

Matters! includes articles on policies, procedures, pending legislation as well as human-interest stories.

Over 150 people currently subscribe to *Immigration Matters!* including individuals and organizations from around the world.

Here’s what a couple of subscribers have to say about *Immigrations Matters!*

“I enjoy reading your newsletter and find the articles useful and interesting.”

Kelly McCown
Attorney-at-law
Certified Specialist in Immigration and Nationality Law
State Bar of California
Board of Legal Specialization

“I just subscribed several issues ago, and REALLY love the information you provide to the immigrant community! I have been passing info from the Immigration Matters mail onto the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) immigration lists of which I am a part. Thank you so much for your hard work.

I just wanted you to know that the service you provide is truly appreciated!”

Leslie Bulbuk, Co-Founder
Love Sees No Borders
www.loveseesnoborders.org
Raising awareness of the struggle of same-sex binational couples in the United States

You can sign up to receive *Immigration Matters!* at www.iisf.org.

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