



### **With your support, 138 determined people gained citizenship despite rising costs**

*New citizen Samia Hachem finds her public voice at our Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors*

"I pledge allegiance to the United States..." Now repeat 138 times.

Thanks to your help, 138 Institute clients swore allegiance to the United States for the first time and became American citizens in 2004.

These new citizens-your neighbors-can vote, compete for promotions, pursue college degrees, and contribute to our mutual well-being.

It is not easy. To gain citizenship, our neighbors must wait five years, pay hundreds of dollars for paperwork, have legal representation, and be proficient in English to pass the citizenship exam.

Samia Hachem, for instance, came from Lebanon six years ago "to be part of the American dream and to have freedom of speech." Unfortunately, her English prevented her from her dream. After taking ESL and citizenship classes, Samia is now a citizen and registered to vote. She is currently taking a GED class in preparation for a civil service job to "help my



Lely De La Cruz prepares to exercise her own voice of freedom.

new country." Samia's confidence and language skills are so improved that she presented at our Annual Meeting.

We agree with Alfonso Aguilar, U.S. Chief of Citizenship and keynote speaker at our Annual Meeting: "The history of the U.S. is the history of immigrants. Citizenship is the key to our democracy and our first priority."

Unfortunately, since March, the federal application fee increased 25%. Yet, together, you, people like Samia, and the

Institute ensure a diverse Rhode Island, a vital labor force, and that more families access the American Dream.



New citizen, Samia Hachem eagerly anticipates voting and pursuing college.

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## Successful alumni double your investment by giving back

*Former clients Lily Leung and William Mansfield find success in business, banking, and service to the Institute*

Lily Leung left her native China in 1988 and came to Rhode Island. She reunited with her husband and found, unexpectedly, her English language skills were not good enough to get a good job! Making things more difficult, she had little formal education at any time in her life.

Much has changed in 16 years!

Lily enrolled in ESL and job training classes at the Institute, but that doesn't begin to tell the story. While here, she brought baked goods and sold them to raise money for us at class breaks. Within two months, she landed a job at a seafood wholesaler and took a typing class. Later, she worked 8 months as a part-time receptionist at the Institute.

Where is she now? She has a mortgage brokers license, runs her own mortgage company and is part owner of HONS, a popular Vietnamese restaurant in Cranston.

Looking back, Lily marvels at her own success, and wants "everyone to know how great the Institute is. I bring people to the Institute who are in need of immigration assistance." When Lily Leung speaks, people can't help but listen.

William Mansfield, an asylee from Liberia, arrived in the U.S. in 2002. He escaped the decades-long civil war in his country but his wife and two children were still there. A trained accountant at home, in the U.S. William had no credentials

and no stateside work experience.

Always hoping to reunite with his family, William enrolled in computer classes at the Institute and at Rhode Island College and received employment case management at the Institute.

In one month, trained in banking interview skills and computers

and sporting an outfit from the Clothing Collaborative, William became a Citizens Bank teller.

Today, reunited with his family and in his third year at Citizens, William is fully self-sufficient and says, "I could not have done it without the help from the Institute." In gratitude, he volunteers on Fridays to help new arrivals open bank accounts to begin their journeys to self-sufficiency.

Without William, supporters like you, and employers like Citizens Bank, we could not do it either. Together, we can assure the self-sufficiency of our state's many newcomers.



Local businesswoman Lily Leung helps fellow immigrants find their way to IIRL.



With warm winter clothing, the Soe family is ready to tackle their first winter.



New arrivals prepare for the workforce. Classroom supplies for adults and children are always welcome.



Case manager Matt McLaren advises a refugee about placement in a job training class.

## Would you like to help refugees face their first New England winter?

Our refugees survived war at home, conditions in refugee camps, international paperwork requirements, and overseas flights.

Now, they must survive their first New England winter! And they would love your help again.

- ✦ Our youngest new arrivals will welcome their first snow with donations of *baby furniture, car seats, equipment and warm winter clothing.*
- ✦ Our newest families will feel warmer and safer with donations of *furniture, kitchen items, blankets and linens, and gift certificates to area stores.*
- ✦ Rhode Island's newest schoolchildren will be better prepared for their first public school attendance with *backpacks* to organize their learning materials.
- ✦ *A gift of \$100* enables refugee parents to take a job training class.
- ✦ *A manual snowplow and waiting room furniture* ensure the safety and comfort of the 16,000+ people who come through our doors each year.

New England winters can be hard on anyone. Imagine if you've never seen snow or walked in an icy parking lot! Please call Refugee Resettlement Coordinator Terri Coustan at 401-784-8607 or Assistant Frey Kassahun at 401-784-8668 today.

## Are you ready for the 21st century? Rhode Island's workforce is changing.

*Institute Employment and Workforce Education programs help you with your staffing needs*

Attention Rhode Island Employers! You are cordially invited to the cutting edge of Rhode Island's workforce development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The 2000 Census revealed an important trend: without an influx of foreign-born people, New England would have lost population in the 1990's. In Rhode Island, the Hispanic population alone rose by nearly 100% and nearly 500 foreign-born Africans are arriving each year.

The faces of New England business and New England workers are changing and with the help of International Institute employment and training services, you can be in the vanguard to meet this new development.

Do you need training for your current workforce? We make house calls at your business.

Do you need eager and competent workers to fill open positions? We have over 250 people waiting for your call and experienced, certified job developers ready to help you with

any paperwork or communications questions.

As you prepare for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, take advantage of the Institute's 83 years of experience providing immigrant and refugee services in the state.



William Mansfield processes paperwork at Citizens Bank. See his complete story on page 2.

### Here's how:

#### Employee Language Solutions.

International Institute Rhode Island, the state's largest, longest-running, and most respected ESL provider is taking its program on the road to help you with your employee educational training needs. Our worksite education coordinator, Nancy Sheridan, specializes in identifying and

solving language-related performance problems within organizations. She will work with you on an initial needs assessment and then provide a customized curriculum in ESL or GED and help you to build a learning culture that matches your training needs. Call Nancy at 401-784-8616.

#### Employment Services.

Employment Services is currently representing 250 clients of widely varied backgrounds, employment histories, and education. Case managers work with employers to ensure the best fits and long-term solutions. With a remarkable record of refugee employment placement within four months of arrival, employment services prides itself on customized placements in positions with benefits and advancement opportunities. Call Jessica Schweiger (401-784-8624) or Nik Peros (401-784-8618) to discover creative staffing solutions.

## Malcolm Grear Designers, Inc. gives the Institute a makeover

*New logo emphasizes community and self-sufficiency*



**International Institute**  
Rhode Island

Many thanks to Malcolm Grear Designers for our new logo! The logo emphasizes the spirit of community and optimism that characterize our growing family. We are honored to have this spirit captured and recognized by Malcolm Grear, the local designer

with the international reputation. Mr. Grear and his team are best known for their work on the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, but we know him and his colleagues as great friends of the Institute and of the state's many immigrants and refugees.