Immigrant and Refugee Integration and Policy Development Working Group

Final Report

DECEMBER 2017

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OVERVIEW

The Immigrant and Refugee Integration and Policy Development Working Group was formed in August 2016 to:

- Identify and inventory immigrant and refugee services available in the community, including referral and support mechanisms for new arrivals;
- Identify the needs of the current immigrant and refugee community that are not being met by service providers or advocacy or community groups;
- Identify possible funding streams from Federal and State agencies that can address on-going and unmet immigrant and refugee needs;
- Identify and utilize city, school, and community resources, including those of the business community, to encourage employment/entrepreneurship within the immigrant and refugee community; and
- Make recommendations to the Lewiston City Council and to assist with policy development in relation to the tasks identified above.

Membership of the Working Group was appointed by Mayor Robert Macdonald (see Appendix A) and was representative of the various stakeholders facing, or involved in managing, issues related to the immigrant and refugee communities. The Working Group was chaired by Lewiston City Council President Kristen Cloutier and was staffed by Deputy City Administrator Phil Nadeau (now retired).

NOTE: Phil Nadeau had been the liaison between the City of Lewiston and our immigrant and refugee communities since the first arrivals began migrating to the city. In his role as Deputy City Administrator, he worked closely with these populations to address needs as they presented themselves. His vast knowledge was invaluable as the Working Group navigated the process of its work.

This report provides some of the critical information necessary to assist the City of Lewiston, and the various non-profit agencies in the area, in tracking the issues and challenges facing the immigrant and refugee populations that now reside within our community. It also presents meeting takeaways, best practices, and recommendations for consideration by the Lewiston City Council and various non-profit agencies in the area, on how to assist in meeting the needs that are currently going unmet. The information contained within this report is not meant to provide a comprehensive or detailed compilation, as the scope of the material is quite broad. The intent is to inform, educate, and identify areas of particular concern on a variety of issues relevant to the immigrant and refugee populations.

It is important to note that while this working group was focused on the lived experience of immigrants and refugees in our community, we learned valuable lessons about how our community programs are working for all of its residents. This process has provided an opportunity to make various governmental and organizational systems work better for everyone.

It shall be the purview of the Lewiston City Council, and the various non-profit agencies in the area working on these issues, to determine which of the presented best practices and recommendations are appropriate for implementation and to create a process for implementation.

PROCESS

The Working Group held its first meeting on September 7, 2016, at which Council President Cloutier provided an overview of the Working Group's purpose, composition and term. It was decided that outreach to groups not currently represented within the Working Group's membership would be pursued. After much discussion, the following topics were selected as the primary areas of focus for the group:

- Workforce Development and Employment
- Language Access
- Healthcare
- Family Relationships, Corrections, and Juvenile Justice
- Higher Education
- Food, Housing, Income Support, Legal Services, and Transportation
- Refugee Resettlement
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse
- Banking and Finance, and
- Public Education and Afterschool Programming.

At its second meeting on September 15, 2016, the Working Group decided that it would meet bi-weekly on Thursdays, and compiled a list of presenters for each of the topic areas identified above. It was also decided that once the initial presentation phase of the meetings was completed in early March 2017, the Working Group would convene weekly on Wednesdays (a change from Thursdays to accommodate various schedules) for Community Involvement meetings. At these meetings, Working Group members were invited to bring members of the community to share their stories and concerns on the topics listed above to help the Working Group formulate

recommendations based upon the information collected through the presentation phase. If community members were unable to attend, Working Group members shared concerns on their behalf. These meetings continued through the end of April. All meetings were open to the public.

Working with a Short Term Action/Research Team (STA/RT) Fellow from Bates College, the Working Group began the final phase of its work on April 26, 2017, in drafting the final report. Notes and agendas from all previous meetings were shared on an overhead projector to help guide the discussion. The first section drafts of the final report were submitted by the STA/RT Fellow throughout May and the summer of 2017, and individual Working Group members took responsibility for further refining specific sections of the report. Drafts were shared with presenters and various other community partners throughout the fall of 2017 to confirm that the information contained in the report was accurate and presented a fair representation of current needs.

The final report was completed and submitted to the City of Lewiston in December 2017.

A complete list of Working Group members can be found in Appendix A.

A complete schedule of meetings can be found in Appendix B.

This report is organized by topic area. Meeting takeaways and best practices are offered in each topic area. The report concludes with general recommendations to the Lewiston City Council.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding this report, please feel free to contact Denis D'Auteuil, Deputy City Administrator, for clarification or additional information at 207-513-3000 ext. 3201, fax 207-795-5069, TTY/TDD 207-513-3007, ddauteuil@lewistonmaine.gov.

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Workforce Development and Employment

Meeting date: October 6, 2016

Presenters: Stefanie Trice Gill, Cross-Cultural Systems Consulting; Mary LaFontaine, State of Maine CareerCenter

Employment represents a significant opportunity for recent immigrants and refugees to integrate into their new communities and contribute to the Maine economy. According to Cross-Cultural Systems Consultant Stefanie Trice Gill, as the state's population grows older and declines, the high rates of retirement pose potentially severe challenges to the workforce. She explained that it is imperative that the State recruits large numbers of qualified employees to fill available positions. Trice Gill shared, and the 2017 Maine Chamber of Commerce report, *Maine's Labor Shortage: New Mainers and Diversity* confirms, that the increase of immigrants and refugees to Maine over the past 15 years provides hope for mitigating the effects of the state's aging population and diminishing workforce. Following the 2008 economic recession, employers are seeking people to meet their job criteria and are increasingly considering immigrants and refugees to fill positions. For immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers who come to the United States with high levels of education, there remain barriers to finding employment in their fields. These barriers may include English language abilities, lack of recognition of prior education and degrees, cultural differences, and work visas. Local programs designed to place skilled immigrants into their job fields have the potential to drastically improve economic productivity in Maine, as well as ease the process of resettlement for immigrants and refugees. The growing and largely untapped immigrant labor pool represents a significant opportunity for revitalizing Maine's economy.

According to the 2017 Maine Chamber of Commerce report, new immigrants and their children are anticipated to account for 83% of growth in the U.S. workforce between 2000 and 2050. This statistic is promising for Maine given the state's aging and declining population, and greater effort must be placed on attracting "people from other states and countries" to grow Maine's population and workforce. However, as the writers of the report indicate, to incentivize immigrant

participation in the Maine economy, "we need to be receptive to the fact that many of the people who will grow our population, workforce, and economy will look different than most of us and have different backgrounds and cultures."[1]

Current Employment Services in the Lewiston Community

Efforts are underway in the Lewiston community to increase employment access for immigrants and refugees. Several area employers, including Staff Management, Aramark, L.L. Bean, Barber Foods, Pionite, Labor Ready, Central Maine Meats, Commonwealth Poultry, Cozy Harbor Seafood, the Harraseeket Inn, Clover Manor, Conform, St. Mary's Regional Medical Center, HW Staffing, Central Maine Medical Center, TJ Maxx, J.C. Penney, Kohl's, Lowe's, Home Depot, BJ's Wholesale Club, Wal-Mart (both retail and distribution), K-Mart, Hannaford, Shaw's, Belanger Farms, Pineland Farms, and Goodwill, have adopted practices and policies to hire and support a diversified workforce. Anecdotal evidence provided by the Lewiston CareerCenter and through community perception suggests that the practice of hiring immigrants and refugees has improved significantly over the past 15 years.

NOTE: There has not been a comprehensive study of refugee/immigrant employment since *An Analysis of the Employment Patterns of Somali Immigrants to Lewiston from 2001 through 2006*, a report written in 2008 by Amanda Rector, Economist at the Maine State Planning Office, and published by the Center for Workforce Research and Information, Maine Department of Labor, and the Maine State Planning Office. This report provided the first attempt at creating verifiable employment data for immigrants employed in the Lewiston-Auburn job market. An updated study on this topic would be incredibly useful.

A variety of community-based and corporate-sponsored services are credited for increasing employment opportunities among immigrants and refugees. Job training programs, including the paid apprenticeship program offered by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) in Lewiston, help prepare employees to find good-paying jobs, which align with their skills and interests. Additionally, according to Mary LaFontaine of the Lewiston CareerCenter, the Center serves as an important resource for people searching for employment. The Center offers help on job applications (both online and on paper), provides funding for job training, hosts regular job fairs, and collaborates with the Adult Education Center to offer training programs specifically for immigrants and refugees. Committed to ensuring services are available to members of the immigrant and refugee communities, these organizations hire interpreters, in addition to relying on Google Translate and other web-based translation programs, to increase language access (see next section). As LaFontaine noted, federal funds for on-the-job training are available and can reimburse up to 50% of wages to employers while skills are developed around a specific position (4-26 weeks depending upon the complexity of the job).

In addition, Lewiston Adult Education has continued to refine English Language curriculum that offers contextualized learning. As students learn to read and speak in English, the curriculum materials focus on job skills acquisition and career exploration. Students learn to complete job

[1] *Maine's Labor Shortage: New Mainers and Diversity* - 2016

applications and to understand basic workforce safety and cultural expectations. In 2010, LAE collaborated with partner agencies and local employers to develop the New Mainer's Workforce Readiness Program. This program identified the skills and competencies for employment targeted for the immigrant and refugee populations. Successful completion of the program results in an earned New Mainer Work Readiness credential. The goal of LAE is for all academic classes to integrate basic skills education, civics, and workforce skills training so students are preparing for specific employment opportunities as they are building their English skills. This type of integration has been developed for the following industries: customer service; office skills; healthcare (CNA); and construction.

Best Practices:
The following best practices were drawn from *Moving into the Fastlane: Understanding Refugee Upward Mobility in the Context of Resettlement*, a report by Faith Nibbs at the Forced Migration Upward Mobility Project.[2]

1. "Strengthen the employer connection between newcomer populations and living-wage industry shortages."
2. "Create programs that more uniformly aid service providers in understanding the capacities and skill sets of refugees and how they can be transitioned into living-wage career trajectories."
3. "Create career-laddering seminars for refugees one year post-arrival, where they can be introduced to the variety of living-wage opportunities in the U.S., the steps needed to move into them, and the resources available to help get them there."
4. "Strengthen and facilitate better information channels about living-wage opportunities to new arrivals. Early employers of refugees should present them with a clear picture of career-laddering opportunities available at that job, the concrete steps needed to reach each rung, the wages an employee can reasonably expect to make at each level, and the approximate time it takes to advance into them."
5. "Strengthen and facilitate refugee organizations as intentional repositories for employment and career laddering information. Important information often bypasses these organizations in favor of Workforce Development offices, which refugees are unlikely to visit and where they are unlikely to be culturally understood."

Meeting Takeaways:

- An inventory documenting the number of languages now spoken in the community would be beneficial. This could be followed up with a needs assessment.
- Immigrants and refugees would benefit from courses on writing skills and pronunciation.
- Mentorship programs that connect foreign-trained and American-born professionals would help to foster relationships within the community.
- A marketing plan would help to increase awareness about apprenticeships in general.
- Mentorships and internships with local businesses would be beneficial.

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[2] *Moving into the Fastlane: Understanding Refugee Upward Mobility in the Context of Resettlement* - 2016

- A local business-to-business mentorship program that focuses on hiring practices and shared experiences would be helpful to those companies trying to diversify their workforces.

Language Access

Meeting date: October 20, 2016

Presenters: Linda St. Andre, Lewiston Public Schools; Jenny Cowie, St. Mary's Regional Medical Center

NOTE: Bill Grant, Director of Lewiston Adult Education, is a member of the Working Group and provided insight on Language Access related to Workforce Development and Employment.

English language skills are fundamental for immigrants and refugees transitioning into their new communities, ensuring that they receive accurate information, empowering them to become active agents in the integration process, and allowing for greater access to education, citizenship, employment, healthcare, and other resources. English Language Learning (ELL) services are offered through Lewiston Adult Education at the Adult Learning Center. In addition to ELL opportunities, interpretation services also represent an important avenue for language access. While children and adolescents are required to learn English in school, their parents/guardians and other adults may face more difficulty learning English and must rely on effective translation services to receive and relay information. ELL programs are time consuming and typically costly. According to the 2007 report, *Adult English Language in the United States: Determining Need and Investing Wisely*, on average, 110 hours of instruction are needed to advance one level in English ability.[3] By placing greater attention on the improvement of ELL and interpretation programs offered in the Lewiston community, both immigrants and refugees and other populations of Mainers serve to benefit from the increased efficiency of local resources and programs. The following section is broken down by language services relevant to healthcare and workforce development and employment.

Language Access Related to Healthcare

In the realm of healthcare, English language access is paramount to ensuring safe and quality medical care for immigrants and refugees. St. Mary's Regional Medical Center in Lewiston is among the local health care providers committed to providing language services to non-English

[3] *Adult English Language in the United States: Determining Need and Investing Wisely* – 2007

speaking individuals. As stated by Jenny Cowie, Coordinator of Volunteer and Interpreter Services at St. Mary's, "effective communication is the cornerstone of patient safety." This commitment is reflected in a variety of interpreting services to meet patient needs, including in-person interpretation, cultural brokers, language lines, video interpretation and pen and paper interpretation.[4] Although in-person interpretation is always preferred, given the large number of languages spoken in the community, St. Mary's also relies on contracted language services, including in-video services, to fill the interpretation gap. Individuals who wish to become an interpreter need to attend a 12-hour basic interpreting course through Southern Maine Community College and then complete a medical interpreting training course of at least 48 hours. When hiring interpreters, St. Mary's prefers individuals who have cultural brokering experience, however, not all interpreters at St. Mary's possess the cultural brokering qualification. In an effort to improve interpretation and communication options for clients, local healthcare providers, including St. Mary's, rely on local resources such as the Lewiston CareerCenter to further develop interpretation services.

Ensuring clear and effective communication in healthcare settings serves to benefit immigrants and refugees as well as the broader Lewiston population. Health literacy, defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human services as "the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions," is influenced by factors including communication skills on the part of the patient and healthcare professionals, relative knowledge of health topics, cultural differences and general situational demands.[5] In Maine, health literacy issues affect other populations of Mainers and immigrant and refugee populations alike, and steps must be taken to improve communication between providers and patients to reduce the risk of preventable adverse outcomes. As explained in the Joint Commission report, *"What Did the Doctor Say?:" Improving Health Literacy to Protect Patient Safety,* "if a patient does not understand the implications of her or his diagnosis and the importance of prevention and treatment plans, or cannot access health care services because of communications problems, an untoward event may occur."[6] Literacy issues are prevalent among Americans, and according to the report "about half of the U.S. adult population has difficulty using text to accomplish everyday tasks." These issues may be even more pronounced in places like Androscoggin County, whose high school graduation rates are below the state average (80.6% of people living in Androscoggin County have graduated high school).[7] A focus on improving the clarity and accessibility of all healthcare-related materials and services has the potential to greatly serve both the immigrant and refugee populations as well as the broader community.

