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### The Inclusion of Highly Skilled Immigrants

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Running head: THE INCLUSION OF HIGHLY SKILLED IMMIGRANTS

The Inclusion of Highly Skilled Immigrants

Elsabel Rincon

Merrimack College

2018

MERRIMACK COLLEGE

CAPSTONE PAPER SIGNATURE PAGE

CAPSTONE SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF EDUCATION

IN

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CAPSTONE TITLE: The Inclusion of Highly Skilled Immigrants

AUTHOR: Elsabel Rincon

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May 11, 2018  
DATE

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### **Abstract**

It is estimated that over 32% of immigrants in the U.S have a bachelor's degree or higher; yet over 2 million are underemployed (Migration Policy Institute, 2008). Many are represented by popular stories of doctors driving taxis and attorneys washing dishes; unfortunately, this is not a myth. This results in a brain drain/waste phenomenon when college graduates cannot fully utilize their skills and education in the workplace despite their high professional qualifications; costing billions in forgone income and taxes. Difficulties with foreign degree credential evaluation and accreditation; lack of English language skills; and lack of social capital have been identified as major barriers contributing to the unemployment and underemployment of highly skilled immigrants. Furthermore, a Boston based report identified the importance of access to those three things to ensure the successful integration of highly skilled immigrants; success defined by working in an occupation that draws on their professional skill and education with a comparable salary. Using this project and framework, I attempt to document the need of highly skilled immigrants in the North Shore to bring awareness to this issue and support a call to action with the startup The Welcome Immigrant Network and its International Professional Network.

### **Executive Summary**

This report seeks to bring awareness to the brain waste phenomenon due to the unemployment and underemployment faced by highly skilled immigrants in the United States.

This project looked at national and state data and reports on highly skilled immigrants, the barriers, and impact of the unemployment and underemployment of skilled workers.

Additionally, the project looked to what contributes to professional immigrant success and national initiatives to support professional integration. This information was utilized to support the gathering of local data at the community level to validate and support a new local initiative.

The project validated a presence and need of support of highly skilled immigrants in the local community in the North Shore region of MA. Through survey, all participants reported to be either unemployed or underemployed; and the majority expressed the desire of professional mentorship and support. This support a new initiative under the Welcome Immigrant Network to support the professional integration of highly skilled immigrants; which will result in economic independence and improved quality of life, while improving the overall economic health of the whole community.

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### Supporting Highly Skilled Immigrants

Migration is one of the most important and impacting event in someone's life and it can potentially be traumatic. It impacts everyone, both the host/receiving community as well as those that are arriving. "The impact of immigration extends beyond the transformation of individual identity...It affects work, social relationships, friendships, marriage, and sex" (Akhtar, 2011). As much as migration is a natural part of human condition, part of our survival mechanism and necessary to preserve our existence; it has been and continues to be a complex and at times painful element of U.S. history and societal structures.

The U.S attracts immigrants from all over the world looking for healthier economic opportunities, sometimes referred to as 'economic refugees' or Economic Class Migrants (UNESCO, n.d.), in part due to its reputation as the richest most powerful nation. While the United States is frequently defined as a nation of immigrants, historically each 'new' incoming group is the recipient of hateful rhetoric and marginalization. Within the diversity among immigrants, one group that is often overshadowed by the contentious immigration debate are immigrants at the higher end of the education spectrum, referred to as "highly skilled" immigrants or foreign professionals. There are more than 2.7 million highly skilled immigrants underemployed/underutilized in the U.S.; resulting in brain waste due to a lack of recognition of foreign academic and professional credentials; thus, limiting the potential earnings of their families and communities, impacting their mental/emotional health and causing a significant loss of human capital (Imprint Project, 2018). However, there's been a recent increased effort to better understand the unique challenges this particular sector of the community experiences along with programmatic attempts to create opportunities for professional integration.

Immigrants experience a great deal of challenges and difficulties during the migration journey and through the acculturation process. Acculturation is the process of learning a second culture and how to navigate such (Akhtar, 2011); this process is beyond simply learning the language and obtaining a job. For highly skilled immigrants, there is a heightened need to understand social norms and the value of social capital that contribute to professional success in the US in addition to acquiring language proficiency and appropriate documentation. Part of the acculturation process requires an intentional and conscious effort on how to apply the acquired language and new social norms to access and navigate different systems and resources effectively. This population initially is unaware of the job search and hiring process, from how to format a resume to how to dress for an interview. One of the biggest challenges is the knowledge of the ability and process of evaluating and accrediting foreign degrees and diplomas in the first place. This lack of information transcends the immigrant communities, as many service providers and employers are also unaware of this process and of the benefit and value of helping integrate highly skilled immigrants. Even when employers are aware, highly skilled immigrants are likely to experience unfounded and misplaced elitism from employers in response to their foreign degrees and professional experience, adopting a ‘made in America’ preference.

Highly skilled immigrant is a term reserved for those that hold a bachelor’s degree or higher and generally have immigrated through legal means to the U.S. The Migration Policy Institute (MPI) reports that 7.6 million out of the 45.6 million college graduates in the US are foreign born, in accordance to the U.S. Census period of 2009-2013 (Batalova, Fix & Bachmeier, 2016). According to data among high skilled professional, the foreign born are more likely to hold an advanced degree in comparison with U.S. born professionals. “For instance, a little over

10 percent of the foreign born with at least a BA degree also have a professional degree and 7 percent hold PhDs. The corresponding proportions for the US-born are 7 and 3.2 percent, respectively” (Kaushal & Fix, 2006). In the data analysis, Batalova finds that one out of every four highly skilled immigrant, about 1.9 million, are underemployed working low skill jobs or are unemployed. Highly skilled immigrants comprise 32% of all immigrants in the US according to MPI. Boston validates that national trend with 30% of Boston’s 165,000 immigrants holding a bachelor’s degree or higher representing a 9% increase in the immigrant population in the region over the last 15 years (Bergson-Shilcock & Witte, 2015).

