

Winter 2005/2006

The New Bostonian



Thomas M. Menino, Mayor

...Strengthening the ability of residents from diverse cultural and linguistic communities to play an active role in the economic, civic, and cultural life of the City of Boston.

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Mayor Menino's 6th Annual New Bostonians Community Day

The Office of New Bostonians (ONB) celebrated its 6th Annual Community Day (NBCD) on September 22, 2005, held at the Boston City Hall Courtyard on a beautiful sunny day. Boston's Mayor Menino opened the event with a warm welcome, emphasizing the city's effort and accomplishments on issues important to immigrant newcomers. In the evening, the achievements of New Bostonians were highlighted in the presentation of the Outstanding New Bostonians Award.



"I am committed to ensuring that everyone in Boston benefits from vibrant, inclusive communities and we are working every day to help our new Bostonians to become more acquainted with our city."

Mayor Thomas M. Menino

An estimated 2,500-3000 New Bostonians enjoyed the day's activities. A plethora of community and city programs and departments, totaling one hundred and twenty-nine resource tables, provided attendees with information about housing, employment, small businesses, and ESOL classes. Information was also available in the areas of health, youth activities and programs, and educational opportunities among others. Participants took advantage of the free immigration clinic that offered confidential legal advice, and toured city hall led by guides in five different languages. For the first time this year, arts and crafts tables presented local artists and their cultures through paintings, jewelry, and other artifacts adding one more aspect to this joyful day (*Continued on page 2*).



Mayor Menino's Column

I created the Office of New Bostonians because I recognized how important diversity is to our city. My Office of New Bostonians has greatly improved services to newly arrived immigrants. I am committed to ensuring that everyone in Boston benefits from vibrant, inclusive communities and we are working every day to help new Bostonians to become more acquainted with our city.

Diversity is the strength of our city and our newest Bostonians contribute every day to making Boston a world-class city. My Office of New Bostonians has become a national model for helping newcomers connect with city government. Over the past year, we have made great strides to improve the services our city offers to new immigrants. English for New Bostonians, a program that seeks to increase access to English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, just launched its second phase, broadening its outreach and scope. English programs are essential for recent immigrants to engage in economic and social opportunities and for our city to benefit from everything that new Bostonians have to offer. The city also offers immigration clinics which give free legal advice to new immigrants.

If you have questions regarding the Office of New Bostonians, please contact the office at (617) 635-2980.

(Continued from page 1) Throughout the day, performers from Cape Verde, Puerto Rico, Brazil, Peru, Haiti, Guatemala, and Mexico played music and danced in colorful costumes. Many clapped and danced, creating an exciting and lively multicultural celebration of the city's diverse cultures as local media outlets interviewed and took pictures of many happy guests.

In the evening, the Outstanding New Bostonian Award celebration featured performances by Gund Kwok Asian Women's Lion and Dragon Dance Troupe and the Serbian folk ensemble Grachanitz. Mrs. Angela Menino warmly welcomed 300 guests to the dinner, and presented this year's Outstanding New Bostonian Award. In honor of the 10th Anniversary of the landmark 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing, two outstanding women were recognized for excellence in their professional fields and for effectively advocating for and empowering other refugee/immigrant women. Quynh Dang, Director of the Refugee and Immigrant Access Program at the Department of Public Health and Co-chair of the Governor's Commission on Sexual and Domestic Violence Immigrant and Refugee Subcommittee, and Carmelle Bonhometre, Coordinator of the domestic violence program at the Association for Haitian Women (AFAB), member of the Governor's Commission on Domestic Violence and Coordinator of the Haitian Roundtable on Domestic Violence, were both recognized as this year's Outstanding New Bostonian awardees.



Amalia Barreda, news anchor at Channel 5, served as the Mistress of Ceremony for the evening. She inspired dinner participants with a personal testimony about her career as an immigrant and a woman in mainstream media. The dinner provided an opportunity for community members and city officials to talk to one another, and to address the concerns, questions and challenges facing women in their respective communities.

As the day of festivities came to an end, many attendees shared with us their excitement about this magnificent way of celebrating diversity and bring immigrants into the spotlight.

