



INTERNATIONAL  
INSTITUTE  
OF BUFFALO

# ANNUAL REPORT 2018

MAKING WNY A BETTER PLACE FOR, AND BECAUSE OF,  
IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES



# CENTENNIAL YEAR 2018 - AT A GLANCE



# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



In 2018, we celebrated our Centennial by doing what we do best—making Western New York a better place for, and because of, refugees and immigrants.

Every day, we welcome and work to integrate refugees and immigrants; we teach English, and provide language access for those without it; we offer support and safety for survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking; and we teach native-born residents to embrace the diversity that makes our community stronger.

This Annual Report outlines in more detail the work we do. We hope it will help you be excited about and more engaged in the Institute.

This is a challenging time for those working to improve the lives of the foreign-born. It is a challenging time for the foreign-born themselves. These challenges only strengthen our resolve. We know that Buffalo was built by, and continues to be built by, immigrants and refugees, and we are honored to play a part.

A few highlights from my point of view – in **2018**, the International Institute:

- Marked our 100th anniversary by hosting a Naturalization Ceremony – right in our backyard. More than 30 new Americans received their citizenship at the ceremony, which was held on United Nations World Refugee Day.
- Unveiled the Institute’s Centennial exhibit, showing that the Institute’s history is Buffalo’s history, and describing our vision for the Institute’s next 100 years. The exhibit debuted at City Hall and spent four months on the road, at colleges, corporations, hospitals and even the Airport.
- Launched the Global 100 Fund to celebrate our Centennial and raise money for new projects and rapid response initiatives. Thanks to your generosity, we raised more than \$127,000!
- Received a grant from Erie County to address the intersection of opioid addiction and human trafficking. We trained mental health, addiction, and medical professionals to identify signs of human trafficking, which allows survivors access to trauma-informed, supportive care.
- Expanded our HELLO in-home English program with new materials aimed at helping clients pass the spoken citizenship exam.
- Led training and testing to certify medical interpreters through the Commission for Healthcare Interpreters.

We are deeply grateful to work in a welcoming community and a welcoming State. Buffalo’s “City of Good Neighbors” label is real and is appreciated. We thank all of you for your support this year. Your generosity of spirit, time, and resources help our clients feel valued as they build lives in freedom and safety.

Eva Hassett,  
Executive Director

# NEW AMERICAN INTEGRATION

Our work encompasses not only the resettlement of newly arrived refugees, but also focuses on services and programs that support the integration of all New Americans.

## REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

All of our clients have stories to tell. And this one touched many hearts: Rebecca, a 111 year old great-great grandmother, arrived in Buffalo in July of 2018 to join her family. What most of us take for granted, Rebecca sees as miracles in her new home: running water, nice people, and Mountain Dew! She was welcomed by members of the Congolese community living here, and most importantly, was reunited with four generations of her family, 26 people, who started arriving in Buffalo in 2015. The Institute resettlement team was honored to help celebrate her 112th birthday in January.

108

REFUGEES  
RESETTLED

(50% FEWER ARRIVALS THAN 2017)



7

COUNTRIES OF  
ORIGIN



111

YEARS OLD

OUR OLDEST CLIENT  
EVER RESETTLED



## NEW AMERICAN INTEGRATION

New York State funding allowed us to provide case management for a mix of post resettlement clients from the Institute and new American clients who have been living in the US for less than five years and need on-going services to assist them with integration. Services we provided include: assistance with benefits related issues such as re-certification, linkages to immigration attorneys for green card and Citizenship applications, and assistance with medical issues. We also conducted large group HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program) sign ups and created educational materials on “what to do in Buffalo” as well as “cold weather preparedness.”

## HELLO (HOME ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER OUTREACH) PROGRAM

Our HELLO program, an initiative that teaches basic English in homes rather than classrooms, has expanded. The program has traditionally been offered to homebound women and the elderly. Recently we have added two new components. Working individuals who want to continue improving their English language skills can work with HELLO tutors. We also offer citizenship tutoring to help prepare individuals who are taking the spoken part of the naturalization exam.

