

Aurora Immigrant & Refugee Commission
Monday, February 11, 2019 5:30pm
Aurora Municipal Center, Aspen Conference Room
15151 E. Alameda Parkway
Aurora, CO 80012

Commissioners Present: Arega, Alula; Camara, Chukwu Fumnanya; Erazo, Marlon;
Jimenez, Christian; Kemer, Sabe; Muhumed, Abukar; Skelley, Linda;
Vargas, Kevin; Zvejnieks, Jackie

Commissioners Excused: Julie Resaalam

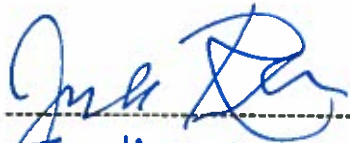
Commissioners Absent: None

Other present: Barbara Shaffer

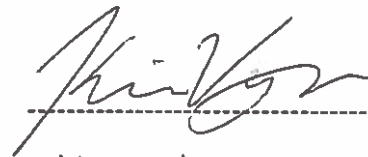
Staff Present: Ricardo Gambetta and Minsoo Song

1. Meeting was called to order at 5:38pm by Commissioner Jimenez. New leadership has not been appointed so Mr. Gambetta asked Commissioner Jimenez to lead the meeting.
2. Introducing New Commission Members and returning Commission Members.
3. Barbara Shaffer from City Clerk's office introduced city's 30 different boards and commissions. Ms. Shaffer explained how citizens can apply for the boards and commissions.
4. Office of International & Immigrant Affairs - General overview by Ricardo Gambetta (See PPT attached)
 - Mr. Gambetta emphasized the importance of Commission's policy recommendation to City Council
 - Annual report needs to be presented to policy committee once a year and AIRC annual report is scheduled on Tuesday, September 17.
 - Mr. Gambetta explained "Natural Helpers" program in collaboration with VEC
 - Global Fire Academy & Global Police Academy
 - Mr. Gambetta proposed the possibility of AIRC taking over "ThankYouAmerica"
 - There will be Naturalization Ceremony during international month(August)
 - Mr. Gambetta introduced city's premier international event, 2019 Global Fest (August 17, 11am-6pm)
 - Mr. Gambetta explained OIIA's Mini Grant program to promote cultural celebration.
 - Aurora International Impact Fund: start up small business assistance
 - Health Campaign (Health Awareness Campaign)
 - 2019 collaboration priority with AIRC
 - * Review existing Comprehensive Integration Plan and share recommendation for New Immigration Integration Plan
 - * Stronger engagement piece: working as a listening bureau through focus groups and community conversations
 - * Anticipated timeline to present New Immigrant Integration Plan : Fall 2019
 - City Council & APD needs AIRC's policy recommendation on citizenship requirement during public safety officer recruitment.
5. AIRC Goals and Mission

- The Goals and Mission of AIRC were reviewed by returning members and Commissioner Jimenez asked new members to share feedback during March meeting.
6. AIRC Rules & Logistics
 - Ms. Song shared AIRC Attendance policy & AIRC by laws. New members were asked to review presented materials and share feedback during March meeting.
 7. AIRC next key steps
 - AIRC members will select leadership during March meeting.
 8. Adjourn
 - Commissioner Jimenez adjourned the meeting at 7:00 pm.



Julie Kessdam
Chair



Kevin Vargas
Vice-Chair



Office of International & Immigrant Affairs





Overview of the Office of International & Immigrant Affairs

As part of the 2015 budget process, the city council created the Office of International Initiatives. The Office was created to organize existing “international efforts” (Aurora Sister Cities International, Aurora Immigrant & Refugee Taskforce, International Roundtable, Global Fest) as well guide the city’s future efforts in this area.

As part of that strategic plan, the Office of International Initiatives became the Office of International & Immigrant Affairs (OIIA). OIIA was created to facilitate the successful integration of immigrant and refugees into Aurora’s civic, economic and cultural life. OIIA oversee the development and implementation of a strategic citywide plan regarding policy, programs and initiatives toward the local immigrant and refugee populations. OIIA oversee the coordination of the Aurora Immigrant and Refugee Commission, Aurora Global Fest, and the Aurora International Cabinet. Also, OIIA lead international efforts focused in the establishments of strategic global partnerships, manage official protocol activities and events, and serve as a liaison to the international community.

