



**2020 YEAR IN REVIEW**

# A LETTER FROM RIAN'S DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

**2020 was the most challenging year in recent history with the impact of the pandemic on public health and the economy; the murder of George Floyd and other racialized individuals that reframed the fight against the systemic racism still present in our society and the culmination of years of nativist immigration policies. Rian stood alongside the immigrant and refugee persons and with your support we worked together to create pathways to stability.**

In February we launched our new name, the Rian Immigrant Center, reaffirming our commitment to welcoming immigrants from around the world while honoring our Irish roots. Rian is the old Irish word for a pathway that needs to be cleared. Shortly after the launch we faced into the challenges of the pandemic, and immediately transitioned all our services to work remotely. We offered over the phone legal services, English and computer classes using Zoom and Google Classroom, counseling and case management using Telehealth and helped Irish students find remote placements.

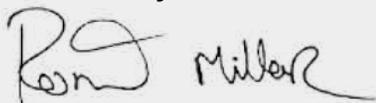
As the disproportionate impact of Covid on immigrant families became clear, Rian along with 14 other immigrant centers, responded to their emergency needs in April 2020, by helping form the Massachusetts Immigrant Collaborative. This Collaborative has since assisted more than 59,000 family members with emergency cash and food assistance, and we are now working to address vaccine equity issues.

We are inspired by the resilience of immigrant families and by the commitment of our partner organizations to support the community through this crisis. We are very grateful to the City of Boston, and to the many Foundations and donors for their partnership.

We are outraged by the continual racial abuse and racism in our country, and committed ourselves to become anti racist - both in our work, and internally as an organization. Our summer series on Black Lives Matter prompted us to look at our organizational culture and we continue this work, learning and unlearning!

We are pleased to share our program highlights and with a renewed sense of hope. Thank you for your support, and I invite you to continue with us on this journey.

In Solidarity,



Ronnie Millar  
Executive Director



## EDUCATION SERVICES



This fall, Rian welcomed our new Director of Education Services, Rebecca Hale. Typically, Becca would have walked into a classroom filled with adult students getting to know each other and eager to improve their English language skills. Instead, the buzz of excitement came from Becca's computer screen, filled with students' faces in the "boxes" so many of us have become familiar with.

The shift to remote learning because of COVID had its challenges. Many students do not own computers, but with support from Smith Family Foundation and HiQ Computers, Rian purchased Chromebooks to create a computer loan program. Now, each student can attend ESOL classes on a larger screen, see all of their classmates and more easily read materials shared on the screen. Rian also continued its partnership with Tech Goes Home (TGH) providing basic computer instruction, this time fully online, to adult immigrant students. In addition, our ESOL instructors manage WhatsApp groups for all ESOL courses to build community, collect homework, and engage students in peer-to-peer interaction beyond the classroom.

Remote learning has brought several advantages. Without the costs and time required for public transportation, and coordination of childcare, class attendance was strong and retention increased by 26%. With support from Arbella Insurance Group, Rian will continue to provide online learning along with a return to in-person instruction for the next three years, and will expand our Individual Achievement Program, engaging volunteers to provide one to one career coaching. In 2020, we had 12 students in our citizenship tutoring program pass their citizenship interviews. We look forward to further developing our curriculum in 2021 and actively integrating an anti-racism focus into our program design. In anticipation of this curriculum development, we have developed new surveys to dive deeper into our ESOL students' needs and motivations for learning English, and have also implemented an entirely-remote standardized English language testing system to measure student learning gains.

## IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES

Prior to February 2020, immigrants and refugees looking for immigration legal services would find our friendly welcome center. While we miss seeing clients in person, our attorneys were able to assist more people than ever remotely. In 2020 ILS consulted with more than 1,300 families and are currently representing 500 families.