# NEW AMERICAN INTEGRATION

## EMPLOYMENT

Our employment program continues to grow. Our services assist clients seeking full time jobs, part time jobs, and assistance with job upgrades. We work with employers who recognize the benefits of hiring our clients. The majority of jobs secured are in the manufacturing industry, with the hospitality industry a close second.

One thing that sets our program apart is that ALL clients are required to participate in our Job Club prior to placement. Job Club is a 16 hour job preparation class ensuring that clients fully understand work in the US. Among the information covered: how to read a paycheck, employee rights, basic personal budgeting and financial literacy, and creation of a personal resume. Employers appreciate that we get to know our clients, and that we fully prepare them for work. We also offer ongoing support to ensure retention.

Our Matching Grant Program emphasizes finding work shortly after arrival. Clients are expected to become employed and economically self-sufficient within four months of arrival in the US. Of all program participants, 91% were employed full time by their fourth month after arrival.

## PREFERRED COMMUNITIES (PC)

Our PC program allows us to provide intensive medical case management to any refugee in the US for less than five years. The PC case manager ensures that clients understand their condition and how to manage it, understand the importance of follow up medical care, and learn how to get back and forth to medical appointments on their own.

PC clients are served for a minimum of 6 months and success is tracked using a quality of life scale. Services include: working with parents to understand their child's disability and to enroll that child in special education classes; assisting clients with chronic medical conditions get the care they need; and working with women at risk. The goal of the Preferred Communities Program is to provide additional case management helping clients become self sufficient in their daily activities.



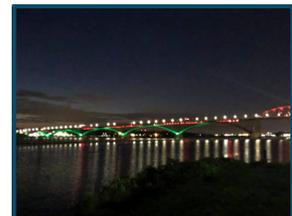
# NEW AMERICAN INTEGRATION

## WELCOMING WEEK

Held in September of each year, Welcoming Week is dedicated to building bridges between receiving and refugee and immigrant communities. This year, the Institute was proud to host several welcoming week events to celebrate refugees living in WNY.

In an effort to "shine a light" on our community, the Peace Bridge and the Dome of Buffalo's City Hall were illuminated in the colors of Welcoming Week - Green and Orange. Events included:

- Pot luck dinner for the refugee community - sharing food, music, and friendship with refugee and native born neighbors
- Refugee 101 - a presentation at the Institute and the YMCA by the resettlement staff highlighting the many aspects of the resettlement program



## GABRIEL'S STORY

Not long ago, a young man from the Congo came to Buffalo with his family. After leaving their home, they spent time in a refugee camp in Uganda, where the young man learned to play the trumpet. His music quickly became an important outlet for him. He played at his church and in a local marching band. However, when the family came to the United States, his beloved instrument had to be left behind.

The staff of the Institute helped this family resettle in Buffalo. Very soon after arriving, the young man told his case manager about his love for music and his trumpet. He asked if there was a chance he could get a trumpet here in Buffalo. One Facebook post later, the Institute had dozens of offers to help find a trumpet. Some folks even offered to purchase a new trumpet for our young musician.

A gentleman from Kenmore, a musician himself, let us know that he did indeed have an instrument that he was willing to give to our young trumpeter. He once tried the trumpet, but soon went back to his main instrument, the drums. So he was pleased to see the instrument put to good use.

The bond between the two musicians was apparent immediately--the Buffalonian happy to play his part and the young trumpeter filled with awe and gratitude. And not ten minutes after the trumpet arrived, the Institute was being treated to a concert courtesy of our young musician. With his family listening nearby and the staff of the Institute marveling at his playing, the joy and excitement in the room was palpable.

This spirit has made Buffalo known worldwide as a place that celebrates diversity. We at the International Institute are proud to play a part in welcoming and serving our foreign-born population as we have for more than 100 years. Though attitudes may have shifted in Washington, we in Western New York not only recognize, but value the contributions brought to this country and our region by refugees and immigrants and we work every day to build bridges within our community.



