



Massachusetts
Immigrant
Collaborative

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Immigration legal Services Conference: Serving the Pioneer Valley community.

Highlights

- Frank DeVito joins M.I.C. as the new Executive Director, bringing a wealth of experience in equity and immigrant advocacy.
- First-ever Pioneer Valley Immigration Legal Services Conference brings together over 135 people for free legal consultations and workshops.
- Community member spotlights reveal how M.I.C.'s programs offer families a pathway to stability and security.

Dear Friend,

We are excited to share with you the latest news from the Massachusetts Immigrant Collaborative (M.I.C.) highlighting the arrival of our new Executive Director, Frank DeVito, the successful launch of the Pioneer Valley Immigration Legal Services Conference,

and inspiring stories from our community members about the impact of our programs. Thank you for being an essential part of this journey. Your support enables us to continue helping immigrant communities thrive.



WELCOME FRANK DEVITO

We are thrilled to introduce Frank DeVito as the new Executive Director of M.I.C. Frank began his role on November 6, 2024, bringing with him a wealth of experience and a deep passion for immigrant rights and social equity. Frank's career spans over two decades, and his work has focused on addressing disparities in education, economic mobility, and access to social services for immigrant communities.

Frank's leadership is informed by his personal experience as the son of immigrant parents from Honduras and Italy, giving him a unique perspective on the challenges many immigrant families face. He has previously led initiatives that created pathways to financial stability and educational opportunities, and innovative programs in workforce development and community empowerment.



M.I.C., Executive Director Frank DeVito

As Frank shared: "I am honored to join M.I.C. and to work alongside our partners to ensure that immigrant families in Massachusetts have the resources, opportunities, and support they need to succeed. We are committed to advocating for policies that promote equity and justice, and I look forward to what we can accomplish together."

Frank's appointment comes at a crucial time as M.I.C. expands its efforts to provide critical services and advocate for immigrant rights across the state. We are excited for the future under his leadership.

PIONEER VALLEY IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES CONFERENCE

In October, M.I.C., along with partners Pioneer Valley Workers Center, Metrowest Worker Center, and New North Citizens' Council, hosted the first-ever Pioneer Valley Immigration Legal Services Conference in Springfield, Massachusetts. The event drew 135 participants and empowered both immigrant community members and service providers with crucial information and resources.

The conference, which was held in Spanish with English interpretation, included:

- **Workshops** focused on navigating immigration legal processes and policies.
- **Free Legal Consultations and MassHealth Assistance** provided by Agencia ALPHA helping community members to understand immigration law and policies and their options; and MassHealth enrollment assistance (with support from Health Care For All).
- **Documentary film screening and support** for obtaining a driver's license led

by experts from partner organizations. We are grateful to the many organizations who led workshops including M.I.C. partners Agencia ALPHA, Centro Comunitario de Trabajadores (CCT) and Metrowest Worker Center (Casa del Trabajador); and local organizations, ACLU of Massachusetts, Pioneer Valley Project, and Central West Justice Center. Community Legal Aid, the People's Medicine Project, the Western Massachusetts Asylum Support Network, Pescando Justicia from New Bedford, and Springfield No One



Leaves staffed tables and shared information, and partners Brazilian Worker Center and ICNA Relief provided support.

A big thank you to South Congregational Church for hosting us within their Center for Community, Mesa Buffet of Springfield for delicious Hispana-Spanish cuisine, and Fish Family Foundation for their generous financial support.

The Pioneer Valley Immigration Legal Services Conference exemplifies the power of collaboration in addressing the needs of immigrant communities, and we look forward to future opportunities to bring together community members and service providers for shared learning and growth.





COMMUNITY MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS

Our immigration legal services program continues to make a lasting impact on the lives of immigrants throughout Massachusetts. By providing consultations and full representation, we help families and individuals navigate complex immigration processes and achieve stability in their new lives. Monica and Marisabel share how they have benefited from these services.

Immigration Legal Services: Monica and Marisabel's Journey

Monica and her daughter, Marisabel, faced significant challenges when they arrived in the U.S. from Guatemala as refugees. Marisabel had been diagnosed with cancer, and the family struggled with both health and immigration issues. Through M.I.C.'s Centralized Immigration Legal Services, Agencia ALPHA DOJ Accredited Representative, Vilma Galvez provided free legal support to the family in their native language assisting them in applying for work permits and adjustment of their immigration statuses.