With support from the Fish Family Foundation and The Shapiro Foundation, Rian launched a new Medical-Legal Partnership for Immigrants with our partners at Boston Medical Center (BMC) and Health Law Advocates (HLA). Rian and HLA provide coordinated health care access and immigration legal services to immigrant patients at BMC whose ability to obtain critical medical services is often frustrated by their lack of immigration status. Through the partnership, Rian attorneys evaluate whether patients have available immigration legal pathways that may allow them to upgrade their health insurance coverage and therefore access life-saving or life-improving medical treatments. When a patient does have an avenue available to them, Rian steps in to provide immigration representation and coordinates with the health law experts at HLA to ensure they are enrolled in the proper coverage.

Cases include patients who need organ transplants to survive, a child with brain injuries that needs comprehensive physical and occupational therapies, and families battling the complex, often long-term illnesses of loved ones stuck in nursing homes. "This partnership is so important because immigration and health care access are inextricably linked," says Rian attorney Jackie Kelley, who manages the Medical-Legal Partnerships with BMC and HLA. The project perfectly combines our [HLA and Rian's] areas of expertise to concretely improve the quality of life of our immigrant clients. We are also thankful for the Schooner Foundation for their support of our work at the Boston Medical Center.

In addition Rian partnered with several youth-serving organizations and Boston Public Schools and with thanks to support from Liberty Mutual Foundation, provided legal support for homeless immigrant youth in Boston. In 2021, we continue to support immigrant students and are seeking to broaden our outreach to other communities (funded by the Cambridge Community Foundation).



## LEARNING EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Our Learning Exchange Program faced many challenges in 2020 with the arrival of COVID-19. In June 2020, the White House suspended the J-1 Exchange Visitor Visa program for new participants through December 31, 2020. This meant that Rian could not issue new J-1 visas. Our team worked hard to support the hundreds of young Irish students who remained on the program; helping those who chose to return to Ireland, and assisting those who chose to remain in the U.S to find internship opportunities or complete their programs.

With nationwide hiring freezes and furloughs, the search for suitable internship opportunities was difficult. Despite the challenges, our staff found paid internship placements for many of our exchange visitors and supported 400 Irish students in 2020.

We have rebranded our J-1 IWT Internship Program. "Rian J-1" has launched a website ([rianj1.org](http://rianj1.org)) in anticipation of the reopening of the visa program. With a high interest level and the continued support of the Irish Government we hope to continue to provide life changing career development opportunities for young Irish students and graduates in 2021. We are also going to explore the possibility of expanding our exchange program to other countries.



## RESOURCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

Despite this year's challenges we had a successful year providing vital services to over 900 immigrants and refugees. Our social worker provided virtual counseling services and our case managers assisted clients with locating resources regarding housing, food, emergency shelter and COVID relief funding.

In September Wellness Services became Resource and Support Services to better exemplify the services we provide to community members.

Our community outreach team worked with other organizations to host a series of virtual community conversations that focused on advancing anti racist work in all aspects of our lives. We also hosted and participated in several virtual community events, such as the Boston Irish virtual pride parade and a book talk with Irish author Ruairi McKeirnan. In collaboration with Education Services we ran conversation groups where anyone was welcome to join and practice speaking English in an informal setting.





## MASSACHUSETTS IMMIGRANT COLLABORATIVE

In April 2020, The Massachusetts Immigrant Collaborative was formed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic when the Brazilian Workers Center, Agencia ALPHA and the Rian Immigrant Center joined forces to provide support to immigrants in our community. With guidance from the Boston Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Advancement and funding from the Boston Resiliency Fund, the collaborative invited eight other immigrant serving Boston nonprofit organizations to come together to provide direct financial relief and other resources for those not eligible for government support. As the need continued to increase across the Commonwealth, four other organizations located in New Bedford, Springfield, Worcester and Framingham joined the Collaborative.

Since April, MIC has disbursed more than \$4.1 million in emergency cash and culturally competent food assistance (and other hygiene and household products). We have served over 59,000 individuals across the Commonwealth. Those individuals that have reached out to our organizations for cash assistance are usually looking to receive funds to cover their housing (31%), utilities (30%), groceries (21%) and medical and pharmaceutical (10%) needs.

