

ANNUAL REPORT 2019- 2020



**St. James
Cathedral
Immigrant
Assistance**

Fiscal Year 2019-2020

Dear Friends,

Now that we are past Thanksgiving and heading into Christmas, I wanted to give you an update on how things have been going this year. As we leave the season of thankfulness and find ourselves in the season of hope, I find that I am full of both. In spite of, or really because of, the hardships faced by so many this past year, we have seen our friends and allies rise up to help others and stand in solidarity. Because of our amazing staff and volunteers, we quickly moved all direct services online at the onset of the pandemic. Donors and funders stepped up to fill in gaps in funding and respond to needs exacerbated by the pandemic. My sense of hope was buoyed by all the people who joined in the fight for justice for immigrants by showing up and speaking out.

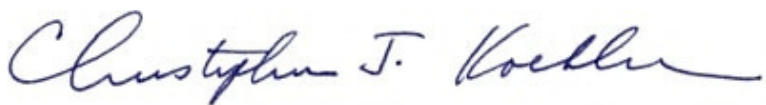
I am proud to share a few anecdotes of success this year all thanks to the time, dedication, and resourcefulness of our volunteers, clients, staff, donors, and allies.

- A citizenship client wrote their letter in English to US Immigration asking for an expedited interview.
- One client who had an unmanageable 2500+ emails learned how to manage his inbox with the help of their tutor.
- A tutor helped his student prepare for and get his driver's license. This was one of his most important goals to help him to pursue more gainful employment.
- A new corps of volunteers formed to help at citizenship clinics. These Form Fillers are ready and waiting for clinics to reopen.
- Another new corps of volunteers started making regular phone calls to keep in touch with clients, update them on the pandemic, and provide financial and health information.
- Staff helped our Elder clients apply for and receive federal stimulus checks and farmers market vouchers, learn how to use Zoom and Skype, keep up to date on the pandemic, and complete the 2020 Census.
- Staff provided transportation and accompaniment for clients who had their naturalization interviews moved to the USCIS office in Portland, OR.
- A former client our staff supported in getting his US citizenship, who previously experienced homelessness, is now completing a degree at Harvard in Afro-Latin American studies.
- A client with a severe developmental disability was able to achieve her dream of becoming a citizen. Becoming a US citizen has allowed her to access essential public programs that can support her long term and reduce some of the caregiver fatigue and financial strain on her siblings.
- A 94-year-old immigrant was matched with a tutor after the pandemic started. She knew only a little English and had low digital literacy skills. Tutoring has helped her stay in touch with the outside world during these isolating times. This tutoring pair is a model of hard work, consistency, determination, and good humor.
- Another pair increased their tutoring hours during the pandemic. As a result of increased confidence in speaking English, the client is now more engaged with his neighbors and community.

I am deeply thankful for all of you and what you have done during this trying year. It's inspiring to see the ways you have reached out and helped each other, and I am hopeful for our continued successes in the year ahead.