In addition, OIIA oversee the Language Access Program that prioritize needs and assign resources in order to provide meaningful and quality language services for Aurora’s residents



Comprehensive Strategic Plan 2015-2018

After an extensive review of the city's current efforts and a thorough community engagement process, the "Aurora Plan" was drafted. The Plan was presented and approved unanimously by the city council in September 2015.

The Plan focuses on integration, defined as:

"Integration is a long-term process, through which immigrants and host communities communicate effectively, function together and enrich each other, create economic opportunities, and have mutual respect and understanding among people of different cultures." (National Immigration Forum)

Primary Objectives of the Plan:

- Maximize resources
- Develop innovative efforts
- Avoid duplication of programs and services aimed at the local immigrant and refugee community



Community Engagement and Public Input

- Identify the needs and priorities of Aurora's immigrant and refugee population
- Gather input and suggestions from community members
- Research current knowledge of programs and services
 - Community Conversations
 - Focus groups
 - Online survey

Key Findings

- **Perceived needs on city services**

- Access and Awareness
- Public Safety
- Civic Participation
- Health
- Youth Issues

- **How do you feel about the City of Aurora?**

- 63% positive responses
- 37% negative responses



- **Greatest Influencers**

- Faith based organizations
- Community organizations
- Service providers

- **Communication Vehicles**

- Social media
- Spanish language media
- Multilingual print media

- **Driving Motivators**

- Family
- Financial stability
- Contribute to the community

- **Advice to the City of Aurora**

- Communicate
- Engage

Recommendations

- 1. Increase communication with the immigrant and refugee population**
- 2. Public safety, health, civic engagement, education and economic development are important**
- 3. Respond to the need for emotional well-being**
- 4. Continue to build networks**





Strategic Policy Recommendations

A. Create an Office of International and Immigrant Affairs

- Replace the Office of International Initiatives
- Facilitate integration, provide leadership, build partnerships, manage activities and support international efforts within the city

B. Formalize the Aurora Immigrant and Refugee Task Force

- Transition to a formal city commission



Comprehensive Strategic Plan

GOALS & PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

- A. Integration through Civic Engagement**
- B. Safety in Our International City**
- C. Integration Through Language Acquisition**
- D. Integration in the Neighborhoods**
- E. Integration through Economic and Financial Growth**
- F. Internationality as a Driving force for Economic Development**
- G. Integration through Sports and Recreation**
- H. Integration through Arts and Culture**
- I. Integration through Mental and Physical Health and Wellness**



Program Models

Key Programs, Partnerships & International Efforts



Opening of the Consulate Of El Salvador





Hosting International delegations





Village Exchange Center

The Village Exchange Center (VEC) is a collaborative community center collocating program and services critical to refugee and immigrant communities in Aurora.

VEC seeks to celebrate cultural and religious diversity by creating an inclusive environment where residents from all background share and develop together.

Key Programs and services:

- Natural Helpers
- Youth Natural Leaders
- "International Kids Club" after school program
- "We Can Do It" women's empowerment (with IRC)
- iBEST Program (with Emily Griffith)
- Food pantry
- English conversation circles
- Computer resource lab





Village Exchange Center

VEC resident partner programs and services:

- ESL and citizenship classes
- Financial management classes
- Community Navigation
- Community food share
- Asylum information and referrals
- IRS and tax support
- Civic engagement and voter registration
- On-site babysitting



Focus Points
FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER





Natural Helpers

Natural Helpers Program – a collaboration with the VEC

- Natural Helpers are volunteers from the local community who have the desire to help their fellow immigrants in the process of integration into the receiving communities.
- These volunteers receive a training to prepare them to be successful in their helper's role
- First training took place at the Aurora Welcome Center on February 26, 2016
- More than 90 participants, representing more than 40 different countries
- Youth Natural Leaders launched June 2018
- Sixth training was held in September/October 2018.





Natural Helpers

Youth Natural Leaders Program

- The Youth Natural Leaders are exceptional high school Juniors and Seniors who are committed to leading and supporting their communities.
- They are provided training in Leadership skills, cultural understanding and public speaking
- They meet and interact with city government and visit local colleges and universities
- First Natural Leaders cohort took place in June 2018



NATURAL HELPERS ARE YOU A "NATURAL" LEADER IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

DO PEOPLE ASK YOU FOR RESOURCES AND ADVICE ALL THE TIME?

IF SO, GET TRAINED TO BETTER HELP YOUR COMMUNITY WITH US!

Our Natural Helpers Program will provide you with leadership training and information on resources and tools to help immigrant and refugee communities more effectively.