The Collaborative disperses more than \$300,000 a month in emergency cash and food to members of our community with eight of our partner organizations distributing culturally competent food. We distribute funding equitably across our 15 partners depending on the community needs, and we have the provisions to support families who are not connected to any of our partner organizations.

We are presently working on COVID-19 vaccine outreach & education, partnering with community health centers and partners to target eligible community members. As we continue into 2021, we aim to continue our cash and food assistance and broaden our culturally competent COVID recovery support by focusing on workforce advancement, immigration legal services and IT tech support for immigrant parents.



**Massachusetts**  
Immigrant Collaborative

# 2021 PRIORITIES

## RIAN STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Expand and integrate our immigration legal, education, resource & support services
- Develop strategic program partnerships
- Invest in our staff, volunteers, and board
- Promote antiracism internally & externally
- Further develop our advocacy, thought leadership, new brand and communications

## EDUCATION SERVICES

- Increase tech support and home internet access for students
- Develop our adult ESOL curriculum
- Integrate anti-racism into our pedagogy and program design
- Offer remote, hybrid and/or face-to-face instruction to best meet student needs
- Expand our Individual Achievement Program (IAP)

## IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES

- Continue to offer expert counsel during our free clinics, and to provide forms assistance and full representation in our core legal services
- Expand our partnerships including our medical-legal partnerships
- Expand remote consultations and access
- Expand our Homeless Youth Project to other communities outside of Boston

## RESOURCE & SUPPORT SERVICES

- Expand culturally and linguistically responsive services, including case management, counseling and crisis intervention
- Raise awareness to destigmatize mental health services
- Adapt remote services permanently
- Host/participate in community building and empowering events
- Continue hosting Irish language classes in partnership with Cumann na Gaeilge

## LEARNING EXCHANGE PROGRAM

- Resume programming post COVID
- Build our intern placements support service for graduates
- Build upon learnings of working during the pandemic by making better use of technology to invest in and support our exchange visitors
- Continue implementing Rian's framework of embracing anti-racism and diversity into all our current and future programs

## MASSACHUSETTS IMMIGRANT COLLABORATIVE

- Continue to provide cash and food assistance
- Promote vaccine equity
- COVID recovery efforts including workforce development, access to immigration legal services and further development of the Dreamers Youth Project

solidarity

empowerment

pathways

resources

2020 IN NUMBERS

**3,814**

immigrants served

**130**

english students

**1,334**

legal consultations

**59,356**

immigrants served  
by the massachusetts  
immigrant collaborative

**450**

irish exchange  
visitors

**1,900**

resource & support  
services

including emergency COVID relief



## SOLAS AWARDS

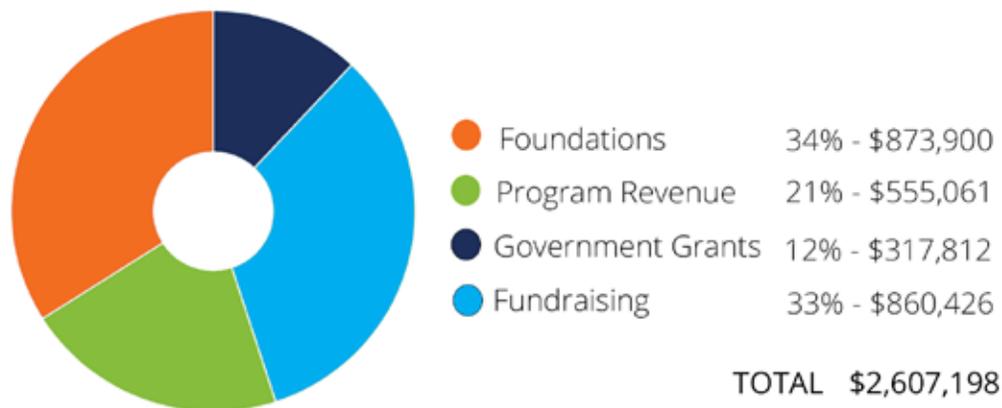


Last October, we celebrated our Solas Awards event virtually. More than 700 people attended the celebration and helped us honor our Solas awards recipients, and reach our fundraising goal. We recognized the courage of Ngozi Okoye, an immigrant teacher and mother, philanthropists Atsuko and Larry Fish, Des Mac Intyre, Irish immigrant, and the iuvent10 crew for their humanitarian efforts in the Mediterranean Sea.