# SURVIVOR SUPPORT SERVICES

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING SERVICES

The International Institute provides support services for all survivors of human trafficking including immigrants, U.S. born, males, females, and youth. In 2018, the Institute and its project partners worked with 125 adult survivors from 14 countries of origin, 51 of them newly identified within the year. In addition, we worked with 115 minors in 2018, 82 of whom were newly identified during the year.

In 2018, a ground-breaking new initiative began in Erie County, as the newly formed Erie County Human Trafficking Task Force was launched. Housed at the Erie County District Attorney's Office, this specialized unit includes dedicated agents and investigators from the Erie County Sheriff's Office, Town of Tonawanda Police, Amherst Police, DA's Office and Homeland Security. The Institute has signed on as the primary service provider for this unit, working to ensure a trauma-informed and client-centered approach to investigations and prosecutions.



## IMMIGRANT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES

In 2018, the Institute provided services to 272 survivors of domestic violence. Over 80% required language assistance through trained, professional interpreters. This marks the highest number of survivors served annually since the inception of the program.

While foreign-born survivors of domestic violence experience similar impediments to safety as US-born survivors, they may be additionally vulnerable to abuse due to issues related to culture, language, or immigration status. The staff of the Institute has specific expertise in working effectively with the foreign-born, non-English speaking survivor population, providing culturally and linguistically appropriate support to those seeking safety and independence.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS SERVED



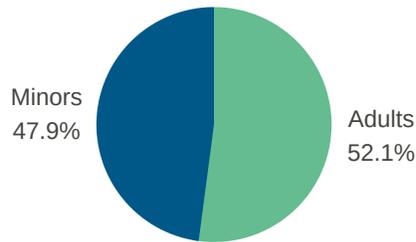
CLIENTS NEEDING LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE

# SURVIVOR SUPPORT SERVICES

HUMAN  
TRAFFICKING  
SURVIVORS  
SERVED



HUMAN TRAFFICKING  
SURVIVORS SERVED



COUNTRIES  
OF ORIGIN

## "MINA'S" STORY

Domestic Violence survivor, "Mina" was referred to the International Institute of Buffalo (IIB) by the Hope Refugee Services Drop in Center, where Mina often frequented for help with her Department of Social Services case.

One day, Mina reported to HOPE staff that her husband and father-in-law had seriously assaulted her two days before, by punching her in the face several times and pushing her repeatedly. When Mina tried to call a neighbor for help, to call 911, her husband broke her cell phone and strangled her. Mina speaks very little English, and had come to the US from Nepal only 10 months earlier. Mina has three children (age 5, 9 and 12) living in her home with her. She also suffers from a serious seizure disorder requiring regular medical attention.

Mina was connected with one of the Institute's DV Advocates, who immediately traveled to HOPE to meet with the client to safety plan and discuss DV services available to her and her children. The DV Advocate assisted Mina in calling the police to report the incident, and her landlord to have her locks changed. The perpetrator (her husband) was later arrested so Mina could safely return to her home with her children.

Over the next several days, the DV advocate assisted Mina in filing for emergency custody, an Order of Protection, safety planned, assisted with a lock change for her home, had referrals in place for civil/legal attorneys, connected with medical case manager for dual case management related to clients medical needs, advocated for safe guards at the children's schools and provided advocacy surrounding police response to the home and perpetrator.

The DV advocate provided Mina with regular safety planning and extensive legal and rights based education surrounding the criminal justice system, civil system and Child Protective Services system. In addition, the Institute's DV program purchased a medical alarm clock for Mina, to assist with her remembering the myriad of medications she needed for her medical concerns. DV Advocate had each verbal alarm recorded with a Nepali interpreter to ensure she understood when to take each medication.

Several months later, the DV Advocate continues to work closely with Mina on long term safety and stability for herself and her children and has connected the client and her children with counseling. Mina is now residing safely in a new apartment with her children and is connected to several medical and counseling providers. She regularly attends court for custody of her children and the Order of Protection.

