



IMMIGRANT WORKFORCE RESEARCH

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF GREATER DUBUQUE



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APRIL 26, 2023



Thank you to the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque, the people of Dubuque, and Alex Baum for their hospitality, guidance, and collaboration.



AGENDA

- Our Approach
- Background on Dubuque
- Insights
- Case Studies
- Insight from May 12th Business Equity Council
- Legal Framework
- Proposal on Immigrant Entrepreneurship

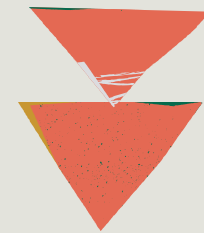


OUR
APPROACH



THE GOAL

Understand the challenges faced by immigrant employees and job seekers in Greater Dubuque, IA.



Identify how employers and local agencies can better support the success of immigrant employees.





THE OBJECTIVE

1. Assess the needs of immigrant communities in Northeast Iowa as it relates to employment.
2. Understand local employers' successes and challenges when hiring, training, and retaining immigrant talent.
3. Outline strategies to help community stakeholders build a more inclusive employment environment for all to thrive. Highlight a few case studies of local community members that have deployed strategies to create more inclusive work environments.

OUR BELIEFS

- **People know what they need and want.** The Greater Dubuque community knows its community best and we are here to help elevate the local voices and shine light on the solutions already present but overlooked.
- What is good for immigrant communities is **good for the broader community** .
- There is great diversity within the immigrant community. Immigrant communities are **not a monolith** .





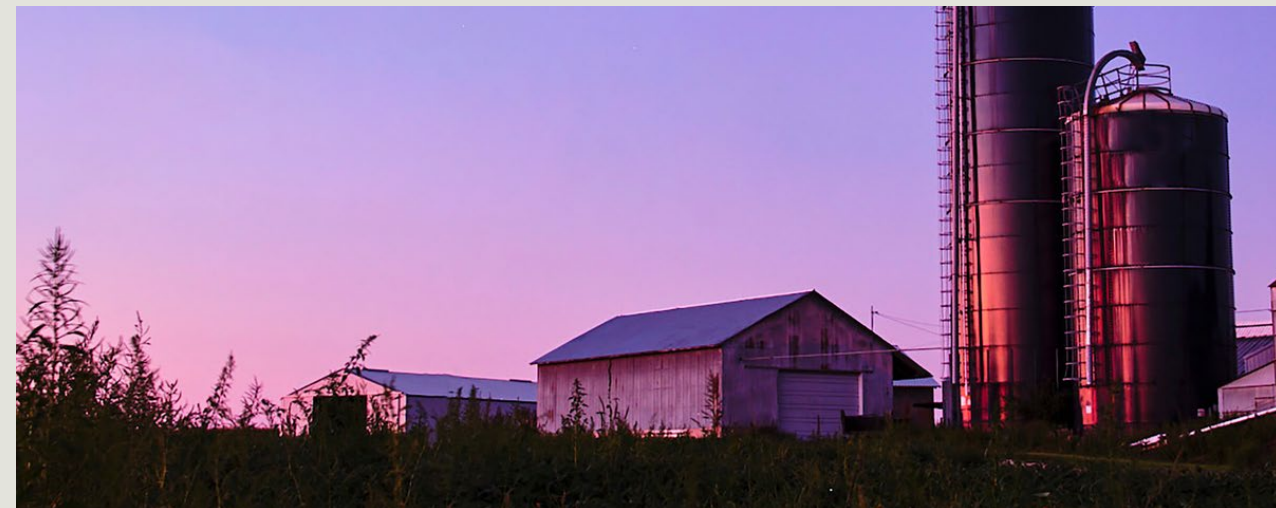
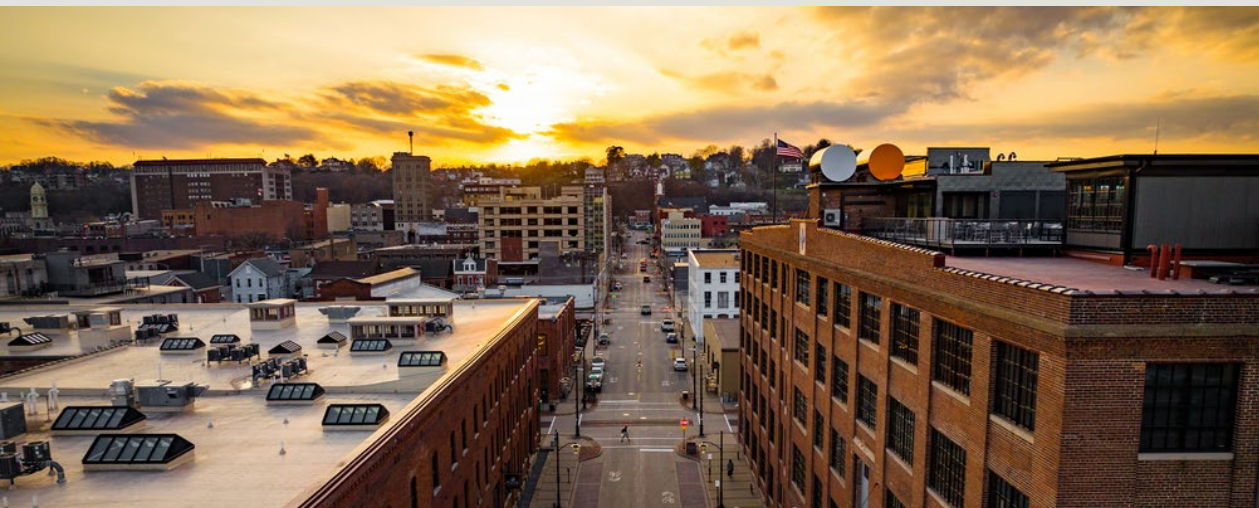
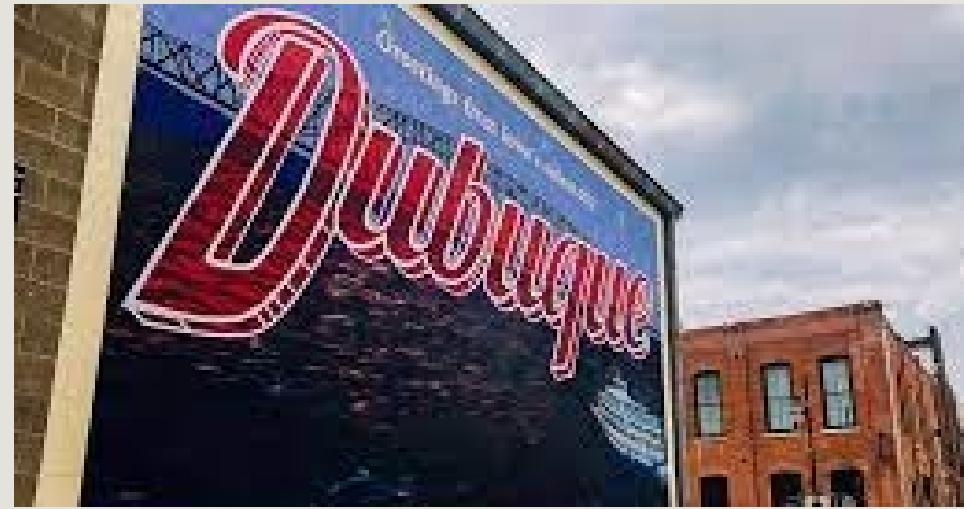
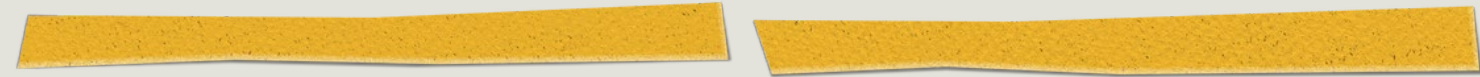
METHODOLOGY



To conduct our research,
we spoke with **40 folks**,
attended **2 community events**,
and conducted additional research
from publicly available information.