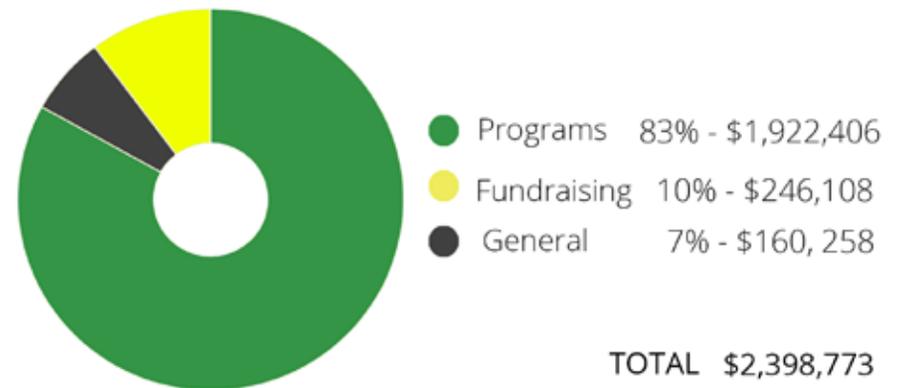
The event included a special musical performance by the Irish duo, Saint Sister, and a poetry reading by award winning poet and human rights advocate Carolyn Forché. It was wonderful having them perform during the event! Thank you to all of our sponsors and all who attended and supported our event! With your support we reached our fundraising goal! Thank you!