# GLOBAL EDUCATION & INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

The Global Education and International Visitors Department builds bridges among the different cultures in Western New York and around the world to promote understanding, sensitivity, and tolerance for one another.

The International Visitors program partners with the U.S. Department of State and Library of Congress to bring foreign delegations to Buffalo for professional and cultural visits. We connect leaders from all over the world to local professionals within specific industries to exchange best practices.

In 2018, the Institute hosted professionals for projects focusing on Human Trafficking, Tourism & Economic Development, Cross-Border Water Resource Management, Preventing Violent Extremism, Youth Job Creation, Social Media & Government, Museum Management, Air & Railroad Safety, Tribal Government, Volunteerism, Policy Formulation, and Refugee Health.

The Institute's Global Education program provides cross cultural awareness programming to local schools, service providers, law enforcement, and businesses through cultural competency trainings and many global education programs. This year, our department emphasized the ways high school students can develop their skills to become globally minded leaders in their communities.

We encouraged high school students to build their global knowledge through Academic WorldQuest – a fun and engaging trivia contest. Students practiced critical thinking and conflict resolution skills through Model United Nations General Assembly, where they gained a global perspective by acting as delegates from another country. High school students joined community members and spoke out in Great Decisions -- a discussion series on pressing foreign policy issues. In addition, Cultural Competency trainings were offered to educate teachers, students, service providers, law enforcement, and businesses on how to work with the foreign-born population. Community WorldQuest puts on a global knowledge trivia contest for community members, local businesses, schools, and organizations to raise funds to support these global education programs. Our Health Literacy Initiatives for Refugee Clients provided health education sessions for immigrants and refugees in Buffalo.



A group of international visitors from Kazakhstan worked with the Service Collaborative of WNY on the service project, Beds for Buffalo, which built over 150 beds for children in need in WNY.



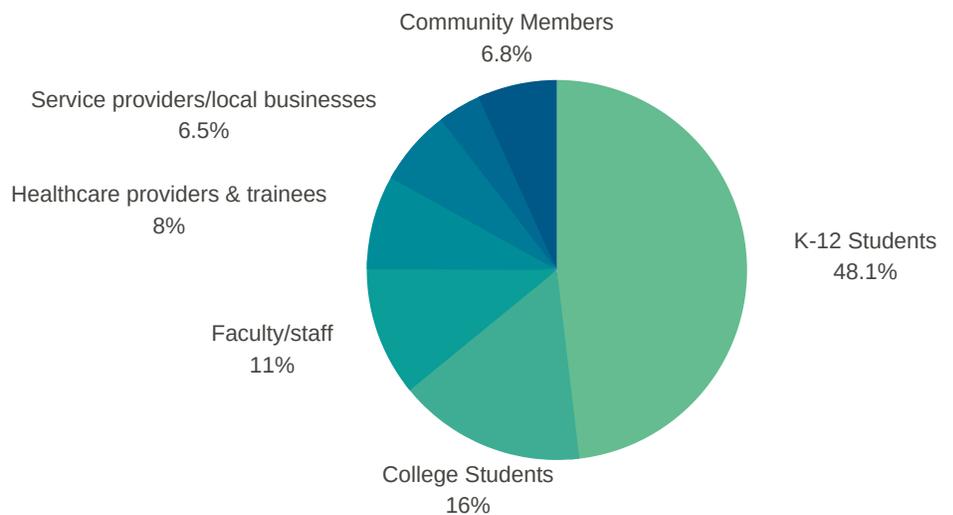
Model U.N., held at University at Buffalo, welcomes high school students from all over Western New York.

# GLOBAL EDUCATION & INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

Our global education programs reached 3,538 individuals; 1,542 students (K-12), 512 College students, 352 faculty/staff, 256 healthcare provider and trainees, 208 service-providers/local businesses, 118 law enforcement recruits, and 217 community members through cultural competency training sessions, Great Decisions Lectures, Model UN, and other global education programs. We have also provided health literacy sessions to 333 refugee and immigrant men and women. New partnerships were formed with local companies that hire refugees and immigrants, local colleges, local public and charter schools. Cultural competency trainings, focus groups, and one-on-one consultation sessions were conducted for the staff, supervisors, and students at those locations.