ABOUT THE NATURAL HELPERS PROGRAM:

Natural Helpers are volunteers from the local community with the desire to help their fellow community members in the process of integration into their new home. The goal is to develop a network of person-to-person support services that will help newcomers more effectively access existing community resources and work with community social service organizations.

WHAT: NATURAL HELPERS FREE TRAINING
WHEN: Three Saturdays, September 22, 29 & October 6, 2018 from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
(You MUST be able to attend all THREE days of training.)
WHERE: Village Exchange Center
1609 Havana St
Aurora, CO 80010

Applications must be submitted by September 7, 2018. Apply online at shorturl.at/ffsCGV or in person at 1609 Havana Street. For questions, please contact the Village Exchange Center at Lara@villageexchangecenter.org



**VILLAGE
EXCHANGE
CENTER**



**NATURAL
HELPERS**



**Office of
International and
Immigrant Affairs**





Global Teen Police Academy

Global Teen Police Academy





GLOBAL *Teen* CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMY



**INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE
ABOUT LAW ENFORCEMENT?**

Join us and learn firsthand what our Police do.

SESSIONS IN JUNE & JULY

JUNE 4-15 with graduation on JUNE 16, 2018

JULY 9-20 with graduation on JULY 21, 2018

Ages 14 and older

Choose **mornings 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.** or **afternoons 1-5:30 p.m.**

Most classes are held at the Aurora Municipal Center
(15151 E. Alameda Parkway) in the Aurora Room.



CLASSES

- Internet Safety
- Traffic
- CPR
- Firearm Safety
- Shoot/Don't Shoot Scenarios in the Police Simulator
- Demonstrations by SWAT
- Use of Force
- K-9
- Driving an Aurora Police Car

INSTRUCTORS FROM THE APD'S:

- Traffic Unit
- SWAT Team
- Gang Unit
- K-9 Unit
- Detective Units
- Police Academy
- Firing Range
- School Resource Officer Unit
- Chief of Police
- 18th Judicial District
- Aurora Fire Dept.

GRADUATION INFORMATION

JUNE 16, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. for first session graduates
JULY 21, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. for second session graduates

Aurora Public Schools Professional Learning & Conference Center
15771 E. 1st Avenue, Aurora, Colorado 80011



Applications can be obtained through your SRO or by emailing
rbrassel@auroragov.org or scondrea@auroragov.org
Questions? Please call Ruth Brassell at 303.739.6350.

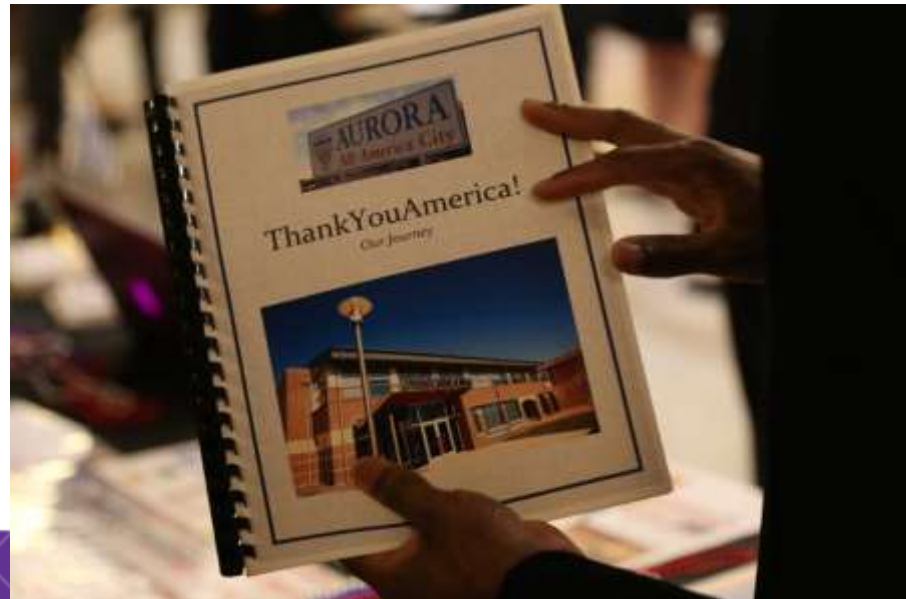




ThankYouAmerica

“ThankYouAmerica Social Campaign” - A collaboration with Community College of Aurora CCA

- CCA was one of over 60 colleges worldwide to be selected by the U.S. State Department to be part of a global campaign to combat violent extremism among immigrant and refugees
- A student led initiative developed a two weeks social media campaign focused on the positive role of immigrants within our local community to recognize and celebrate their immense contributions and challenge anti-immigrant narratives
- The Office of International and Immigrant Affairs organized a special closing event to recognize leaders of the local immigrant and refugee communities for their outstanding efforts in their communities. Attendees included: Lt. Governor Joe Garcia, U.S. Attorney for Colorado John Walsh, Colorado International Consular Corp, and other local officials





WE ARE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE YOU KNOW!!!