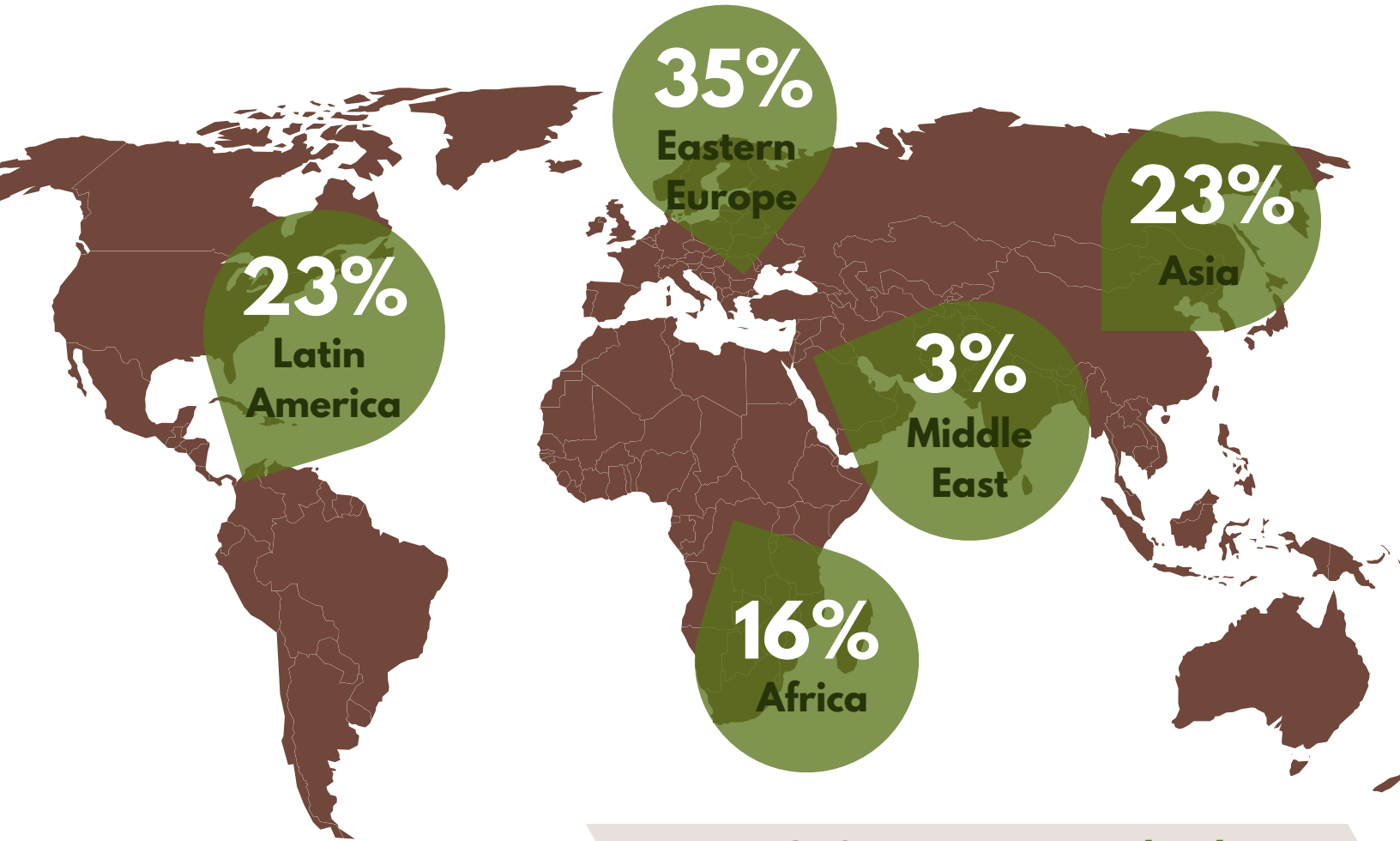
We would love to hear from you! Tell us about your successes, challenges, struggles, and hopes for the new year. Share the ways in which you've been enriched and/or challenged by being part of the struggle for justice for immigrants as a volunteer, donor, ally, etc. I think it's safe to say we have all been challenged this past year, but let's not lose sight of the good we have been able to accomplish together!

Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



Chris Koehler, Director
St. James Cathedral Immigrant Assistance

Our clients come from all over the world...