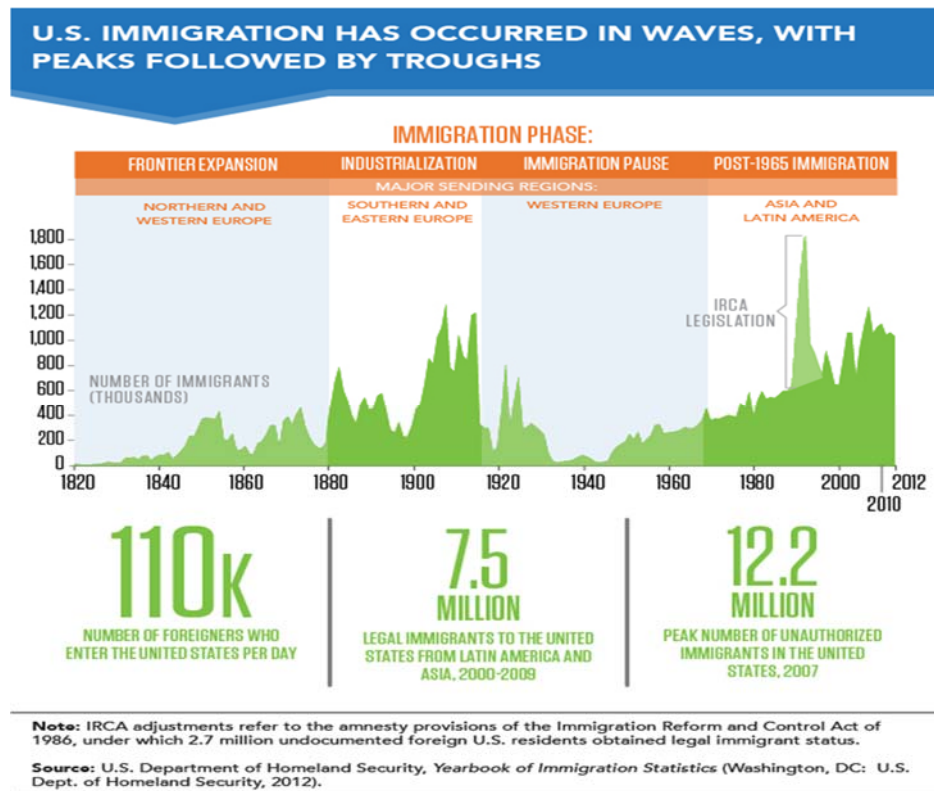
The lack of recognition of foreign academic and professional credentials and limited English proficiency contribute to the underutilization of high-skilled immigrant workers causing a “brain-waste” (Batalova, 2008) phenomenon in the United States: a serious waste of human capital resulting from the unemployment or underemployment of highly skilled college-educated immigrants. Brain waste not only impacts the economic development and global competitiveness of host countries (Batalova, 2008), but also result in large wage gaps (Somerville & Walsworth, 2009), intensifies the effects of brain drain in sending countries. Their underemployment has high costs for their families and communities and a tremendous waste of human capital (Imprint Project, 2018). The Welcome Immigrant Network seeks to bring the community together to explore the integration of highly skilled immigrants in our local community to raise awareness of this issue, foster collaboration and partnerships and support the integration of highly skilled immigrants in our local markets and industries leading to economic benefit and growth of our community as a whole. The purpose of this project is to raise awareness around the need to support the professional integration of highly skilled immigrants, while educating the community

at large around the challenges and contributions of highly skilled immigrants and provide attendees with the opportunity to take immediate action.

### Literature Review

Immigration to the U.S. is characterized by four major waves of migration marked by population peaks (see figure 1). According to the 2013 American Community Survey (as cited in Zong & Batalova, 2015) the U.S. immigrant population represented 13 percent of the total U.S. population at more than 41.3 million.

Figure 1: Waves of Immigration (Image: Population Reference Bureau)



Data on the birth of U.S. population started to be collected in 1850, showing there were 22 million immigrants representing nearly 10 percent of the total population. The highest percentage in comparison to the total population occurred during the third wave of migration

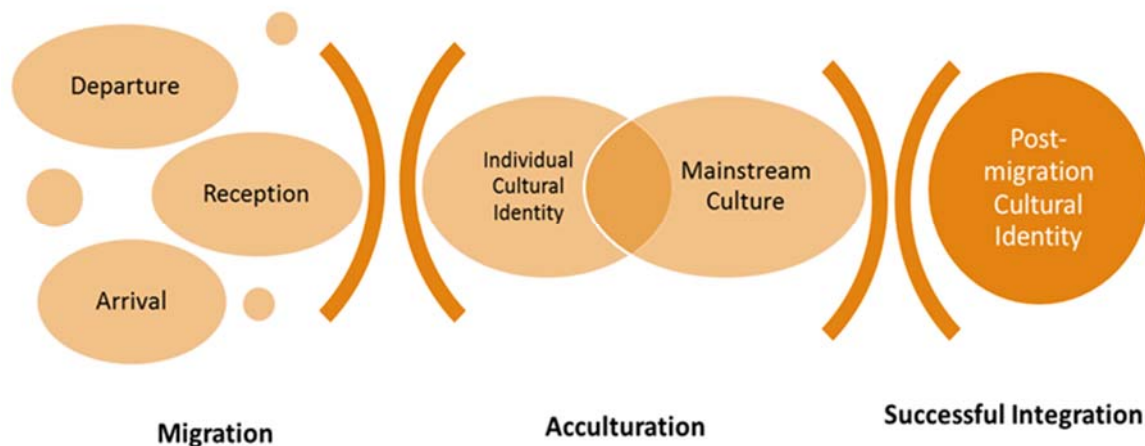
during the industrialization period of 1860 and 1920, when immigrants reached 15 percent of the total U.S. population. In the subsequent years, immigration rates declined significantly due to restrictive immigration policies, the Great Depression, and World War II. Since 1970 we have seen an increase in migration bringing us to the present and fourth wave, led largely by immigrants from Latin America and Asia. It is noteworthy that this is the first large migration of individuals not of European origin, contributing to greater ethnic, racial and language diversity to American society. It is important to consider these factors when analyzing the challenges and successes of immigrant integration, given racial tensions and xenophobia throughout U.S. history.

### **Migration and Acculturation**

Immigration and acculturation is one of the most impacting and important experiences in an individual's life, and it can potentially be a traumatic one. Stress resulting from immigration and acculturation is associated with isolation, marital problems, depression and substance abuse (Wong & Wong, 2006). For immigrant professionals, the inability to rejoin the workforce in their original fields after migration is a serious source of stress, both mentally and economically, diminishes self-esteem; and impacts their social standing within the family unit and their community. Psychoanalyst Salman Akhtar (2011) describes the stages of immigration as: departure, arrival, reception, acculturation, and the formation of a post-migration cultural identity (see figure 2). The departure stage is often characterized by a feeling of mourning and loss, as many aspects of an individual's life of material, symbolic and identity values are left behind. While the arrival stage can be characterized by excitement for a new beginning, individuals will often experience anxiety and fear for the unknown. Social and political attitudes towards immigrants in the receiving country will also impact an individual's ability and comfort level to

participate in the host community; xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment can hinder the acculturation process and contribute to stress. In highly skilled immigrants, this can be experienced in the dismissal or inferior perception of international education and professional experience. Acculturation is the process of learning a second culture and how to navigate such; a process where migrants retain native aspects of their cultural identity while balancing those with cultural and societal norms of the host culture (Akhtar, 2011). This ability to navigate two or more cultural and societal structures adeptly is defined as achieving a successful post-migration cultural identity. The high unemployment and underemployment of immigrant professionals might result in individuals not ever feeling fulfilled or successful post migration.

