

Diversity and Civic Leadership Program Year-end performance summary

FY 2012-13
July 2012 through June 2013

Organization: Center for Intercultural Organizing (CIO)

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.
 - **Pan-Immigrant Leadership and Organizing Training (PILOT) Program** continues to provide intensive leadership retreats and workshops for a cohort of 15-20 emerging immigrant and refugee leaders, and building alliances across immigrant and refugee groups. By enhancing the skills, analysis and organizing ability of emerging immigrant and refugee leaders across cultural groups, PILOT builds long-term relationships between diverse immigrant and refugee communities in Portland and builds the capacity and voice of new communities to affect change.

Approach: (See more under leadership) The PILOT Program addresses the challenges faced by emerging immigrant and refugee leaders and groups through leadership and skill building convenings. Over a period of 12 months, the program:

- Supports individual leaders from various immigrant and refugee communities to build a shared analysis for organizing;
 - Strengthens the capacity of immigrants and refugees to build power for their communities through in-depth skill building, leadership development and mentoring;
 - Develops a long-term multi-ethnic coalition of immigrant and refugee leaders, who can work together on issue campaigns.
- **Popular education model:** CIO utilizes popular education techniques in its workshops and organizing trainings, with the fundamental belief that all are both teachers and learners. This enables us to draw from the rich, diverse experiences of immigrants and refugees and engenders very deep group ties.
 - **Accessibility efforts:**

- **Language interpretation:** PILOT class provides simultaneous interpreting in three languages—Nepali (for Bhutanese refugees), Arabic, and Spanish—for participants who are more comfortable learning in their native language. For our voter engagement work, CIO held Get-Out-The-Vote phone banks in October with volunteers who spoke 12 different languages. In doing our East Portland housing organizing, CIO has hired interpreters, youth organizers, Nepali-speaking organizer, and has provided simultaneous interpreting during meetings, and translated flyers.
 - **Child care:** is always reimbursed for participants as well.
 - **Dietary and religious considerations:** Each PILOT member fills out a special needs form indicating any issues with foods, prayer times, religious holidays, etc.
 - **Transportation:** During the candidate forums we held, CIO bussed 25 immigrants and refugees to the event who have been involved in our East Portland housing work, provided interpreters for them, and organized a group of Somali community members and interpreters to likewise participate in the forums.
 - **Accessibility:** In August 2012, CIO physically upgraded our Portland office, with sustainable, bamboo flooring making it easier for people with non-motorized wheelchairs to access the space and ensuring floors are clean for families with young children, who often play on them. Wheelchair ramps were secured and neighborhood safety measures were also components of the capital improvement project.
- **CIO's general organizing model:** Immigrants and refugees are less likely to build the power they need to create positive change by working in isolation from each other or from mainstream institutions. Employing a grassroots, bottom-up approach designed and led by the individuals and communities impacted by the issues, CIO's programs connect newcomers with their government, neighbors and each other. Within the PILOT Program, weekend retreats enable participants to develop deep and lasting relationships, learn from one another, and develop a shared sense of community identity. Beyond this program, CIO always offers a safe space for cross-cultural dialogue, analysis, strategy building and organizing that foster long-term alliances between immigrant and refugee communities. We see our role as building a shared analysis of immigrant and refugee issues and fostering solidarity across culture and race so that we can develop leaders with the skills and ability to organize collectively and build campaigns that foster multi-ethnic movement building.

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

CIO always offers a safe space for cross-cultural dialogue, analysis, strategy building and organizing that foster long-term alliances between immigrant and refugee communities. We see our role as building a shared analysis of immigrant and refugee issues and fostering solidarity across culture and race so that we can

develop leaders who has the skills and ability to organize collectively and build campaigns that foster multi-ethnic movement building.

- **First Friday gatherings:** These primarily social events enable CIO to provide space for our diverse members to interact, develop relationships and learn about community activities and campaigns. Typically hold 2-3 per quarter.
 - In September, CIO hosted partner organizations We Are Oregon and Family Forward Oregon for a discussion on a joint campaign for earned paid sick days in the City of Portland. 30 immigrant and refugee members attended, sharing their experiences of working in jobs without paid sick leave. This “First Friday” event was also attended by Oregon State Rep. Alyssa Keny-Guyer who came to listen to immigrant and refugees on this issue.
- **Second All Women’s Slumber Party:** Attended by 24 women and daughters. These women, many of whom are from cultures with very strict sex/gender separation norms, were able to talk about common issues, socialize and build ties across culture and race.