- 16 immigrant community members
- 8 small-to-mid size companies
- 8 Local non-profit, for-profit, and public agencies

BUT FIRST, GET TO KNOW "GD"



BUT FIRST, GET TO KNOW "GD"

DUBUQUE AT A GLANCE

Unemployment Rate: 3.7%

Current Population: 98,718

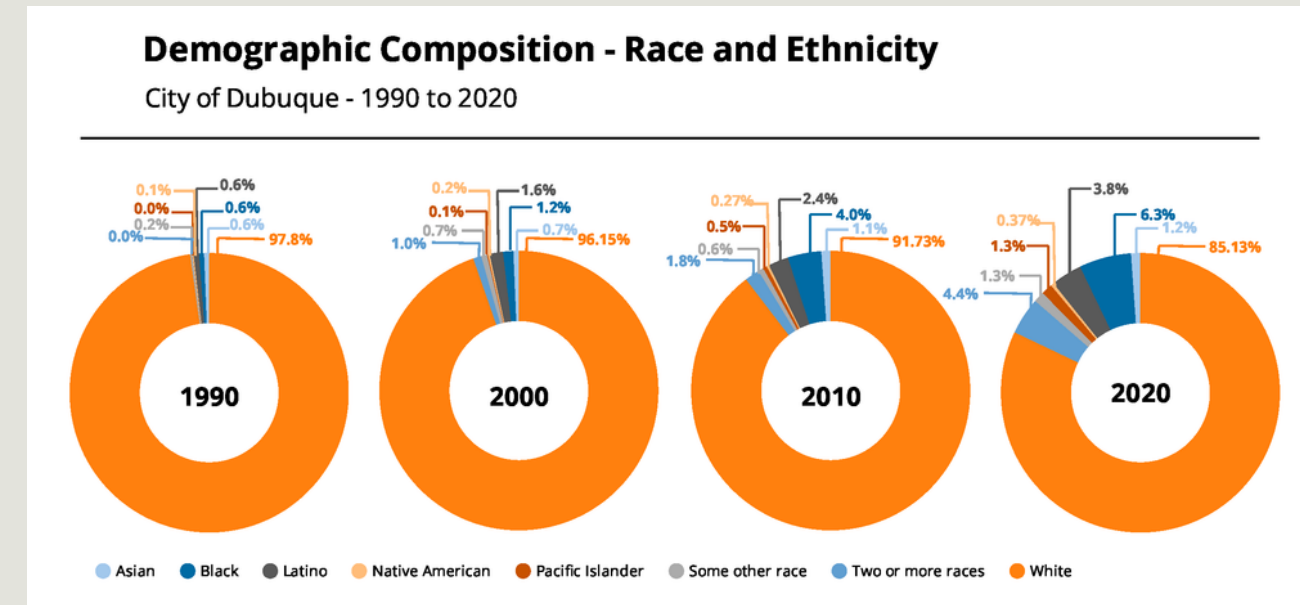
Primary Language Spoken at Home: English

Foreign Born population: 2.7% ± 0.7%

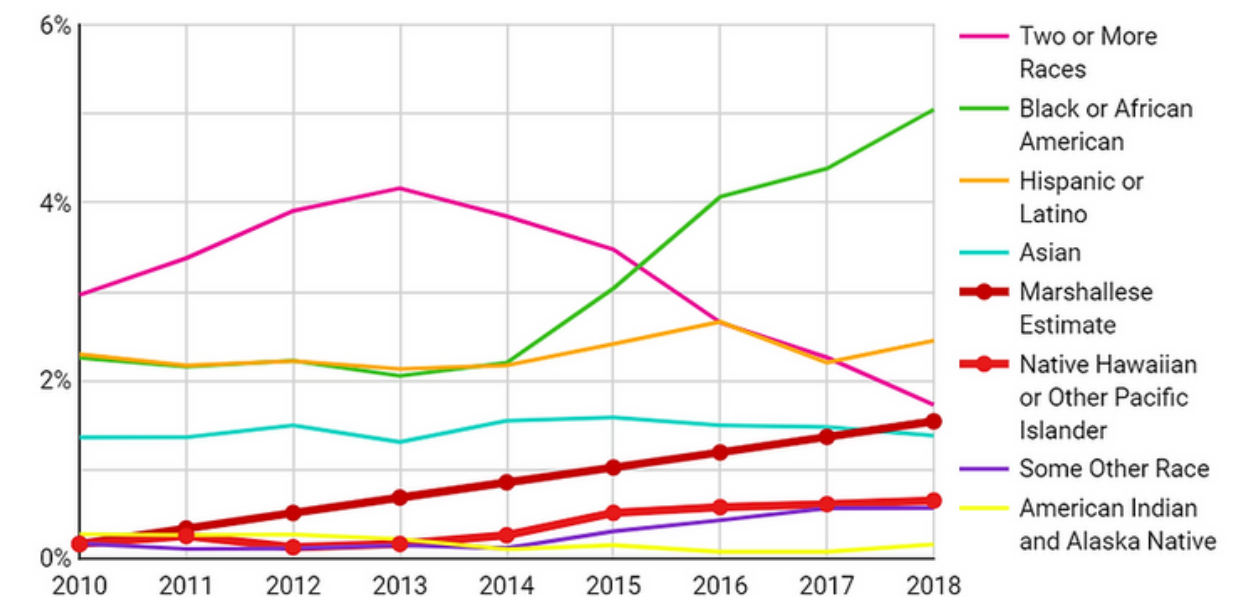
Bachelor's Degree or Higher - Population 25 Years and Older: 32.6% ± 2.8%

Means of transportation to work: 79% drive alone, 7% carpool

["WORKFORCE DATA." DATA AND RESOURCES | GREATER DUBUQUE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, BUREAU, U.S. CENSUS. US CENSUS BUREAU,](#)