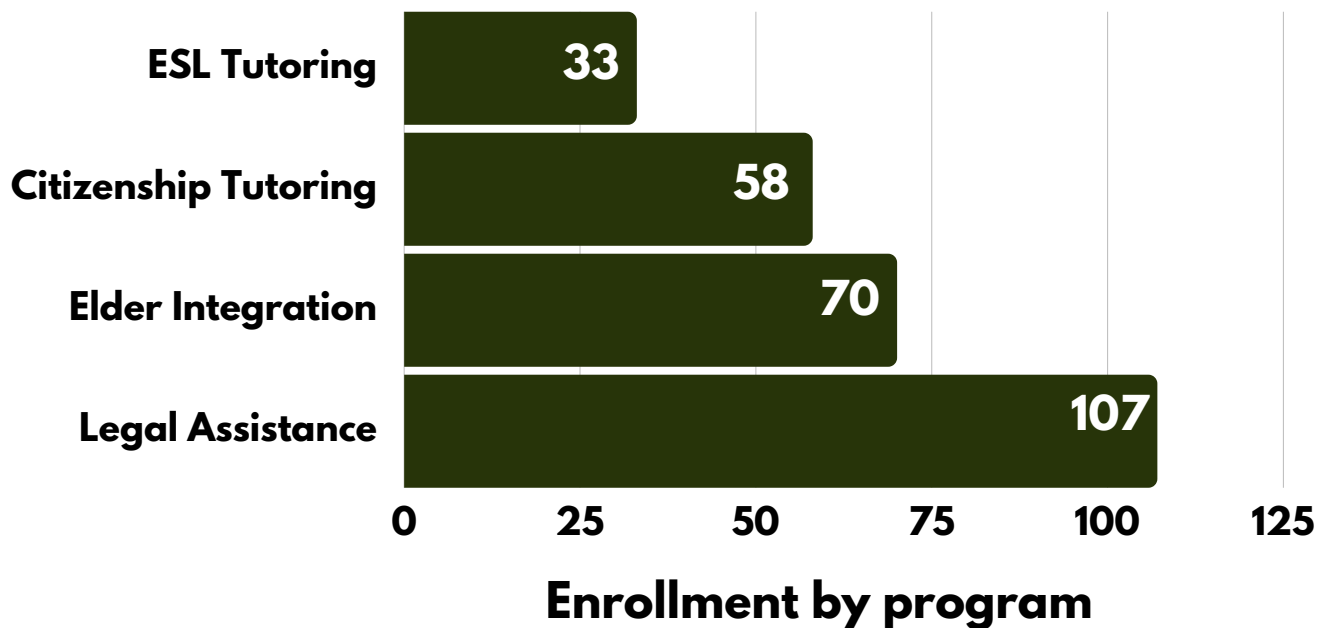
258 Immigrants Helped
30 Languages Spoken

Nguyen* was heavily reliant on others to translate when she enrolled in ESL tutoring. Her tutor was concerned about being able to communicate given Nguyen's level of English, but recently reported that Nguyen's language skills have been steadily developing. She gave birth to her first baby last fall, and recently began trying to read a story book in English to her infant son.

*Names have been changed to protect privacy

**In the 2020 fiscal year, 258
immigrants were helped**

30 languages spoken



A mother and her two young adult children were survivors of domestic violence at a time when they were all undocumented. For years, they faced uncertainty regarding their immigration status and their lives. After they spent years finding their way through the immigration system, our staff were able to help them with their final step in obtaining US citizenship. The family now feels a burden lifted. They all appreciate the stability that comes with citizenship and the relief of no longer having to navigate the immigration system. For mom, seeing that her children no longer have to live with this uncertainty was a huge relief. She is enjoying watching her son travel and study in another country, broadening his horizons and experiences in a way that was limited before becoming US citizens.

OUR PROGRAMS

As a community outreach program of St. James Cathedral, we work to promote an inclusive society and advance justice for refugees and immigrants through education, advocacy, and by helping refugees and immigrants to learn English, become citizens and connect to community resources.

Citizenship Preparation

To pass a citizenship interview, applicants need to learn answers to over 100 questions! We provide tutoring using a standard curriculum, including everything needed to pass a citizenship interview.

Elder Integration

These groups offer older refugees and immigrants an opportunity to connect with their peers and become more involved in the local community. They learn about emergency preparation, health issues and services, community attractions, social services, and more.

ESL Tutoring

Immigrants and refugees enrolled in our ESL Tutoring program receive individualized instruction tailored to their specific situation and needs – whether that be employment skills, transportation, navigating their children's school, the grocery store, or the healthcare system. In addition to ESL skills, volunteers are welcoming and supportive companions in an immigrant or refugee's life.

Legal Services

We help clients to complete their N400 citizenship application. We work to ensure clients have everything they need to file. This can include, for example, legal services, health services, and even transportation to the appointment



102 people volunteered

67

ESL Tutors

37

**Citizenship
Preparation Tutors**

16

**Office and
Administration
Volunteers**

6

**Program Support
Volunteers**

Thank You, Volunteers!

Advisory Board

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Salina* had no formal education growing up, and is not able to read or write in her first language. She nevertheless dedicated herself to studying English in order to become a US citizen. Even though she qualified for an English language exemption, she still wanted to take her civics test in English. With the help of her tutor and her family, she passed her exam in English. The joy and pride that she took in being able to attain this goal was wonderful to experience with her and her family. She now is very proud to be a US citizen after so many years of it feeling like an outsider and was happy to vote in her first election.

*Names have been changed to protect privacy