English for New Bostonians completes Phase I, Begins Phase II

English for New Bostonians (ENB), a city-community-private sector project, initiated by the Mayor's Office of New Bostonians in 2001, to respond to the growing demand for ESOL classes in Boston, has completed its first phase in June 2005.

Originally, a four-year project, ENB has awarded grants to 32 community based agencies, and helped 700 students attend ESOL classes annually.

English for New Bostonians Phase Two (ENB II)

With the support of the Mayor and ENB's major funders, ENB is continuing its mission and expanding programs for another three years (2005-08). ENB II was launched on June 1, 2005, to ensure continuous access to English classes and improvement of ESOL system with the following goals:

- * Provide access to ESOL classes for a minimum of 1,000 immigrants annually;
- * Provide capacity-building and ensure access to underserved communities;

(Continued on page 3)

Boston City Hall Cultural Awareness Series

The Office of New Bostonians, in collaboration with other city departments, brought a series of cultural presentations to city hall employees, better known as Cultural Awareness Series (CAS). The CAS were implemented with the purpose of appreciating each other's cultural heritage in September 2004. The goal of the monthly one-hour presentations is to increase the sense of community and teamwork by understanding each other, and sharing aspects of the cultural heritages represented in city hall such as languages, music, customs, food, folklore, literature and artifacts.

The CAS' are very popular with the employees at City Hall staff. The series consisted of a presentation and a discussion period held six times during the lunch periods with topics ranging from the Heritage of African-American Quilting and the Underground Railroad, Italian Feasts in America, to the Roots of an Armenian-American, and Islam and the Arab World. At the end of each presentation, hands shot up with questions and a lively exchange ensued as the participants beamed commenting, "this was such an informative presentation!" Overall feedback on the series were overwhelmingly positive as the attendees asked for the series to be continued on a monthly basis.



- * *(Continued from page 2)* technology-based pilot model that has the potential to significantly increase the overall impact of Boston's ESOL system;
- * Launch ESOL classes at workplaces;
- * Advocates for increased state, federal and alternative sources of funding to support ESOL services over the long-term through a public education and advocacy campaign.

Strides made since June 2005:

1. Access to ESOL Classes:

ENB is expanding access to English classes (from 700 to 1,000 people annually). In July 2005, ENB renewed funding to 12 of these programs, which had been previously funded (Established Programs in ENB I). Next year, ENB will invite programs to apply for funding (issue an open Request for Proposal, RFP) of English classes for two more years.

2. Capacity Building of Emerging Programs

In order to assist smaller programs expand, especially programs that targeted underserved immigrant population, ENB reviewed 19 applications from emerging programs in June 2005. Six new emerging programs were funded, in addition to the three emerging programs that currently receive ENB funding. An open RFP will be issued for two years of funding next February.

3. and 4. Launch Technology-based and Workplace ESOL

ENB is currently working on implementing these programs in 2006.

5. Advocacy

Advocacy is essential in increasing public-private support for ESOL programs and helping the general public to better understand the importance and benefits of teaching English to New Bostonians. ENB has launched an intensive public relations and educational campaign with the support and collaboration of the mainstream and ethnic media. Billboards underscoring the importance of supporting ESOL classes have been posted across the neighborhoods, Public Service Announcements in English, Haitian Kreyol and Spanish, supporting ESOL classes were broadcasted across seventeen towns and cities. Eye-catching PSAs about ESOL appeared in the business section of the Boston Globe. Other print media sponsors have committed to regularly contribute space to promote this project.