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.
 - One-on-one communication between people and culturally appropriate meetings in groups remain the best possible way to share information, organize and promote dialogue.
 - Web site
 - E-news/email system
 - Facebook: CIO finds more immigrant and refugee members are actually communicating through our Facebook page than through other electronic formats. Many immigrants and refugees (who are literate) learn how to use Facebook to connect with relatives back home or in other countries, and subsequently find CIO. In fact, many CIO event photos or status updates follow with dialogue and banter among members in a variety of languages.
4. How many people are receiving these communications on a regular basis?
5. Describe one example of how one of these communication strategies is supporting your community building and livability efforts, fostering dialogue on policy issues, or publicizing opportunities for involvement with the City?
 - **Facebook:** Most immigrant and refugee members are actually communicating through our Facebook page than through other electronic formats. Many

immigrants and refugees (who are literate) learn how to use Facebook to connect with relatives back home or in other countries, and subsequently find CIO. In fact, many CIO event photos or status updates follow with dialogue and banter among members in a variety of languages.

6. Are there plans to develop/implement any new communications strategies?

Leadership development

7. 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?

- **PILOT:** Pan-Immigrant Leadership and Organizing Training (PILOT) includes 20 emerging leaders from 14 different nations and/or unique ethnicities including Vietnam, Philippines, Mexico, Kurdish/Iraq, Indigenous/ Mexico, Colombia, Colombia, Spain, Iraq, Nepal, Iran, Taiwan, China, and Bhutan. Program elements include:
 - **Training and workshops:** Over the course of 12 months, participants convene quarterly (four times per year) for two and a half day weekend retreats, where they participate in workshops such as: basics of city government; introduction to community organizing; politics of oppression; power analysis; cross-cultural community movement building; conflict resolution; base-building; media strategy and many more aspects that are relevant to the experiences of immigrants, refugees and people of color in general.
 - **Field Training for Participants:** During this program, participants put their training into practice by learning how to testify at City Council, hold press conferences, attend public meetings and implement short term community projects, which they will then evaluate.
 - **Long-Term Involvement:** CIO works with leaders of each graduating class long after they have finished the PILOT Program. These leaders, armed with the skills, analysis, and relationships gained through PILOT, have gone on to serve on City Boards and Commissions, lead nonprofit organizations, spearhead their own issue campaigns, and train hundreds of their fellow community members.
 - **Workshop topics** held this year include:
 - **Introduction to Popular Education** presented by staff of the Community Capacitation Center: Participants were introduced to the concept of popular education, a teaching methodology came from a Brazilian educator and writer named Paulo Freire, who was writing in the context of literacy education for poor and politically disempowered people in his country. Different from formal and informal education, popular education is a process which aims to empower people who

feel marginalized socially and politically to take control of their own learning and to effect social change.

- **Organizing Terminology:** This participatory workshop explored common terms in community organizing and what they mean.
- **Organizing 101** presented by Amara Perez: Amara Perez, founder of Sisters in Action for Power, presented this workshop on the basics of community organizing for social change.
- **Legislative Overview:** CIO staff led the group in discussing our 2013 legislative agenda, including how immigrants and refugees can get involved in legislative advocacy in the upcoming session and what issues are going to be brought to the Oregon State Legislature next year.
- **Form of Government:** Participants learned about state and local form of government, who the elected officials are, and how public policy is made.
- **Roots and Branches:** The purpose of this interactive exercise is to examine immigrants and refugees' common values, what grounds the work together and to consider how the immigrant rights movement is linked with other social justice movements.
- **Immigration Timeline:** Understanding the history of United States immigration policy using a racial justice lens; how this history informs the current environment for immigrants and refugees.
- **Mapping Our Community:** This workshop explored participants' shared physical and political space as immigrants and refugees.
- **Power Relations:** This workshop was a role-play examining power relations in a real-world context; participants began to explore the pushes and pulls of public policy development.
- **Models of Social Change:** Participants explored and better understood the difference between common models of social change in the United States and how each engages people and builds community power.
- **Community Based Leadership:** This workshop provided basic principles of community based leadership while examining the difference between this type of leadership and solo or self-selected leadership.
- **Leadership Self-Assessment:** Participants conducted a leadership self-assessment so that CIO could tailor future workshops and mentoring sessions to the individual needs of each PILOT member.
- **Campaign Planning:** Familiarizes participants with the components of issue campaign planning
- **Strategy Development:** Explores how to use the most effective strategies within issue campaigns
- **Power Analysis:** This workshop explains how to chart power within campaign, outlines allies and opponents, and helps analyze how to use the power we have to move people.

