

# Building Our Dream

2015  
Annual  
Report



DREAM

SKILLS

COMMUNITY

TRUST



TEAM

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

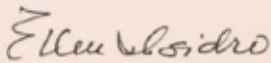
DEAR FRIENDS,  
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2015 was a spectacular year for our young organization, ending on a high note as we learned that we would receive the Bank of America 2015 Neighborhood Builders® award. This support will help us expand our mission of strengthening the whole community by actively enhancing the healthy integration of immigrants. This honor belongs to everyone in our organization – our clients, staff, volunteers, donors and friends. We thank all of you who have helped us in **building our dream**.

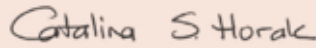
During the year, we made significant progress in developing our core programs – English as a Second Language, the Skills Development Program, our Worker Center, and our Family and Individual Support Services. As we continue this work, we see new opportunities in serving the growing number of immigrants from Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Our community is becoming more diverse, and we are committed to meeting the needs of these recent arrivals.

An ever-present reminder of our varied and vibrant community is our new mural, visible to everyone who steps through our front door. Designed by a Darien-based Mexican artist, it portrays immigrants coming to Stamford from many different parts of the world. Bringing the artist's design to life on the center's wall were over 200 volunteer "painters" representing more than 30 different countries, along with several of our elected officials.

Much like the mural, our success as an organization truly is a community effort. We are very grateful for your support in **building our dream**.



Ellen Isidro, Board Chair



Catalina Samper-Horak, Executive Director



VOLUNTEER MAEVE FLAHERTY WAS HONORED FOR HER WORK WITH US AT A JANUARY CEREMONY SPONSORED BY THE UNITED WAY OF WESTERN CONNECTICUT

*We bring passionate people together to help immigrants prosper in the community by giving them information, tools and resources needed to succeed.*

### A SNAPSHOT OF 2015

2,326

Active clients

1,014

Active ESL learners

706

People receiving Family and Individual Support Services

299

Participants in our employment and skills training programs

54

Countries represented among our clients



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CATALINA HORAK RECEIVES THE BANK OF AMERICA 2015 NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDERS® AWARD FROM CAROL J. HELLER, SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT MARKET MANAGER, ENTERPRISE BUSINESS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, AND WILLIAM R. TOMMINS, PRESIDENT, SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT, BANK OF AMERICA

## BANK OF AMERICA 2015 NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDERS® AWARD SUPPORTS EXPANDED PROGRAMS

We are so pleased to be one of just 61 select organizations across the country to be recognized with the Bank of America 2015 Neighborhood Builders® award. The multi-year award recognizes our significant accomplishments to date and provides both capacity building and financial support to help grow our organization over the next two years. In addition to these benefits, the award raises our profile among volunteers, donors and partners, opening opportunities to build and sustain our work.

The funds from the Neighborhood Builders® award will be used to develop and implement specific skill-based training programs for our students in culinary arts and personal care services, and to develop more employment-focused units for our English as a Second Language classes. The grant also will support the expansion of our current programs as we broaden our outreach to more completely serve the community. Along with the funding, we will have the opportunity to send key staff members to two leadership development programs sponsored by Bank of America.

Since its start in 2011, our organization has reached more than 5,500 immigrants in the Stamford area. Our purpose is to enhance the healthy integration of these individuals into the community. As Stamford Mayor David Martin noted at the awards ceremony, "This organization, more than any other, makes the American Dream real. This organization puts out the welcome mat to everyone."

In accepting the award, Executive Director Catalina Horak noted, "This award validates the importance of our mission. It recognizes that, in a community where 37% of the population is foreign-born and 40% of the children in public schools speak a language other than English at home, we need to address the unique barriers that immigrants face. The award recognizes our history as a country of immigrants and embraces it."

The Neighborhood Builders® award program is a signature philanthropic effort of Bank of America. Since founding the program in 2004, the bank has invested over \$6 million in Connecticut.