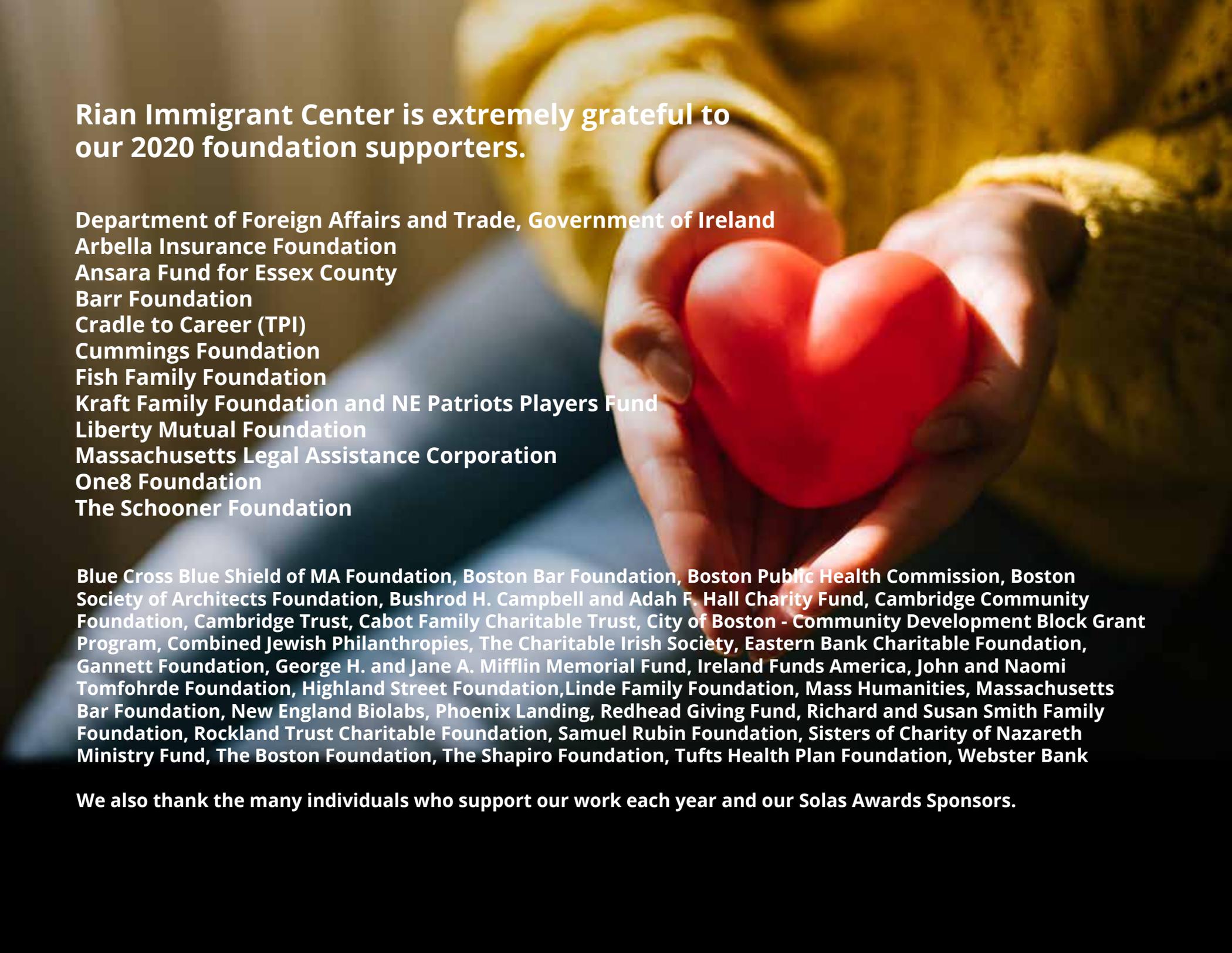
## 2020 FINANCIAL PICTURE

### INCOME



### EXPENSES





**Rian Immigrant Center is extremely grateful to our 2020 foundation supporters.**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Government of Ireland  
Arbella Insurance Foundation  
Ansara Fund for Essex County  
Barr Foundation  
Cradle to Career (TPI)  
Cummings Foundation  
Fish Family Foundation  
Kraft Family Foundation and NE Patriots Players Fund  
Liberty Mutual Foundation  
Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation  
One8 Foundation  
The Schooner Foundation**

**Blue Cross Blue Shield of MA Foundation, Boston Bar Foundation, Boston Public Health Commission, Boston Society of Architects Foundation, Bushrod H. Campbell and Adah F. Hall Charity Fund, Cambridge Community Foundation, Cambridge Trust, Cabot Family Charitable Trust, City of Boston - Community Development Block Grant Program, Combined Jewish Philanthropies, The Charitable Irish Society, Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation, Gannett Foundation, George H. and Jane A. Mifflin Memorial Fund, Ireland Funds America, John and Naomi Tomfohrde Foundation, Highland Street Foundation, Linde Family Foundation, Mass Humanities, Massachusetts Bar Foundation, New England Biolabs, Phoenix Landing, Redhead Giving Fund, Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation, Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation, Samuel Rubin Foundation, Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Ministry Fund, The Boston Foundation, The Shapiro Foundation, Tufts Health Plan Foundation, Webster Bank**

**We also thank the many individuals who support our work each year and our Solas Awards Sponsors.**

RIAN IMMIGRANT CENTER STAFF

Ronnie Millar  
 Maren Coniglione  
 Gjergji Cani  
 Lea Vugic  
 Rebecca Hale  
 Anthony Marino  
 Janey Tallarida  
 Jude Clarke  
 Erin Chubb  
 Rebecca Minahan  
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 Ann Marie Byrne  
 Raphaela Barros Campbell  
 Cristina Dacchille  
 Victoria DiCianni\*  
 Ilona Drew\*  
 Sari Foundas