Minority Groups by Percent of Population - City of Dubuque



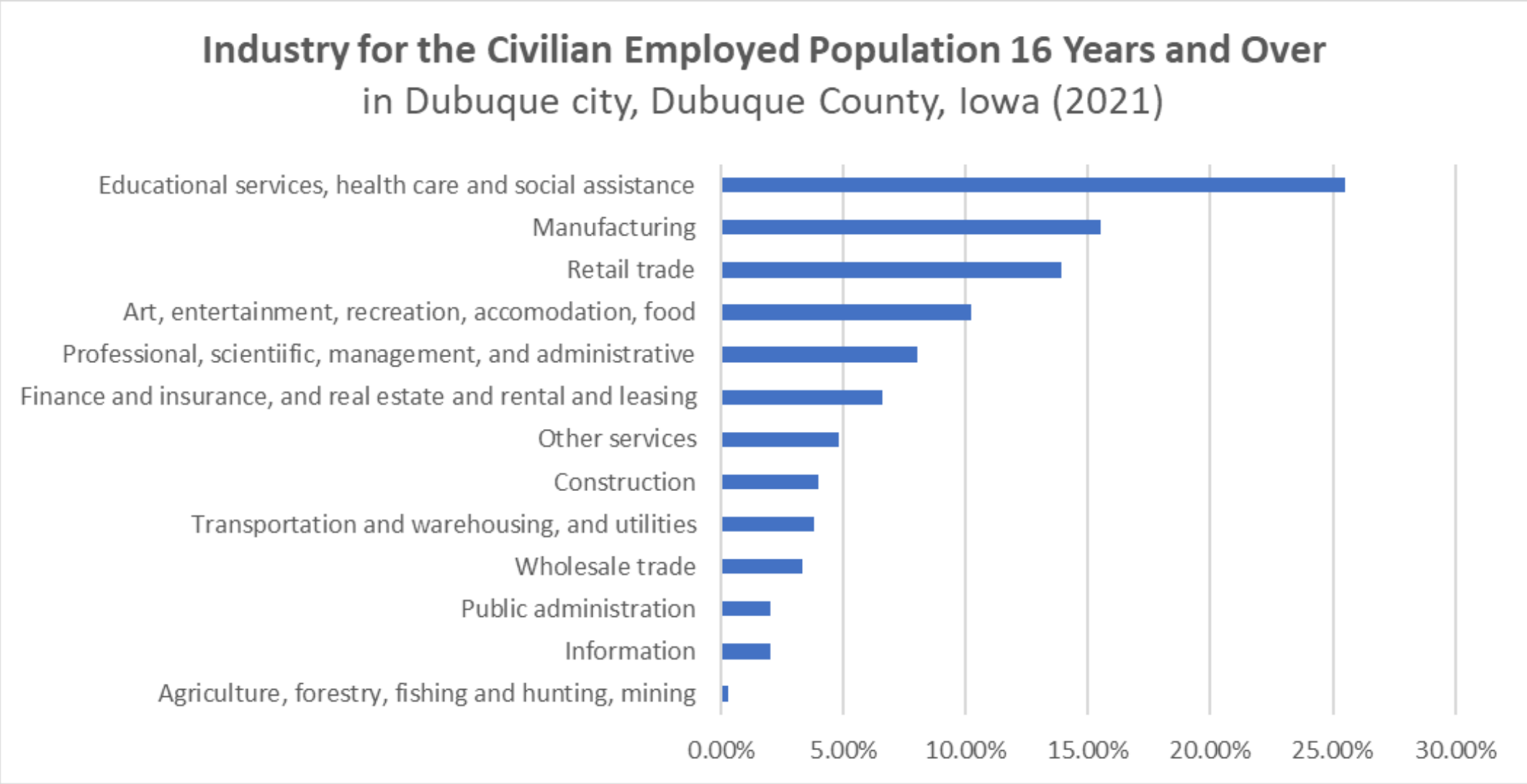
Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey

(TOP) [CFGD: COMMUNITY EQUITY PROFILE: DUBUQUE DEMOGRAPHICS \(2022\)](#)

(BOTTOM) ["DEMOGRAPHICS." DATA WALK 2020, COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF GREATER DUBUQUE](#)

[DATA SOURCED FROM US CENSUS BUREAU](#)

BUT FIRST, GET TO KNOW "GD"



[SOURCE: UNITED STATE CENSUS BUREAU](#)

Historical population		
Year	Pop.	±%
1850	3,108	—
1860	13,000	+318.3%
1870	18,434	+41.8%
1880	25,254	+37.0%
1890	30,311	+20.0%
1900	36,297	+19.7%
1910	38,494	+6.1%
1920	39,141	+1.7%
1930	41,679	+6.5%
1940	43,892	+5.3%
1950	49,671	+13.2%
1960	56,606	+14.0%
1970	62,309	+10.1%
1980	62,374	+0.1%
1990	57,538	-7.8%
2000	57,686	+0.3%
2010	57,637	-0.1%
2020	59,667	+3.5%

Source: "U.S. Census website" [↗](#).
 United States Census Bureau.
 Retrieved 2020-03-29.