Best Practices:

The following best practices were drawn from the federal *Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS)* standards.[8]

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[4] St. Mary's Regional Medical Center interpreter services handout (Appendix C)

[5] https://health.gov/communication/literacy/quickguide/factsbasic.htm

[6] *"What Did the Doctor Say?:" Improving Health Literacy to Protect Patient Safety* - 2007

[7] http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/phdata/SHNAPP/documents/county-reports/whole-reports/Maine%20Shared%20CHNA%20ANDROSCOGGIN%20County%20Report-2-29-16.pdf

[8] REACH materials (Appendix D)

1. "Offer language assistance to individuals who have limited English proficiency and/or other communication needs, at no cost to them, to facilitate timely access to all health care and services."
2. "Inform all individuals of the availability of language assistance services clearly and in their preferred language, verbally and in writing."
3. "Ensure the competence of individuals providing language assistance, recognizing that the use of untrained individuals and/or minors as interpreters should be avoided."
4. "Provide easy-to-understand print and multimedia materials and signage in the languages commonly used by the populations in the service area."

The following best practices were drawn from "*What Did the Doctor Say?:" Improving Health Literacy to Protect Patient Safety*, a report from The Joint Commission.[9]

1. "Make effective communications an organizational priority to protect the safety of patients."
2. "Address patients' communication needs across the continuum of care."
3. "Pursue policy changes that promote improved practitioner-patient communications."

Meeting Takeaways:

- In-person interpretation is the most effective form of interpretation, and all efforts should be made to provide it as often as possible.
- The Lewiston CareerCenter could be a resource for developing more interpretation resources in healthcare.

Language Access Related to Workforce Development and Employment

English language skills pose a significant challenge for immigrants and refugees seeking to enter the workforce, and employers may be initially hesitant to hire immigrants and refugees due to language-related concerns. Although translators are often used during the interview process, some employers are apprehensive about the difficulties English language learners may face once hired in regard to understanding instructions and completing tasks. English skills are essential for ensuring safe and effective job performance, especially for jobs that require specific safety precautions such as cleaning, manufacturing, and construction positions. While on-the-job training and other language access programs offered through the Lewiston CareerCenter and other local organizations represent a significant step forward for employment-related language access, greater coordination is needed between employers and service providers to increase job prospects for immigrants and refugees.

Best Practices:

The following best practices were drawn from *Moving into the Fastlane: Understanding Refugee Upward Mobility in the Context of Resettlement*, a report by Faith Nibbs at the Forced Migration Upward Mobility Project.[10]

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[9] *"What Did the Doctor Say?:" Improving Health Literacy to Protect Patient Safety* - 2007

[10] *Moving into the Fastlane: Understanding Refugee Upward Mobility in the Context of Resettlement* - 2016

1. *"Integrate living-wage training programs with vocation-specific language and literacy services and create clear pathways for refugees to take advantage of them upon arrival."
2. "Utilize existing technologies to deliver skill and language training or employment opportunities to refugees. Smart phones are widely used by refugees but are an underutilized tool that could deliver and translate career-laddering information to newcomers."
3. "Address resource gaps and approaches that facilitate paths to entrepreneurship for limited language speakers."

*The State of Washington currently runs an "iBEST model," where the ELL and vocation instructors team-teach trainings. Lewiston Adult Education (LAE) is very interested in implementing this model, but does not have the funding to hire two instructors for each course. However, even with this barrier, LAE is using the Integration of Education and Training (IET) model to help students move along a career pathway more quickly through contextualized curriculums and work readiness standards built into class expectations.

Meeting Takeaways:

- ESOL numbers are increasing at Lewiston Adult Education. This could lead to an increased need in personnel.
- Volunteers from Bates College and the General Assistance (GA) program provide invaluable resources at Lewiston Adult Education. Many GA volunteers speak multiple languages and have a remarkable work ethic. Efforts should be made to increase these partnerships whenever possible.

Healthcare

Meeting date: November 17, 2016

Presenters: Joan Churchill, Community Clinical Services; Abdulkerim Said, New Mainers Public Health Initiative; Mary Schneckenburger, Consumers for Affordable Healthcare; Holly Lasagna, Healthy Androscoggin

Ensuring access to quality and affordable healthcare for immigrants and refugees in Lewiston is fundamental for continued success with integration. Over the years, some healthcare providers and community-based public health organizations have come together in an effort to make health services more accessible and relevant to the immigrant and refugee populations. The major focus of these initiatives has included increasing the cultural competency of healthcare providers, raising awareness and education about preventative care and chronic disease management, and ensuring access to affordable healthcare services. While significant steps have been taken to improve the healthcare experience for immigrants and refugees in Lewiston, there remains room for growth in the provision of culturally competent care, health insurance coverage, access to preventative care, geriatric care, and funding for local healthcare-focused organizations.

Various organizations in Lewiston and throughout the state are dedicated to improving healthcare access for all Maine residents, including immigrants and refugees. Community Clinical Services, Inc. (CCS), an independently run non-profit healthcare provider associated with St. Mary's Regional Medical Center, is among the local healthcare organizations committed to serving people regardless of citizenship status and income. CCS offers outpatient medical, dental, pediatric, and mental health counseling and psychiatry at 15 locations throughout the Lewiston-Auburn area. CCS does not inquire about citizenship status as a prerequisite to care. If a person has no health insurance, or high deductibles/co-pays, a sliding fee scale is available for household income below 200% of the federal poverty level. If a household has income below 100% of the federal poverty level, the services are discounted 100% (free). It is important to note that both St. Mary's Regional Medical Center and Central Maine Medical Center will provide care to anyone requiring immediate medical attention regardless of income or residency.

Consumers for Affordable Health Care (CAHC)
CAHC is an advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring access to affordable and quality healthcare state-wide. The organization, which is predominantly grant funded, focuses on legislative advocacy, outreach, and education through their extensive online library of healthcare information. CAHC also administers a confidential Consumer Assistance Helpline, which is available state-wide to assist people with questions regarding the Affordable Care Act, MaineCare, Medicare, and programs for the uninsured. Services are provided free of charge, and the organization also offers language line options. While their services are intended for both native Mainers and immigrants and refugees, CAHC is currently engaged in targeted outreach to the state's immigrant and refugee populations to further increase awareness about their services.

Healthy Androscoggin (HA) REACH
The Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) program through HA is an initiative aimed at improving the cultural competency of local healthcare and wellness organizations. Through partnerships with a variety of community organizations, REACH has improved the ways in which healthcare services are provided and chronic disease is managed in a culturally appropriate way among the immigrant and refugee populations. As stated on the HA website, "reaching African New Mainer populations requires resources beyond clinical expertise, including an awareness of cultural and linguistic differences and strategies to increase cultural competence."[11] Current partnerships include collaboration with the B Street Community Health Center, Bedard's Pharmacy (developing pictographs for drug compliance and safety), the YWCA (offering culturally appropriate physical activities such as single gender swim classes and walking groups), Central Maine Medical Center, St. Mary's Regional Medical Center, United Ambulance (collecting culturally appropriate data for the Home Visitors Program), and Seniors Plus (working on developing an off-site halal, multicultural dining facility). In addition, HA has produced a series of videos for the REACH website and a YouTube channel to help immigrant and refugee patients navigate the healthcare system, and to provide healthcare organizations with additional tools to improve cultural competency. The REACH web site (www.healthyandroscoggin.org/REACH) contains numerous resources for providers including culture-specific healthcare information, cultural competency training materials, and videotapes to help both providers and immigrants and refugees improve access to care. REACH programs have trained over 750 clinical staff and community members on best practices for creating culturally competent programs, services, and resources. HA is the only Maine organization to receive a United States Center for Disease Control REACH grant for a project focused on improving cultural sensitivity and competency in healthcare. The grant extends for four years and will begin its final year in October 2017. HA is hoping to renew funding when the initial grant concludes.

New Mainers Public Health Initiative (NMPHI)
NMPHI is an ethnic community-based organization that focuses on reducing health inequalities between new and native Mainers, and educating the community about the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH). Their mission is to empower, advocate, inform, and educate immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers about preventive health measures through the promotion of healthy

[11] http://www.healthyandroscoggin.org/projects/health-reachers/

habits and the development of community partnerships to identify and solve health problems, thereby bridging the gap in health equity and reducing racial health inequalities. NMPHI strongly believes in education, advocacy, and empowerment to help immigrants and refugees reach their highest potential to live a healthy life. Their weekend educational classes focus on educating the community on health issues such as women's health, developmental delay among youth, and the dangers of lead contaminated housing. Their health literacy programs include: Autism Awareness for New Mainers; a New Mainers Wellness Program; Arabic Public Health Awareness; French Public Health Awareness; and an Aspirational Program for New Mainer Youth (touring colleges and universities, providing support for navigating the healthcare field in higher education, and teaching leadership skills). NMPHI offers services including targeted case management and rehabilitative community support for individuals with intellectual and developmental delays, and is dedicated to promoting preventative care habits, increasing education and awareness of certain diseases, improving the cultural competency of local healthcare providers, and facilitating greater communication between immigrants and refugees and healthcare providers to raise awareness of immigrant and refugee health needs.[12] Since it's founding in 2014, NMPHI has grown extensively, and is in the process of seeking Maine DHHS certification for its influential Community Health Workers (CHW) program. As defined by the Maine Migrant Health Program, the Community Health Worker position is a "frontline public health worker who is a trusted member of and/or who has an unusually close understanding of the community served. This trusting relationship enables the CHW to serve as a liaison/link/intermediary between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and to improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery." The CHW position represents an invaluable service in the realm of healthcare for bridging cultural barriers between immigrants and refugees and native Mainers. In the case of NMPHI, CHWs are engaged in the organization's principal initiatives, including in recent efforts to increase awareness about autism and related support services within the Somali community (as the word 'autism' does not exist in the Somali language).

Barriers to Healthcare Access

The greatest barriers to healthcare access for immigrants and refugees, as indicated through information provided to the Working Group, include a lack of health insurance, cost of services, challenges and miscommunication related to cultural competency, and a need for greater education surrounding chronic disease, behavioral conditions and preventative care. Additionally, cuts to the MaineCare budget pose a serious threat to affordable healthcare access in the state, especially for low-income, immigrant, and refugee Mainers.

Best Practices:

The following best practices were drawn from *Opportunities for Maximizing Revenue and Access to Care for Immigrant Populations*, a report by Sonal Ambegaokar of the National Health Law Program (NHeLP), Partnership for Public Health Law.[13]

1. "Educate and outreach to immigrant communities to allay fears and encourage the use of

[12] http://nmphi.org/about-us/

[13] *Opportunities for Maximizing Revenue and Access to Care for Immigrant Populations* - 2015

all available public health services."

2. "Assess and train clinic staff, enrollment assisters, and providers to address gaps in knowledge about immigrants."
3. "Review current forms or applications to make sure only necessary information is requested to avoid deterring immigrant patients from applying or seeking care."
4. "Strengthen privacy policies regarding patient information as well as access to facilities."
5. "Increase screening and use of Emergency Medicaid for outpatient services."
6. "Increase cultural competence and language access capacity."

Meeting Takeaways:

- Increase healthcare education outreach to improve communication to the immigrant and refugee communities.
- Improve publicity for healthcare services in Lewiston and provide more information on how to access those services (including the Free Care program).
- Support increased funding and reimbursements for Community Health Workers.
- Support the REACH guidelines (Appendix D).
- Provide free preventive dental care to all student populations, from elementary schools through the high school, through T.F.I. (Tooth Fairies).
- Organizations need to collect data and show outcomes in relation to the services being offered within the community.
- Utilize Behavioral Home Health organizations to reduce ER visits and to provide health coaching and preventative services.

Family Relationships, Corrections, and Juvenile Justice

Meeting date: December 1, 2016

Presenters: Rilwan Osman, Maine Immigrant and Refugee Services; Jay Pennell, Maine Department of Corrections; Jerome Bennett, Maine Department of Corrections; Edho Mukendi, social worker; Shobow (Khasin) Saban, Mecca Abdi, Madina Abdi, and Muhumed (Elmoge) Abdi, community members

Immigrant and refugee youth of color can experience repeat encounters with the American juvenile justice system due in part to a lack of understanding around the way the system works. Youth contact is rarely isolated and a series of court summonses, arrests, and detentions all carry significant consequences often lasting into adulthood. Attention must be paid to bridging the gap between youth, their families, and the juvenile justice system in both minor and more severe cases. While part of the solution to prevent and improve youth encounters with law enforcement and the justice system must be aimed directly at reforming the legal institutions themselves, strengthening family relationships, and providing youth with accessible programming is essential to promoting healthy youth development. There are several organizations in the Lewiston community that provide culturally appropriate afterschool and co-curricular programming for local immigrant and refugee youth. However, our traditional institutions, such as our school systems and law enforcement agencies, need to do more to educate parents and guardians of their rights and responsibilities to aid in prevention of these encounters. The following section addresses the realities of juvenile justice in Lewiston as well the current state of family relationships and youth development in the community.

Juvenile Justice

Both the Maine Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Lewiston Police Department collect data on youth infraction rates within the city. In 2016, data indicated that around 240 students were arrested or charged, a decrease from 331 charges in 2015. Of youth arrested in Lewiston, including students of color, it is difficult to determine if immigrant and refugee youth are disproportionally represented in these statistics because data between the two agencies is not

collected uniformly. Youth arrests are categorized either as a court summons or an arrest, and most offenders are not taken into custody. While court summonses are more frequent than arrests for youth offenders, failure to appear for a court date results in the issuance of an arrest warrant, escalating the severity of the consequences and creating greater complications in resolving the charges. Encounters with the Maine DOC, while challenging for most youth and their families, are particularly so for immigrant and refugee youth due to the DOC's lack of cultural competency. The Maine DOC is in the process of making their services more culturally appropriate and currently utilize ethnic-based treatments and provide cultural and linguistic brokers when necessary.