*"This organization, more than any other, makes the American Dream real. This organization puts out the welcome mat to everyone."*

*—Stamford Mayor David Martin*



A CULINARY SKILLS CLASS USES THE KITCHEN AT NEW COVENANT CENTER, ONE OF OUR PROGRAM PARTNERS

## BUILDING SKILLS

We help new immigrants prepare for jobs and careers in this country through our Skills Development Program and Worker Center. Our goal is to help immigrants find sustainable employment in local high-demand industries.

The Skills Development Program includes two tracks – culinary specialty and home health care. A key element is the apprenticeship module that helps our students develop their skills in an actual work

setting. The foundation of both tracks is a series of English as a Second Language classes with a vocational focus.

At the Worker Center, clients can find employment opportunities that make use of their skills and abilities. We help match their skills and experience to the requirements of employers seeking temporary help. We also conduct a targeted outreach program to potential employers who might hire our students either as apprentices or employees.



## COMPUTER CLASSES ARE TAUGHT BY VOLUNTEERS AT OUR COMMUNITY CENTER

In addition to specific vocational preparation, our Skills Development Program offers classes to help students build skills to sustain their employment. These classes are arranged in three modules – employability skills, which teach professional conduct in the workplace; job preparedness, which includes resume building and

interview skills; and professional development, which focuses on digital literacy and financial literacy. Taken together, these modules are designed to help our students maintain their positions and seek out additional opportunities for growth.

## BUILDING SKILLS



ONE OF OUR CLIENTS REVIEWS WAGE AND SAFETY REGULATIONS WITH A STAFF MEMBER

## BUILDING COMMUNITY

Through our Family and Individual Support Services Program, we provide many different kinds of services to help our clients settle into and navigate their new communities. We provide assistance to resolve issues connected to unpaid wages, immigration, housing and employment. Working with our partners, health exams, dental cleanings and flu shots are regularly scheduled at our site.

We participate in Connecticut's Drive Only program, helping our clients prepare to take the written test required to receive a Drive Only drivers license. We sponsor a required eight-hour safety course at our site. In addition, staff and volunteers assist with the online application for the license and registration for road tests.

We also host Family Nights and other festive events to bring immigrants and volunteers together as part of the larger community.



A PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE AT NEWFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WITH SOME OF OUR CLIENTS AND A STAFF TRANSLATOR

We connect parents with their children's schools, making sure that schools understand the needs of the families and that families understand how the educational system functions and what the schools expect of them. Parents receive support to understand how to help their children succeed academically and socially through several programs and activities held in partnership with the Stamford Public Schools.

For students, we host a Homework Help Club on weekdays to complete and review lessons from the day. Volunteers are available to assist the children.

During the summer months, we sponsor a reading program that brings students and their parents together with teachers from local schools to read and discuss grade-appropriate books.

**BUILDING  
COMMUNITY**



STAMFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT MEMBERS JOIN SOME OF OUR CLIENTS IN A FRIENDLY GAME OF POOL

## BUILDING TRUST

We have constructive relationships with the Stamford Police Department and the City of Stamford, as well as local immigration attorneys and other community leaders. These associations benefit our community at many levels. We work collaboratively with senior officials from the city, addressing issues that affect the community we serve. Police officers attend our programs, from community

presentations to Family Nights. They often stop in to chat for a few minutes while on patrol in the neighborhood. These visits are very effective in developing the community's perceptions of police officers and other city officials, and enhancing their willingness to interact with each other.





## BUILDING OUR TEAM

We give thanks to the more than 50 local partner organizations, and to the over 300 volunteers who help us achieve our mission of immigrant integration. Their commitment to our clients is an inspiration to all of us.



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Faustina Aquino  
Ana Maria Badash  
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Please excuse any  
errors or omissions.



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Please excuse any errors or omissions.