*Figure 2: Stages of Immigration (Akhtar, 2011)*



### **Highly Skilled Immigrants in the United States**

The United States has historically attracted diverse groups of people in search of better opportunities, and within those groups are some of the brightest. The contributions of highly skilled immigrants is increasingly being recognized by increasing study and research in the field; immigrants have brought with them innovation, Nobel prizes, entrepreneurship and startups like Ebay and Google. The US is a leader in the import of human capital striving to meet the

demands in science and technology through “selective immigration policies that favor skilled workers” (Cervantes & Guellec, 2002). However, there are little paths for highly skilled immigrants to integrate into their professional fields after migrating to the US.

Highly Skilled Immigrants or professional immigrants, used interchangeably throughout this paper, is a term reserved for immigrants that have migrated to the United States with a bachelor’s degree or higher; are unemployed or underemployed, that is working at jobs that do not utilize their prior education or skills. Highly skilled immigrants are a growing sector within the newly arrived immigrant population, making up almost one half of immigrants that entered the country between 2011 and 2015 in contrast with 33% that entered prior to the 2007-2009 recession (Batalova, Fix & Bachmeier, 2016).

Ji and Batalova (2012) report that according to the 2011 U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS), immigrants made up 16% of the college-educated persons numbered at 58.8 million. They further report that “one in six college-educated adults was born abroad” and the immigrant college educated population grew at a faster rate than their native counterparts in the last two decades. However, “college-educated immigrants are more likely to be unemployed than native born” and “more than 1.6 million...were underutilized in the U.S. labor market in 2011” (Ji & Batalova, 2012). On the other hand, immigrant professionals were more likely to have a doctorate or professional degree and were well represented in certain occupations; immigrant professionals represent 28% of physicians, 31% of computer programmers, and more than 47% of medical scientists. Furthermore, nearly 28% report to be of limited English proficiency and 8% to live below the poverty line. Women made up slightly more than half of the college educated population; while more than half of the total population

was from Asia, with India, Philippines and China being the top three countries (Ji & Batalova, 2012).

### **Barriers Faced by Highly Skilled Immigrants**

One of the major barriers identified by all immigrants in acculturating and achieving success is limited English proficiency. Not only is this a direct barrier to employment, but also to access the avenues and resources that might support immigrants' success, such as foreign credit evaluation and accreditation. Lima et al. (as cited in Bergson-Shilcock & Witte, 2015) identify a medium proficiency in English required for the vast majority of jobs in the Boston region in accordance to the Boston Redevelopment Authority making a "clear connection between language skill requirements and salary". Enforcing the importance of English proficiency is the 8.8% unemployment rate of Massachusetts highly skilled workers with foreign degrees and limited English proficiency, reported highest in the state by Lima et al. (as cited in Bergson-Shilcock & Witte, 2015).

Another major barrier is the lack of awareness of the credit and evaluation process of foreign degrees or the lack of confidence or financial resources in navigating this pathway. Bergson-Shilcock and Witt (2015) define credit evaluation as "the process of assessing academic qualifications obtained in one country and determining their equivalents in another country". Additionally, immigrants with professions that require licensure need to navigate the highly fragmented U.S. systems, compared to more centralized departments abroad, whose regulations and education requirements vary by state and profession. Credential evaluation is a requirement to pursue licensure for currently licensed professions.

A popular attitude and narrative in the U.S. displays a sense of superiority while undermining the education, skills and experience obtained abroad. Beyond the community,



employers often question and undermine the quality of education and expertise brought by highly skilled immigrants simply because “it is not made in the U.S.” This attitude continues despite the U.S. ranking 38<sup>th</sup> in Math and 24<sup>th</sup> in science out of 71 countries, as reported from the 2015 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) by the PEW Research Center (Desilver, 2017). Kunz makes reference to a U.S study that “suggests that managers tend to think more highly of staff from Europe than of those from Asia (Friedman & Krackhardt, 1997, as cited in Kunz, 2003). There is also the ever-popular claim that immigrants are taking jobs from native born individuals. A report published by the partnership for a New American Economy and American Enterprise Institute found that immigrants, both highly skilled and less skilled, boost U.S. employment. The author, Zavodny (2011), found that:

*“An additional 100 immigrants with advanced degrees in STEM fields from either U.S. or foreign universities is associated with an additional eighty-six jobs among U.S. natives. An additional 100 immigrants with advanced degrees—regardless of field or where they obtained their degrees—is associated with an additional 44 jobs among U.S. natives.”*

Kunz (2003) reminds us that immigrant integration is a two-way street where “employers need to be aware and utilize the skills of immigrant employees” and that “warmth of welcome by the receiving society is critical to immigrant inclusion in the long run”.

It is also common for recently arrived immigrants to join communities where there are members who share their cultural and ethnic background, as well as language. This safety social net is often referred to as ethnic enclaves. This helps diminish the feeling of isolation and the culture shock of relocating to a completely different and unfamiliar community and culture. This however, may impact and/or delay the recent arrival’s participation and inclusion within the community at large. This will limit their network, social capital and even access to resources and

information that could translate to opportunities. “Success in the labor market depends as much on one’s human capital as it does on the social capital one is able to accumulate” (Kunz, 2003). Social capital promotes a civic community where citizens are on a horizontal plane based on “trust, reciprocity, cooperation and active participation” that gives them “the ability to come together as equals to achieve some common good” (Putnam, 2000). An immigrant’s access to the larger network is limited and there is certainly not a horizontal relationship; exacerbated by discrimination and anti-immigrant sentiment that permeates human resource departments across communities and industries. But as Kunz (2003) points out, “...it is that bridging capital that enables immigrants to advance economically and socially”.

### **Brain Waste / Brain Drain**

Brain waste refers to the phenomenon of the unemployment or the underutilization of highly skilled immigrants in low skill jobs despite their qualifications. Batalova and Fix (2008) suggest this results in national economic losses as well as harm to the wellbeing of highly skilled immigrants and their family. It is estimated that this results in \$39.4 billion in forgone earnings annually; and \$10.2 billion in forgone federal, state and local taxes annually (Batalova, Fix & Bachmeier, 2016). This also compromises the U.S as global competitor for much needed talent, as Canada and the European Union become increasingly attractive for highly skilled immigrants. On the flip side, brain drain in the U.S. signifies brain waste in the sending countries, who lose on the social, political and economic benefits as well as the educational investment in the professional immigrant upon departure. Goldring states (as cited in Batalova & Fix, 2008, p. 7) that “migrant’s potential contributions might include building the home country’s social and political institutions and expanding its knowledge base”. Aside from losing human capital, the

sending country losses on the potential remittance and exchange of knowledge and information that results from a successfully integrated immigrant leading to brain waste.