Family Relationships

Maine Immigrant and Refugee Services (MEIRS) is one Lewiston organization centered on family education and youth programming for immigrants and refugees. Located on the second floor of the B-Street Community Center and at their new location at 256 Bartlett Street, MEIRS offers a variety of youth and family programs, classes, and services. In regards to juvenile justice, MEIRS provides important resources to aid in the prevention and improvement of immigrant and refugee youth encounters with the law. The organization believes that culturally competent family education and involvement is the key to preventing youth entrance into the juvenile justice system, and has identified a breakdown in communication between immigrant and refugee youth and their parents/guardians due to generational language and cultural barriers. MEIRS aims to bridge differences between youth and parents/guardians, as well as between families and the legal system, and is able to provide cultural brokers, interpreters, psychological care, and case management to anyone who needs it. Most notably, MEIRS strives to reduce the number of reports made to DHHS in Lewiston by promoting positive change in family relationships, and providing education on discipline and care of immigrant and refugee children**.**

Best Practices:

The following best practices were drawn from *Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Juvenile Justice Systems: Promising Practices*, a report from the National Juvenile Justice Network.[14]

1. "Engage juvenile justice professionals and diverse members of the community in addressing racial and ethnic disparities."
2. "Collect data regularly and use it to guide decision-making."
3. "Use structured decision-making tools."
4. "Develop more community-based alternatives."
5. "Enhance cultural and linguistic competence."
    a. "Develop culturally competent programs and services."
    b. "Train juvenile justice professionals."
    c. "Break down language barriers."
6. "Improve youth-police relationships."

[14] *Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Juvenile Justice Systems: Promising Practices* - 2014

Meeting Takeaways:

- Combine values, culture, religion, and morals from home countries with what is interpreted as good American values. The mosque can help, but it does not always appeal to youth. Some youth are caught between the values of their home country and American values.
- Develop a more formal recruitment process to integrate members of our refugee and immigrant populations into our police, fire, and other municipal departments.
- Expand family education and programming through Ethnic Community-Based Organizations (ECBOs) to keep youth from entering the juvenile justice system.
- ECBOs have the cultural awareness and competency necessary to provide afterschool programming to immigrant and refugee youth for those families that would prefer this type of program.
- More data is needed to establish whether disproportionate minority contact is an issue in Lewiston separate from Androscoggin County and to determine where in the juvenile justice process it is presenting itself.

Higher Education

Meeting date: December 15, 2016
Presenters: Joyce Gibson, University of Southern Maine, Lewiston-Auburn College; Barbara Bixby, University of Southern Maine; Grimes Williams, Central Maine Community College; Abdimalik Maalim, Central Maine Community College; Maggie Davis, College for ME – Androscoggin; Darby Ray, Harward Center for Community Partnerships, Bates College

Access to higher education in Lewiston represents unique opportunities and challenges, especially for members of the immigrant and refugee communities. Attending college or other higher education programs often increases immigrant students' employment options and earning potential. However, there are many language, cultural, and financial barriers that prevent immigrants and refugees from enrolling in two- and four-year higher education institutions. It is important that the concept of higher education and the realities of attending be introduced to immigrant students at a young age to provide greater clarity around the process and to increase their desire to enroll in college, particularly in the Lewiston area. Promoting higher education options in the local area serves to strengthen ties between immigrant and refugee students and the greater Lewiston community. A variety of institutions and local colleges including Kaplan University, Maine College of Health Professions, University of Southern Maine's Lewiston Auburn College, Central Maine Community College, and Bates College all serve to connect members of the immigrant and refugee communities to opportunities for higher education in the area.

In addition, the Maine College Transitions Program (MCT), offered through Lewiston Adult Education and expanded to include Auburn and RSU #16 Adult Education, helps prepare students for the rigors of post-secondary education. MCT, a grant-funded program that allows students to enroll for free, is designed to help students prepare for, get accepted to, and be successful in college. This program provides a comprehensive review of reading, writing, and math in a college-style setting. All MCT students take a pre- and post-ACCUPLACER test (a college placement test that evaluates students' skills in reading, writing, and math) to document their

academic growth with the goal of eliminating enrollment in remedial courses. It also provides assistance with the college application process, financial aid issues, study habits, time management, career pathways, and post-secondary campus tours. Many students, including ESOL learners, have found this program helpful in providing the skills and confidence needed to succeed at the post-secondary level.

Issues Related to College Access

Immigrants and refugees in Lewiston face specific language, cultural, and financial barriers to college access. At CMCC specifically, though the college offers placements for ESOL students, depending on their English language level, not all students will receive degree credit for their ESL courses. Due to cultural differences with regards to authority and gender norms, many immigrant and refugee students, and Somali students specifically, struggle with their ability to self-advocate in the education system, and do not maximize their educational opportunity. In terms of financial barriers, many Muslim immigrants and refugees face unique challenges as many choose not to take out interest bearing loans (discussed in more detail in the Banking and Finance section of this report), and are not aware of Pell Grants, State of Maine grants, and zero-interest student loans.

Scholarships and Continuing Education Support

Financial resources lack visibility, accessibility, and supportive navigation for most people seeking higher educational opportunities. These resources can be even more difficult to access when there are language and cultural barriers. However, the resources do exist. In high schools, guidance counselors are tasked with providing financial aid and scholarship information. The Adult Education centers support post-secondary higher education aspirations through the College Transition Program. CTP covers access to financial resources. Various non-profits such as Tree Street Youth, MEIRS, Take 2, and Trinity Jubilee Center dedicate time and space to support people pursuing higher education. Each college and university provides financial information and resources to prospective and enrolled students. The CareerCenter advises clients as to educational resources available through workforce development programs. Financial resources can be found online as well.

Perhaps the most challenging financial resources to investigate are scholarships and grants. It has been reported that almost one million dollars of scholarship money went undispersed in Maine last academic year. Maine based scholarships are available to people of all ages and cultural backgrounds. Below is a list of online scholarship resources. However, it is important to note that unless people are accessing resources to support them through the scholarship application process, obtaining these financial resources can be overwhelming. A combination of accessible financial resources, individual mentoring or guidance, and group peer support produce best overall results and experiences in higher education.

https://www.unigo.com/scholarships/by-state/maine-scholarships
https://www.mycollegeoptions.org/ME/0/Maine/search-results-scholarship-search-by-location.aspx
https://usm.maine.edu/scholarships

http://legislature.maine.gov/lio/legislative-memorial-scholarship-fund/9083
https://www.famemaine.com/education/topics/paying-for-college/maine-grants-loan-programs/
https://www.famemaine.com/education/topics/paying-for-college/maine-scholarship-search/
http://www.mainecf.org/Scholarships/AboutScholarships.aspx
http://www.mainecf.org/Scholarships/ForAdultLearners.aspx
https://www.cmcc.edu/FutureStudents/PAYINGFORCOLLEGE/Scholarships.aspx#.Wc0faiKWzcs
https://lametrochamber.com/initiatives/scholarships/
http://www.collegegrant.net/maine/

- Kaplan University
  Kaplan has a unique student experience model, wherein they personalize the experience for each student, regardless of background, and therefore do not have any specialized programs for the immigrant and refugee populations. For example, each student is assigned his or her own finance advisor who provides one-on-one assistance to navigate financial questions as they relate to higher education. Similarly, each student works closely with a student advisor, checking in weekly to assist with education needs as well as any barriers to success. The student advisor works in close conjunction with the Learning Commons to determine academic success intervention as needed. These wrap-around services are personalized to each student's unique needs. In terms of financial support, Kaplan provides a Dreamers Scholarship to support undocumented immigrants in their journey to succeed through a college education. For community support, they offer their campus as a venue for community conversations. They make their facility available to community partners (free of charge). Since the campus is centrally located downtown, it serves as an ideal space to hold community meetings on various topics.

- Maine College of Health Professions (MCHP)
  MCHP, founded in 1891, provides programs in Nursing (RN), Radiologic Technology, Computer Technology, C.N.A., and general education courses, including phlebotomy. MCHP is affiliated with Central Maine Healthcare and is the only hospital-affiliated college within Maine. Currently, almost 200 students attend MCHP, which allows them to develop close working relationships with their students, inside and outside of the classroom. Each student works with a faculty advisor to identify strengths and mitigate areas of concern over the course of the program. Their ability to develop close relationships and partnerships with Central Maine Healthcare provides them the opportunity to work on two strategic goals geared toward improving the path to and through healthcare programs. They are engaged with their Board, faculty, staff, and community leaders in a strategic initiative to enhance services and visibility to the immigrant and refugee communities. The goal at MCHP is to ensure that they are recognized as a potential resource and sought-after education choice, which meets the needs of immigrants and refugees, and provides a positive and successful experience. MCHP also strengthens pathways for students to gain education and employment, while continuing to pursue higher education, such as assisting students in becoming a C.N.A., continuing their education, and then becoming a RN or Radiologic Technologist. Over

the past two years, they have worked closely with Lewiston/Auburn Adult Education by visiting their college transitions courses and hosting campus visits for their students. MCHP also hosted the college transitions program on their campus last summer. This outreach is one way they are reaching out to the immigrant and refugee communities and increasing their visibility within the larger community.

- University of Southern Maine's Lewiston Auburn College (USM-LAC)
  USM-LAC maintains a deep commitment to the Lewiston community and strives to meet the needs of its regional student body. The university offers a variety of interdisciplinary majors at the baccalaureate and graduate levels, and certifications and minors in a variety of disciplines. USM-LAC provides significant scholarship assistance to students and in the past year alone, raised over $1.5 million towards scholarship funding. However, despite efforts to expand the reach of the university's courses and programs, immigrants and refugees continue to face barriers to access. Representatives from the university have expressed that there is confusion among immigrants and refugees surrounding higher education options in the area, and members of the immigrant and refugee communities often feel disconnected from the college process, specifically regarding how to apply and/or what courses to take. Addressing these barriers has already begun at USM-LAC through the hiring of an Admissions Officer based at the Lewiston campus. Collaboration has begun with immigrant organizations, afterschool programs, and the Aspirations Laboratory at Lewiston High School. In addition, USM has recently reorganized its Ambassador program, offering meetings in community settings for parents and children to provide current information about higher education. This includes sessions on scholarships, new programs, application processes, and how to set up a visit to classes. The program was launched in September 2017.

- Central Maine Community College (CMCC)
  CMCC represents another viable higher education opportunity for the immigrant and refugee communities. The college offers career, technical, and liberal arts programs, and is committed to providing affordable, quality higher education to Lewiston and the surrounding community. To meet the needs of the local immigrant and refugee communities, CMCC has undertaken efforts including the creation of the New Mainer Student Navigator position to better target immigrant and refugee students for enrollment in their programs and to promote the benefits of receiving a local college education. Additionally, the college offers the ACCUPLACER test to assess non-native English speakers' preparedness for college level courses, and offers a complete English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) suite covering reading, language usage, listening, and writing to support placement decisions for English language learners.

- Bates College
  As a highly selective national liberal arts college, the majority of Bates College students are from out of state. However, the college strives (successfully) to ensure that at least 10% of its students are from Maine. Almost all Bates students are traditionally-aged undergraduates, 18-22 years in age. Bates promises to meet 100% of the demonstrated

financial need of all accepted students, making it financially possible for students with high need to attend without accumulating significant debt. An array of student support services is available to students—including one-on-one advising, diverse programs offered through the Office of Intercultural Education, paid summer internships, financial support for studying abroad, and the Science Fellows program and Bobcats First program, both of which provide special opportunities for students from underrepresented populations. Through the work of the Harward Center for Community Partnerships, Bates makes a concerted effort to bridge the local and student communities by facilitating student engagement in the local community and connecting students to the immigrant and refugee community through a variety of volunteer placements and college-paid positions at non-profits and in the school system.

Best Practices:
The following best practices were drawn from *Preparing Immigrant Students in Minnesota for Higher Education*, a report from the Minnesota Office of Higher Education.[15]

1. "Provide outreach beyond students."
2. "Build and strengthen partnerships."
3. "Recruit dedicated team members."
4. "Facilitate travel to and from events."
5. "Utilize holistic programming."
6. "Pay attention to cultural cues."
7. "Increase enrollment in advanced classes."
8. "Simplify the financial aid application process."

Meeting Takeaways:

- Create a program to support recent graduates and those about to graduate with post-graduation issues such as FAFSA forms.
- Hold college fairs at various ECBOs.
- Set-up a meeting to introduce Glenn Cummings, the President of USM to leaders of the immigrant and refugee communities.
- Hold ESOL classes at USM-LAC.

[15] *Preparing Immigrant Students in Minnesota for Higher Education* - 2013

Food, Housing, Income Support, Legal Services, and Transportation

Meeting date: January 5, 2017

Presenters: Erin Reed, Trinity Jubilee Center; Nicole Bissonnette, Pine Tree Legal Assistance; Joby Thoyalil, Maine Equal Justice Partners; Sue Roche, Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project; Meg Moran, Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project; Sue Charron, City of Lewiston, General Assistance Program; Craig Zurhorst, Western Maine Transportation Services (not present but submitted information to be distributed)

There are a variety of local organizations dedicated to providing support and advocacy services to the immigrant and refugee communities in Lewiston. Organizations such as Trinity Jubilee Center (TJC), Pine Tree Legal Assistance (PTLA), Maine Equal Justice Partners (MEJP), the Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project (ILAP), and Western Maine Transportation Services (WMTS) represent valuable resources for both the native and immigrant and refugee populations, and address basic needs such as food, housing, income support, legal services, and transportation. The City itself provides both services and advocacy through its General Assistance Office.

Trinity Jubilee Center (TJC)

TJC is a non-religious organization located in downtown Lewiston that offers a variety of services to Lewiston residents. TJC operates a robust food pantry and meal program. Each week, the food pantry, which is open on Thursdays, serves 300 households, and every day TJC provides lunches for nearly 100 people in their soup kitchen. The organization maintains a strong focus on healthy cooking and offers many fresh food options. TJC is committed to serving anyone in need, including members of the local immigrant and refugee communities, and over 500 immigrant and refugee households are enrolled in the Center's programs. According to the organization, nearly 60% of those enrolled in the food pantry participate in additional TJC programs including the Day Shelter, Resource Center, and Refugee Integration Program. TJC runs on the commitment of 70-80 active volunteers, the majority of which are either refugees or asylum seekers, and serves as a worksite for employment programs including the General Assistance Workfare program, the National Able Network, and ASPIRE (now FedCap).

