



# **ANNUAL REPORT**

**Fiscal Year 2008-2009**

**Immigration Outreach Service Center**

**5401 Loch Raven Boulevard**

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## **Mission**

The Immigration Outreach Service Center, Inc. (IOSC) at St. Matthew Catholic Church is a center for immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers, regardless of status or ethnicity.

The IOSC:

- Provides legal immigration counseling and representation regarding adjustment of status and naturalization;
- Acts as liaison to connect immigrants with other organizations that provide health care, education and employment services;
- Organizes immigrants to access power for advocacy;
- Collaborates with Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development (BUILD) and other organizations to promote leadership development.

## **Goals**

- To enable the smooth re-settlement of immigrants by providing a variety of services in a safe environment, in order to facilitate the ease of immigrants' integration into the Baltimore Metro Area.
- To expand the Immigrants' Institute in collaboration with other immigrant organizations;
- To develop immigrant leaders in the areas of education, advocacy and healthcare.

## **Objectives**

- To prepare immigrants to achieve status of permanent residents, and permanent residents to achieve naturalization.
- To prepare socially challenged immigrants for the journey toward successful integration into communities in the Baltimore Metro area.
- To serve as a portal in Baltimore City for immigrants who are seeking social and economic opportunities and basic services.
- To collaborate with other organizations on advocacy issues to improve the quality of life for immigrants in the Baltimore Metro area.

## Message from the Executive Director

Looking back, the years 2008-2009 have been tough ones for the Immigration Outreach Service Center (IOSC) as well as for all of us in America. After several months of deliberation, the board of directors decided it was best to reduce the Center's weekly hours of operation from five days to two days starting on July 1, 2008. Once that decision was made, we conducted an audit of the clients' cases from July 1, 2008 to September 15, 2008. We then decided to retain 60 cases where decision or adjudication from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) was pending; close 112 cases, and continue to review 70 cases for potential closing. At the beginning of 2009 the board voted to increase the operations to four days per week.

A special appeal was made to the top contributors of the parish of St. Matthew, as well as to small ethnic groups, individuals and friends, to make a commitment to support the IOSC from August 2008 to December 2009. The response to that appeal brought in \$43,465.00 between August 2008 and June 2009. I wish to thank all of them for their support during this reporting period with special mention to:

- James DeGraffenreidt and Mychelle Farmer,
- Patrick Muth and family, for planning the first IOSC Bull Roast held in January and which was a great success;
- The Sisters of Mercy of the Americas;
- John Shields and the staff of Gertrude's Restaurant for hosting our annual Savor the World fund raiser;
- Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, whose members gave generously to the IOSC and who later awarded a grant to support the Institute;
- The Archbishop's Lenten Appeal;
- The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) which awarded a local grant to prevent the IOSC from closing its doors.

Other sources of funding came from program fees and generous donations from our Savor the World

Corporate sponsors -- Harrison Health Care, Inc., Eleanore Hofstetter, Bon Secours Baltimore Health System, and March Funeral Home. I would be remiss if I did not mention the unselfish generosity of Rev. Joseph Muth, Pastor of St. Matthew, who continues to give of his time and talent, as well as his treasure, to work of the IOSC. I am indeed grateful to all of them.

Special thanks go to the parishioners of St. Matthew who responded unselfishly to the IOSC's appeal for a two-year commitment; to the Cross Cultural Committee for their collaboration with IOSC in its first International Mass and Summer Bazaar and for their continued support of the IOSC.

No expression of gratitude is complete without including the board of directors, advisors, and donors for supporting the center with their selfless hard work and financial contributions over the years, especially this past year.

Looking forward into the new fiscal year, plans are afoot to find a bigger location to expand our programs and staff. In order to better achieve our goals it is essential that we now have the highest quality Web presence. We will use our Web site to market our services, to assist with fund-raising, and to link services that provide access to health care, education, employment and other social services.

The current site [www.ioscbaltimore.org](http://www.ioscbaltimore.org), was upgraded by Sparks!, our web developer. The Knott Foundation awarded IOSC a \$2,500 grant to redesign the web site to improve its quality by making it current, flexible and user-friendly.

Needless to say, IOSC will have to aggressively and creatively seek new sources of funding to carry it beyond 2009.

