

Immigrants' Assistance Center receives \$75,000 in state funding for training classes

On Wednesday, Massachusetts Governor Charles Baker signed into law the FY 2020 budget which includes \$75,000 allocated for the Immigrants' Assistance Center (IAC). The IAC will use these funds to support citizenship and workforce readiness training classes.

In a first-of-its kind partnership, with capital support from the Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation, the IAC collaborated with MassHire Greater New Bedford Career Center to build a technology classroom and establish a Citizenship and Workforce Readiness Program. Clients attend technology-based language and civics classes until they are ready to apply for citizenship, and once citizenship is attained, are invited back to the classroom for computer-based job training. This program enables our new citizens to be job-ready, and for the companies in the area to have a viable candidate pool for their employees.

"The IAC is uniquely positioned to leverage these funds in support of immigrant families. There is no program in the SouthCoast that provides this start-to-finish service, designed to reduce barriers to economic mobility for new citizens and positively impact the region's work force," said Director of Development Kristin Batstone Morrissey.

The new funding will enable the IAC to respond to the current human services crisis around immigration by stepping up to meet the increased demand in clients seeking U.S. citizenship and better-paying jobs.

Advocacy from lawmakers made this funding possible. "We are deeply grateful to Sen. Mark Montigny, Chairman Michael

Rodrigues and Rep. Tony Cabral for their unwavering support of immigrant families and the IAC,” said Executive Director Helena DaSilva Hughes.