TJC fills gaps in services through their extensive program offerings and functions as a connector agency, referring individuals to organizations that best fit their needs. Many clients are homeless,

and while TJC does not operate an overnight shelter, the organization provides a variety of support services available during the day such as bathroom facilities, rest space, phone, fax machine, internet access, and a mailing address for homeless individuals. Each week, a local doctor works with the University of Southern Maine nursing students to offer free medical care, and TJC partners with other organizations to offer on-site flu vaccines and cancer screenings. In addition, TJC offers employment assistance by helping individuals with resume writing, job searches, and the job application process. In the past year, over 600 people received employment services, enabling more than 200 of those individuals to secure a job. All TJC clients can request help overcoming issues they are facing and many immigrants and refugees often receive assistance with job applications, immigration paperwork, pursuing education, and addressing housing concerns. TJC staff speaks Somali, French, and Arabic.

Immigrant Resource Center of Maine (IRCM)
The Immigrant Resource Center of Maine provides culturally and linguistically appropriate services to Maine's refugee and immigrant populations, and acts as a liaison between community partners and the immigrant and refugee community in a joint effort to provide efficient and effective programs and services. IRCM seeks to empower refugee and immigrant families by helping them access available services, advocating for victims of sexual and domestic violence, preventing violence in our communities, and providing assistance with childcare, resettlement, translation, and transportation. IRCM strives to guarantee access to existing services and possesses an empathetic understanding of the unique needs of refugees and immigrants settling in Maine. Staff are trained to assist schools, social services, medical providers, and others working with the immigrant and refugee communities.

Somali Bantu Community Association of Maine (SBCA)
SBCA is a non-profit organization whose mission is to assist members of the immigrant and refugee community with issues related to housing, employment, literacy and education, health, and safety matters. This includes empowering children and families to achieve lifelong success through personal and social change, by providing them with information on how to create a new life in the United States. As the Somali Bantu community grows in central Maine, SBCA strives to provide transitional services that address the needs of our immigrant population. They provide services free of charge for men, women and children, in an effort to develop a united community of Mainers.

Djibouti Community Association (DCA; also known as Djibouti Community and Voluntary Services)
The Djibouti Community Association helps asylum seekers from Djibouti, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Angola as they work to integrate into daily life in Lewiston-Auburn. By offering English conversation classes, driver's license test preparation, one-on-one advising and volunteer opportunities, the DCA helps asylum seekers to find employment and access healthcare and educational opportunities. Soccer programs for youth and adults help to promote physical activity and a sense of community.

Maine Community Integration (MCI)
Maine Community Integration (MCI) is a non-profit organization that promotes the support and understanding of various immigrant and refugee cultures by providing enhanced and improved opportunities for integration into American society through education, advocacy, and social change empowerment. Maine Community Integration (MCI) seeks to sustain the social vitality and cultural vibrancy of immigrant and refugee heritages by helping to maintain historical traditions, assisting clients with needed social services, and organizing meaningful traditional and cultural events. MCI works in collaboration with other organizations, governmental agencies, and educational institutions whenever possible.

Sustainable Livelihoods Relief Organization (SLRO)
Sustainable Livelihoods Relief Organization (SLRO) was created to help immigrants, especially refugees and asylum seekers, improve their participation rates in the American labor market and build long-term wealth through the establishment of sustainable livelihoods. The organization aims to promote and support long-term farming initiatives and to coordinate experiential learning opportunities on local farms during the planting, harvesting, processing, marketing, and sales cycles. SLRO seeks to assist families in becoming more resilient to economic and social fluctuations through suitable employment, education, and community wellbeing so that they may integrate into the local Maine workforce more efficiently.

Pine Tree Legal Assistance (PTLA)
PTLA is a non-profit law organization dedicated to "providing high quality, free, civil legal assistance to low-income people in Maine." Committed to the principle that "all Mainers have access to justice," PTLA aims to ensure "that state and federal laws affecting poor people are enforced while also addressing the systemic barriers to justice that low-income Mainers face."[16]

The Lewiston office of PTLA handles a wide variety of issues, including evictions, unsafe housing issues (no heat, bedbugs, lead paint, etc.), foreclosures, benefits (GA, TANF, SS, etc.), domestic violence, sexual assault, education, taxes, housing discrimination, unfair debt collection, and other civil legal issues. PTLA may only serve "lawful" permanent residents and those granted asylum due to federal funding laws. Their clients represent an even mix of native Mainers and immigrants and refugees. In addition to direct legal help, Pine Tree Legal maintains a comprehensive library of self-help tools, legal information, and resources in multiple languages, which are freely available to everyone online at www.ptla.org. These resources are viewed and downloaded more than 2 million times each year.

Maine Equal Justice Partners (MEJP)
MEJP is a non-profit legal aid provider dedicated to finding solutions to poverty and improving the lives of low-income Mainers. MEJP provides direct legal assistance to low-income Maine residents related to public benefits, food, housing, and healthcare. In addition to direct legal aid, the organization advocates for "fair public policies in the legislature and with governmental agencies," and partners with "diverse low-income communities and agencies through outreach,

[16] http://ptla.org/about-us

organizing, and education."[17] MEJP does not accept federal legal services funding and therefore has no limitations based on immigration status for the populations they can assist.

Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project (ILAP)
ILAP is an organization based in Portland, with weekly office hours in Lewiston, which provides legal services related to immigration, asylum, green cards, domestic violence, human trafficking, and deportation. In addition, ILAP offers education, outreach, and advocacy services to help fill the information gap among the immigrant, refugee, and asylum seeker communities. ILAP aims to provide as much support as possible to those in need, although ILAP does not always have the capacity to represent everyone who needs a lawyer. For those who may not be represented, ILAP can provide consultations and information. Since the organization does not receive federal funding, there are no limitations on the populations they can assist. Asylum application assistance represents a major focus area for the organization, which provides free and low-fee legal aid to help immigrants with the immigration process and an online instructional manual for filling out an asylum application. Currently, an ILAP representative visits Lewiston's Adult Learning Center weekly to assist with asylum cases, and the organization is hoping to offer more workshops in Lewiston soon.

Western Maine Transportation Services (WMTS)
In Lewiston and Auburn, WMTS operates the citylink fixed-route bus service for the Lewiston-Auburn Transit Committee (LATC). WMTS also operates the associated Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) demand-response bus service which extends ¾ mile beyond each side of the citylink bus routes to assist those who are unable to access the citylink buses due to a medically-certified disability. An application to qualify for ADA service is required. Route maps, schedules and additional information for citylink are available on-line at www.purplebus.org. Except for certain holidays, the citylink and ADA services are available Monday through Friday, with reduced service available on Saturday. Anyone requiring a ride to a MaineCare-covered appointment must call LogistiCare.

General Assistance (GA) Office, City of Lewiston
The City of Lewiston's General Assistance (GA) Office assists eligible Lewiston residents, for a limited period of time, who are unable to provide basic necessities essential to maintain themselves or their families. Eligible applicants must re-apply to qualify for the General Assistance program every 30 days. The GA Office tends to be the first stop for the majority of the city's immigrant and refugee populations. In addition to assistance (vouchers) with basic necessities, limited case management (including referrals and advocacy) is provided. These services ensure that households secure the appropriate resources and benefits that will assist them in achieving self-sufficiency. Additionally, the GA program's work requirement helps individuals obtain the skills they need to gain employment and become self-supporting. All individuals are required to participate in appropriate workshops, orientations, training, education, and language classes. All able-bodied individuals may be required to participate in the Workfare Program, comprised of actual work assignments at city sites and local non-profits. Acknowledging that

[17] http://www.mejp.org/content/our-mission

many individuals arrive with an education and a work history, the program tries to match individual existing skill sets with work sites whenever possible. Because many GA-eligible asylum applicants need to wait at least 180 days (most are waiting much longer due to an increase in applications) for their work documents, the work requirements are proving to be quite beneficial. Individuals are obtaining actual work experience within the U.S. and acquiring the necessary training, education, and English language skills to make them work-ready.

Referrals are made to collaborating service-providers, such as the Lewiston CareerCenter for employment opportunities and at-work initiatives, and Lewiston Adult Education for language acquisition, high school credentialing, and workforce training. Individuals are eligible for GA as long as they have an immigration status (refugee, asylee, legal permanent resident, etc.) or if they have a valid I-94 or Alien number. There is currently a 24-month time limit on GA benefits for certain immigrants.

NOTE: All family members must obtain an Alien Registration Number (often referred to as an A number) from the federal government to receive a work permit and to receive state benefits, except that minor children do not need an A number to be eligible for MaineCare. State benefits are terminated once work documents are secured because individuals are then considered eligible for employment, except that minor children continue to be eligible for MaineCare. There is currently a major backlog at the federal level of service.

Best Practices:
The following best practices were drawn from *Pathways to Opportunities: Promising Practices for Immigrant Children, Youth & Their Families*, a report by the Institute for Immigration, Globalization, & Education.[18]

1. "Assisting immigrants in locating affordable and adequate places to live stands to reduce some of the geographical isolation and segregation that hinders successful integration from occurring."
2. "Mentoring programs that match residents and citizens with new immigrants can be invaluable in easing the frequently frustrating, bewildering, and often frightening experience of learning about and adjusting to new rules, policies, and expectations."
3. "Providing immigrants with explicit information about the steps required to access legal citizenship is a critical part of the integration process; however, broader conceptualizations of citizenship that recognize other types of information helpful in facilitating immigrants' transitions to new ways of social life are also incredibly valuable."

The following best practices were drawn from *Promising Practices for Increasing Immigrants' Access to Health and Human Services*, a report from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.[19]

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[18] *Pathways to Opportunities: Promising Practices for Immigrant Children, Youth & Their Families* - 2016
[19] *Promising Practices for Increasing Immigrants' Access to Health and Human Services* - 2012

1. "Community Based Organizations (CBOs) Acting as Liaisons between State Agencies and Immigrant Populations: Contracted partnerships may ease public offices workload and help eligible immigrant families feel more comfortable applying for services. Other partnerships allow CBOs to assist immigrant families with applications in key locations throughout communities. CBOs can also combine services to maximize their resources. To ensure continued partnerships with CBOs, states can take steps to establish an infrastructure that will support CBO involvement with immigrant families and benefit enrollment on an ongoing basis, and they should view these partnerships as complements to but not replacements for their own services and activities."
2. "Simplifying Application and Eligibility Procedures: In line with a much broader movement, the states have developed or are developing integrated application systems, including online versions. The shift to integrated systems poses document-sharing dilemmas and other challenges, but the systems are especially relevant to serving the immigrant population."
3. "Using Community Partnerships to Address Cultural Issues: CBOs play a crucial role in addressing fears and mistrust of government within many immigrant communities, lack of knowledge about the health and human service systems, unfamiliarity with Western medicine, and myths about the potential risks of program enrollment. CBOs can serve as trusted liaisons to government services, which can ease immigrant's fears about deportation or future prospects for adjusting status or becoming citizens. Partnerships between government offices and CBOs with ethnic media and local businesses can also increase trust and awareness of public programs."
4. "Overcoming Language, Literacy, and Logistical Issues: Addressing language, literacy, child care, and transportation challenges helps immigrants apply, enroll, and re-enroll in public programs. In [Maryland, North Carolina, and Texas], materials, applications, and assistance are available in English and Spanish, and government offices contract with interpreter services to increase their ability to serve clients. Each state also uses an international language line. Massachusetts has addressed language barriers among foreign language speakers who do not speak Spanish. The use of plain language and visual information can also address literacy challenges. Enabling services such as transportation or help caring for young children also helps connect immigrants to services."
5. "Enabling Families to Meet Multiple Needs Simultaneously: States have begun integrating services themselves, much like a one-stop shopping model intended to serve applicants in multiple ways at once rather than in piecemeal fashion. Multiservice centers allow several programs to co-locate, and partnerships between health care systems and school districts link families to important health services."
6. "Meeting the Needs of Individuals within Mixed-Status Families: Applications that provide clear guidance and disclaimers regarding immigration questions help immigrants apply for assistance for eligible family members such as citizen children. Clear distinctions between required fields for applicants and items that can remain blank for non-applicants are useful. Screening tools can differentiate household income data and information about individual household members immigration status. The Massachusetts opt-out policy allows ineligible household members to take themselves out of consideration for benefits without affecting applications for others in the household.

CBOs help families secure benefits for individual household members by clarifying confusion and allaying fears about who qualifies for services."

Meeting Takeaways:

- Service providers need to be more accessible.
- Service providers need to better publicize services.
- There is a need for a factual document that clearly outlines the process for asylum seekers. Make this document available in several languages in the General Assistance Office.
- Increase the hours for legal assistance in Lewiston.
- Create a coalition of community organizations who can help raise funds for those not eligible for General Assistance.
- Make culturally appropriate interpretation readily available.
- Communicate regularly and directly with community members about changes to services, changes in laws, and policies that impact community members.
- Communicate regularly and directly with community members about opportunities for community involvement.
- There is a perception that the GA Office in Portland and the GA Office in Lewiston are doing things differently. When possible, create more consistency in services from municipality to municipality to eliminate confusion.
- Provide more accessible and affordable childcare options for asylum seekers, who are not eligible for the Department of Health and Human Services' Child Care Subsidy Program.

Refugee Resettlement

Meeting date: January 19, 2017

Presenters: Tarlan Ahmadov, Office of Maine Refugee Services Catholic Charities Maine; Julia Trujillo Luengo, formerly of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Catholic Charities Maine (CCM) is a statewide non-profit organization that provides services to vulnerable and disenfranchised residents of Maine including refugees, children, seniors, persons with disabilities, or persons struggling with mental health and substance abuse issues. CCM's Refugee and Immigration Services (RIS) program has provided resettlement services to primary refugees in Maine since 1975. In 2017, after the withdrawal of the State of Maine from the administration of the federal Refugee Resettlement Program, CCM established the Office of Maine Refugee Services (OMRS), which is distinct from RIS, to coordinate statewide infrastructure related to refugee resettlement and administer federal funds to subgrantees throughout the state.

The last six months have been a transitional time for the refugee resettlement program in Maine. As Maine experienced shifts in refugee resettlement, the national resettlement program is also experiencing changes. This has been a time of uncertainty within the world of federal refugee resettlement. OMRS is committed to transparent relationships with community partners and providing information as soon as it becomes available regarding the federal refugee resettlement program. Refugee resettlement is largely in the hands of the federal government. The ability of refugees to enter and seek safety in the United States and the fiscal underpinnings of the program are determined federally. While CCM does not control any aspect of these federal decisions, both RIS and OMRS are working hard to support the refugees who are already here, and those who will arrive in these uncertain times.

