

Diversity and Civic Leadership Program

Year-end performance summary

FY 2012-13

July 2012 through June 2013

Organization: **Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization**

GOAL: Community Involvement, Increase the number and diversity of people who are involved and volunteer in their communities and neighborhoods.

1. Examples of developing culturally appropriate strategies to bring constituency together to build community identity, understanding of existing City governance structures, and/or skills to analyze City power dynamics.
 - **Free legal clinics:** IRCO staff worked with Vietnamese Attorney, Ms. Dao, from Oregon Law Center to organize monthly free legal clinics and workshops for immigrant & refugee communities. Ms. Dao is a Fellow from IRCO's API Community Leadership Institute. The OLC is a non-profit law firm with the mission to achieve justice for the low income communities of Oregon by providing a full range of the highest quality civil legal services. These training/clinics helped IRCO's staff to stay informed of some recurring community issues and find ways to address issues at policy level if needed.
 - **Coalition of Communities of Color's API disparity report:** One important tool to advocate for communities is to use credible data. DCL staff was involved in the Coalition of Communities of Color's API community specific report and its release. DCL staff coordinated a two-part training on community issues and how to use the API report data to advocate for the communities. Ann Curry, PSU researcher for the report, was the trainer. Part one presented the report and discussed community issues. Part two focused on how to discuss and present data to the communities and policy makers to advocate for given issues.
 - **Civic and Political Engagement Survey and "Hear Our Voices":** Organized survey to collect solid baseline data in terms of the civic participation/engagement behaviors and attitudes of the immigrant and refugee community across three areas: civic engagement (volunteering), electoral engagement, and political voice engagement. Dr. Pei-ru Wang, served as the lead researcher, adapted a survey tool by the same name developed by Tufts University. Staff reviewed and added additional open ended questions to collect more in-depth knowledge of this issue. More than a dozen ENGAGE leaders were recruited and trained to use the surveys to collect data within their own communities. Leaders were also using this survey opportunities to engage and educate their perspective community members. A total of 256 surveys (68 Slavic, 65 Asians, 85 Africans, and 39 Pacific Islanders) from 28 ethnic communities were collected.

Leaders strengthened their community capacity by understanding different aspects of civic participation and meeting with individual members and sharing ideas about how civic engagement can make an impact on community outcomes. Staff mentored leaders throughout the process. Each leader received a stipend for collecting surveys. Staff created a database and organized ENGAGE leaders in two data review sessions to analyze the results. Staff worked with ENGAGE leaders to craft talking points for the “Hear Our Voices” presentation at City Hall on May 4, 2013, to share the results and recommendations to City officials and other jurisdictions to increase civic participation from immigrant/refugee communities. Civic leaders had the opportunities to talk with community leaders from Asian, African immigrant, Slavic and Pacific Islander communities. The process of collecting data, discussing the results, and planning how to present that information to civic leaders and officials strengthens community capacity of ENGAGE leaders.

- **Bhutanese Community of Oregon board elections:** Partnered with the Bhutanese Community of Oregon to strengthen their community capacity through support of their upcoming Board elections on May 11, 2013. Initially, this community faced internal divisions, but they are now working on coming together and choosing their community leaders democratically. Staff met with the newly-elected Board of Directors in June to understand the community’s priority issues, in particular citizenship classes because their community is nearing their 5-year mark in the United States. Staff also referred the board to the Oregon Law Center’s Pro Bono Clinic for help writing their charter and by-laws.
- **DCL staff organizer monthly meetings:** Participated in monthly meetings with staff organizers as part of ONI Diversity and Civic Leadership program.

2. Have you convened any gatherings/meetings or events to accomplish this goal/program function? If so, how many gatherings/meetings? Attendance?

- 26 meetings and activities
- 608 participants

GOAL: Capacity Building, Strengthen neighborhood and community capacity to build identity, skills, relationships and partnerships.

Communications

3. Describe the methods of communication currently used to outreach to your group.

- **Emails:** Send out regular emails to ENGAGE graduates (e.g., City training/workshops; neighborhood events, free services provided).

4. How many people are receiving these communications on a regular basis?

- Up to 157 people receiving e-newsletters, mostly ENGAGE participants and graduates.

- 62 one-on-one meetings with community members and ENGAGE participants

Leadership development

5. As a result of this project describe one method to develop leadership opportunities for your constituents to become effective advocates on City public involvement initiatives and/or initiatives by your organization to achieve economic and social equity? How many people have participated?