INSIGHTS & DELIVERABLES

INTERVIEWS

IDEA HUB

CASE STUDIES

**FRAME-
WORK**

PROPOSAL

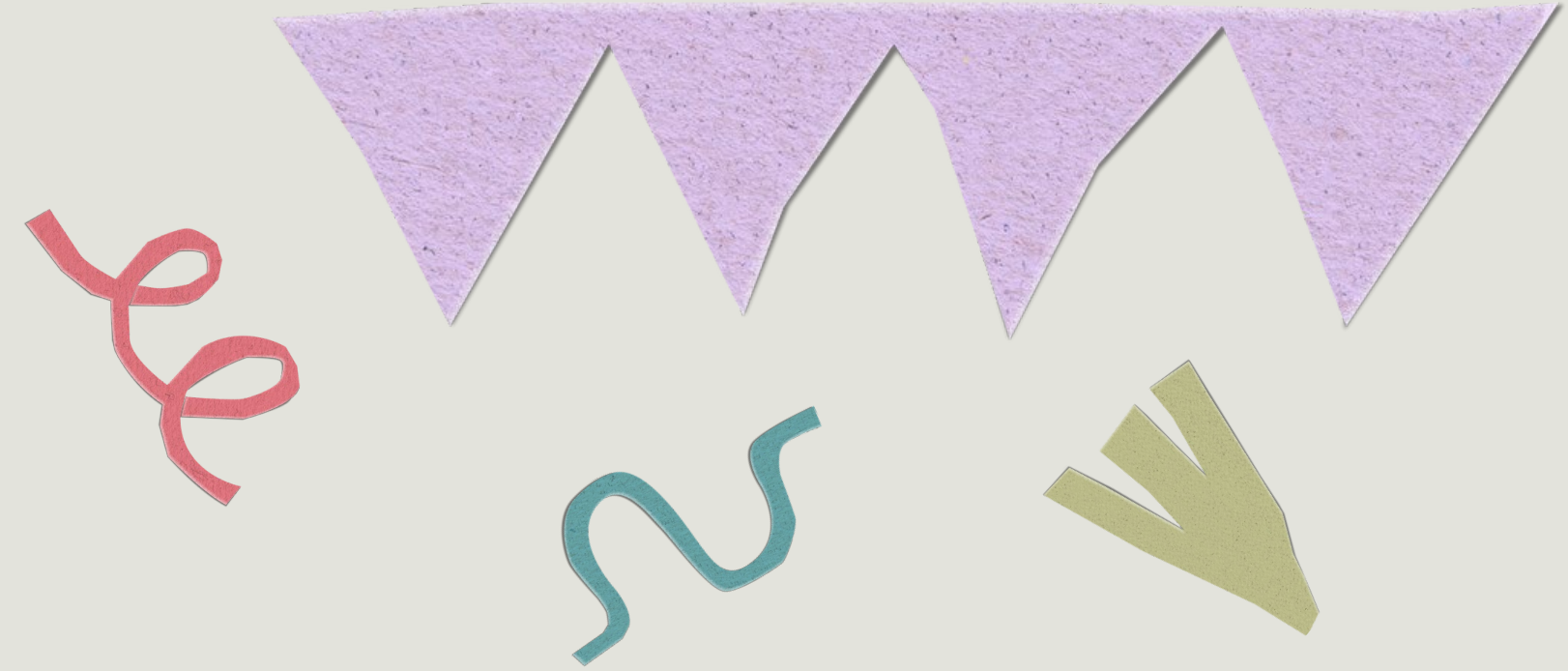
INSIGHTS & DELIVERABLES



INTERVIEWS : IMMIGRANT EMPLOYEES

- There is a great barrier re**interpretation and translation** from recruiting to hiring to training to retaining - including verbal for those who may be illiterate
- There is a need for greater transparency on upward mobility in the company - people want a **transparent merit-based approach**

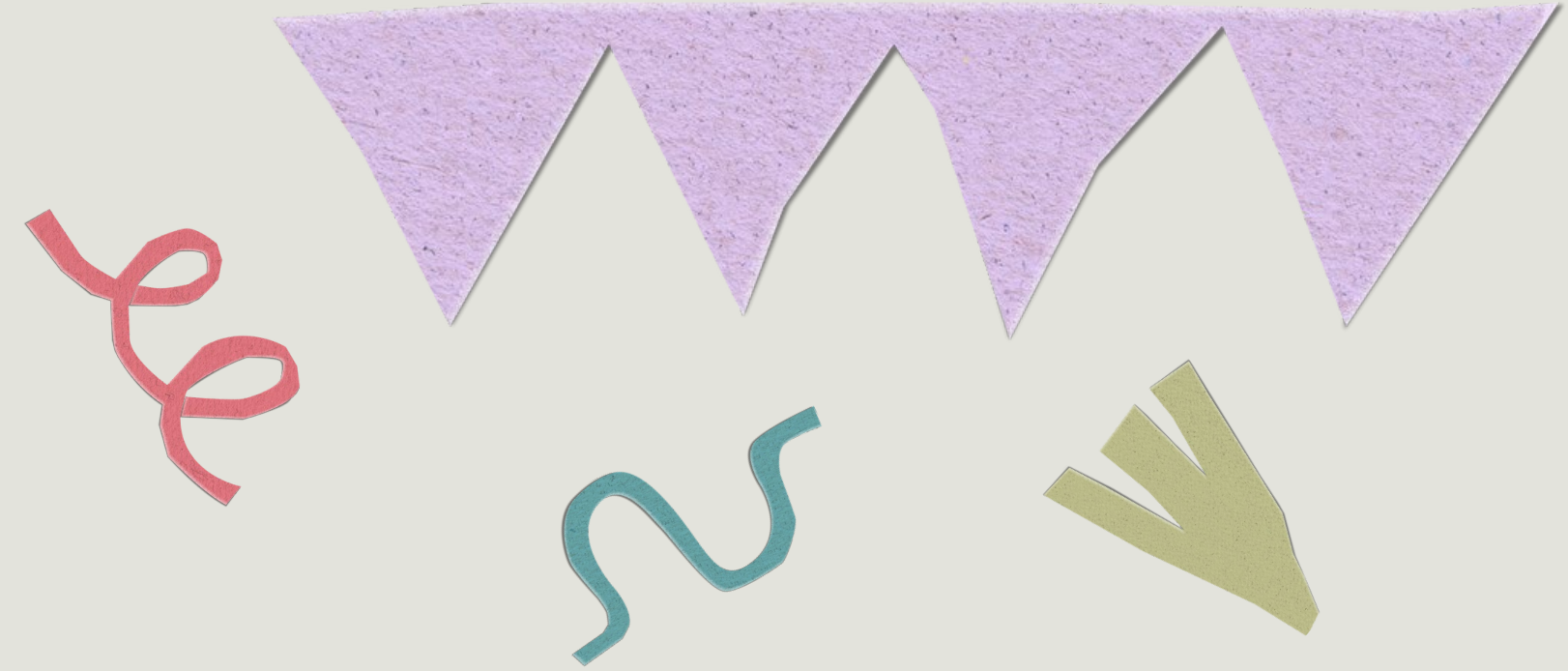
- The existing staff become **defacto Mentors and Support** for incoming staff of similar ethnic/cultural background
- Many do not feel comfortable voicing **discrimination**, harassment, or clear biases in their fellow employees or senior leaders
- There is a fear around working with undocumented **immigration status** (including loss of paperwork)



INTERVIEWS: IMMIGRANT EMPLOYEES

- Many rely on **one car per household** to get to work because public transportation is a challenge, especially given various shifts
- Quality housing is scarce and **housing instability** is common

- There is still difficulty finding **quality jobs**, and when they apply - they do not hear back
- The **lack of Cultural Competency** amongst Employers and strict rules make it difficult to stay



INTERVIEWS : EMPLOYERS

- There is a strong desire to understand how to better **recruit and retain** immigrant community members driven by growth needs
- **Disconnected** from the community and potential employees
- **DEI best practices** and knowledge building are still in early stages for many corporations
- Each team has **different priorities** with HR seeking to protect the company, and CEOs seeking to get as many bodies as possible
- There is a strong **lack of translation** services - costly, specific languages not available



INTERVIEWS: LOCAL AGENCIES

- There is a robust **nonprofit ecosystem** that often communicate with each other
- Employers **do not act as collaboratively** nor as holistically as the local organizations
- Most interactions come from employers seeking quick wins but **not in strategic partnerships**

- Local agencies are committed to supporting employees **holistically**. Meanwhile, employers tend to focus on on-site needs.
- Employers lack **cultural competency** and lack knowledge regarding the **legal system**
- Employers should understand what their employees need and work with local nonprofits to **bridge the gap**



KEY TAKEAWAYS

QUICK Q+A

Was there an insight that particularly struck or resonated with you?