- **Public Speaking--City Hall EXPOSED! (Practice Candidates Forum):** One of the key skills that immigrant and refugee leaders need to develop as organizers is public speaking. Participants explored key components of good public speaking and then practiced their newly learned skills.
 - **Project Planning:** Participants learned how to project plan and further developed three group projects.
 - **Community Conversation: Movement Building and Ongoing Engagement** – An interactive workshop on engagement
 - **Civics in the City: Exploring the Web:** How to get civically involved in Portland
 - **Public Speaking: Testimony Development and Practice:** Participants learned how to develop three minute testimony and practiced delivering their message in Council Chambers
 - **Closing the Wedge:** A workshop exploring “wedge issues” and how to handle them in our organizing work
 - **Multiethnic Movement Building:** A workshop on building the movement for the long haul
- **Capacity for Associations of Newcomers (CAN) Project:** CIO is providing a series of workshops and mentorship events to meet the capacity building needs among emerging immigrant/refugee groups, and many PILOT participants this year (and last year) are leaders within these targeted immigrant and refugee organizations. In September, we hosted the CAN Project groups for a grant development workshop where they learned the basics of foundation fundraising. (See below under partnerships)

Partnerships and Collaborations

8. 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?
 - **Capacity building in emerging immigrant and refugee communities:** Over the past several years, CIO has received an increasing number of requests to provide organizational mentorship and technical assistance to emerging immigrant and refugee mutual assistance associations due to the trust, reputation, relationships, and respect for culturally specific ways of organizing CIO engenders. Therefore, CIO developed the **Capacity for Associations of Newcomers (CAN) Project**, which formalizes the support we already provide seven immigrant and refugee led organizations:
 - Student Alliance Project (emerged from the “Papers Youth Crew” group that produced the film “Papers” focused on undocumented youth
 - Somali Youth of Oregon

- Somali Bajuni Community Coalition
- African Women’s Coalition
- Iraqi Society of Oregon
- East European Coalition
- Bhutanese Community Organization

Examples of capacity building support provided include:

- Board Development Training, facilitated by the Alliance for a Just Society,
 - Provided mentorship to the East European Coalition on their community-based research study,
 - Provided case management for members of the Nepali-speaking refugee community on navigating the system,
 - One-on-one capacity building guidance for the Somali Bajuni Community Services Coalition.
 - Helped Somali-Bajuni apply for 501c3 reinstatement,
 - Helped the Bhutanese community organize its first community-wide election,
 - Assisted East European Coalition design, develop and implement a community assessment.
- **Healthy Oregon Partnership for Equity (HOPE) Coalition:** Members include Urban League, APANO, Tobacco Free Coalition of Oregon, Upstream Public Health, and CIO, which focuses on issues of health equity in the four-county region.
 - **Oregon Health Equity Alliance (OHEA):** Members include CIO, CAUSA, APANO, Urban League, Oregon Action, VOZ, Oregon Latino Health Coalition, Oregon Somali Family Education Center, Urban League of Portland. This Alliance focuses on “upstream” health issues at the local and state levels.
 - **New American Voters Project:** CIO, APANO, CAUSA, Oregon Voice work together four to five days per week to register New Americans to vote at their naturalization ceremonies.

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

Representation on City advisory committees

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

Culturally appropriate public involvement models

10. 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?