Jean-Marie Holloway is Executive Director of IOSC. She may be contacted by email: [jmkholloway@ioscbaltimore.org](mailto:jmkholloway@ioscbaltimore.org) or phone: 410-323-8564.

## **Summary of Outreach Legal Services from July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009**

During the past year the IOSC assisted at total of 700 through phone contacts and visits to the Center. A total of 271 persons (not including spouses and children) were assisted through visits to the Center. These were from 43 countries with a variety of immigration-related issues/concerns which are mentioned below.

Our emphasis remained as a center to counsel individuals or families on the Immigration Laws of the U.S.A.; to assist with affirmative applications before the USCIS; to provide representation before the Immigration Court, and to collaborate with other agencies on advocacy issues to benefit immigrants. IOSC contracted the service of King, King and Associates to file its IRS Form 990 - tax returns.

- **Consults**

A total of 66 received consultation on immigration and/or other matters.

- **Affirmative Asylum Application**

Out of a total of 7 asylum pending applications, 5 were processed.

- 3 asylum applications granted by Asylum Office, one of which had been pending for 2 years
- one asylum application is pending before the Immigration Judge
- one asylum application is pending at the Asylum Office

- **Family Petitions/Adjustment of Status Applications based on Relative Petitions before the USCIS:**

A total of 29 Family Petitions were processed during this period

A total of 15 Applications for Adjustment of Status based on Family Petitions were processed.

- Attorney represented three at adjustment interviews
- 7 are pending before the USCIS
- 5 of these green card applications have been granted.

(10 beneficiaries of approved family petitions are awaiting visa and consular processing through the visa center and their respective embassies.)

- **Asylee Relative Petitions:** 2 were processed and approved by the USCIS

- **Refugee Derivative Application:** One application was processed and is pending at the USCIS

- **Asylee/Refugee Adjustment of Status Applications:**

10 Asylee/Refugee adjustment applications are pending before the USCIS  
(5 have been called for interviews and are awaiting adjudication of their case.)  
10 Asylees/Refugees received their green cards

- **Religious Visa Immigrant Petition/Adjustment of Status**  
One adjustment application based on an approved religious visa application is pending before the USCIS.
- **Removal proceeding with pending Adjustment Applications**  
Two clients seeking adjustment based on spousal family and whose cases were pending before the Immigration Court have now received their green cards.
- **Removal proceeding with pending VAWA (US citizen or Green Card Holder spouse who is a victim of domestic abuse)**

There is one case pending before the Baltimore Immigration Court. The VAWA application is pending before the USCIS.

- **Extension/change of non-immigrant status visa:**  
None were processed during this period
- **K- Fiancé Visa application**  
Two were processed and approved
- **Naturalization applications:**  
Six applications were processed during the period -  
2 clients are now US citizens  
4 applications are pending before the USCIS.
- **Removal of Conditions for conditional green card holders:**  
Two were processed and one application received his unconditional green card
- **H1-B visas:**  
One was processed and is pending before the USCIS. The changes in the system of available visa numbers made it difficult for H1-B visas to be available for applicants.
- **Advance Parole:**  
Two applications for advanced parole were processed and approved.
- **Organizing:**  
Since the IOSC's operations were scaled back to two days each week for six months, organizing activities such as the Institute were deferred.

## Board of Directors and Staff

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**Executive Director:** Jean-Marie Holloway

### Attorney:

 Oti W. Nwosu

During the reporting period, Ms Nwosu provided immigration counseling and information, assisted in completing forms, prepared briefs and motions, represented clients at the Immigration Court, at Asylum interviews, as well as at Adjustment and Naturalization interviews. Ms. Nwosu also participated in meetings and discussions with members of other churches who wanted to learn more about or to collaborate with IOSC. Ms. Nwosu works with IOSC a minimum of twenty-five hours per week.

**Bookkeeper:** Mrs. Robin Novak works part-time with IOSC.

**Volunteers:** Lucy Gitaka, Nickie Sommerfeldt, student intern Stella Marie Wesley, Gianna Blake, the Board of Directors, the Savor the World Committee and the Cross Cultural Committee. These dedicated volunteers enabled much of the work at the Center to be accomplished.