Refugee and Immigration Services (RIS)

CCM RIS has been providing direct resettlement services to primary refugees, newly arrived secondary migrants, and asylees in Cumberland and York Counties since 1975 and in Androscoggin County since the early 2000s. In Kennebec County, CCM RIS has been assisting a

growing population of refugees, primarily Iraqi, since 2014. While resettlement largely occurs in these counties, refugees settle throughout the State of Maine, and RIS provides services statewide. CCM RIS's services for refugees include Case Management, Immigrant Legal Services, Cultural Skills Training, and Employment Services. CCM RIS staff helps connect refugees to services such as English classes, healthcare, transportation, and childcare, and offers Cultural Orientation and Community Education workshops to clients and social service providers working with refugees. CCM RIS also helps implement numerous contracts and grants from the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) within the U.S. Department of Human Services' Administration for Children and Families. CCM's federal contracts and grants in support of refugees include Refugee Social Services (RSS), Services to Older Refugees (SOR), Reception and Placement (R&P), Early-Sufficiency Match Grants (MG), Refugee Health Promotion Grants, and the Trafficking Victims Assistance Program (TVAP). Since the removal of the refugee program administration from the State of Maine, CCM RIS has also begun providing access to Refugee Cash/Medical Assistance and Refugee Medical Screening.

Under the R&P program (funded by the Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM), CCM RIS provides arriving primary refugees with up to 90 days of refugee resettlement services. This includes, but is not limited to, airport reception, intake /service plans, housing, food, transportation, cultural orientation and assessments, referrals for health screenings, assistance obtaining a social security card, applying for public benefits, and enrolling children in school and adults in ESL classes.

Office of Maine Refugee Services (OMRS)

In March 2017, Catholic Charities assumed the administrative roles related to refugee resettlement that had previously been held at the state level. Upon establishing OMRS, the roles of State Refugee Coordinator, State Refugee Health Coordinator, and a data and contract analyst, were created to administer the federal fiscal resources and responsibilities associated with refugee resettlement. In accordance with the Refugee Act of 1980, each state that is involved in a federal refugee resettlement program must establish these positions, usually operating on a statewide basis. These federally funded positions are often a part of state government, with the State Refugee Health Coordinator being housed in a state public health department, for example. However, the federal government also has an established mechanism in place to ensure that these important positions can be filled if the state itself is unable or unwilling to fill them. In this case, the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement will designate an alternative agency (usually a non-profit involved in direct resettlement services) as the "Replacement Designee (RD)." The RD is then able to house the administrative positions, assume authority for coordinating aspects of resettlement such as the domestic medical screening, administer federal funding related to resettlement, apply for exclusive federal grants, and conduct other such activities.

As the RD, OMRS is responsible for infrastructure related to refugee resettlement on a statewide basis, including education, health, employment, and working with federal, state, and local officials. In this capacity, OMRS administers funding to RIS, to school departments with significant numbers of refugee students (including Lewiston, Portland, and Westbrook), and to the adult education programs, among others. OMRS coordinates planning for resettlement across

the state, hosting the quarterly State Refugee Advisory Council meeting, at which upcoming resettlement is discussed with state, local, and community partners. Responsibilities include working to increase the capacity of programs to address the needs of refugees (such as increasing the ability of adult education programs to offer intensive ESL), ensuring that the domestic medical screening is standardized and consistently delivered, conducting health data surveillance, and collecting data from subgrantees, including conducting site monitoring and reporting related to federal funding requirements. Unlike RIS, OMRS does not deliver any direct services to refugees.

Best Practices:
The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) Resettlement Handbook offers comprehensive resettlement management and policy guidance, and is a key reference tool on global resettlement policy and practice. First released in 1997, the Resettlement Handbook was fully revised in 2011 and can be found online at: http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/protection/resettlement/4a2ccf4c6/unhcr-resettlement-handbook-country-chapters.html

Meeting Takeaways:

- There is a great deal of confusion within the immigrant and refugee communities regarding the State of Maine's recent decision to no longer administer the refugee resettlement program. Greater clarity and communication about process and services is needed.

Mental Health and Substance Abuse

Meeting date: February 2, 2017

Presenters: Abdikadir Negeye, Maine Immigrant and Refugee Services; Melissa Marcinuk, Maine Immigrant and Refugee Services; Inza Ouattara, Maine Immigrant and Refugee Services; Fatuma Hussein, Immigrant Resource Center of Maine; Chris Bicknell, New Beginnings (not present but submitted information)

Issues of mental health and substance abuse are prevalent in the Lewiston community. Diagnosis and treatment pose unique challenges for immigrants and refugees due to cultural differences, language barriers, and disparities in healthcare access. Considering the trauma history of many immigrants and refugees, mental health frequently manifests as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, behavioral disorders in youth, and sometimes drug and alcohol addiction. The significant stigma surrounding the recognition of mental health challenges remains pervasive within native Mainer and immigrant and refugee communities alike, and constitutes a central barrier to treatment. Several local organizations including Tri-County Mental Health, Maine Immigrant and Refugee Services (MEIRS), New Beginnings, the Immigrant Resource Center of Maine, the New Mainer Public Health Initiative (NMPHI), and Lewiston Public Schools work to provide culturally sensitive mental health services to immigrants and refugees in Lewiston. This section explores the current state of mental health and substance abuse issues and services in Lewiston, barriers to access of quality and affordable treatment options, and potential areas for improvement.

Mental Health Service Providers in Lewiston

Several community based non-profit organizations provide the bulk of mental health services to immigrant and refugee patients in Lewiston. Among these organizations is MEIRS, which is dedicated to offering culturally competent outpatient counseling, home and community treatment

(HCT), behavioral health home services, rehabilitative and community support services for children with cognitive impairments and functional limitations (RCS), and case management. The Immigrant Resource Center of Maine also provides support around mental health as it pertains to domestic and sexual violence. New Beginnings' youth drop-in center and homeless shelter represents another central agency servicing mental health needs in Lewiston, particularly among youth and families in crisis. Though New Beginnings was not founded for immigrant and refugee youth specifically, the organization has established relationships with youth from the local immigrant and refugee communities. Lewiston Public Schools is an additional resource for youth mental health services in the community, and provides counseling services through Spurwink and in partnership with Community Clinical Services at St. Mary's Regional Medical Center. The district continues to develop a trauma system training program to better equip staff to support youth.

Substance Abuse

Drug addiction, particularly among middle and high school aged youth, has become an increasingly common phenomenon in the Lewiston community. Given the generational and cultural divide between youth and their parents/guardians, many parents/guardians feel disconnected from their children and their social activities. Many parents/guardians may be resistant to acknowledge that their children are struggling with substance abuse issues out of fear and shame. Children growing up in immigrant and refugee households must navigate between American societal expectations and their parents'/guardians' culture, and often struggle to feel fully at home in either.

Barriers

While access to mental health services in Maine represents a challenge for most residents due to the cost of services, lack of insurance, and the cultural stigma surrounding mental health, immigrants and refugees are faced with additional challenges including language and cultural barriers and a lack of familiarity with the American system. Though community providers have improved their cultural competency and interpretation services, opportunity exists to expand accessibility and reduce stigma so that individuals feel more comfortable disclosing their symptoms.

In addition, Maine suffers from a shortage of psychiatrists and there are insufficient providers who understand the unique trauma that immigrants and refugees experience. Two newer organizations in the Lewiston area, Gateway Community Services and Bright Future Healthier You, are now providing mental health services to the immigrant and refugee population.

Best Practices:

The following best practices were drawn from *Working with Immigrant-Origin Clients: An Update for Mental Health Professionals*, based on *Crossroads: The Psychology of Immigration in the New Century*, a report of the APA Presidential Task Force on Immigration.[20]

1. "Examine the extent of cultural and linguistic differences between the clients and the

[20] *Working with Immigrant-Origin Clients: An Update for Mental Health Professionals* - 2013

dominant culture."

2. "Consider using revised culturally sensitive versions of classic measures."
3. "Recognize the dynamic nature of culture and incorporate cultural variables as central to all phases of the assessment process."
4. "Use more comprehensive assessment approaches—for example: the Multicultural Assessment Procedure."
5. "Incorporate culturally sensitive assessment interviews, collecting information on acculturation, language, religious practices, racism and prejudice, and cultural values as part of the assessment process."
6. "Use a contextual approach that attends to clients' explanatory models and to clinicians' assumptions and biases."
7. "Recognize the conditions and circumstances under which assessment and diagnosis take place and the implications of testing and diagnosis on client's present and future."
8. "Assess the possibility of culture-bound syndromes."
9. "Recognize that disorders can lie on a continuum."
10. "Work in collaboration with translators and interpreters."
11. "Work in collaboration with families and community members when appropriate."
12. "Consult with colleagues."

Meeting Takeaways:

- Increase ECBO-based services that offer certified interpretive/culturally-skilled assistance to improve accessibility to needed services.
- Increase public outreach to inform and educate immigrant families about mental health illnesses and the treatment needed to manage those illnesses.
- Increase education within the immigrant and refugee communities in relation to drug identification, the terminology around drugs and drug use, and the legalities related to specific drugs and drug use.
- Increase collaboration among community partners to create a youth job program that would help to keep youth engaged and out of trouble. Such a program could be pitched to funders such as the Gorman Foundation.
- Recruit and train more immigrant mental health workers to fill the growing need for immigrant mental health services in the community.
- Improve access to mental health services overall.
- Increase funding for youth employment programs.

Banking and Finance

Meeting date: February 16, 2017

Presenters: Claude Rwaganje, Community Financial Literacy; and Dennis Lajoie, Community Concepts Finance Corporation (not present but submitted information to be distributed)

Improving financial literacy among immigrants and refugees in Lewiston is crucial for ensuring economic self-sufficiency and security. Given the complexity of American banking, financing, and credit systems, many immigrants and refugees are misinformed about US financial institutions and risk making poor economic decisions. Additionally, for religious reasons, some Muslim immigrants and refugees may prefer not to take out interest-bearing loans but face challenges obtaining fee-based lending (the moral basis behind this is to avoid wronging the lender or one's family if unable to repay any extra that was borrowed, and to protect people who may end up burdened by interest rates even if they enter willingly into a contract). This can also affect financing options for higher education, leading many promising high school or adult immigrant students looking to further their education to attend college without taking on any debt whatsoever, limiting their options and upward mobility.

As an alternative, fee-based lending from a bank or within a mortgage is permissible in Islam, and is something that non-Muslims may want to utilize as well for the sake of budgeting or decreased risk. However, the current lack of fee-based lending options poses a significant financial challenge to many Muslim immigrants and refugees living in Lewiston. Due to stringent regulations, the cost of implementation, and the fear of an inadequate market to justify policy change, banks have been resistant to expanding lending options. The financial literacy non-profit, Community Financial Literacy (CFL) and various local lending institutions, including

Androscoggin Bank, Bangor Savings, and Community Concepts, are working to address some of the barriers to financial independence for immigrants and refugees in Lewiston.

Community Financial Literacy (CFL)
CFL is a non-profit that provides financial education and counseling for members of immigrant and refugee communities in the Greater Portland and Lewiston/Auburn areas. CFL operates with the understanding that immigrants and refugees "are not here as visitors, but are here to stay," and empowers immigrants and refugees to "invest in themselves to build financial stability, careers, businesses, and wealth" (Claude Rwaganje, Executive Director). Immigrants and refugees represent a large consumer market with significant economic promise, however, without adequate financial literacy, many immigrants and refugees are not maximizing their economic potential. To address this gap in financial literacy and strengthen the local Maine economy, CFL focuses their programming on topics including money management, budgeting, financial goals, banking, savings, and credit. Through partnerships with other Lewiston based non-profits, including the Adult Education Center, Finance Authority of Maine (FAME), a non-profit with a focus on college access counseling, and Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (CEI), an organization dedicated to small business management, CFL connects immigrants and refugees to relevant educational and consulting services in the area.

Best Practices:
The following best practices were drawn from *Best Practices in Immigrant Lending*, a report prepared for the American Bankers Association.[21]

1. Create an immigrant-focused strategy involving all local banks that serves the market and matches the needs of the community.
2. Employ a variety of outreach strategies, such as bilingual advertising, financial education seminars, and effective partnerships with organizations that the immigrant and refugee communities know and trust.
3. Expand product offerings to address barriers. This may include secured consumer loans, secured credit cards, credit development loans, ITIN mortgages, and fee-based or "profit" loan products.

Meeting Takeaways:

- Continue to investigate fee-based lending products such as those offered by Boston Community Capital and Small Money Maine.
- Support the efforts of Community Financial Literacy and other community organizations seeking to increase the financial literacy of the immigrant and refugee populations.
- Further encourage the efforts of Androscoggin Bank, Bangor Savings, Coastal Enterprises, and Community Concepts in their adoption and implementation of fee-based lending practices.

[21] *Best Practices in Immigrant Lending* - 2004

Public Education and Afterschool Programming

Meeting date: March 2, 2017

Presenters: Bill Webster, Lewiston Public Schools; Linda Scott, Lewiston School Committee; Bill Grant, Lewiston Adult Education; Julia Sleeper, Tree Street Youth

Many immigrants and refugees in Lewiston place significant value in the local school system and look to Lewiston Public Schools (LPS) as the gateway for their children's success. Serving over 5,000 students, LPS consists of six elementary schools, one middle school, one high school, and is host to a large and continuously growing ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) student community. Students of color, predominantly black students of immigrant and refugee descent, comprise 30% of the district's student body and special attention must be paid to ensure racial and cultural equity within the school system. The immigrant and refugee community, as well as LPS administration and district staff, are committed to improving the educational experience for all immigrant and refugee students. While the district takes pride in its numerous achievements with regards to immigrant and refugee integration, including the nationally recognized Lewiston High School boy's state championship soccer team, and the nearly 80% five-year graduation rate for ESOL students, there remains significant opportunity for growth.

One of the positive outcomes forthcoming from the Working Group meetings has been the creation of the Lewiston Schools Immigrant Advisory Council. The Council is independent of the schools and was endorsed by the Superintendent and the School Committee on September 25, 2017. The Council is seeking broad community membership and seeks to establish, maintain and/or improve:

- Communication between the immigrant and refugee communities and the schools, including parents/guardians and educators;
- Avenues for including immigrant voices and experiences in all education-related conversations and decisions that might affect immigrant children and families;

- Recruitment and hiring processes that prioritize and proactively support an LPS staff that reflects the diversity of the community it serves, including the immigrant and refugee communities;
- A cultural sensitivity professional development curriculum and training plan for all LPS teaching, administrative, and support staff;
- Empowerment of the immigrant community to be informed advocates for themselves.