### **Contributions of Highly Skilled Immigrants to U.S. Workforce**

Highly skilled immigrants contribute greatly with diversity in education, skills, experiences and innovation. From an economic standpoint, Kaushal and Fix (2006) claims that “the addition of skills.... raise labor productivity and create jobs for natives”. The Partnership for a New American Economy (as cited in Imprint Project, 2018) reports that for each 100 highly skilled immigrants employed in STEM is related to 44 new jobs for other workers. Highly skilled foreign workers are key to U.S leadership in global technology; here more than 50 percent of US Nobel laureates in science were foreign born and 37 percent received an international education. Immigrants are also more likely to be entrepreneurial; for instance, 29 percent of technology firms started in Silicon Valley between “1995 and 1998 were run by immigrants accounting for \$19.5 billion in sales and 72,839 jobs” (Kaushal & Fix, 2006). Furthermore, Kaushal and Fix (2006) report that “after adjusting for differences due to age and education, high-skilled immigrants have slightly lower employment rates and earnings than natives. As their length of stay in the U.S. increases their employment and economic potential rises. Imprint Project (2018) reports that highly skilled immigrants “paid an average of \$22,500 in taxes while using less than \$2,300 in benefits for government programs in 2009”.

### **Making the Case for Potential Solutions**

World Education Services (WES), Imprint Project, and the Institute of Immigration Research at George Mason University gathered Metro Boston specific data on the success of college-educated immigrants. About 18 percent of the population in the metro area of Boston is foreign born “driving population growth” in the commonwealth; furthermore, Bergson-Shilcock

and Witte (2015) found that if it hadn't been for immigrants the state's population would have decreased by more than two percent between 2000 and 2010. This study surveyed 1,012 college-educated immigrants from Boston metro area; 436 participated via an online survey and 576 via audio-survey. The study used three dimensions to measure success among these identified college educated immigrants, identified as earning, skills, and professional success. Earning success for participants in this survey was defined as being gainfully employed at the time of the study with earnings of at least \$50,000 per year; in addition to being employed in a job where they were making "some use" of their higher education and skills. Professional success was defined as having both, earning and skills success, as well as being employed in a managerial or professional occupation.

The study reinforced the importance of acquiring language proficiency, pursuing further professional development, and expanding their social capital as key characteristics leading to the professional success of highly skilled immigrants. Over half of respondents who achieved professional success as defined in this study self-report to speak English very well, to have pursued additional higher education in the U.S and to have applied for credential evaluation. The study also supports the need and benefit of having a strong support system, such as family and friends. The length of time the immigrant is living in the country can also be an indication of acculturation, as well as other engagement like being registered to vote (Bergson-Shilcock & Witte, 2015).

Based on the results of the aforementioned study, a number of recommendations have been documented to support the advocacy and development of local program for the professional integration of highly skilled immigrants. Supporting English language acquisition is vital to increase the likelihood of successful integration. As Bergson and Witte state in the study Steps

to Success “...investing in English language training is likely the single most powerful step an individual can take toward his or her future employability” (2015, p. 33). This study found a direct connection between English proficiency and economic success attained by highly skilled immigrants. In addition to language, highly skilled immigrants need to be supported and guided in building or rebuilding their social network. In US society, social capital is one of the most valuable social currency and one of the biggest barriers for newcomers in obtaining employment. Part of the acculturation process is learning social norms and rules for interaction and all immigrants need guidance not only in expanding their network, but also need orientation around social norms. As Kunz (2003) states, “success in the labor market depends as much on one’s human capital as it does on the social capital one is able to accumulate”. Mentoring, job shadowing opportunity, meet and greets with local professionals can help individuals grow their network in a supportive environment.

In order to overcome U.S. employers’ favoritism for American training and experience, immigrant professionals could benefit from exploring professional development opportunities that will enhance their international education. This could include training programs, certificate programs, internships, job shadowing and volunteer experience. Additionally, career pathways could serve as a stepping stone for some immigrant professionals, particularly those that need to pursue re-licensure and require a number of practicum hours in the field. This option could also serve as an income generating medium while en route to a complete reintegration of their original profession.

A comprehensive orientation and educational approach where service providers, educators, policy makers and funders work collaboratively to explore viable options and avenues for highly skilled immigrants could prevent unnecessary loss of time and significant amount of

money. Funders can support programs and approaches that are thoughtful and intentional in designing programming that support immigrant professionals. Additional funding is also needed to support the continued education for professionals that graduate the standard three level state funded community adult education programs; but don't quite yet have the proficiency for advanced employment nor higher education instruction. Similarly, policymakers and legislator could advocate for and allocate the funding necessary for program to be fully functional and make significant impact. This will support the necessary infrastructure and resources are in place to provide appropriate programming and services. It will also be valuable in gathering appropriate data to inform of the need, program design and success of implemented measures. It truly takes a coordinated approach between service providers, funders, policy makers, and researchers to create the support system that will lead to the effective integration of professional immigrants and their economic success.

Informed by this research, The Welcome Immigrant Network (WIN) is a startup initiative in the North Shore that focuses on supporting the inclusion and integration of highly skilled immigrants by providing orientation, advocacy and support. The vision is that recently arrived immigrants will be better able to actively participate in American civic and economic life sooner upon arrival while being able to maintain dignity, seek opportunity and find security in their lives. WIN's main initiative, The International Professional Network, will connect highly skilled immigrants with a mentor in their field, provide scholarship awards to overcome financial barriers to the evaluation and accreditation process; while educating the whole community (including employers) of the benefits of immigration and inclusivity.

### **Project Plan**

The Project will help validate and bring awareness of the need of support for highly skilled immigrants in the North Shore. A multilingual survey will be implemented to measure education, compare pre and post migration employment of highly skilled immigrants in the local community. The local survey results will then be presented along with an explanation of the issue with the goal of rallying support for professional integration efforts.

#### ***Situation Statement***

The Supporting Highly Skilled Immigrants workshop will bring together different community members that include service providers, employers, immigrant community and community leaders to increase awareness around the effects of the underemployment of highly skilled immigrants, understand the benefits of integration pathways, and provide an opportunity to act and support the professional inclusion of highly skilled immigrants in the community.

#### ***Define Your Goals***

- Bring awareness to the brain waste/drain effect due to the unemployment/underemployment of highly skilled immigrants.
- Highlight a local need through implementation of survey
- Promote the benefit of the integration of highly skilled immigrants.
- Provide the opportunity to contribute, participate and support local integration efforts of highly skilled immigrants
- Promote partnership and collaboration

#### ***Target Audience and Stakeholders***

The target audience for this workshop will be a diverse group of people representing different sectors of the community. The people of influence, a primary target, include

community leaders, service providers and educators. This will be the people that will likely have some knowledge of the issue as well as direct avenue of communication and influence on those most impacted: highly skilled immigrants. These include public library personnel, ESOL and Adult Education program instructors, as well as the local community development and CAP agencies. Community leaders include formal groups like the Latino Leadership Coalition and Neighborhood Association; and more informal community organizers and faith-based leaders. Another layer of influential target is elected officials, who can advocate and support future and potential legislative changes and initiatives.

The information consumers are the two groups that this project is trying to bring together: members of the immigrant community and local employers. Our primary consumer group are members of the immigrant community who fit the definition of a highly skilled immigrant and are interested in learning of pathways and resources to reintegrate into their former profession. The workshop will provide information of the current options and resources available to assist the professional journey of highly skilled immigrants, as well as newer efforts. Within this group of information consumers are also employers, who will benefit from learning about this underutilized human capital in their own backyards. Another important player is career services, as they are often a first point to contact for those seeking employment. Career services will be a key messenger and support system in directing and helping a highly skilled immigrant plan a career pathway that will allow them to navigate the U.S. employment search process while validating foreign educational credentials and professional experience.

