

IOSC Newsletter



Immigration Outreach Service Center **Volume 1 / Issue 8**

A Message from Our Founder

Where Do I Go From Here? What's Next? Immigration Outreach Service Center September 2021

COVID-19 has kept us separated from each other and kept us masked so that we can't always see each other.

During this time the IOSC staff and volunteers have continued with tutoring on-line; delivering food to food-insecure immigrant families; obtaining grant-funding to assist with food, job, and housing issues; and giving hope and encouragement to many others through regular phone conversations. In the midst of very trying and difficult circumstances, the work and ministry of IOSC has continued. This has been an inspiration for me.

I have been going through my own transitions this year. I was retired as Pastor of St. Matthew and Blessed Sacrament Churches and found myself invited into new ministry possibilities. I am now the Catholic Chaplain on the campus of Notre Dame of Maryland University (NDMU). However, my transition from being Pastor to being Chaplain did not mean that my relationship with the IOSC would be discontinued.

In fact, my role with the IOSC continues. I will still attend IOSC Board meetings, and be a consultant on the future decisions of the IOSC. I will participate in fund-raisers, and will speak on behalf of immigrants and their struggles when invited to do so. The twenty-year history of IOSC has made an impact on the immigrant community of Baltimore, and the many churches who reach out and welcome the immigrant community to their new church homes. The IOSC has also gone beyond its Christian Catholic roots, and extended its outreach to the Jewish Community and the Muslim Community. For me, this is the development of the Beloved Community that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. frequently preached about in his sermons. I still feel called to this IOSC ministry no matter what my official title is.

I am looking forward to my on-going involvement with the IOSC and the opportunity to welcome new people to America, learn from their stories, and give them a safe place to begin the journey to their new life. So, where do I go from here? I am still here and continue my ministry with the IOSC!

Fr. Joe Muth

Legal Clinic

We are excited to welcome **Patricia Chiriboga-Roby, Immigration Attorney** to the IOSC team. Patricia recently transitioned from the World Relief Immigration Services Legal Clinic (WRISLC) where she served as Office Director and Senior Staff Attorney for 12 years. She has joined the IOSC team to provide immigration legal consultations both in person and virtually via Zoom. We are delighted to be working with Patti and to provide immigration legal consults to all in need. The Legal Clinic will be held on Wednesdays in the IOSC office on a first come-first serve basis. We ask that those attending the Legal Clinic arrive between 9:30 am to 10:30 am. Our consultation fee is \$80.00. Virtual consultation appointments will be scheduled as needed. Please contact Mary Ritter at 410-323-8564 or mary@ioscbaltimore.org for further information.

IOSC Newsletter

Volume 1 / Issue 8

We are delighted to welcome **Nathalie Piraino** to the IOSC team! Nathalie will be coordinating the St. Matthew, Blessed Sacrament and IOSC volunteers who will be assisting the resettlement of an Afghan family. In addition, Nathalie will be volunteering in the office to provide clerical assistance three days a week. Nathalie is originally from Rwanda, and therefore brings her own experience as an immigrant to bear in her work with the IOSC.

Virtual Career Fair

On September 29th, we will host a Virtual Career Fair with Our Dailly Bread Employment Center from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Please register at <https://www.ioscbaltimore.org/career-fair-registration/> to meet with potential employers. If you are or know of an employer seeking skilled staff members, please contact Mary Ritter at mary@ioscbaltimore.org.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Our Fall semester of ESOL began in late August when we welcomed both new and continuing students into beginner, intermediate, and advanced level classes with five dedicated and experienced teachers providing mostly virtual instruction, while also accommodating students who preferred in-person classes.

Computer Literacy

After our successful Spring semester, we offered a more advanced Summer mini-semester for previous Computer Literacy students. Four students enrolled in this entirely online class, and learned how to use Google Sheets (the equivalent of Microsoft Excel) to manage information. We are resuming our beginner Computer Literacy course for the Fall semester at the end of September. Many thanks to our committed teacher, Fred Trenkle, who developed both of these courses, and his co-teacher Véronique Ayivi-Blibo.

Financial Literacy

After taking a few weeks off for a Summer break, our Saturday morning Financial Literacy classes began again in July. Our teacher, François Ntchombou, spent many weeks taking an in-depth look at the topic of credit before resuming our regular curriculum. He and co-teacher Cliff Okoth spent the rest of the Summer leading some very interesting and fruitful discussions on the basics of money management.

Beyond the Borders Tutoring

This summer we had tutoring with each group of students entering grades 1-3, 4-6, and 7-12. Tutors for each grade group planned sessions together, sharing stories, reading, and conversation as we continued to enhance learning. Each group read Hidden Figures with books written for their respective age group. Our middle school group prepared plays, Rufus & Ryan and Stone Soup, which they performed at the end of the summer. We closed summer tutoring on August 28th by viewing the movie Hidden Figures.

On September 5th we distributed school supplies to each student for this school year. We invite you to continue contributing to the school supplies through Amazon Prime at: https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1B8CW36UG3WBF?ref_=wl_share. At this site you will find the "wish list" to fulfill the supplies needed by our students. For the shipping address please select "**Elaine Crawford, IOSC's Gift Registry Address**". Our students and families appreciate your kind donation(s).

Virtual Tutoring will resume on Saturday, October 2nd from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Our goal is to provide one-to-one tutoring via Zoom breakout rooms for immigrant children and children of immigrants from ages pre-K through high school.

If you are feeling called to tutor a child in math skills, reading comprehension, and occasional special school projects, please contact Elaine Crawford at Elaine@ioscbaltimore.org. In order to keep our children safe, all tutors are required to complete a background check through Virtus.