Some of these goals are further addressed in other sections of this report. Critical areas include the equity of opportunity for participation in prekindergarten (pre-K), afterschool, and summer programs. These areas are particularly helpful for ESOL students as they are less exposed to English at home. Over the last decade, LPS has more than doubled pre-K programs to the present enrollment capacity of 304 slots (including 80 slots in partnership with Promise, formerly known as Androscoggin Head Start). Presently, approximately 30 of those slots remain unfilled, and an estimated 100 future kindergarten students citywide are not attending any preschool program. While pre-K is not needed for all children, it is strongly recommended for ESOL students. The ESOL participation rates are improving, but still lag behind those of non-ESOL students.

Extended day and year programming are two other critical areas to improve student academic achievement. Enrollments have more than doubled over the last five years and now total roughly 600 students for extended day and over 1,000 students for summer programs. These learning opportunities have been well-received by immigrant and refugee families, and ESOL student participation rates exceed those of non-ESOL students. Demand, however, is exceeding available slots given current funding levels.

One of the key measures of school districts is the completion (graduation) rate. The Lewiston High School (LHS) rate lags behind most high schools in Maine. Overall completion rates would likely be lower if not for ESOL students who have a higher graduation rate than non-ESOL students. The State is still computing the rates for 2017, but the 2016 5-year completion rate at LHS was 73% for all students and 78% for ESOL students. The average of all high schools in Maine is over 85%, making clear the opportunity to improve both ESOL and non-ESOL rates at LHS.

In February of 2017, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Maine, in partnership with Disability Rights Maine and Kids Legal at Pine Tree Legal Assistance, released a well-publicized study that investigated racial disparities and identified five primary areas of concern: lack of teachers who share the cultural background of students; discipline disparities; differences in special education identification; programming for ELL students; and insufficient interpretation services.

While there is debate about the validity of these findings, Lewiston Public Schools acknowledges the need and desirability to address these areas and is already working with outside consultants and Lewiston community members to this end.

Teachers Who Share the Cultural Background of Students

All agree and research has proven that educators of color dramatically reduce drop-out rates among students of color. As identified in the 2017 study entitled, *The Long-Run Impacts of Same-Race Teachers*,[22] students benefit greatly from having in-school role models. Specifically, the study found that, "having just one black teacher in third, fourth, or fifth grade reduced low-income black boy's probability of dropping out of high school by 39 percent."[23] Lewiston Superintendent Bill Webster has confirmed the district's need for more black and minority teachers, and conversations are taking place in relation to the recruitment and hiring of a more diverse workforce within Lewiston Public Schools. The district is seeking to work in partnership with the University of Southern Maine and other partners to design a recruitment program to attract more minority instructors. The district also seeks to promote careers in education to Lewiston High School graduates of color.

The table below, provided by the Lewiston School Department, summarizes the racial makeup of Lewiston staff as of August 2017 and June 2017. Excluded are nurses, food service, and other miscellaneous positions.

	As of September 7, 2017			As of June 8, 2017		
Position	Total	Black	Other Minority	Total	Black	Other Minority
Teachers	528	6	7	505	5	8
Ed Techs	230	9	6	239	9	6
Administrators	58	1	1	59	0	1
Mgmt Hourly	37	7	0	37	7	0
General Gov.	78	2	2	78	2	2
Substitutes	93	20	2	Not available		
Total	1022	45	18	918	23	17

The significantly higher minority rate for substitutes suggests an avenue to further emphasize employment in LPS, and to provide opportunities to move these employees to more full-time employment as educational technicians and teachers.

Discipline Disparities

Discipline disparities in Lewiston schools are greatly impacted by three factors: lower special education identification rates (see next section); limited cultural competency; and the incidence of trauma in many students. Cultural competency will improve with additional training of teachers and educational technicians. In addition, school staff would benefit from increased understanding of trauma and how adverse childhood experiences (ACES) impact learning. Schools need to continue to provide more training in these areas and have recently secured the assistance of a local facilitator/consultant to work on educator cultural competency in multiple schools.

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[22] *The Long-Run Impacts of Same-Race Teachers - 2017*

[23] *The Long-Run Impacts of Same-Race Teachers - 2017*

Over the last five years, the school district has sought to further reduce out-of-school suspensions by adding in-school suspension programs, where students are able to continue their studies while also receiving support to improve behaviors when they return to the classroom. These initiatives are evolving into more pro-active Response to Intervention (RTI) behavioral programs that work to improve student identification and further reduce suspension numbers.

In 2013 the school district established the Dingley Program for students who were suspended for more than 10 days or expelled. This is the only program of its kind in Maine and has been successful in re-integrating many students who go on to graduate from high school. The district works closely with the Department of Corrections on developing successful re-entry plans. This summer, three expelled students were readmitted to Lewiston schools due to these efforts.

In addition, there is a district-wide initiative to move toward restorative practices to enhance staff relationships with students and improve school climate. Montello Elementary School is ahead of the other Lewiston schools in the implementation of restorative practices. The table below summarizes the improvements seen in the Montello data from 2015-16 to 2016-17.

Category	2015-2016	2016-17
Out-of-School Suspensions	79	24
In-school Suspensions	218	219
Office Discipline Referrals	3,274	1,505

The Superintendent seeks the improvements above in all Lewiston schools as restorative practices are implemented district-wide. Lewiston Public Schools still needs to gather demographic data to ascertain the extent to which disparities may remain.

Special Education Disparities

Superintendent Webster recognizes that students of color have lower identification rates, but that gap is closing. During the last few years the identification of ELL students for special education services has almost doubled. The district continues to move closer to the overall identification rate of 18% as shown in the table below.

Year	Total Special Education %	Non-ELL %	ELL %
2012	16.1%	18.5%	7.3%
2013	16.3%	18.4%	8.7%
2014	16.4%	18.8%	8.9%
2015	16.7%	18.8%	9.6%
2016	17.9%	20.3%	11.3%
2017	This data is being compiled.		

There are many factors that account for this difference. First, we do not have adequate data from Child Development Services, who is responsible for providing special education services for children between the ages of 3-5 (interestingly, the State of Maine has just proposed that local school districts take over 100% of the responsibility for serving these children). Second, while

overall identification rates are similar, ELL families are more apt to reject services for their identified children due to the cultural stigma related to special education services. These rejections may often already be in place when the student is enrolled in Lewiston Public Schools, and it is difficult to convince families to accept services once rejected. This attitude is changing as the community increasingly recognizes the benefits of these services, but some roadblocks still remain and more community outreach will be helpful. Finally, some immigrant students frequently begin their public education in higher grades, including many students who start their public education at Lewiston High School, leaving little time to identify and service special needs.

Programming for ELL Students

A quarter of the students in the Lewiston Public Schools are English language learners and language access is, and must continue to be, a critical focus of the Lewiston school district (see Appendix E). All Lewiston Public School (LPS) teachers are state-certified teachers, and all of the district's ELL teachers possess the English as a Second Language (ESL) 660 endorsement. Nonetheless, there is an ongoing need to certify ELL teachers, and LPS staff is working with the University of Maine to increase ESL certifications. Ideally, all LPS teachers would be ESL certified regardless of whether or not they work directly with ELL students. To receive ESL endorsement, one must complete five ESL courses, which cover topics including ESL teaching methods, multiculturalism and diversity, curriculum and assessment development, and science education for ESL students.

The LPS ELL program serves many students in the district, represents an essential community resource, and is based on Immersion instruction, which is considered the instructional best practice for language learning[24]. Although the ELL program meets most student language needs, many students leave their non-ELL classrooms for varying amounts of time, depending on their ELL level, which is determined by using English language proficiency and academic data from assessments that demonstrate a child's growth and performance in different subjects. Additionally, ELL instruction is offered during the summer as part of LPS summer programming, which is structured differently to address learning loss and assists students in building language skills in preparation for the regular school year. Some students may also seek ELL and other academic instruction outside of the public schools at programs such as those offered by the Islamic Center of Lewiston, Tree Street Youth, and various other afterschool programs mentioned later in this section.

Language barriers are responsible for numerous instances of miscommunication, and must be mitigated to the best extent possible. While there have been multiple initiatives to increase immigrant and refugee parent/guardian involvement in Lewiston schools, a variety of barriers including a lack of structured programming, and the perceived intimidating presence of school security, have reduced the success of these endeavors. Over the summer of 2017, as a means to rectify this barrier, LPS applied and was accepted into a Nellie Mae grant-funded cohort group of schools to improve parent/guardian engagement.

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[24] *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education* - 2007

Insufficient Interpretation Services
The Lewiston school district supports a variety of services in addition to ELL instruction to help bridge language barriers for both students and parents/guardians. For example, language facilitators are employed at every Lewiston public school (excluding Farwell Elementary due to the language proficiency of that school's population) to facilitate information transfer between the school staff, students, and their families. LPS also utilizes contracted language services to provide support for the multiple languages spoken in the district. The district has three language lines, which are in regular use and collect data regarding who is calling, language(s) requested, and length of call. It is important to note that while in-person interpreting is always the preferred method of communication, the high demand for these services makes it difficult to accommodate each request for personal interpretation in a timely matter. As of the 2016-2017 school year, the school department employed seven Somali-speaking interpreters to meet the needs of the largest proportion of ELL students. Students of other languages often rely on an interpreter phone service, which all teachers and school staff are trained to access. The school district also contracts with outside interpreters, and many prefer this option if available. Without consistent and effective communication between the teacher and parents/guardians, teachers are unable to provide important information and updates to the child's family.

Collaboration between Lewiston Public Schools and the Immigrant and Refugee Communities
As a result of the challenges raised by the ACLU letter and those voiced by members of the immigrant and refugee community at the March Working Group meeting, Superintendent Webster and School Committee Chair Linda Scott scheduled a follow-up meeting in June with parents/guardians and other community members to encourage more direct interaction with the Lewiston School Department. The meeting drew many immigrant and refugee community leaders and parents/guardians, and resulted in a successful collaboration between these communities and LPS. Action items and a timeline were developed for both school personnel and community members, including:

1. Creation of a community advisory committee to enhance communications with school personnel;
2. Inclusion of immigrant and refugee community members in the review of the job description for language facilitators;
3. Organization of longer parent/guardian-teacher conferences and greater opportunities for privacy as needed;
4. Review of student-led conferences, which currently do not work for many parents/guardians;
5. Development of better systems for parent/guardian-school communications, including training about school policies and practices and fostering consistency of such communications among all schools;
6. Creation of an improved website to include more current data;
7. Provision of data on programs as requested;
8. Increased communication about the ACCESS test for parents/guardians so that they may remind students;
9. Provision of cultural competency training for teachers on an ongoing basis that ties into restorative practices and opening day ceremonies;

10. Scheduled follow-up meetings between the community advisory board and school personnel to check on the progress of defined activities and the issues raised in the February 2017 ACLU letter.

NOTE: In October 2017, the ACLU of Maine released a follow-up report to its research conducted in Maine school districts. Entitled, "We Belong Here: Eliminating Inequity in Education for Immigrants and Students of Color in Maine," this report can be found at: https://www.aclumaine.org/en/publications/report-we-belong-here

Requirements for serving Maine's English Learners:
The following requirements were drawn from the Maine Department of Education ESL/Bilingual Programs' *Serving Maine's English Learners Resource Guide*.[25]

1. **"Create a Lau Plan, which requires school board approval and is to describe what a school district will do to:
   - Identify its [English Learner] ELs;
   - Design an effective program to meet EL needs, including a Language Acquisition Committee (LAC) and Individual Language Acquisition Plans (ILAP);
   - Employ appropriate English-as-a-second-language or bilingual personnel (or both)
   - Align the instruction of ELs to state content standards; and
   - Provide ongoing authentic assessments to ascertain their growth in English language proficiency by administering annually the ACCESS for ELLs® and in the comprehension of academic content."
2. "Identify English Learners, screen for services;
3. Develop and provide a program of services to meet the academic and English language proficiency needs of the English Learner;
4. Administer all required State assessments to measure student progress; and
5. Continue to assess the program of services and modify when needed."

**A copy of Lewiston Public School's LAU Plan can be found online in the Policy Manual at: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B38Cnf2wuPXpdDlJMGNHbTlSSHM

Best Practices:
The following best practices were drawn from "Teaching English Language Learners: What the Research Does – and Does Not – Say," an article in *American Educator* magazine.[26]

1. "If feasible, children should be taught reading in their primary language. Primary language reading instruction:
   - Develops first language skills;
   - Promotes reading in English; and
   - Can be carried out as children are also learning to read, and learning other academic content in English."

[25] http://www.maine.gov/education/esl/guide/index.html
[26] *Teaching English Language Learners: What the Research Does – and Does Not – Say* - 2008

2. "As needed, students should be helped to transfer what they know in their first language to learning tasks presented in English; teachers should not assume that transfer is automatic."
3. "Teaching in the first and second languages can be approached similarly. However, adjustments or modifications will be necessary, probably for several years and at least for some students, until they reach sufficient familiarity with academic English to permit them to be successful in mainstream instruction; more complex learning might require more instructional adjustments."
4. "ELLs need intensive oral English language development (ELD), especially vocabulary and academic English instruction. Effective ELD provides both explicit teaching of features of English (such as syntax, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and norms of social usage) and ample, meaningful opportunities to use English—but we do not know whether there is an optimal balance between the two (much less what it might be)."
5. "ELLs also need academic content instruction, just as all students do; although ELD is crucial, it must be in addition to—not instead of—instruction designed to promote content knowledge."

The following best practices were drawn from *Building Collaboration Between Schools and Parents of English Language Learners: Transcending Barriers, Creating Opportunities*, a report from the National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems.[27]

1. "Demonstrate support for parent-school collaboration through policy, staff decisions, and behaviors such as:
    - Hiring specific personnel, such as a parent liaison and front office staff who are capable of communicating with and building relationships with the parents of ELLs;
    - Choosing staff capable of welcoming and building relationships with all parents of ELLs, even if they are only capable of speaking the native language of the majority of these parents;
    - Attending school-sponsored parent meetings in order to hear and respond to parent questions or concerns;
    - Clearly communicating to teachers and other school staff that they value parents, parent involvement programs and events, and parent-school partnerships efforts; and
    - Giving attention to the work of parent-school collaboration at staff meetings, allocating school resources toward parent-school collaboration, making efforts to speak with parents, and being present at some parent-school collaboration activities."
2. "Initiate effective communication with parents."
3. "Offer open-ended meetings involving teachers and parents."
4. "Offer skill-based workshops and informational meetings."