When they arrived in the US they didn't know how they would manage. Marisabel's treatments were expensive, and they were uncertain how to navigate the immigration process. Agencia ALPHA helped them apply for work permits and green cards. Monica shares, *"Having the support of people to do the process helped because we didn't have all the stress of the immigration paperwork [while in a health crisis]. [They] helped us minimize all that stress."*

Marisabel, now in recovery, has dreams for the future. *"I'd like to train to be a doctor, to help other people."* Monica added, *"We feel more*

secure ... and have a better quality of life, [and look forward to] establishing ourselves in a better way, economically, to have a house, to have more peace of mind and security, for all of us."

Monica and Marisabel's story is a testament to the life-changing power of legal expertise. With the right support, immigrant families can overcome barriers and achieve their dreams, despite daunting challenges.

M.I.C. is grateful to Agencia ALPHA and its other legal partners, Rian Immigrant Center, Immigrant Family Services Institute and Mabel Center for Immigrant Justice.

Emergency Assistance: Words from our community members

Emergency assistance remains a lifeline for people in urgent circumstances; providing food and enabling families to pay rent, medical bills, childcare and cover other essential needs. A few of our community members share the impact of this support on their families.

"I came here looking for a better future for my kids. It's been hard, we are living in a shelter but the services are limited. With this gift I can buy food and some clothing for them. Thank you." – A. Rodriguez

"Thank you for your gift. I will use it for transportation and childcare for my daughter while I look for work. We appreciate your generosity and we will use the money wisely." – E. Joseph

"Thanks to MIC's emergency assistance, I was able to get out of a hostile living situation and move into a safer place for both me and my grandchild." – Ms. Li



IMMIGRANT ECONOMIC RECOVERY INITIATIVE

A partnership between the Collaborative and the City of Boston Equity and Inclusion Cabinet, the **Immigrant Economic Recovery Initiative** is a year-long program empowering 200 participants to work toward financial sustainability. With support from a dedicated case manager, participants receive monthly basic needs assistance, opportunity cost funding for language and workforce training; and a household savings match. Fredeler, a program participant shares his experience in the program.

“Since [I’ve been] participating in this program my life is changing. I always have some money in my savings account. [The program] helps me overcome barriers and participate in life by providing [services] that help me develop my skills, build social connections, and access mainstream society. There is a great team, especially Gizelle Bombardier (case worker from Brazilian Worker Center). She is very supportive and always here whenever I need her assistance. I will be always grateful for having participated in this program from this important organization, and will be happy one day to serve back this team as I can. Thank you isn’t enough, thank you, thank you for all.”
-Fredeler L.

STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION

Thanks to grant funding from **Liberty Mutual Foundation** through its **Impact Driven Collaboration** program, M.I.C. and its 15 partners will work together to strengthen the foundation of our collaboration by more intentionally sharing skills and knowledge and improving structure; and increasing our impact on the community by collectively amplifying immigrant voices, supporting regional solidarity, relationship building, and service delivery impact. We believe that working in partnership with Liberty Mutual Foundation to strategically advance our collaborative goals, we can ensure that all partners contribute to a far-reaching future.

THANK YOU!

The Massachusetts Immigrant Collaborative is proud to have made a significant impact this year. As we look ahead, we remain dedicated to providing the tools, resources, and support that families need to build a stable and successful future. Thank you for your support of the immigrant community. Together, we can continue to make a lasting difference.



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You can learn more about our partners by visiting their websites.

[Agencia ALPHA](#)

[Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center](#)

[Boston International Newcomers Academy](#)

[Brazilian Worker Center](#)

[Caribbean Youth Club](#)

[Centro Comunitario de Trabajadores](#)

[Centro Presente](#)

[Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative](#)

[ICNA Relief](#)

[Immigrant Family Services Institute](#)

[MetroWest Workers Center: Casa](#)

[New North Citizen Council](#)

[Pioneer Valley Workers Center](#)

[Rian Immigrant Center](#)

[Sociedad Latina](#)