Do you know an outstanding volunteer or an inspiring leader in your local Immigrant and Refugee Community who has demonstrated great support, and been instrumental in the welcoming process of immigrants into the heart and life of the city of Aurora?

If so – we want to recognize this special person in our next Thank You America Campaign - Annual Celebration and Recognition Event that will take place in March 15, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. here at the Aurora Municipal Building

All we need is this person's history of involvement, short bio and a letter of recommendation. Finalists will be selected by a committee that includes representatives of Community College of Aurora, Office of International and Immigrant Affairs and the Aurora Immigrant and Refugee Commission.

Please contact us at: International@AuroraGov.org by March 2, 2018
Or: Office of International and Immigrants Affairs
City of Aurora, 15151 E. Alameda Parkway, Ste. 5900, Aurora, CO 80012



Office of
International and
Immigrant Affairs





Naturalization Ceremony

Naturalization Ceremony

- Office of International and Immigrant Affairs has been promoting the benefits of Naturalization in partnership with U.S Citizenship and Immigration Services and the Aurora Public Library.
- The Naturalization Ceremony was at the City Council Chambers on July 29, 2016 & August 17, 2017 & August 2, 2018.





Global Fest

Global Fest 2018

- City of Aurora celebrates the cultural riches from all of the world. Event presents global flavors, Music and Dance, and international Fashion show.
- It is the great opportunity to appreciate our cultural diversity and richness.





Support Cultural Celebrations



Empowering Refugees
and Immigrants to
Strengthen Businesses
and **Develop Assets.**



AURORA INTERNATIONAL IMPACT FUND

Collaboration between
CCA, CEDS, and OIIA



AURORA INTERNATIONAL IMPACT FUND (AIIF):

Community College of Aurora & CEDS & OIIA(Potential Partner) have partnered to develop the AIIF & Entrepreneurship Incubator for entrepreneurs ready to launch their business, but requiring technical and financial assistance

CCA's Incubator

- 15 businesses per Incubation Cohort
- Businesses receive individualized coaching, office workspace complete with technology (computers with specialized software – accounting, graphic design, etc.)

CEDS Financing

Round 1

- Businesses co-qualify for the Incubator & for seed capital
- Seed capital would support businesses through the first year of operations
 - Loan Range: \$1,000 - \$2,000
 - Purpose: Working capital, purchase assets, etc.
 - Term: 12 months

Round 2

- Businesses submit an abridged application for follow-on (Round 2) funding
- Round 2 Debt:
 - Range: \$2,000 - \$5,000
 - Term: 1-3 years
 - Purpose: Working capital, purchase assets, etc.



CEDS
COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES





Health Powers Life

Health Awareness Campaign

- The first city wide Health awareness campaign toward the local Immigrant and Refugee Communities
- Launch of the Multimedia Public Health Campaign in collaboration with the TRI-County Health Department
- This health awareness campaign will focus on preventive medicine, easy access to resources, and integrated health access and care



HEALTH POWERS LIFE

Health is everything.



Yearly
Checkup



Healthy
Diet



Exercise



Rest



Balance

Move forward. Be healthy.

healthpowerslife.com



Office of
International and
Immigrant Affairs





OIA- Recognitions and Awards

- Named as a BEST PRACTICE MODEL in the area of immigrant integration and local government in the U.S. by the Strong Cities Network based in London, United Kingdom, January 2017.
- Recognized by the National League of Cities with its "City Cultural Diversity Award" Second Place, March 2017.
- Recognized by the Denver Regional Council of Governments with its "Metro Vision Award" for best program in the region, April 2017.
- Recognized by the U.S. Conference of Mayors with its "2018 City Livability Awards", June 2018.
- Recognized by the Academy of Interactive & Visual Arts with its "The Communicator Awards" for Health Powers Life Campaign, September 2018.



Questions?

Are there any questions?