Jonah Hanh\*  
 Jacqueline Kelley  
 Siobhan Kelly  
 Priya Murali\*  
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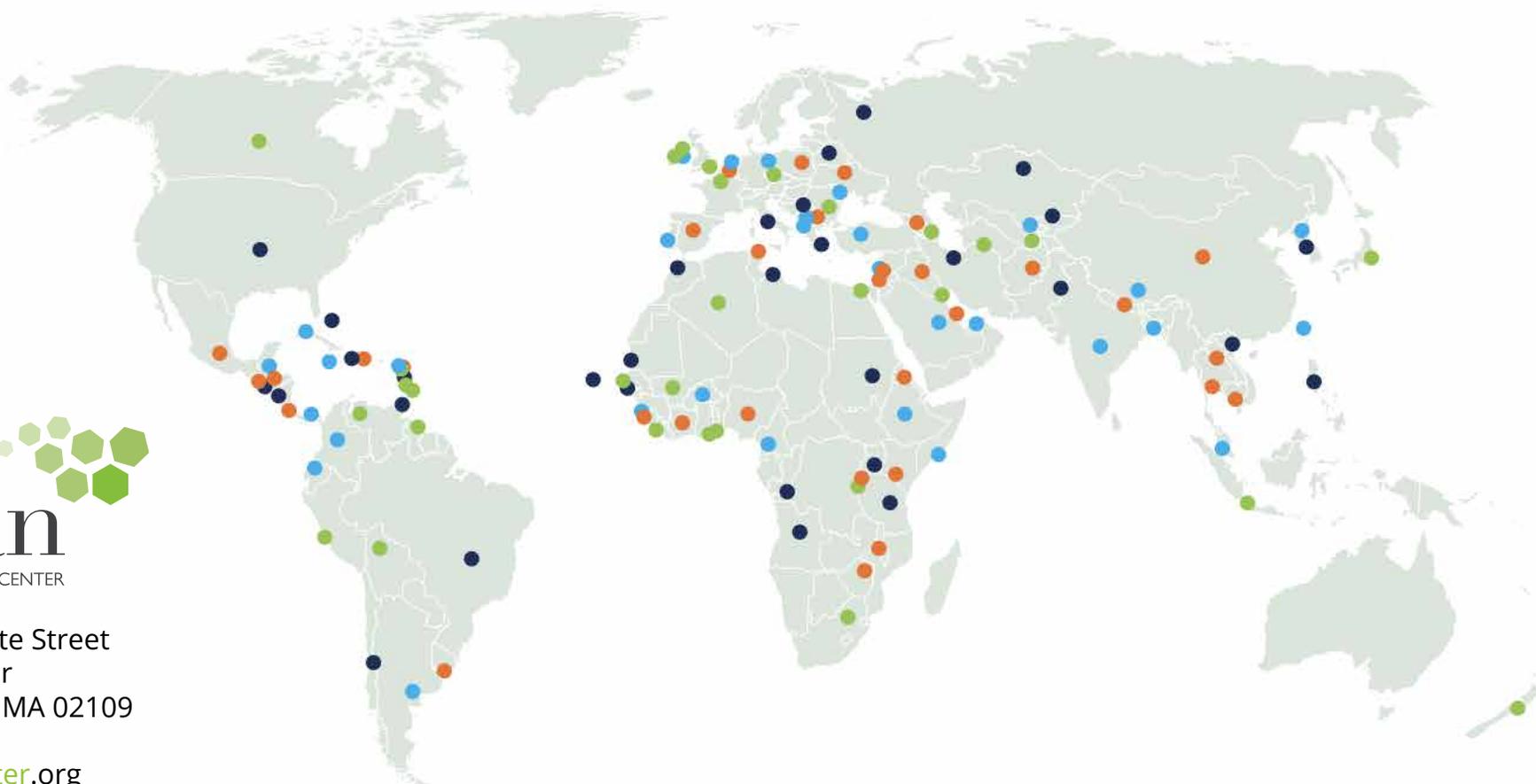
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\*joined in 2021



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## We served immigrants from over 124 countries on their pathway to new beginnings

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Azerbaijan, The Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Dem. Rep., Congo, Rep., Costa Rica, Cuba, Czech Republic, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Kosovo, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Moldova, Montserrat, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan, Palestine, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, Sudan, Syria, Taiwan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Vietnam, Zimbabwe, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Tibet, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Vietnam, Zimbabwe

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