### ***Crafting a Clear Message***

The stories we hear about doctors driving taxis and attorneys washing dishes is not a myth. Highly Skilled immigrants are individuals who migrate with at least a bachelor's degree or



higher; often experiencing great barriers to integrate into their former professions post-migration. Join us for an educational & networking event to learn of the benefits of supporting the integration of our highly skilled immigrants and hear stories of community members at different points in their journey.

The Migration Policy Institute reports that about 1/3 of all immigrants in the U.S. have a bachelor's degree or higher, of which 22 percent are underemployed contributing to a brain drain/ brain waste phenomenon that negatively impacts the U.S and the native countries. Furthermore, the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research and the Partnership for a New American Economy research shows that the integration of highly skilled immigrants, as well as less skilled immigrants, is a boost to U.S. employment. The community at large will benefit from a coordinated effort to support the social, professional and economic health of its disadvantaged members directly contributing to the overall health of the whole community.

### ***Incentives for Engagement***

Stakeholder: Highly Skilled Immigrant

Incentive: Direct information, support, and access to resources to support them to make well informed decisions to reintegrate into their former professions and achieve economic independence.

Stakeholder: Service Providers/ Educators/ Community Leaders

Incentive: Increased awareness of issue and resources, opportunity for collaboration in current integration efforts.

Stakeholder: Employers

Incentive: Increased awareness of the issue, access to greater diverse workforce, gains in public image.

Stakeholder: General Public

Incentive: Increased awareness and education to the issue, opportunity to support current efforts.

### ***Identify Outreach Methods***

A diverse set promotional outreach tools were used such as social media, emails, as well as targeted invitation to key stakeholders identified above.

- Create Facebook event for promotion and easily share to Facebook pages and groups, invite ‘friends’; use Facebook promotional tools and paid sponsor ads.
- Create flyer/invite for email blast to different list serve
- In person announcement and invites through coalition and group meetings
- Visit the local Spanish language radio station and local access TV program for promotion

### ***Responsibilities Chart***

NAME	ORGANIZATION OR AFFILIATION	RESPONSIBILITIES	CONTACT INFORMATION
Elsabel Rincon	WIN Founder	Program content, presenter/facilitator, outreach	rincone@merrimack.edu
Sonibel Gonzalez	Founding Board Member	Outreach, sign in, activity coordinator registration, set up	Wsgonzalezr@gmail.com
Any Lina Gonzalez	Volunteer	Spanish interpreter	
Paula Gomez-Stordy	Board Member	Disseminating & collecting evaluations	stordyp@merrimack.edu

Javier Rincon	Board Member	Flyer design / Facebook event / outreach	Jdrincon421@hotmail.com
Lauriere Courtois	Volunteer	Room / food set up	
Omar Longus	Volunteer	Set up of technological equipment, laptop, projector.	Omar.longus@gmail.com

### ***Tools/Measure to Assess Progress***

A pre-event survey will be conducted via Google Docs and in paper to validate the presence of unemployed/underemployed highly skilled immigrants in the local community and confirm the relevance of the issue at a local level. The number of attendees, as well as contact information, will be measured via event RSVP and event sign in sheet. Onsite paper evaluation forms will be developed to assess overall event, speakers, and content. Paper response forms will be distributed to measure individuals interest to support local effort providing different options: volunteer, serve as a mentor, support institutional advancement.

### ***Implementation Timeline***

January 2018	Assemble committee, start recruiting event speakers.
February 2018	Confirm panelist Confirm Interpreters Confirm location Create Outreach Calendar
March 2018	Finalize Flyers/ Invite Send out communication/email blast Finalize presentation content
April 2018	Food

	Secure equipment Last outreach efforts Collect presentation materials Hold event on 4/17,2018
May 2018	Assess and analyze event data, send thank you notes to speakers, send follow up email to event attendees.

Ideally this event will be held at a local and accessible community setting, such as a community room. The workshop will have a short presentation, followed by a panel, and a question and answer period. Immigrant professionals will have the opportunity to access the WES preliminary credit evaluation site with the help of volunteers for unofficial foreign degree evaluations. Employers and area professionals will have the opportunity to fill out appropriate contact cards to explore mentorship and internship opportunities to be coordinated by the startup WIN. Simultaneous translation will be provided in Spanish and Portuguese, (with estimated cost of \$80) if can't secure volunteer, with equipment borrowed from the city of Salem at no cost. Light refreshments, such as coffee and cookies will be provided. The event will likely be held in the evening, 6-8pm, to accommodate folks who work a traditional schedule.

Reports and infographic will be developed and disseminated during the event to highlight key findings and recommendation of this project. I will also access resources and materials already developed by two key national organizations: World Education Services (WES) and Imprint Project.

The workshop will last approximately 2 hours, with time for networking and refreshments allotted at the beginning of the event. The main presenter will share the agenda as well as a brief presentation on different aspects of professional immigrant integration that includes key concepts, data, statistics to support the need for attention on this topic for the first

30 minutes. Then a panel will be introduced, the guest speakers will be immigrant professionals that will share their journeys, challenges and successes in their different stages of their professional reintegration efforts. One guest speaker is a Dominican dentist at the last step of gaining a full dental license in the U.S; while the second is a teacher with 13 years of experience and an Engineering master’s degree from France. Finally, I will be representing The Welcome Immigrant Network (WIN) and its International Professional Network initiative.

**Logical Framework**

Problem Analysis			
Effect	The underutilization of highly skilled immigrants leads to brain drain, which directly impacts the overall health of individuals; it is a missed opportunity for increased revenues and tax collection.		
Problem	Despite 33% of immigrants in the U.S. holding a bachelor’s degree or higher; 22% are unemployed or underemployed.		
Causes	Lack of knowledge among highly skilled immigrants of the avenues to evaluate and accredit foreign degree and enter the US Labor market	Lack of resources to support the integration of highly skilled immigrants and financial capital to help overcome financial barriers to accreditation	Lack of positive bridges and social network that promote the benefits of a diverse workforce; Negative misconception about the quality of higher education and foreign professional experience compared to US.

Logic Model			
Long Term Outcome	Highly skilled immigrants will have an easier transition to their original fields after migration, leading to healthier economic, employment, family and community life.		
Intermediate Outcome	Increase awareness of resources and initiatives support professional immigrant integration; greater collaboration between service providers and employers.		
Short Term Outcomes	Increase the knowledge and awareness of the avenues to evaluate and accredit foreign degrees and credentials among the immigrant community.	Increase access to resources and programs that facilitate the integration of highly skilled immigrants.	Increase availability of professional network, access to social capital and mentorship that promote the benefits of a diverse workforce; while bridging the quality of an international education with U.S. experience.