**Unlock All the Talents of Boston
Support English Classes for New Bostonians**

Sponsored by
English For New Bostonians
(ENB)
Funded by
City of Boston Neighborhood Jobs Trust
Frank W. and Carl S. Adams Memorial Fund
The Boston Foundation
The Hyams Foundation, Inc.
The Riley Foundation
Citizens Bank Foundation
John Hancock Financial Services
Liberty Mutual Foundation
State Street Corporation
Verizon Foundation
NSTAR Electric & Gas
Staples Foundation for Learning

**Call the Mayor's Office
of New Bostonians
617-635-2980**

**Thomas M. Menino
Mayor of Boston**

CLEAR CHANNEL
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Special thanks to our:

Funders: Anonymous, The Boston Foundation, Citizens Bank, City of Boston Neighborhood Jobs Trust, Community Benefits - Warren Avenue & Berkeley Street, Frank W. and Carl S. Adams Memorial Fund, Hyams Foundation, John Hancock Financial Services, Liberty Mutual Foundation, Mabel Louise Riley Foundation, Massachusetts 2020 Foundation, NSTAR, Sovereign Bank, Staples Foundation for Learning, State Street Foundation, UNICCO Services Company, Verizon.

Media partners: Boston Latino TV, Boston Neighborhood Network (BNN), Channel 4, Channel 7, Chinese Daily, Clear Channel, COMCAST, Cuenca Vision, Epoch Times, La Semana, Rendon Group, Tele Diaspora, Tele Kreyol, The Boston Globe, Univision.

Program Partners: Jobs and Community Services (JCS), Boston Adult Literacy Fund (BALF), Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy (MIRA) Coalition.

New Citizens Reception/Celebration with Mayor Thomas M. Menino

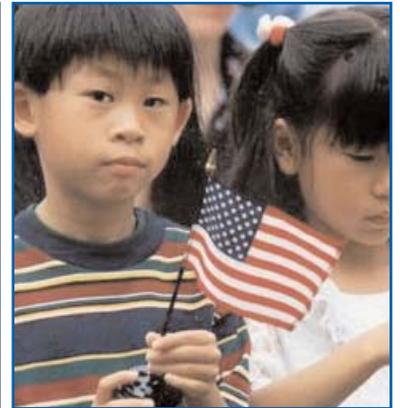
Each year many New Bostonians become naturalized citizens of the United States of America. Becoming a citizen enables immigrants to fully participate in the life of the city and inspires a sense of accomplishment, pride and belonging. To honor such an important event, the Mayor’s Office of New Bostonians (MONB) celebrated the occasion with a reception with Mayor Menino and the new citizens. The reception was held on July 7th, 2005 at historic Faneuil Hall, downtown Boston.



The event celebrates the Mayor’s continued commitment to New Bostonians by inviting new citizens to share the meaning and values of U.S. independence as new citizens. The new citizens who attended this year’s reception were from the various neighborhoods of Boston. Mayor Menino spoke about the meaning and value of U.S. citizenship, answered questions and encouraged new citizens to take part in civic duties and responsibilities. He affirmed and celebrated new citizens as assets to the City of Boston, and the United States.

“The American spirit is a unique one. It is a strong alloy fusing individuality, unity, generosity, ‘can do’ attitude and a sense of destiny. To be an American is a privilege that must be cherished.”

***Mahesh Sharma
President, Cambridge College***



Immigration Clinics in Boston City Hall

Since 2003, MONB has held free Immigration Clinics at city hall on every first and third Wednesdays of the month from 12:00 - 3:00 PM. This year, there is an increase in the numbers and diversity of people attending the clinic.

The number of Immigration Attorneys willing to devote their time and energy to the clinic also increased.

“Everywhere immigrants have enriched and strengthened the fabric of American life.”

John F. Kennedy

Continent	Female	Male	Number	%Total
AFRICA	18 72%	7 28%	25	10%
ASIA	26 61%	17 39%	43	18%
CARIBBEAN	36 54%	30 46%	66	27%
EUROPE	5 42%	7 58%	12	5%
LATIN/SOUTH AMERICA	51 66%	26 34%	77	32%
NORTH AMERICA	3 50%	3 50%	6	3%
Other	5 42%	7 58%	12	5%
TOTAL	144	97	241	
	59.5 %	40.5%	100%	100%

These attorneys are multilingual, very often immigrants themselves. They speak a variety of different languages, such as: Arabic, Bulgarian, Chinese, Farsi, French, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. When asked, why they are so devoted to the clinic, one lawyer responded:

“MONB’s Immigration Clinic of Boston prevents deportation of people, and the separation of families. Because it is a free service, clients save from \$70 to \$250 and they save thousand of dollars by being directed in the most efficient way towards solving their case.”