INSIGHTS & DELIVERABLES



COMMUNITY IDEA HUB

- Have dedicated employee both knowledgeable around language and cultural acquisition that can serve as Coaches to new hires and stay with them for weeks
- Build a softskills course to support employees- NICC has created a 16 hour softskills course, Brightspace
- Work between employers and nonprofits to tap into existing referral systems
- Utilize the CFGD Business Equity Council as venue for peer exchange to hear how employers are tackling
- Pay, train, and support Community Champions who can help serve as liason between Community Members, Cultural Organizations, Nonprofits, and Employers
- Adapt training/EL classes at the Community School District and Northeast Iowa Community College to the actual employers' needs
- Provide language training certification to bridge translation gap around Marshallese, Spanish, and Guatemalan Mayan
- Provide Empathy training for HR and employees
- Conduct a Legal review with Catholic Charities and HR leaders
- Create food-centered cultural exchanges
- Develop a carpooling system to support employees coming in on 2nd and 3d shifts
- Build a pathway for entrepreneurship for immigrant community members

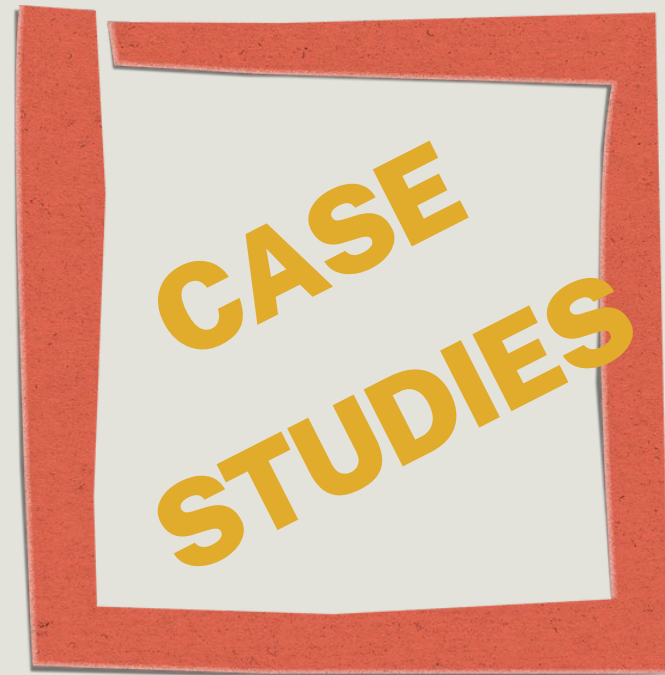


KEY TAKEAWAYS

QUICK Q+A

Which among the community ideas does your organization particularly want to run with?

INSIGHTS & DELIVERABLES



CASE STUDY 1



ABOUT

Guttenberg Industries, Inc.

Location: Garnavillo, IA

Industry: Manufacturing

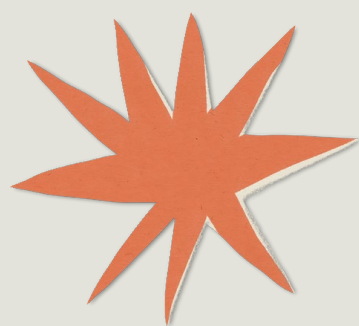
Ownership: private, second-generation family business

Business: provides high-precision custom plastic injection molding and related services to customers

Employees: ~140 employees

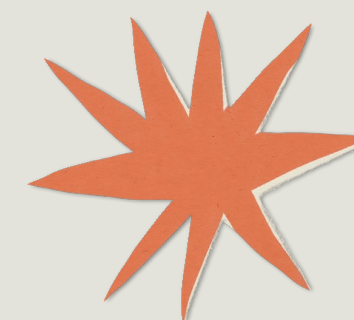
Operations: three shifts on a 24/5 basis





CASE STUDY 1: BARRIERS

- Addressing language barriers in application and training process
-
2. Addressing lack of clarity around growth trajectory in a company (performance, pay increases, promotion)



CASE STUDY 1



Guttenberg
Industries, Inc.



CATALYST

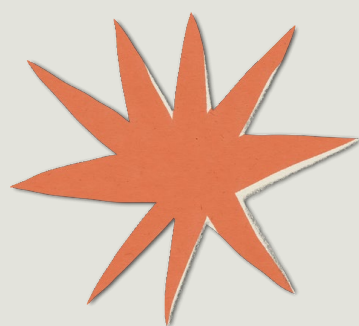
- Challenges finding talent
- Would get a lot of applications but they were not fully complete or hard to understand. Management realized that these applicants might not speak or be fluent in English

SOLUTION

- In 2013/2014 Actively recruited and hired first bilingual (Spanish and English) employee to serve as a bridge
- Translated targeted ads and internal opportunities (Spanish and English); Interviews in Spanish were made available
- Trained and compensated bilingual staff for additional responsibilities. Each shift has a bilingual staff member
- Yearly performance/pay appraisal
- No tolerance policy around harassment

RESULT

- 20% Latino Workforce
- Low turnover
- 5 bilingual employees/trainers
 - bilingual employees were trained as a bridge in addition to regular responsibilities; paid a premium
- Actively working on translating working documents to reduce language barriers at work

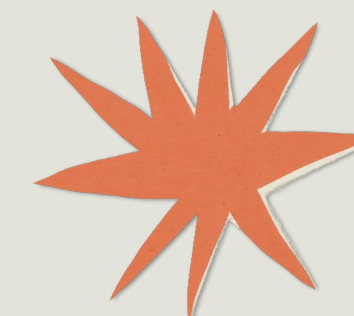


Guttenberg
Industries, Inc.

CASE STUDY 1: LEARNINGS



Short-term	Medium-Term	Long-term
<p>Translate job opportunities and job applications.</p>	<p>Create Language Navigator role paid to mentor, support, and train new non-English proficient staff (and matched by language).</p>	<p>Ensure that each shift has an employee that can be a language bridge for the team.</p>
<p>Acknowledge additional responsibilities, such as language translation, certain employees may be taking on and compensate/show appreciation.</p>	<p>Formalize review and promotion procedures. Post these procedures in the office and communicate how the firm promotes and rewards employees. Translate HR materials into various languages.</p> <p>Ensure employees and job seekers have equal access to information regarding opportunities, pay, promotion, and performance measurement.</p>	<p>Translate and make accessible work related documents (machinery guides, handbooks, company policies, company news).</p>



CASE STUDY 2



ABOUT

Anderson Corp

Location: Dubuque, Iowa with headquarters in Bayport, MN

Industry: Manufacturing

Ownership: private large company founded in 1903

Business: serve customers across the new residential, home improvement and light commercial building sector,

Employees: ~13,000+ employees across 30+ locations

Operations: three shifts on a 24/7 basis





CASE STUDY 2: BARRIERS

1. Building overall infrastructure to support marginalized communities across teams to be successful in the workplace
2. Creating pipelines for advancement and growth of immigrant employees and while supporting recently hired immigrants

CASE STUDY 2



CATALYST

- Began with new American employees and expanded to a growing Deaf workforce
- Andersen quickly realized they need to build infrastructure to support employees
- Many supervisors benefitted from supporting the acquisition of a plant in Garland, TX where workforce was very diverse and many languages were spoken

SOLUTION

- Redesigned new employee orientation through the lens of an English language learner, adding many visual elements. Redesign resulted in an ESL workbook that became the basis for customer onsite English classes begun in 2020. The program now supports low / no English literacy employees. Scaling program to 6 sites.
- Created Language Navigator role to guide employees through first 9 weeks of employment
- Leveraged “Language Survey” results to understand concentration of languages spoken across production lines and different shifts. Placed new employees where a shared language could be leveraged for training and building community.