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[27] *Building Collaboration Between Schools and Parents of English Language Learners: Transcending Barriers, Creating Opportunities* - 2008

5. "Approach school-site decision making bodies differently (include a diverse representation of parents)."
6. "Assign staff time specifically to the work of parent-school collaboration."
7. "Offer parents English as a Second Language classes or a family literacy program."
8. "Create and support a school-based parent volunteer program."
9. "Create and support parent leadership development."
10. "Create and support a district-level parent-school advisory council."

Afterschool Programming

In addition to the afterschool and summer programming offered in Lewiston Public Schools, community-based afterschool academic and extracurricular programming options represent a major contributor to the K-12 educational experience in Lewiston, and several organizations, including those listed below, help to meet this growing need.

- Tree Street Youth
  Since 2011, Tree Street Youth (TSY), located in downtown Lewiston adjacent to Longley Elementary School, has been prominent among local organizations serving the youth of the Lewiston area. Currently in its sixth year, each day approximately 120-150 youth, 65% of whom come from immigrant or refugee families, access the organization's programming. Given its convenient and easily accessible location, most students in attendance walk to TSY from the downtown area. With the mission "to support the youth of Lewiston-Auburn through programs rooted in academics, the arts, and athletics in a safe space that encourages healthy physical, social, emotional, and academic development while building unity across lines of difference,"[28] TSY offers extensive afterschool, summer, college aspirations, and youth leadership programming which combine academics, athletics, and the arts. In addition, TSY engages in a variety of restorative and intervention practices with local youth including a male mentorship program for boys involved or at risk of being involved with the juvenile justice system; facilitating restorative circles to mitigate school disciplinary issues; and a special education tutoring program for students in need of specialized academic, social and emotional support.

- Lewiston Public Library
  The Promoting Academic Success program (a joint partnership between the Lewiston Public Library and the Harward Center for Community Partnerships at Bates College) is primarily a prevention program. It is designed to prevent youth from leaving high school without a diploma. It does this by promoting academic success for school-age students, increasing their chances of maintaining passing grades, and moving up from one level to the next. The program helps to instill positive habits of work in the students, which leads to success in both school and life. (These habits of work include self-control, paying attention, being prepared, work ethic, and self-directed learning skills.) This in turn

[28] http://treestreetyouth.org/

increases the opportunities for Lewiston youth to access higher education, to become productive members of society, and to have a good quality of life.

In addition to providing new knowledge and increased skills to the participants, this program also alters their attitudes, self-image and values. By regularly interacting with the tutor/mentors, participants have an increased sense of self-esteem and confidence in their abilities, not just in the academic arena, but also in society in general. This regular positive interaction results in a higher level of civic engagement and helping the students to feel a real connection to their community.

Last year, the program served 177 grade 6-12 students, 88% of whose parents/guardians were born in Somalia. Beyond providing a safe space for middle and high school youth to complete their homework, a primary goal of the program has been to increase students' self-esteem, particularly self-confidence in their abilities to succeed in school. Another hoped-for outcome has been that consistent work with college students will inspire the attending youth to pursue education after high school. Last year, a Bates student working with a psychology professor designed surveys for both tutors and tutees designed to measure the success of these goals. Among her findings: 100% of youth feel supported by their tutors; 89% agree that that their tutors inspire them to pursue higher education; and 97% would recommend the program to their peers. Of the 11 tutors who completed surveys, 9 of them reported seeing changes in the students with whom they regularly worked. Changes included: caring more about the process than the answers; improved skills; greater independence; and increased motivation.

- Maine Immigrant and Refugee Services (MEIRS)
  MEIRS youth programs are designed to help young people live more meaningful lives on a social, educational, and cultural level. Young people, particularly immigrant and refugee youth who are still learning how to survive in a new country, need guidance and positive reinforcement. The afterschool program, which runs throughout the school year, provides academic assistance, social and cultural skill development, and recreation.

- YWCA of Central Maine
  The mission of the YWCA of Central Maine is to eliminate racism and empower women while promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. The YWCA provides childcare, aquatic health and wellness services, and empowerment programming that prioritizes immigrant, refugee, and asylee women and girls. The goal of the YWCA's Early Learning Center and before/afterschool program is to transform the lives of children and families by providing educational and enrichment opportunities that youth in Lewiston-Auburn may not otherwise be able to access.

  One such opportunity is through the YWCA's brand new Healthy Eating and Nutrition Education Program, which not only addresses the basic nutritional needs of children served, but also seeks to transform long-term health outcomes for families living in poverty through preventative education and skill-development. This program provides

nutrition education to compliment the new initiative to serve daily, free, nutritionally-complete breakfast and lunch in the Early Learning Center (ELC) and fresh food snacks for youth in the afterschool Program. The YWCA's cooking and nutrition educator facilitates mandatory nutrition education for pre-school and school-age children, provides regular cooking and gardening programming for youth in the afterschool program, and leads a parents' group focused on nutrition, cooking, and connecting parents to affordable resources for healthy food.

Another opportunity is accessed through the YWCA's aquatics center, which provides classes and free swim opportunities for all children at least once a week, offering fun physical exercise while encouraging children to develop the vital skill of swimming.

The before and afterschool program provides care for children from kindergarten through age 12. Homework help, outdoor activities, and games assist children in learning appropriate behavior, respect for others, and inclusion of all in organized activities. Afterschool programming also includes dance lessons, multi-cultural educational experiences, karate, and boys and girls empowerment programming.

Childcare programs are open during snow days, teacher workshops, and school vacations in order to meet the needs of working parents. The YWCA of Central Maine's childcare program is committed to accessibility of care for all families, offers flexible hours of care, and accepts State of Maine childcare subsidies.

Meeting Takeaways:

- Consider offering cultural competency training to all Lewiston Public Schools employees.
- Consider offering ELL certification for all Lewiston Public Schools teaching staff. This could be offered in collaboration with the University of Southern Maine's Lewiston Auburn College.
- Increase outreach to ELL families in ways that are less affected by language barriers.
- Expand upon the safe, positive, culturally competent youth programs in Lewiston that offer both academic and extracurricular supports for all kids.
- There seems to be a duplication of services in afterschool programming. We need to think smarter and more efficiently so that organizations aren't competing for limited funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LEWISTON CITY COUNCIL

Much of the information contained in this report relates specifically to certain issue areas. However, there are several more broad-reaching recommendations that the Working Group has compiled for consideration by the City of Lewiston and its current and future city councils.

As stated in the Overview of this report, it shall be the purview of the seated council to determine which of these recommendations are appropriate for implementation and to create a process for implementation.

RECOMMENDATION #1

The one issue that rose to the top of almost every Working Group discussion was the need for a centralized office where all of this information was kept and updated, and where individuals could receive referrals to other agencies for various services. Currently, the City of Lewiston's General Assistance Office and the Adult Learning Center are helping to fill this gap, despite the fact that this work does not really fall under the umbrella of either, and staff in both offices are already overwhelmed by their respective workloads. Given that our immigrant and refugee population has grown by over 330% since 2004[29], the Working Group strongly recommends the creation of an Immigrant/Refugee Program Coordinator position (actual title and job description to be determined), which is not foreign to the City of Lewiston. In 2002, a similar position was funded by the Maine Department of Labor, to manage and coordinate city, state, federal and non-profit agency programs that serviced the immigrant and refugee populations in the greater Lewiston and Auburn area. A copy of the job description and funding proposal can be found as Appendix F at the end of this report. While the Working Group acknowledges that the funding for this position was cut, it suggests a few ways that it may be funded again in the future:

- Currently, Senator Roger Katz of Augusta has a bill before the Legislature (carried over) entitled, "LD1492: An Act To Attract, Educate and Retain New Mainers To Strengthen the Workforce." This bill would appropriate funds from the State of Maine to create a Welcoming Center (similar to the one currently funded by the State in Portland) through Lewiston Adult Education, and to hire a full-time coordinator to develop programming or a series of programs designed to assist foreign-trained workers to fully participate in our local workforce. This bill would also provide opportunities for additional grant funds for industry specific training and ESOL programming. The Working Group recommends that the City of Lewiston and the Lewiston City Council support and advocate for the enactment of this bill, which is supported by the Director of Lewiston Adult Education. A copy of the bill's text can be found at: http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/getPDF.asp?paper=SP0521&item=1&snum=128.

- The City could also consider appropriating Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for the hiring of an Immigrant/Refugee Program Coordinator. Due to

[29] Lewiston GA Immigrant Report October 2004 through October 2017 Analysis (Appendix G)

the 15% cap regulated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development on social services agency support (including workforce development) through the CDBG program, the position would only be eligible for partial funding. In order to compete most effectively for CDBG dollars, it has been recommended by the City's Community Development staff that the position be housed outside the City's employ (although a staff position in the City's General Assistance Office is currently partially funded through the CDBG program). It is recommended that the City work with a local non-profit or with Lewiston Adult Education, and a group of stakeholders, to create a job description and plan for this position, which could then be requested in the CDBG grant application process and supported by the Council if the Community Advisory Council (who first considers these requests), chooses to allocate funding.

- Lastly, the City could consider creating and funding the Immigrant/Refugee Program Coordinator position within the City's operating budget. The Working Group understands that City budgets are tight, but we also understand the importance of this position in helping with community integration and easing the workloads of our GA and ALC staff.

RECOMMENDATION #2

The second recommendation the Working Group would like to make is for the City of Lewiston to consider membership in Welcoming America, a network of nonprofit organizations and municipal governments interested in making their communities more welcoming to immigrants and refugees. Dues are minimal ($200 per year) and participation would allow city staff access to support and training from a network of members who have addressed many of the issues raised in this report in their own communities. Current members include Baltimore, MD, Concord, NH, Manchester, NH, Burlington, VT, Gainesville, FL, Louisville, KY and over 90 other communities across the United States. More information can be found at: https://www.welcomingamerica.org/.

RECOMMENDATION #3

Thirdly, the Working Group recommends that the City of Lewiston and the Lewiston City Council continue to create better access to safe and affordable housing and support stricter code enforcement efforts, especially as they relate to combating the high childhood lead-poisoning rates in our community. Recommendations are made in the most recent Comprehensive Plan that was adopted by the Council and the Working Group hopes that the Council will work toward implementation of those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION #4

Fourth, the Working Group would like City staff and the Council to continue their work to attract and create more good-paying, full-time jobs in Lewiston, not just for the members of our immigrant and refugee populations, but for everyone. This directly coincides with current workforce development efforts. We have access to a willing and able workforce that is highly motivated to help build our economy. We need to provide them with as many opportunities as possible to do so.

RECOMMENDATION #5
Lastly, the Working Group requests that the City and the Council consider a more holistic approach to the recruitment of immigrants and refugees for positions on municipal boards and committees. Communication about openings seems to be lacking across populations and a plan should be created for better outreach to the community as a whole. We also ask that the City and Council support, recognize, and utilize in whatever way possible, various local organizations that are providing services to these populations. Such organizations and their staff are often working long hours and on shoestring budgets to provide for some of our most vulnerable populations.

CONCLUSION

It is the sincere hope of the Immigrant and Refugee Integration and Policy Development Working Group that this report is received in a manner consistent with its intended purpose: to provide an update to the on-going dialogue about immigrant and refugee services available in the City of Lewiston and the needs not currently being met, and to assist with policy development in relation to those services and needs. We look forward to working toward that end with the City of Lewiston, the Lewiston City Council, our legislative delegation, and those agencies engaged in providing services to our immigrant and refugee populations.

A NOTE OF THANKS

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- Chris Bicknell, New Beginnings
- Nicole Bissonnette, Pine Tree Legal Assistance
- Barbara Bixby, University of Southern Maine
- Natalie Bornstein, YWCA
- Sue Charron, General Assistance Office, City of Lewiston
- Jenny Cowie, St. Mary's Regional Medical Center
- Joan Churchill, Community Clinical Services
- Maggie Davis, formerly of College for ME - Androscoggin
- Hannah DeAngelis, Catholic Charities Maine
- Sofia Gnabasik, Bates College Short Term Action Research Team Fellow, Class of 2017
- Erin Guay, Healthy Androscoggin
- Fatuma Hussein, Immigrant Resource Center of Maine
- Holly Lasagna, Healthy Androscoggin
- Dennis Lajoie, formerly of Community Concepts Finance Corporation

- Abdimalik Maalim, Central Maine Community College
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- Inza Ouattara, Maine Immigrant and Refugee Services
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- Marcela Peres, Lewiston Public Library
- Darby Ray, Harward Center for Community Partnerships, Bates College
- Erin Reed, Trinity Jubilee Center
- Sue Roche, Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project
- Claude Rwaganje, Community Financial Literacy
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- Abdulkerim Said, New Mainers Public Health Initiative
- Mary Schneckenburger, Consumers for Affordable Healthcare
- Linda Scott, Lewiston School Committee
- Julia Sleeper, Tree Street Youth
- Sue Smith, Maine Department of Corrections
- Linda St. Andre, Lewiston Public Schools
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- Craig Zurhorst, Western Maine Transportation Services

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Appendix A: Immigrant and Refugee Integration and Policy Development Working Group Membership List

- Immigrant and Refugee Community Leaders
  - Fowsia Musse (Healthy Androscoggin)
  - Abdifatah Ahmed, Vice Chair (Maine Community Integration)
  - Zam Zam Mohamed (community member representing Somalia)
  - Abdikadir Negeye (Maine Immigrant and Refugee Services)
  - Hawo Abdille (Lewiston Public Schools)
  - Muhidin Libah (Somali Bantu Community Association)
  - Mohamed Ali (Trinity Jubilee Center)
  - Mutaz Abdelrahim (community member representing Sudan)
  - Abdi Abdalla (Maine Community Integration)
  - Coach Abdulahi Abdi (Lewiston Public Schools)
  - Bishar Alkhayr (community member representing Chad/Central Africa)
- Service Provider/Advocacy/Community Leaders
  - Joe Philippon (Lewiston Police Department)
  - Kathy Durgin-Leighton (YWCA)
  - Joyce T. Gibson (University of Southern Maine's Lewiston-Auburn College)
  - Kate Brennan (Maine Equal Justice Partners)
  - Carolyn McNamara (B Street Health Center, St. Mary's Regional Medical Center)
  - Jacynthe Blais Jacques (Gendron Franco Center)
  - Bill Grant (L-A Adult Education)
  - Mary LaFontaine (Maine CareerCenter)
- City Staff and Elected Officials
  - City Council President Kristen Cloutier, Chair (Ward 5)
  - Councilor Isobel Golden (Ward 3)
  - Senator Nathan Libby (Senate District 21)
  - Representative Jared Golden (House District 60)
  - Deputy City Administrator Phil Nadeau (staff support - retired)
  - Deputy City Administrator Denis D'Auteuil (staff support)

Appendix B: Immigrant and Refugee Integration and Policy Development Working Group Complete Meeting Schedule

Presenter Meetings:
Members of the community who provide services in the following topic areas were invited to present to the Working Group.