- Trainings - 7
- Participants - 136
- **Evaluating ENGAGE graduate interest in trainings:** Staff did one-on-one interviews with previous year's graduates and collected their input on workshop development and public engagement updates. In general, they were pleased with the workshops (e.g., dates/times, speakers/facilitators, topics) they attended previously, and emphasized that hands-on and interactive activities were preferred styles of learning. ENGAGE graduates expressed that the need to bring graduates together and support each other, in addition to bring new community members to be part of ENGAGE. Some ENGAGE community members were more involved in the government as results of ENGAGE (e.g., serving on Diversity committee of City of Vancouver; applied small EPAP grant to conduct civic engagement training for Laos Community). Past few years we have grown a large number of ENGAGE graduates pool but we need to do a better job to keep the graduates stay engaged and continue learning.
- **Africa House Youth Leadership retreat:** Engage staff helped plan and support a 3-day retreat in August, 2012, lead by Africa House Youth Council, where youth learned to appreciate and reflect on the diversity of African Cultures, learned collaboration skills reflecting cultural values, and law enforcement system. It is best to cultivate the youth leadership by letting them lead the development and implementation of the program.
- **Tongan community Voter Education training:** In August, 2012, DCL staff helped Tongan community leaders and ENGAGE graduates, Suliasi Laulaupea'alu and Kolini Fusitua, coordinate a training on Voter Education. IRCO's API Leadership Program Fellow and APANO Community Organizer, Fipe Havea, conducted the training. They discussed the importance of voter registration for the upcoming election and subsequently had the largest voter turnout from the Tongan community to date (reported by Suliasi & Kolini). In this training, she also shared the research data on API communities in the Multnomah County. She facilitated discussion on how to use research data (e.g., poverty rate, academic achievement, etc.) to advocate for Tongan Community. Tongan community was very effective in educating other community members through word of mouth.
- **"Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals" training:** ENGAGE graduate, Bertha Madrigal and IRCO organized training on deferred action for childhood arrivals.

Twelve Hispanic community members attended this training in Spanish presented by the Immigrant Law Group. These 12 community members reported they shared this information with more than 200 community members reflecting their increasing roles as community leaders and informants.

Partnerships and Collaborations

6. Describe a new or update on a collaboration or partnership developed as a result of this project with other community organization(s), neighborhood and/or business association(s) where there may be opportunities to work on common community and neighborhood livability issues?

- Africa House Youth Council – leadership retreat
- Asian Pacific Network of Oregon – candidate forum & voter education
- Bhutanese Community of Oregon – board training
- Burmese Zomi Community of Oregon – candidate forums
- Burqaa Lami Oromo Association – candidate forums
- City of Portland
- Coalition of Communities of Color – API specific report
- Immigrant Law Group – DACA training
- IRCO’s API Leadership Program
- Metro
- Multnomah County
- Northwest Somali Association – candidate forums
- Oregon Law Center – legal clinics
- Oregon Youth Authority
- Portland Housing Bureau – focus groups
- Portland State University - survey
- Somali Bantu Youth Association – candidate forums
- Tongan Community – candidate forums
- Tufts University - survey

GOAL: Public Impact, Increase community and neighborhood impact on public decisions.

Representation on City advisory committees

7. How many people have participated on city advisory committees, boards, commissions?

- NA

Culturally appropriate public involvement models

8. Please describe any opportunities this quarter you have had to engage with City public involvement efforts. What have been some of the successes or challenges in engaging in this process?

- **Portland Housing Bureau:** A partnership to organize several focus groups on housing opportunity mapping. IRCO staff met with Housing Bureau several times to learn about housing data to be collected/analyzed and discuss what are the best strategies to collect input on housing strategies. DCL staff also took time to educate Housing Bureau staff to work with immigrant and refugee communities and how to design the right way to conduct the focus groups.
- **Candidate forums:** IRCO co-sponsored 2 candidate forums, a mayoral forum with Charlie Hales and Jefferson Smith and a Commissioners' candidate forum with Amanda Fritz and Mary Nolan, October, 2012. Staff worked with ENGAGE graduates to organize community members to attend. In addition, staff helped arrange interpretation and transportation for attending.
- **Civic and Political Engagement Survey:** *(See more detail in first section.)* Organized survey to collect solid baseline data in terms of the civic participation/engagement behaviors and attitudes of the immigrant and refugee community. Staff worked with ENGAGE leaders to craft the presentation at City Hall on May 4, 2013, to share the results and recommendations to the City and other jurisdictions to increase civic participation from immigrant/refugee communities.