**Theory of Change:** Based on The Welcome Immigrant Networks initiative to support the professional integration and inclusion of highly skilled immigrants.

**Strategy**

Communicate with key organizations, service providers, business networks and professional immigrant community about WIN’s international professional integration vision.

So That

There is increased attention on the focus of the international professional integration of highly skilled immigrants’ initiative [Influence]

So that

There is increased knowledge of and interest in the international professional integration agenda [Influence] and there is increased awareness of how partners can work together and what each partner can contribute to achieve the professional integration of highly skilled immigrants.

[Influence]

So That

There is increased shared commitment to a common vision for the integration and inclusion of the professional immigrant community [Influence] and there is increased investment of local resources in the international professional integration agenda [Leverage]

So That

A shared plan of action is developed [Influence] and there are increased resources available in the community to support the professional integration of highly skilled immigrants [Influence]

So That

There are positive changes in the quality of life and professional development of highly skilled immigrants [Individual Impact] and the overall quality of life and economic health of the community is improved. [Community Impact]

### **Individual Impacts**

- Number of people who are gainfully employed in their field of training/study
- Increase in individual self-esteem and confidence about skills and abilities
- Improved outlook on future
- Improved sense of well-being and belonging
- Breaks down individual isolation
- Increases individual earning potential and overall quality of life

**Organizational Impacts**

- Increase in the number of people who access the organization's resources
- Stronger understanding of organizational mission (internally / externally)
- New partnerships and collaborations
- Stronger awareness amongst constituencies / stakeholders about key issues important to the organization
- Increased access to resources to support program/mission of the organization

**Community Impacts**

- Increased awareness about important community-wide issues / problems and impact
- Number of groups who came together to work on a project
- New connections formed between groups
- New community-wide dialogues and debates
- New means of sharing knowledge for a common purpose
- New awareness of alternative avenue to immigrant integration
- Increased access, participation and economic contribution to the community

**Methodology**

This project was designed to engage highly skilled immigrants and allies to bring awareness to the barriers faced in their professional integration efforts as well as gather support for new initiative.

***Participants***

The workshop Supporting Highly Skilled Immigrants is an open event to the community and will expect to attract a diverse set of participants and attendees. I expect a significant



representation of the immigrant community, including those that fit the definition of a highly skilled immigrant; and furthermore, are interested in learning about pathways and resources to translate their skills to the U.S. workforce. Provided that this event will be held and promoted around the Salem, MA community, a community that is 16.2 percent Hispanic and 22.7 percent speak a language other than English (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018); I expect a majority of the members from the immigrant community to be Latino. A significant amount of outreach was conducted among adult educators and service providers in the area; particularly among ESL programs and CAP agencies. The North Shore is home to various active community led groups and neighborhood associations that were outreached for this event. This include the Point Neighborhood association, the geographic neighborhood to the largest immigrant community of Salem and the Latino Leadership Coalition. Also, faith-based organizations such as the Essex County Community Organization (ECCO), a leader in advocacy and organizing efforts for legislative comprehensive immigration reform. Outreach to local employers was conducted through the Salem Chamber of Commerce and its Executive Director. Finally, members of the general community that might have interest and empathize with the issue are expected to be present as well.

### ***Materials***

A pre-event survey created with Google Docs was launched several weeks prior to the event dates in three languages: Spanish, Portuguese, and English (see Appendix A) via social media through the Facebook page of The Welcome Immigrant Network. Additionally, it was shared through email to local ESL programs and groups such as The Latino Leadership Coalition. Paper copies were delivered to the local ESL program for instructors to administer

during class time. The survey was created via google docs so that a customized link could be created via Bitly for easy access and sharing.

English: <http://bit.ly/WINProfessional>

Spanish: <http://bit.ly/EspañolSurvey>

Portuguese: <http://bit.ly/PortugueseSurvey>

The survey was meant to gather information on the educational attainment among highly skilled immigrants within the immediate local community. Another major point was to compare employment pre and post migration, to measure how many survey participants were able to work in their professional fields post migration and how many were underemployed. To validate the need for some sort of program, participants were asked if they were interested in being connected with a mentor and/or learning more about a program like The Welcome Immigrant Network. This data would validate a need for local resources to be invested in highly skilled immigrant integration efforts. The survey also gathered data on the country of origin of the respondents and how long had they been in the country. The local data gathered will be compiled with the data from existing research to be presented in a networking forum in an effort to educate and make the case for the need of the inclusion of highly skilled immigrants. The information will be presented through a brief PowerPoint presentation and infographics; which again will be validated by a panel of community members at different stages of their professional integration.

For the workshop, we had a sign in sheet to collect contact information from attendees and institutional affiliation. This would also help us quantify the number of attendees during the event. This sign in sheet also provided the opportunity for event participants to indicate if they were interested or willing to participate in future efforts or activities. As an initial activity, participants were also provided with sticky notes and invited to write the year, place and

relationship to the first people in their family to migrate to the U.S. After, they were invited to place that on a timeline that included the immigration history of the U.S. This was used as an opening activity to encourage all attendees to personally connect to their immigration story and to the legislative narrative accompanying their ancestors or relatives at the time.

At the end of the presentation, which included an invitation to participate in a call to action to support emerging efforts to integrate highly skilled immigrants, participants were invited to fill out a contact sheet with options on how they could contribute to this effort (see Appendix B). The contact sheet asked for basic contact information such as name, email, phone number and employer. The second part said: “Yes! I want to support the integration of highly skilled immigrants in my community.” It provided various options and degree of involvement and support; such as volunteer, mentor, institutional advancement and the opportunity for participants to fill an ‘other’ category and define their desired level of involvement. Finally, an evaluation (see Appendix C) was distributed to gather feedback on the actual content of the presentation, the delivery of the materials, the presenter and the opportunity to provide open feedback

### ***Procedure***

I decided to conduct a survey prior to the workshop event (see Appendix A) among highly skilled immigrants in the North Shore to help validate their presence and my effort to support their professional integration as well as better understand their representation. This was also a way to better understand how national data and other studies compare to my local community. I designed a short and simple survey to gather information on what professions and what countries are represented in the local community. Additionally, the survey asks for last employment prior to emigrating from native country and the job they hold now, in an effort to

quantify unemployment or underemployment. This survey is specifically for immigrants who had college education or a degree prior to immigrating to the U.S. This will help validate a local need that has been shown throughout the research referenced throughout the literature review and support my call to action to support the efforts of The Welcome Immigrant Network.

The presentation started with an immigration timeline activity (see Appendix D) that asked the participants to connect to their immigration story to set a tone of collectiveness with the immigrant experience. This allowed the presentation to move from a historical framework of immigration to a socio-cultural exploration; and then to the economic contributions of immigrants to the U.S. In this exploration of U.S. migration, we laid a brief but comprehensive foundation to move on to the focused topic highly skilled immigrants. The presenter shared definitions, data and statistics including the results of the local survey with a power point presentation (see Appendix E); followed by a panel of two guest speaker sharing their personal stories on the topic. This workshop event is meant to bring together collective feedback to inform the efforts to support the inclusion of highly skilled immigrant in our local workforce while gathering support for emerging efforts. To document a connection and an interest in this effort, workshop attendees were invited to fill out a card with their contact information and to what capacity they could support this effort.