- October 6, 2016: Workforce Development and Employment
- October 20, 2016: Language Access
- November 17, 2016: Healthcare
- December 1, 2016: Family Relationships/Corrections/Juvenile Justice
- December 15, 2016: Higher Education
- January 5, 2017: Food/Housing/Income Support/Legal Services/Transportation
- January 19, 2017: Refugee Resettlement
- February 2, 2017: Mental Health and Substance Abuse
- February 16, 2017: Banking and Finance
- March 2, 2017: Public Education and Afterschool Programming

Community Involvement Meetings:
Working Group members invited members of the community to share their stories and concerns on the following topics. If community members were unable to attend, Working Group members shared concerns on their behalf. Notes and agendas were shared on the overhead projector to help guide the discussion.

- March 15, 2017: Workforce Development and Employment; Language Access
- March 29, 2017: Mental Health and Substance Abuse
- April 19, 2017: Family Relationships/Corrections/Juvenile Justice; Food/Housing/Income Support/Legal Services/Transportation; Banking and Finance
- April 26, 2017: Refugee Resettlement; Healthcare
- May 10, 2017: Higher Education; Public Education and Afterschool Programming

Working Final Report Meetings
Working Group members reviewed draft sections of the final report prepared by a Bates College Short Term Action/Research Team Fellow on an overhead projector and provided feedback. These were working meetings where specific sections of the report were reworked as needed.

- May 3, 2017: Workforce Development and Employment
- May 17, 2017: Language Access; Healthcare; Public Education and Afterschool Programming
- May 24, 2017: Food/Housing/Income Support/Legal Services/Transportation
- May 31, 2017: Next Steps Discussion
- June 15, 2017: Introduction
- July 27, 2017: Higher Education; Refugee Resettlement

- August 17, 2017: Mental Health and Substance Abuse; Banking and Finance
- August 31, 2017: Workforce Development and Employment (second draft); Family Relationships/Corrections/Juvenile Justice
- September 7, 2017: Public Education and Afterschool Programming (second draft)
- September 14, 2017: Higher Education (second draft)

Appendix C: St. Mary's Regional Medical Center Interpreter Services Handout

ST. MARY'S INTERPRETER SERVICES

WHY?

Why provide Interpreter Services?

We have a moral, ethical and legal obligation to provide our diverse community with the services they need to effectively communicate with our providers. Joint Commission states: **Effective communication is the cornerstone of patient safety.**

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), hospitals must provide effective means of communication for patients, family members, and hospital visitors who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Civil Rights Act of 1964 Title VI:

No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance

WHO?

Who needs interpreter services?

Patients who have limited English proficiency

Definition of LEP: Persons who are unable to communicate effectively in English because their primary language is not English and they have not developed fluency in the English language. A person with Limited English Proficiency may have difficulty speaking or reading English.

HOW?

How does one determine if a patient requires an Interpreter?

It is the expectation of the Joint Commission that the hospital respects the patient's right to receive information in a manner he or she understands (RI.01.01.03). The hospital identifies the patient's oral and written communication needs, including the patient's preferred language for discussing health care (PC.02.01.0X).

WHAT?

Once language is determined what forms of interpreter services do we have?

In person Interpreters/Cultural Brokers
Language lines
VRI – video remote interpreting services
Pen and paper

HOW?

How do we go about acquiring an interpreter or utilizing one of our interpreter services?

Language Database
Interpreter Request

Questions regarding Interpreter Services please contact: Jenny Cowie, jcowie@stmarysmaine.com, 777-4191

Appendix D: REACH Materials from Healthy Androscoggin

Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Resources

General Health:

- Common medical issues and cultural concerns of Somali patients
  http://www.culturecareconnection.org/matters/diversity/somali.html
  (Minnesota Department Health)

- Health Education Resources
  http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/refugee/hlthmat.html

- Somali Immigrant Women and the American Health Care System: Discordant Beliefs, Divergent Expectations, and Silent Worries:
  http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2893335/

- The Somali Health Coalition of Minnesota
  https://somalihealthcoalitionmn.wordpress.com/2011/06/03/skin-bleaching-press-release/

- Somali Health Solutions
  http://www.somalihealthsolutions somalihealthsolutions.com/
  http://www.resource-mn.org/about-resource/

Cultural Competency:

- Ideas on how to develop a Culturally Competent landing page
  http://www.culturecareconnection.org/

- Do I need an interpreter video
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=goXu4x0WB7k&feature=youtu.be

- Quick CLAS test for staff and colleagues
  http://www.culturecareconnection.org/navigating/assessment.html
  http://aetcnmc.org/curricula/CLAS/index.html

Health Data:

- Collecting Health Data
  http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/health-equity/REL.html

- Community Health Improvement Navigator-Best Practices
  http://www.cdc.gov/CHInav/

- Focuses on skills and knowledge to value diversity.
  http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/cultural-competence-training-health-care-professionals

Medical Resources:

- ECHO crafts high quality culturally and linguistically appropriate health-related programming for television and radio broadcast and phone, print, web, and DVD partner relay distribution
  http://www.echominnesota.org/tools/echo-dvds

- Health Reach is a national collaborative partnership that has developed a vast archive of quality multilingual, multicultural public health information.

  https://healthreach.nlm.nih.gov/

Interpretation Services:

- Language Select:

  DIAL 844.379.9878 to reach an interpreter.

- Language Line:
  https://www.languageline.com/interpreting/- $3.95 per minute

House of Languages	(207) 423-9962	428 Fore St. P.O. Box 18210 Portland Me, 04112	http://www.houseoflanguages.com/

Updated July, 2016

Appendix E: ELL Students by School

School	LEP Count	% LEP
Dingley School	3	42.9
Farwell Elementary School	60	13.8
Geiger Elementary School	124	17.6
Lewiston Academy	10	20.4
Lewiston High School	334	25.9
Lewiston Middle School	209	27
Longley Elementary School	246	61.3
LPS Outplaced	19	18.3
Martel Elementary School	49	16.6
McMahon Elementary School	176	25.7
Montello Elementary School	288	40.4
Lewiston Public Schools	1539	27.9

Appendix F: Lewiston GA Immigrant Report October 2004 through October 2017 Analysis

Lewiston GA Immigrant Report Oct 2017- P Nadeau Analysis

Item	Calculations	Data				
Lewiston Population - 2000 Census(1)		35,690				
Lewiston Population - 2010 Census		36,592				
Oct 2017 Report Analysis(2)						
October 2004 Individuals(3)	1268 X 125%=	1585				
October 2017 individuals	4204 X 125%=	5255				
Total all individuals since 2001		6840				
Immigrant Pop Ratio Oct 2004(3)	1585(10/04 pop)/35690(2000 Lew pop) =	4.4%				
Immigrant Pop Ratio Oct 2017	6840(10/17 pop)/36592(2010 Lew pop)=	18.7%				
Im Pop Increase 10/17 - 10/04	6840-1585 = 5255	331.5%				

(1) - All population numbers represent officials decennial US Census population numbers for Lewiston

(2) - All population numbers used in this analysis of the Oct 17 GA report represent individuals not cases **processed** as first-time applicants (repeat applications are tracked separately). Individuals/cases **processed** do not reflect if individuals/cases were awarded General Assistance.

(3) -The "125%" used in this calculation reflects the GA methodology of adding 25% to its processed individuals as the city's unofficial method of calculating the total immigrant population. By adding an additional 25% to the first time applicant number, this methodology, though unscientific, has roughly correlated both to the 2010 Census numbers and to the currently increasing ELL student enrollment in the LPS system.

NOTE: Data for October 2004 Individuals and October 2017 Individuals was taken from a spreadsheet provided by the City of Lewiston's General Assistance (GA) Office, which tracks first-time immigrant and refugee GA applicants. These numbers were then multiplied by 125% to establish an estimate of the immigrant and refugee population within the City. While certainly not a scientific method, these estimates match those of the 2000 and 2010 censuses, as well as those of our immigrant public school student population, very closely.

Appendix G: Immigrant/Refugee Program Manager Job Description and Funding Proposal

IMMIGRANT/REFUGEE PROGRAMS MANAGER
JOB DESCRIPTION
DRAFT

September 17, 2002

Nature of Work

This is administrative work associated with the management and coordination of city, state, federal and non-profit agency programs which service, directly and indirectly, immigrant and refugee (IR) populations in the greater Lewiston and Auburn area. Tasks will require regular contact with, citizens, elected officials, government and non-profit agency representatives. Work is performed with considerable independence of action in accordance with applicable laws. Employee will follow established administrative procedures, but must exercise considerable judgement and initiative. The employee shall be supervised and report directly to the Assistant City Administrator in performing a variety of administrative tasks, and shall keep him/her informed of applicable matters associated with the position. Work shall require the operation of a computer, and a working knowledge of a variety of software and hardware applications. Work may be reviewed through observation, verification, internal audit, and thorough fiscal audit.

Examples of Work

- Coordinates those activities associated with the Portland-Lewiston Collaborative Refugee Project and other local, state, federal government and non-profit agencies directly, or indirectly, involved in providing services and programs to IR populations
- Assists in facilitating the sharing of information with all appropriate government and non-profit agencies providing IR services to maximize servicing and program opportunities for area IR populations
- Works with state agencies to develop appropriate state policy addressing the unique challenges associated with some IR populations
- Conducts necessary coordination and outreach to recruit funding support for services and programs which may be of value to IR populations
- Develops processes and reports which will provide information to the Dept. of Labor, and to city officials, on activities associated with this position
- Provide appropriate levels of support to the Director of General Assistance related to support services associated with General Assistance administration
- Must possess the ability to operate a PC and operate software associated with data collection and analysis; spreadsheet analysis; report writing; and communications in general
- Exercises considerable judgement, tact, and diplomacy in handling difficult complaints, and solving complex problems
- Performs related work as required

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Requirements of Work

- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with City officials, employees, and the general public
- Graduation from a college or university with major course work in the social sciences or any equivalent combination of experience or training
- Preference for individuals who are multilingual and have experience working with refugee/immigrant populations
- Working knowledge of refugee and immigrant federal, state, and other funding sources
- May involve coordination and contact with news media requiring the need for the development of press releases; providing personal contact for interviews; and providing support for general media information inquiries for news reporting purposes
- Can display a high level of professionalism relative to personal contact with citizens, elected officials, agency professionals, and city staff
- Thorough knowledge of modern office procedures, practices and equipment
- Ability to maintain records and prepare reports
- Ability to operate all necessary computer hardware and software specifically those Microsoft programs which include Word; Excel; Access; and PowerPoint
- Possesses a valid State of Maine Class C driver's license and personal vehicle available for work use
- Ensures that privileged information is held in confidence

I, _____, understand the above, and acknowledge that this job
(please print clearly)
description accurately expresses the responsibilities/requirements of the **Immigrant/Refugee Programs Manager for the City of Lewiston**.

_____

Signature of Employee Date

OUTLINE OF FUNDING PROPOSAL BETWEEN THE CITY OF LEWISTON AND THE MAINE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR:
Funding of Proposed Immigrant/Refugee Program Manager

DRAFT

September 11, 2002

1. Maine Department of Labor (herein referred to as "MDOL") will provide full funding for a position which will be funded as a full-time position City position, administered by the City; subject to available state or other funding which shall be dedicated for the payment of wages, benefits, at a scale reflecting current City salaried positions; and shall be identified as "Immigrant/Refugee Program Manager" position with the City.

2. MDOL will provide full funding for the position immediately upon hire by the City through June 30, 2004 under the following provisions: That MDOL shall have the authority to review the position at any time; make recommendations to modify responsibilities within the scope of general objectives associated with servicing Lewiston-Auburn immigrant/refugee populations; and have final authority to terminate funding, with sixty (60) days notice to the City Administrator only under such conditions as it can be reasonably demonstrated by MDOL that the objectives of the position have not been adequately met as defined within the positions job description.

3. MDOL shall commit to review all wage and benefit funding for this position and commit to issue any decisions relative to additional funding, or modifications of responsibility, no later than May 1, 2004. The position shall be paid at a rate equal to that of a Grade Four (4) position under the City's salaried personnel wage plan; posted at a wage rate not to exceed $36,000 annually ; shall be subject to any annual pay plan increases approved by the City Council for FY2004; provide for a benefit package which shall reflect those offered to all salaried personnel which, for purposes of this agreement, shall not exceed 55% of the wage rate, or $14,850 (proposed benefits from October 1, 2002 through June 30, 2003), for a total first Fiscal Year 2003 commitment of no more than $41,850 (proposed funding from October 1, 2002 through June 30, 2003).

4. MDOL shall commit to provide full one-time funding for all PC, software, printer requirements, and other office assets associated with supporting the position at a cost not to exceed $4,000.

5. The position shall work to coordinate the activities of multiple local, state, federal and non-profit agencies in an attempt to maximize efficiencies and minimize duplication of services and programs. The list of agencies currently engaged with the City of Lewiston, either directly or indirectly, in providing proposed or on-going programs or services for IR populations includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Career Center
ME Dept. of Agriculture
Sisters of Charity Health System
Catholic Charities Maine
ME Dept. of Human Services
USM - The Center for Workplace Learning
Lewiston Somali MAA's
Maine Commission on Community Service
Lewiston School System
Lewiston Housing Authority
Training Development Corporation
Portland-Lewiston Collaborative Project
Central Maine Medical Center
Multiple United Way Agencies
ME Dept. of Labor – Career Center
ME Bureau of Health
Lewiston Adult Education
Maine Rural Workers Coalition
State Planning Office
Lewiston Police Department
Multiple faith based organizations
Lewiston-Auburn Transit Committee