- **East Portland housing complex engagement:** CIO is working with the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT) on a grassroots organizing effort targeting housing issues in East Portland. In this project, we are engaging 120 participants, including training 40 refugees from Bhutan, Burma, Nepal and the Karen minority group and a few Mexican immigrants. The project to date has targeted four apartment buildings. Each effort begins with door-knocking and canvassing, then hosting a Renters' Rights workshop (CAT), organizing meetings to surface issue, developing demands for repairs from landlords, obtaining report of code violations from City inspectors, and—throughout—leadership development trainings by CIO. Issues that have surfaced from these meetings include: a lack of affordable housing, infestation, mold, space issues for larger families, food security, safety and police, and language/cultural barriers. CIO has been working with the residents of these apartment buildings to create plans for mitigating many of these issues and organizing for change.
- **Two candidate forums:** PILOT Program and recent PILOT graduates organized two candidate forums attended by 200 people - one for Portland City Commissioner (Fritz/Nolan) and one for Mayor (Hales/Smith). PILOT leadership participants created the format, prepared questions, organized the community to attend, ensured video, audio and photography, invited media, and acted as organizers and volunteers for the event.
- **Ballot measure forums in six languages:** Produced 14 educational forums on the November ballot for communities in six different languages (Arabic, Somali, Spanish, Russian, English, and Vietnamese).
- **City's legislative agenda:** CIO and PILOT participants also gave their input regarding the City's legislative agenda and provided feedback on constituent priorities, including lifting the ban on exclusionary zoning, tuition equity and ending racial profiling.
- **Legislative advocacy days:** Mobilized CIO members to participate in Legislative Advocacy Days at the Oregon State Capitol, attended by 200 people. PILOT Project participants and recent graduates engaged mostly with elected officials at the state level in conjunction with CIO's equity agenda in the state legislature. Participants created their own talking points and advocated for policies that impact their communities. CIO produced 3 legislative advocacy trainings, hosted phone banks on racial profiling, housing issues and tuition equity, and engaged members on advocacy issues during our Monthly First Friday events.
- **Water fluoridation education:** CIO members participated in educational efforts in support of fluoridating Portland's water.
- **"Opportunity maps" with Portland Housing Bureau:** Partnership to engage public to provide feedback on Citywide Housing Strategy. "Opportunity maps" can be a powerful tool to identify place-based disparities. However, immigrant and refugee communities in Portland can be hard to track using Census data, particularly when groups such as African and African American are combined into one racial category. These groups, to continue with the example, have vastly

different needs, experiences, and backgrounds—and housing strategies must take these into consideration. Slavic and Russian-Speaking communities are often made invisible due to their identification as “Caucasian/White.” A nuanced understanding of family, social and cultural dynamics within diverse immigrant and refugee communities will be necessary to gain a full understanding of housing strategies that can be effective for these groups. Further, Portland is experiencing not only refugee resettlement, but secondary migration from refugees settled in other parts of the country who move here—as many do—for the quality of life Portland provides. Understanding who is moving and why will be essential to ensuring Opportunity Maps really do ensure investments for these communities are wise ones.

Therefore, CIO will be organizing five select focus groups of invited community members from our organizations and partner organizations (between 10-15 participants each) that are familiar with the issues and will be able to provide considered feedback and suggestions, that may be included in the draft review. These focus groups shall be conducted in the following communities:

- African
 - Asian/Pacific Islander
 - Arab (may be “Muslim” if we find Central Asians and North Africans wish to participate)
 - Latina/o
 - Slavic/Russian Speaking
- **Citywide Housing Preference Survey:** Participating in Housing Bureau project. Given the housing issues low income and communities of color are currently dealing with, we will be reviewing the current survey and providing supplemental questions for our community to provide context to community response on the issue of future housings, which reflect the communities experience of current housing conditions and issues that impact “housing choice”.
 - **Metro “Opt-in” survey on housing experiences:** In combination with some of the other DCL partners, CIO will organize a large-scale community meeting where immigrants, refugees, and people can share their current housing experiences while soliciting their response to the Metro Opt-in survey and identifying gaps in the current data. We would like to see the results of this community feedback incorporated in the draft strategy review.