3,538

INDIVIDUALS REACHED BY GLOBAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS



333

REFUGEE & IMMIGRANT MEN AND WOMEN SERVED BY HEALTH LITERACY SESSIONS

615

MODEL UN PARTICIPANTS

92

INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

30

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

# INTERPRETING & TRANSLATION

The Interpreting & Translation Department managed a strong demand for language services in 2018, processing more than 18,000 individual requests. The Institute now offers professional foreign language interpretation in more than 85 languages face to face, and 100 languages by phone or video. The Institute's certified and qualified linguists serve customers in healthcare, education, legal, corporate, health and human services, and other settings.

As the demand for interpreting services in WNY continues to grow, the Institute is increasing its technological capacities and interpreter trainings to meet these needs. In 2018, more than 90 interpreters were trained for community, healthcare, mental health, legal interpretation, and working with trauma survivors. The Institute became a testing site for the Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters, and several of our interpreters achieved their medical certification.

The Institute's diverse and talented interpreters possess specific expertise and speak languages that are both common and rare throughout the United States. The Institute continues to explore new technologies to expand the delivery of interpreting services, through telephone and video, filling gaps in services for local customers and facilitating access in underserved geographic areas.

We are fortunate to have such diverse talent in the City of Buffalo, and by working together, we are one step closer to our vision of language access for all.

## LANGUAGES

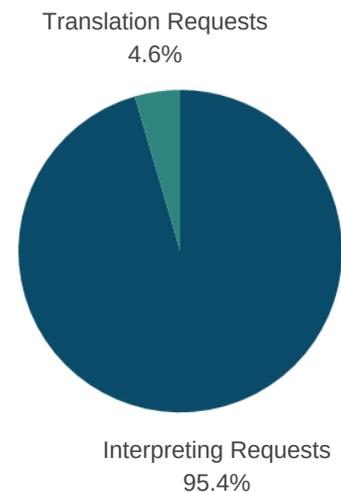


**INTERPRETING JOBS**      17,628 requests      14,228 completed

**TRANSLATION JOBS**      841 requests      841 completed

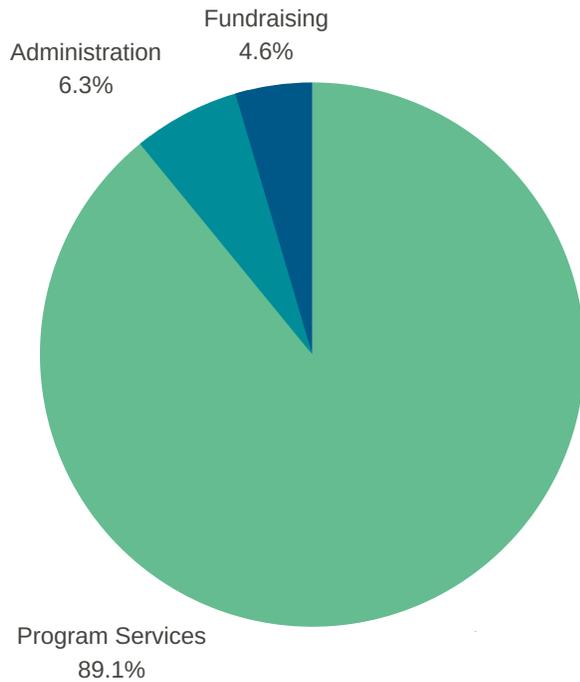
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**TOTALS**      18,469 requests      15,069 completed