RESULT

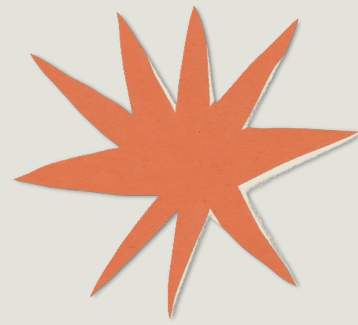
- Retention Rates range from 86%-100% for onsite English class graduates
- At one plant in particular, 33% of Team Leads are bilingual new Americans, and 25% of Supervisors are bilingual
- Many initiatives are just beginning to come to Dubuque plant

CASE STUDY 2



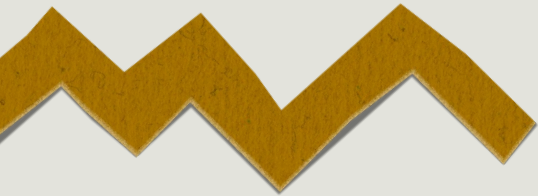
SOLUTION

- Pipelined bilingual talent off shop floor into entry level Training roles
- Hired Learning & Development professionals at most manufacturing plants to build training systems
- Leveraged technology tools like noise-suppressing headsets with outfeed to large display screens for start-of-shift meetings
- Trialing on-demand video remote interpreting and the MS Translator App to support improved communication between hearing supervisors and deaf employees on offshifts
- Hosted cultural competency courses for plant leadership teams in Hmong 101 and Karen 101
- Continued to scale 10 Employee Resource Networks to build community and support across the country

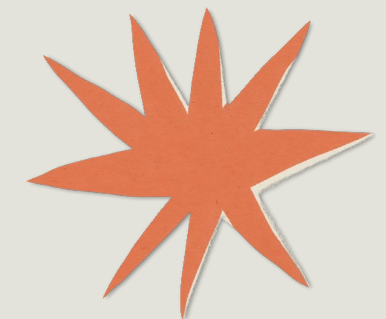


ANDERSEN
WINDOWS & DOORS

CASE STUDY 2 : LEARNINGS FOR DUBUQUE



Short-term	Medium-Term	Long-term
Ask the question "what might help you?" or "whatever you need just let me know" to employees	Create Language Navigator role paid to mentor, support, and train new non-English proficient staff (and matched by language)	Invest in on-site English Language Literacy courses tailored to the job
Use Language Survey tool or through conversation to understand comfort with English and if they will need a Buddy on their shift	Cultural 101 sessions held by staff or community members	Hire a Learning & Development Specialist
Revisit current hiring and training protocols with those of different nationalities to understand gaps	Translate HR materials and marketing materials into various languages with the support of those from different cultural backgrounds - to provide culturally competent messaging and provide support for those who cannot read efficiently	Redesign entire hiring and training protocols with those of different nationalities to understand gaps



KEY TAKEAWAYS

QUICK Q+A

Which of these efforts do you see your organization being interested in exploring?

INSIGHTS FROM MAY 12 TH BUSINESS EQUITY COUNCIL PRESENTATION

Business communities' immigration employment efforts have not been as successful as desired in Dubuque region

Need to see the value of investment both short-term and long-term (notably short-term)

Need for practical actionable successful examples that can be learned from

Need for coaching/Technical Assistance for companies trying to increase immigration employment

Need for peer-learning on the how companies have been able to progress

How to support CEOs struggling NOW with investments that may not be actualized for months/years?

The challenges of businesses must be centered when framing this conversation on immigration employment

The Dubuque region does not have a go-to nonprofit that is coordinating and centralizing efforts to support immigrant employment

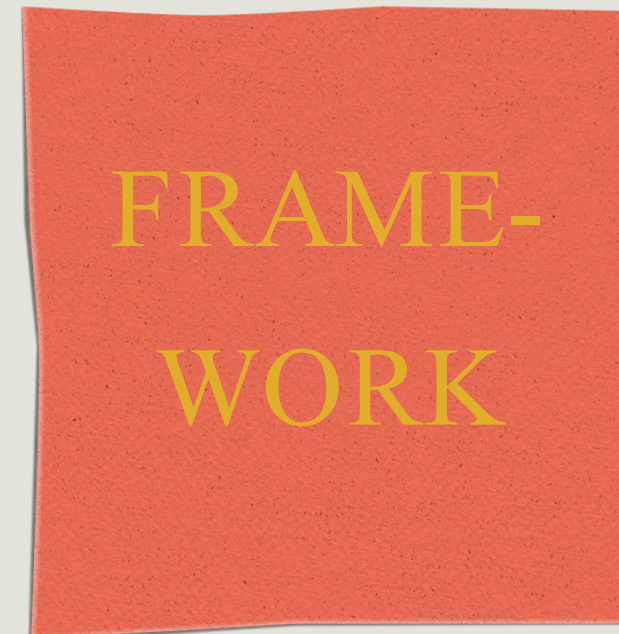
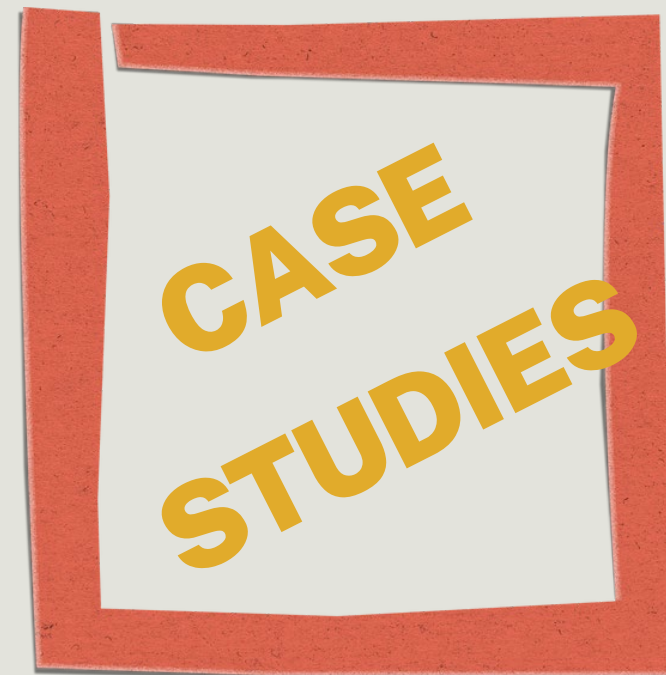
The lack of one-stop shop or centralized location leads to lack of ownership or fragmented efforts

The business community is not plugged in to strategic partnerships with the non-profit community

Business community doesn't know who to go to to even find a translator if they wanted to hire one

Need for local Community Champions that can act as a Resource Group/bridge between Employers and Immigrant communities (being worked on now by the City Equity Director and NICC separately) - stipend involved

INSIGHTS & DELIVERABLES



FRAMEWORK:

Immigration + Employment Quick Things to Know

IMMIGRANT

K1-
Family-based visa. Each country has a limited amount. Immigrants from Mexico for example may wait decades. on average, wait can be 20+ years. Eligible to become a Green card Holder. Receive a EAD (Employment Authorization Document)

REFUGEE -
Received permission to come to the US after a long and arduous process; usually coming from a refugee camp. Granted a Refugee Travel Document which allows you to immediately work. Eligible to come a Green card Holder.