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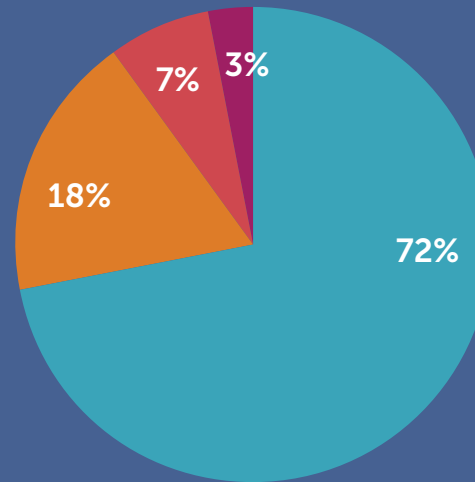
# OUR FINANCIAL PICTURE

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As of December 31, 2015

ASSETS	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$511,768
Grants and pledges receivable	\$9,580
Other	\$15,889
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$537,237</b>
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	
Accounts payable & accrued wages	\$22,977
NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted	\$365,926
Temporarily restricted	\$148,334
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$514,260</b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$537,237</b>

## SOURCES OF FUNDS

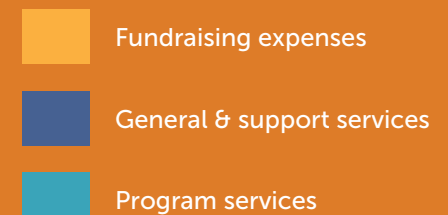
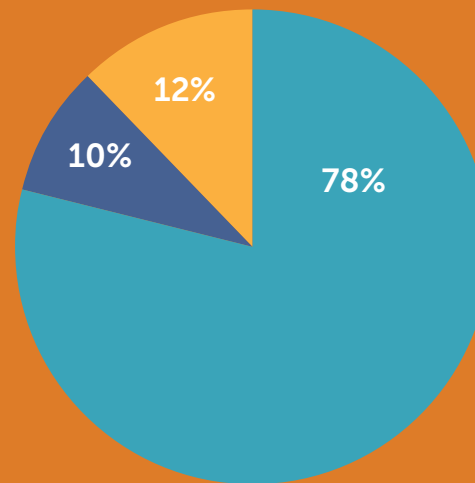


## PROFIT & LOSS

As of December 31, 2015

INCOME	
Individual contributions	\$307,161
Foundation grants	\$268,909
Event income	\$155,359
Other income	\$56,294
Total cash income	\$787,723
Donated goods & services	\$52,863
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$840,586</b>
EXPENSES	
Program services	\$553,248
General & supporting services	\$73,588
Fundraising expenses	\$86,736
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$713,572</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$127,014</b>

## ALLOCATION OF FUNDS





Visitors to our building cannot help but notice the beautiful mural that covers a large portion of one wall in our front room. Creating the mural was truly a community effort, involving over 200 people from 30 countries.

Mexican-born artist Maria Esther Magallanes worked with project manager Michelle Saldivar to develop ideas for the mural. They spoke to clients, staff and volunteers, and researched Stamford's history in the process of determining what to include in the mural, which depicts the hopes of immigrants coming to Stamford and their sometimes long journeys to reach our city.

To create the "canvas," Magallanes' sketch was projected onto the wall, traced and divided into many small sections that could be painted by people who came in to the facility. Everyone became an artist, with each painter also leaving a handprint and signature next to the mural. Examining those signatures reveals celebrity artists such as Stamford Mayor David Martin and Police Chief Jonathan Fontneau, Senator Richard Blumenthal and Representative Jim Himes. The painters indicated their countries of origin along with their names, so the mural also shows the variety of places from which Stamford immigrants have come.

## MURAL EXPRESSES COMMUNITY

ALL ARE WELCOME TO COME AND VISIT OUR MASTERPIECE



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## NEIGHBORS LINK STAMFORD

75 Selleck Street, Stamford, CT 06902  
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