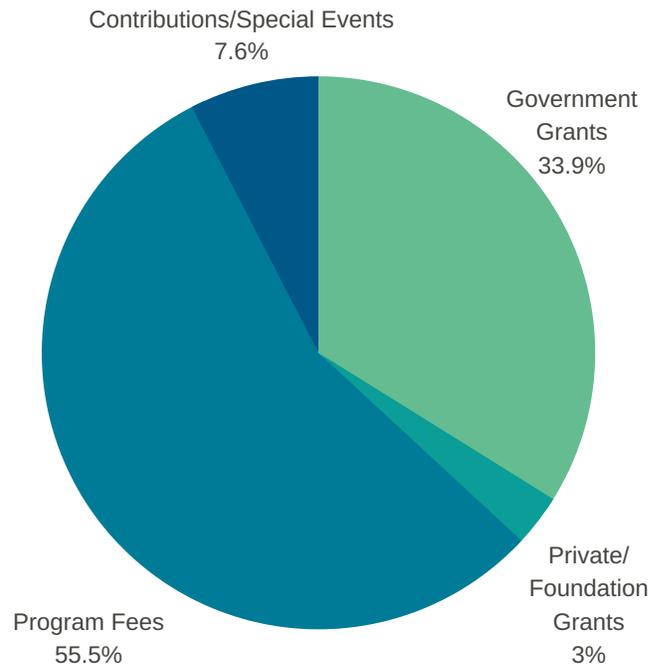


# 2018 FINANCES

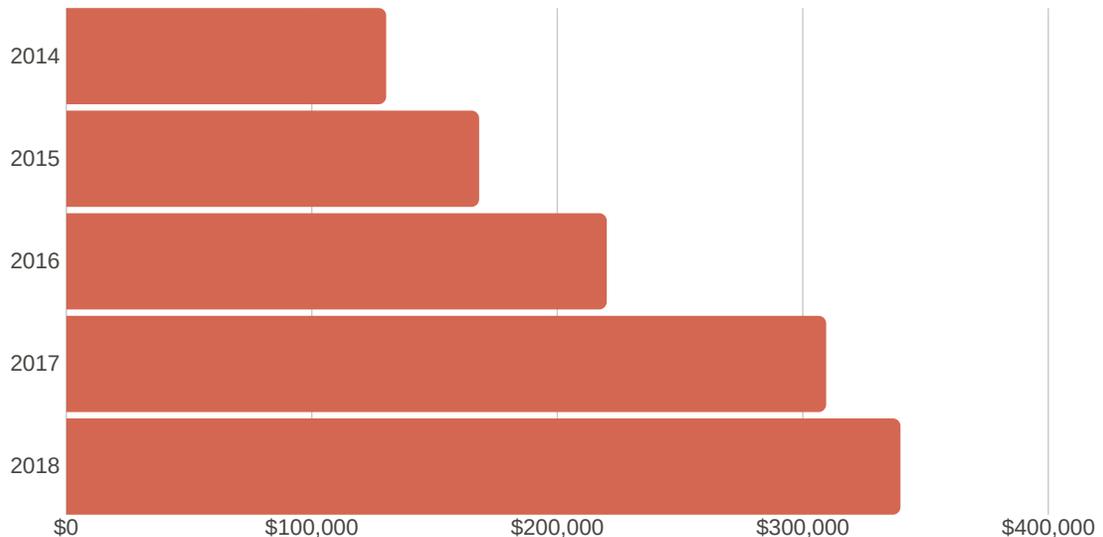
## 2018 EXPENSES \$3,583,511



## 2018 REVENUE \$4,114,403



## 5 YEARS OF GIVING AT THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE



# DONORS TO THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE - 2018

Thank you to all of our donors!

## GLOBAL 100 FUND

This fund was established in 2018 to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the International Institute of Buffalo. Thanks to the donors listed below who marked the Centennial by supporting our work of making Western New York a better place for, and because of, refugees and immigrants.

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## 2018 ANNUAL FUND

The Annual Fund supports the ongoing operations at the Institute. The thoughtful gifts of our donors allow us to continue supporting the refugee and immigrant community in Western New York.

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This special initiative raised more than \$6,100 to assist Survivor Support Services. The funds provided language assistance for foreign-born victims and their children fleeing domestic violence, who face cultural and linguistic impediments to safety, self-sufficiency, and appropriate services available within our community.

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