ASYLUM-
Arrive through inspection seeking protection out of fear of prosecution for race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular group, or political opinion. These are limited. It will take 7-10 years. The nearest court is in Omaha, NE. There are only 3 judges and the denial rate is 96%-98%. One can apply for an EAD after your application is processed (which can take 4+ months).

SIJS -
Special Immigrant Juvenile Services when an unaccompanied minors is then sponsored by someone who vouches for them. in the US . They have to prove that they were abused, neglected or abandoned, and then find a guardianship. Once granted, can receive an EAD 1 year later. Max age is 18 in Iowa although 21 federally.

NONIMMIGRANT

STUDENT -
Receive visa to be a full-time student in the USA. F1 visas have 12 months of temporary employment during and post completion related to their studies.

WORK -
Employer must file with USCIS before employee arrives: learn more [here](#)

TOURIST B1 OR B2 -
temporary visa for those visiting either for work or for leisure. You are not granted an Employment Authorization document.

EWI

Those who enter the US without inspection and without paperwork. These individuals do not have the legal right to work in the USA.

OTHER

DACA - Allows path to permanent residency for kids that arrived EWI (Entered Without Inspection). Have an EAD (Employment Authorization Document)

MARSHALLESE - Allowed under US/Marshall Island Compact to come. The only documents needed to come and to work is an I-94 and their ID from their country.

Humanitarian Parolee - Allowed to come under urgent crises overseas without a visa, such as recent waves of Afghans and Ukrainians. Have a 2 year EAD (Employment Authorization Document)

TPS (Temporary Protected Status) - Currently in the US and have continued residence in the US but a national of a country designated for TPS.

INSIGHTS & DELIVERABLES

INTERVIEWS

IDEA HUB

CASE STUDIES

**FRAME-
WORK**

PROPOSAL



"EVEN ADVOCATES
ARE SOMETIMES SWAYED BY THE NATIONAL MEDIA NARRATIVE
CONCERNING IMMIGRATION, FOCUSING MORE ON THE
NEEDS AND CHALLENGES
OF THE IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE COMMUNITIES THAN ON THE
STRENGTHS AND RESOURCEFULNESSES
THAT THOSE INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES POSSESS."

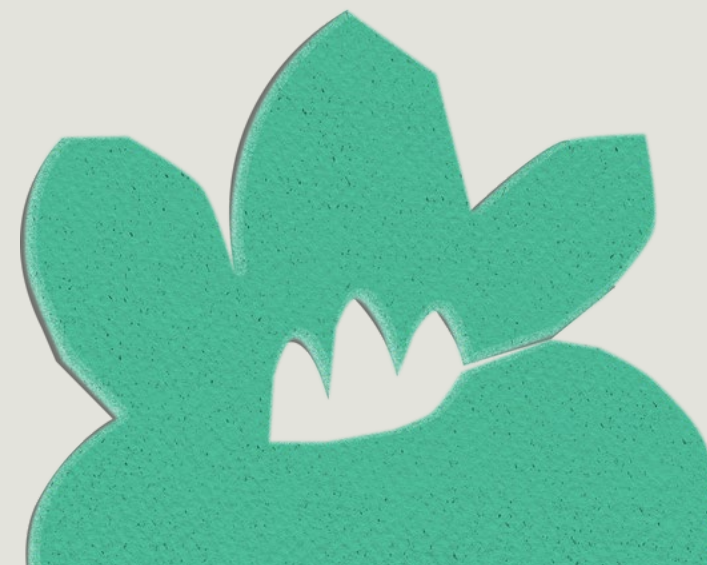
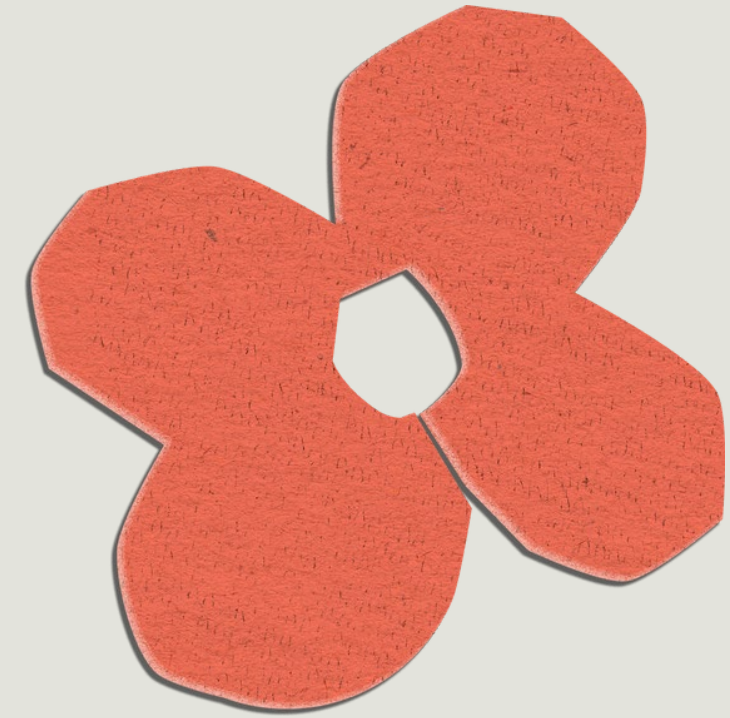
WELCOMING AMERICA | GUIDE TO IMMIGRANT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | STEVE TOBOCMAN



SMALL BUSINESS ENTREPRENEURS HUB SUPPORT

Empower people with the knowledge and skills to build a living and legacy of their own in the community they call home.

Create a sense of community ownership and equity in a city's welcoming initiative.



IMMIGRANTS ENTREPRENEURS PLAY A KEY ROLE IN REVIVING AND GROWING COMMUNITIES

IMMIGRANTS ARE
ALMOST 2 X AS
LIKELY AS THE
NATIVE-BORN
POPULATION TO
START A NEW
BUSINESS

IN 2015, 28% OF
"MAIN STREET
BUSINESSES"
WERE OWNED BY
IMMIGRANT
ENTREPRENEURS

IN 2017,
IMMIGRANT
OWNED
BUSINESSES HAD
SALES OF
\$ 1.3 TRILLION

IN 2019, THE SHARE OF
ENTREPRENEURS WHO
ARE IMMIGRANTS WAS
21.7% DESPITE THE
SHARE OF
IMMIGRANTS IN THE
US POPULATION ONLY
BEING 13.6%

IMMIGRANT-
OWNED
BUSINESSES
EMPLOYED
8.0 MILLION
PEOPLE IN 2017.

IMMIGRANTS BRING
THEIR FOODS,
LANGUAGE,
CULTURE, GOODS,
AND SERVICES,
ADDING A RICH
DIVERSITY TO
COMMUNITIES.