Finally, at the end of the forum, participants will be invited to fill out an evaluation form (see Appendix C) to assess their response to the content presented and what they gained out of it. Since I am already collecting contact information through a sign in process, as well as interest in mentorship; the evaluation will be focused on the content presented as well as open ended questions where participants can provide feedback. The evaluation will be provided in paper format. In the end I will have feedback on the content, the number of participants attending the

event, the number of highly skilled immigrants the participate in the survey prior to the event, and the number of attendees with an interest in providing mentorship. This information will help inform and provide structure to launch the International Professional Network to put into practice the lessons of this project towards the inclusion of highly skilled immigrants in the North Shore region.

### **Results**

The workshop event on Supporting Highly Skilled immigrants sought to understand the impact of brain waste/brain drain phenomenon and validate that effect in the local community of the North Shore to assess the need for services. The pre-workshop survey collected the responses of 42 participants from the North Shore whom identified as highly skilled immigrants. The responses confirmed and validated the unemployment/ underemployment of highly skilled immigrants in the area and their need/interest in information and support. Of the 42 respondents: 16 had a bachelor's degree, 11 a master, 6 doctorates, 6 technical certificates, and 3 had some college without a degree. This is important when looking at type of employment prior and post migration; the majority of respondents were employed within their area of study and drawing on those skills and experiences prior to their move. However, after migrating to the U.S. the majority are working entry level jobs that do not draw on their abilities and education (see table 1). The ones that were working within the same industries are the ones who reported having a technical training or certificate, such as mechanic and tailor.

*Table 1: Employment Prior and Post Migration*

Employment in native country-prior to Migrating.	Employment after moving to the U.S.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United Nations Official</li> <li>• Energy Efficiency &amp; Renewable energy</li> <li>• Logistics Manager</li> <li>• Teacher</li> <li>• OBGYN</li> <li>• Accountant/Financial Analyst/ Credit Analyst</li> <li>• University Lecturer</li> <li>• Chemical Lab at a Mine</li> <li>• Self-employed Dentist</li> <li>• Nutritionist</li> <li>• Attorney</li> <li>• Mechanic</li> <li>• Tailor</li> <li>• Administration</li> <li>• Manager</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Entrepreneur/ Restaurateur</li> <li>• NGO Director &amp; Investigator</li> <li>• Vice Principal Elementary School</li> <li>• Director of Child Welfare Agency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unemployed</li> <li>• Home Health Aid</li> <li>• Assistant Child Care Provider</li> <li>• Cook</li> <li>• Bagging Groceries</li> <li>• Carpenter</li> <li>• Driver</li> <li>• Community Organizer</li> <li>• Paraprofessional</li> <li>• CNA</li> <li>• Assistant Teacher/ Substitute Teacher</li> <li>• Social Services Advocate</li> <li>• Housekeeping</li> <li>• Patient Observer</li> <li>• Assembly</li> </ul>

The participants were asked to self-report on their level of English language proficiency, since this was identified as a major barrier to the success of the employability of highly skilled immigrants. The largest grouping of the respondents, 35 percent, reported “little or no English’

proficiency. This was followed by advanced at 15 percent; intermediate and fluent with 10 percent each (see figure 3). To assess a need and interest in receiving supportive services, participants were asked if they were interested in learning more about the Welcome Immigrant Network and being connected to a mentor in their professional background. The majority of responses were affirmative or maybe, while only 3 participants responded “No” (see figure 4). Approximately 52 percent of participants reported to have been in the country for less than 5 years; this breaks down to six respondents having been in the country for a year or less and 16 have been in the U.S. between 2 to 5 years. Of the remaining responses, seven reported to have lived in the country between 6-10 years, three have lived in the country for 11-14 years, and the remaining ten for over 15 years. The respondents were very diverse in terms of nationality: 16 respondents were from the Dominican Republic; 3 from each Nicaragua and Brazil. Each of the following countries were represented by one respondent: Albania, Argentina, Cambodia, D.R. Congo, France, Guatemala, Guinea, India, Mexico, and South Sudan.

*Figure 3: Perceptions of English Proficiency*

### How well would you say you speak English?

40 responses

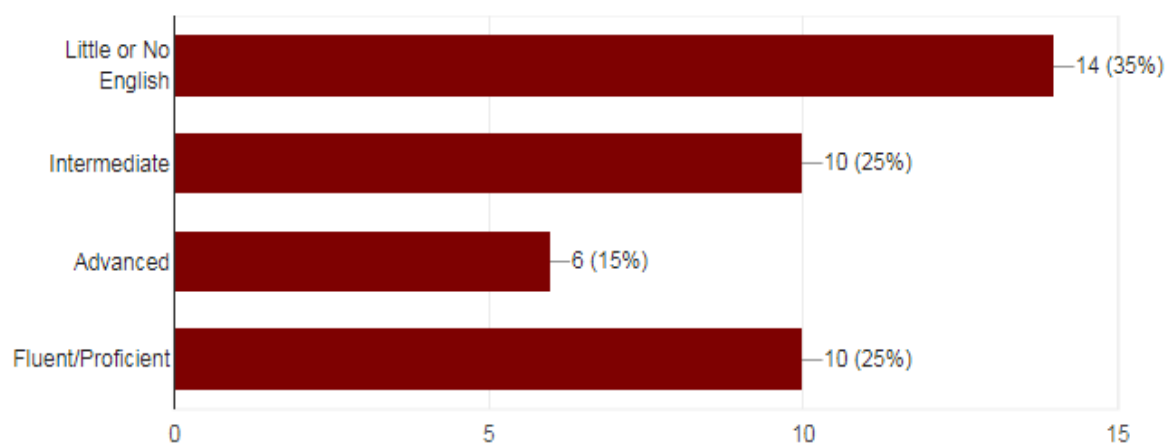
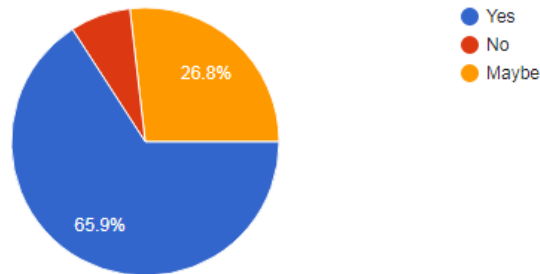


Figure 4: Interest in a Professional Mentor

Would you be interested in being connected with a mentor in your professional field?

41 responses



The event had a general positive response on social media, with 12 people confirming attendance and an additional 31 reporting an interest in attending the workshop. However, the actual number of participants during the event was 16, representing various groups and stakeholders. There were three members of the Latino Leadership coalition, one representative of the Point Neighborhood association, 2 social service providers, 1 elected official and the remaining were members of the immigrant community. Out of the 16 attendees 4 documented an interest in supporting the initiative as, both, an expert/advisory board member and a mentor; an additional 7 responded with an interest to volunteer and 3 to serve as experts on advisory board.