The spectrum of issues that come up at the clinics varies from a simple family petition to a deportation order. Below are two examples of the types of issues people present at the clinic:

1. A client with a pending adjustment of status application (green card application) decides to travel to her home country; because she consulted with one of the attorneys at ***(Continued on page 5)***

(Continued from page 4) MONB's Immigration Clinic of Boston, she learned that if she had traveled without seeking prior permission or an advance parole from USCIS, she would have been unable to return to the United States for at least 10 years because she would be "out of status" for more than one year prior to filing her adjustment application.

2. Another client wanted to know if she should file an asylum application in order to get a work authorization card, even though she has overstayed her visa for over two years and was clearly not eligible for asylum. The Immigration Clinic attorney advised the client that filing the asylum application would likely result in a deportation order and the client would not be able to obtain an employment authorization card.

The clinics are offered on every first and third Wednesday of each month from noon to 3:00 PM at City Hall, in Room 804. All sessions are private and confidential. Each session usually last from 15 to 45 minutes, depending on the case.

For more information on the free immigration advice program offered at City Hall, please contact James R. Colimon at 617-635-2980 or send him an e-mail at the following address: james.colimon@cityofboston.gov

Community Meets New Chiefs Appointed by Mayor Menino

The Office of New Bostonians (ONB) created an opportunity for community members to meet with Mayor Menino's newly appointed Chief of Staff, Chief of Policy and Planning and Chief of Human Services in February at the Merengue Restaurant on Blue Hill Avenue in Roxbury. Following brief presentations by the Chief of Staff, Ms. Merita Hopkins, Chief of Policy and Planning, Mr. Michael Kineavy, and Chief of Human Services, Mr. Larry Mayes, questions and comments/suggestions from the community followed. Among other topics, attendees were reminded that for any issues to "always call the Mayor's hotline 617.635.4500." Without exception, the presence of the newly appointed Chiefs and the leadership of the Mayor on immigrant issues pleased everyone in the audience. This meeting was yet another great forum between the community and City of Boston officials. Mr. and Ms. Piña, owners of the restaurant, hosted the event while Reverend Cheng Imm Tan, Director of ONB, was the moderator.



General Information/Updates/Announcements

Aleksandra R. Andjelkovic, LMHC, is a child and trauma therapist by training. As the new Resource Development Manager, she is responsible for seeking appropriate sources of funding, writing the annual newsletter, various reports, and coordinating programs. As a native of the former Yugoslavia, and an immigrant/refugee to the United States, Aleksandra speaks Serbian, Bosnian, and Croatian. She is keenly aware of the developmental and psycho/social issues confronting children and their families who come from troubled environments and are trying to adjust to a new life. Her goals are to continue working with, and advocating for immigrant/refugee populations in her professional life as well as continuing to expand her knowledge base. Her future goals are to have a family and get a doctorate degree.

The Mayor's Office of Jobs and Community Services makes available 400+ training vouchers to eligible customers through the three Boston Career Centers. If you need better skills to get your first job or a better job, you may be eligible for FREE training. If you are at least 18 years old, live in Boston, unemployed or been laid off from a job in Boston, One Stop Career Centers can help you find skills training. Please call Boston Career Link at 617-536-1888, JobNet at 617-338-0809 or The Work Place at 617-737-0093

Save The Date: Celebrate International Women's Day
2006 International Women's Day Breakfast

When: Wednesday, March 8, 2006

What Time : 7:30 AM - 9:00 AM

Where: Simmons College, 300 The Fenway, Boston

For more information, please contact Diane Hammer at diane.hammer@simmons.edu

The Boston Public Library extends its Literacy Services to New Bostonians at the Copley Square Library and various branches throughout the city. Services include: ESL Conversation Groups, basic computer workshops, ESL classes for Levels one and two, GED classes, and a Conversation Book Group. Please call us at 617.859.2446 or at www.bpl.org/branches/dudleylrc.htm. Registration is required. All events are free.

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