

Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition Earns National Award for Exceptional Immigrant Integration Initiatives

WASHINGTON – The Migration Policy Institute’s National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy announced today that the [Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition](#) (MIRA), is one of four recipients of its 2013 *E Pluribus Unum* Prizes for exceptional immigrant integration initiatives. The national award honors MIRA’s New Americans Integration Institute for its work to help newcomers contribute more fully to the economic, civic and social fabric of the United States.

The New Americans Integration Institute, launched in 2011, works through policy-oriented research, training and stakeholder partnerships to support the development of policies and programs that create and strengthen effective integration pathways for immigrants across Massachusetts. The Institute’s primary areas of work include promotion of citizenship, immigrant entrepreneurship and employment pathways for immigrant professionals, as well as the removal of barriers to educational access, from early education and child care through higher education. MIRA built the foundation for the Integration Institute when it led efforts from 2007-2010 to bring communities across Massachusetts together to create and push for implementation of a [New Americans Agenda](#) that included 131 recommendations for improving the integration of immigrants and refugees in the Commonwealth.

The [E Pluribus Unum Prizes](#) program, established in 2008 by MPI’s National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy with generous support from the [J.M. Kaplan Fund](#), seeks to encourage the adoption of effective integration practices and inspire others to take on the important work of integrating immigrants and their children so they can join and contribute to the mainstream of U.S. society. MIRA’s work is guided by an understanding that the success of U.S. and state immigration policy is directly linked to how well immigrants integrate into their communities.

The 2013 *E Pluribus Unum* Prizes winners will be honored tonight at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., with a keynote address by U.S. Congressman Luis Gutierrez, author of the recent *Still Dreaming: My Journey from the Barrio to Capitol Hill*. The national award is accompanied by a \$50,000 prize.

“The success of U.S. immigration policy ultimately turns on the effectiveness of immigrant integration,” said Margie McHugh, who co-directs the National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy. “MIRA and its New Americans Integration Institute offer an important example of the critically important role that state policies and practices play in ensuring successful integration and the role that a talented policy organization can play in helping numerous state-level actors come together to solve tough problems.”

Said MIRA Executive Director Eva Millona: “Even when federal immigration reform is enacted, corresponding state and local responses will be necessary to assist immigrants, community-based

organizations and service providers. We created the New Americans Integration Institute to facilitate and advance integration efforts in key areas where significant gains are currently possible at the local level. We are honored to win the *E Pluribus Unum* Prize and hope our efforts will provide a model for others doing this work.”

“MIRA’s Integration Institute provides a mechanism for galvanizing action by state, private-sector, academic and non-profit stakeholders to put effective immigrant integration policies and practices in place,” said MPI Senior Vice President Michael Fix, who co-directs the National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy. “By serving as an incubator for partnerships and projects across public agencies and leading community organizations, it is helping the state build the infrastructure necessary to respond to federal immigration reform when it occurs — infrastructure that is quite weak in many parts of the United States.”

The other 2013 winners of the \$50,000 *E Pluribus Unum* Prize are the **Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School**, a Washington, D.C.-based adult-focused charter that provides adult basic education and workforce training to more than 3,000 immigrants and refugees annually; and **Neighborhood Development Center**, a St. Paul, MN community development organization that connects immigrant and native-born ethnic communities to revitalize inner-city neighborhoods in the Twin Cities. The Prizes program’s 2013 Corporate Leadership Award goes to **Kaiser Permanente** for its dedication to providing linguistically and culturally competent health care and expanding such efforts in the health care industry more broadly.

Winner highlights can be found at www.integrationawards.org. For more information or to set up interviews, contact Michelle Mittelstadt at 202-266-1910, mmittelstadt@migrationpolicy.org.

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The **Migration Policy Institute** is an independent, non-partisan think tank in Washington, D.C. dedicated to the study of the movement of people worldwide. MPI provides analysis, development and evaluation of migration and refugee policies at the local, national and international levels. For more, visit www.migrationpolicy.org.

MPI’s **National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy** is a crossroads for elected officials, researchers, state and local agency managers, grassroots leaders and activists, local service providers and others who seek to understand and respond to the challenges and opportunities today’s high rates of immigration create in local communities. For more on the center’s work, visit www.migrationpolicy.org/integration.