SUPPORTING IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP CREATES A MORE INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY



CHALLENGES

- Personal and professional relationships / Network
- Language and cultural barriers
- Limited access to capital, often because of a lack of credit history
- Less familiarity with local laws and regulations for small businesses
- Potential distrust of government and local agencies

PROVIDE SUPPORT

- Assistance with administrative procedures for business setup
- Entrepreneurship training
- Legal advice and counseling for complying with tax regulations, labor laws, social security obligations, and immigration
- Mentoring and coaching in business networks to help build social capital
- Assistance with raising start-up capital

ACTIONABLE NEXT STEPS

- Ensure resources and information is accessible in multiple languages and access points
- Organize a cohort of community business leaders to develop an immigrant entrepreneurship initiative
- Assemble relevant non-profits, local agencies, and professionals with relevant experience to advise on startup business development
- Identify and aggregate sources of capital

CASE STUDY

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MODEL: NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER, MINNEAPOLIS / ST. PAUL



CONTEXT

NDC has been assisting aspiring entrepreneurs and activating commercial corridors in low-income, immigrant, and minority neighborhoods in Minneapolis/St. Paul since 1993.

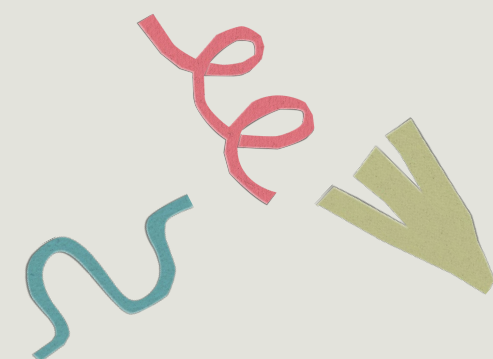
NDC works in target neighborhoods and relies heavily on community partners within those neighborhoods (e.g. a community development corporations, schools, faith-based organizations, social service agencies, etc.) to attract local residents with the vision and enthusiasm to launch a business within their neighborhood.

SOLUTION

- Community partners market NDC training as their own and host classes in the neighborhood. This allows NDC to connect more naturally with residents already in the community partner's network.
- NDC provides a fully integrated, one-stop shop for entrepreneur training, small business consulting, microfinance, and business incubation.
- NDC's microenterprise development programs are offered in six languages (English, Spanish, Arabic, Hmong, Vietnamese, and Somali)

RESULT

- NDC has trained over 4,500 entrepreneurs since 1993.
- Provided over \$11 million in loans to business owners with limited access to traditional capital.
- Focuses on personal empowerment, rebuilding neighborhoods.
- Half of NDC entrepreneurs use formerly vacant buildings.
- 82% of NDC-assisted businesses hire neighborhood residents.



CASE STUDY

SERVICE INTEGRATION MODEL PROGRAM:
MISSION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AGENCY, SAN FRANCISCO



CONTEXT

The Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA) is a neighborhood service center that is designed to be a one-stop shop for residents of San Francisco's Mission District - two thirds of whom are Spanish-speaking.

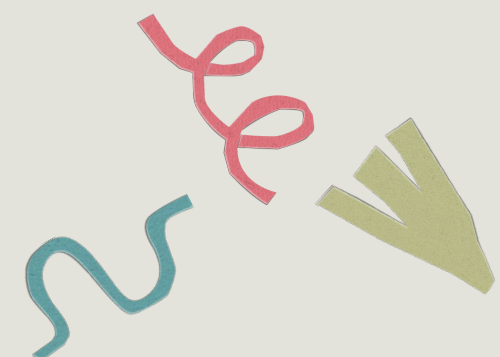
MEDA provides various support services including financial literacy, homeownership, computer literacy, free tax preparation, and small business development.

SOLUTION

- Free tax preparation is often the first point of contact.
- Through the single intake process, MEDA staff can build trust and learn about clients' aspirations and needs. This information allows staff to direct clients to different support services and identify those interested in entrepreneurship.
- MEDA enrolls aspiring entrepreneurs in a six-week business-training course, provides ongoing individualized coaching and potential housing in a business incubator.

RESULT

- In 2013, MEDA received an \$800,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to launch a revolving loan fund for small minority businesses
- Since that time, 41 loans have been packaged, amounting to nearly \$700,000 to support 36 new businesses in the district.



RESOURCES

TRAINING / NETWORK

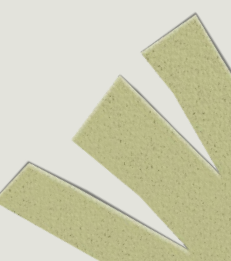
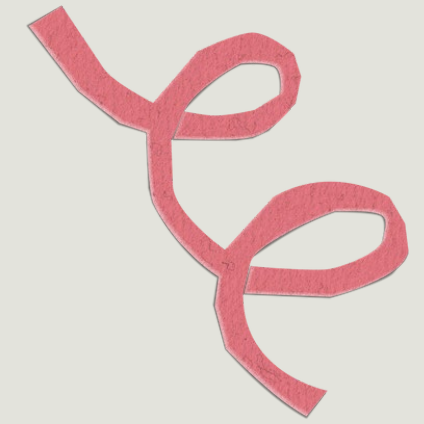
- Economic Development Department
- Greater Dubuque Development Corp.
- Northeast Iowa Community College
- Dubuque Area Chamber of Commerce
- Empower
- Iowa Venture School
- SCORE

CAPITAL / RESOURCES

- Low and Moderate Income Owned Business Assistance Grant
- Iowa Micro Loan
- Dubuque Main Street
- The Innovation Lab
- East Central Intergovernmental Association (ECIA)

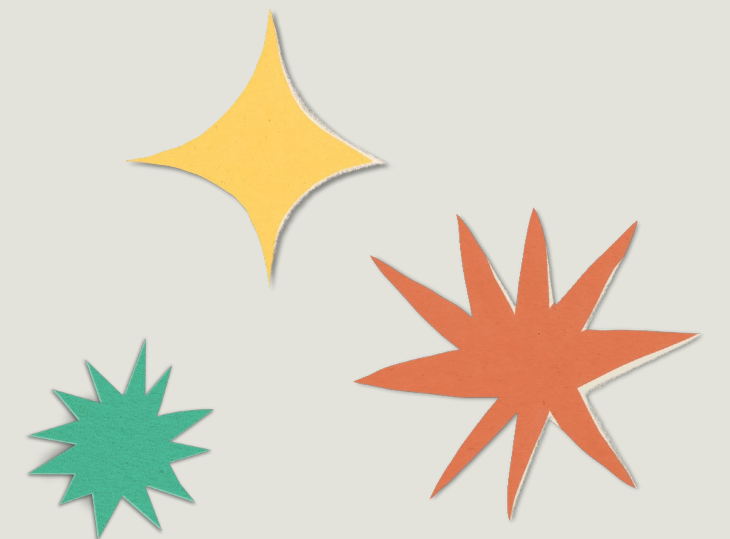
[LINK: CITY OF DUBUQUE SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES](#)

Make resources accessible (language, platform, place) to all community members.



NEXT STEPS

- Speak to existing immigrant business owners and understand their experience starting their business in Dubuque
- Ensure resources and information is accessible in multiple languages and access points
- Organize a cohort of community business leaders to develop an immigrant entrepreneurship initiative
- Identify and assemble relevant non-profits, local agencies, and professionals with relevant experience to advise on startup business development.
- Identify sources of capital for local small business entrepreneurs



THANK YOU!