For the event evaluation, attendees were asked to rate content of the presentation, the presenter, and whether there was a clear call to action on a 4-point scale: 1-poor, 2-fair, 3-good, and 4-excellent. Of the 14 evaluations collected, 13 rated the presenter a 4 (excellent) on knowledge of the topic, delivery, organization and questions answered. All 14 responses cited to have learned something new on the topic and that the presentation was informative. There were mixed responses on a clear call to action, with one rating of 2 (fair), two ratings of 3 (good) and



the remaining ratings of 4 (excellent). All 14 respondents would recommend this workshop event to others. The additional comments on the evaluation were generally positive: “great job! This project will be a great asset to the community”; “this is a great area of need, I am glad someone is working on it”; and “I want to do this for our high school students and their families”.

### **Discussion**

The lack of an integration effort to support the inclusion of highly skilled immigrants leads to a brain drain phenomenon that is costly to our communities. The national data showed that there is a significant percentage of the immigrant population that has great sets of skills that are underutilized; and if the barriers are overcome could increase significantly the quality of life of those individuals, their families and the communities they are a part of. Through this project and the survey conducted at a local level, I validated not only the presence of highly skilled immigrants, but also their underemployment. Although the 42 respondents are a very small sample to be representative of the whole immigrant community in the region, their responses corroborate the reported statistic that highly skilled immigrants are unemployed or underemployed at significant rates. There is a great gap of skills, and one can infer in income as well, in the employment positions the participants held prior to migration versus post migration.

This effort was also looking to assess the community’s interest in the topic as well the community’s awareness and understanding for an intervention and call to action. Collectively, the response on the pre-event survey, the social media response to the event, turnout to the workshop and the evaluation suggest that there is interest to support a startup initiative on the efforts of highly skilled immigrant integration. The responses demonstrate there is a need and

interest for more information on the pathway to evaluate and accredit foreign degrees; as well as to support community members in a mentorship role. Workshop participants reported an increase in understanding of the specific challenges of this subgroup of the immigrant population and a need for an appropriate response. The participants were impacted by the unemployment data, as well as the monetary loss due to this unemployment/underemployment. The information presented comparing premigration employment of those surveyed to postmigration employment seem to be the one to cause a greater impact. It is also important to note that the individuals who attended the workshop are highly influential in the community; such as the State Representative for the district, president of the neighborhood association, president of local advocacy group, and a consultant for World Education Services (a leader in the field).

While there is increasing data and resources to bring awareness to the cost of brain drain amongst the country's highly skilled immigrant population; there is a great need to bring depth to that awareness at state and local levels with local data and a call to action. There needs to be continuous awareness building and education around this issue across sectors that will hopefully promote collaboration of integration efforts. This includes efforts to provide orientation to the growing immigrant population on the pathways and resources to support their professional and continuing studies efforts. Promote information on how employers can benefit from drawing on the existing skills in their own communities and of having a diverse workforce. Highlighting the contributions and positive impact of integrating highly skilled immigrants can support legislative advocacy efforts to overcome barriers to licensing and foreign degree accreditation. Ultimately, a long-lasting impact is dependent on the different players: community, institutions, legislative bodies, collaborating on this issue.

### *Limitations*

One of the greatest limitations of this study is not to have been able to collect more detailed data from local community members. It would have been helpful to have collected income data with a complete job history since they arrived in the country; assess how much information they currently know about career pathways and foreign credit evaluation. Due to limitations around time and duration of this project, I was not able to collect data on income levels of participants. This would have required numerous in person interviews and trust building with the respondents to collect this kind of sensitive data. The limited time also limited the number of respondents to gather the local data.

### *Implications*

Guided by the existing literature and data, this project embarked on an attempt to assess, document and bring attention to a local need and a garner support for a corresponding response. I believe this project provides enough data to ignite a conversation that has the potential to bring groups together to pull the appropriate resources to adequately document the need and foster collaboration for a sustainable effort. While it is successful in highlighting the issue, it could expand to formally gather appropriate amounts of local data to put pressure on elected officials, potential partners and funders for a structured program to effectively support the integration of highly skilled immigrants in our local community. Future efforts should consider expanding the amounts of local data; perhaps partnering with local organizations such as the career center and workforce development. seacrhAdditional data could include economic measure of the impact at a state or local level. Future workshops should consider a networking component for highly skilled immigrants, mentors and employers.

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**Appendix A: Pre-Event Survey**

## The Welcome Immigrant Network (WIN!)

The Welcome Immigrant Network is collecting data on local immigrants who migrate with a college degree or profession to support their professional integration through the start of the International Professional Network.

Thank you for participating and sharing part of your story!

For more information contact [info@nswin.org](mailto:info@nswin.org) or 978-717-3946  
[www.welcomeimmigrantnetwork.org](http://www.welcomeimmigrantnetwork.org)

Name

Your answer

Where were you born?

Your answer

Highest level of education in native Country. Please check all that apply

4 Years College (Bachelors)

Master

Doctorate

Technical Diploma/ Certificate

Other:

What area of study or industry?

Your answer

What was your job just before you moved to the U.S.?

Your answer

What job do you have now?

Your answer

How long have you lived in the U.S.?

Your answer

How well would you say you speak English?

Little or No English

Intermediate

Advanced

Fluent/Proficient

What city do you live in now?

Your answer

Would you be interested in being connected with a mentor in your professional field?

Yes

No

Maybe

Would you like to receive more information about WIN! or the International Professional Network? Leave your preferred contact information



**Appendix B: Call to Action Form**



**Yes! I want to learn more about The Welcome Immigrant Network**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I am interested in supporting the Program:**

**Volunteer**

**Mentor:**

**Occupation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Institutional Advancement**

**Expert/ Advisory Board:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other:** \_\_\_\_\_



**Yes! I want to learn more about The Welcome Immigrant Network**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I am interested in supporting the Program:**

**Volunteer**

**Mentor:**

**Occupation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Institutional Advancement**

**Expert/ Advisory Board:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix C: Evaluation****Supporting Highly Skilled Immigrants - Presentation Evaluation Form**

Your opinion is very valuable. Thank you for sharing your opinion with us.

The presenter:

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
The presenter was knowledgeable about the topic	1	2	3	4
The presenter delivered material in clear and structured manner.	1	2	3	4
The presenter was organized and prepared	1	2	3	4
The Presenter Answered questions effectively	1	2	3	4

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
The presentation was informative	1	2	3	4
I have learned new information on the topic	1	2	3	4
The presentation provided a clear call to action	1	2	3	4
Would you recommend this presentation to others?	NO			YES

**Additional Comments:**

**Appendix D: Workshop Agenda****Supporting Highly Skilled Immigrants Agenda**

- 6:00 PM Registration & Networking
- 6:15 PM Welcome & Introductions
- Who is in the Room
- Introduce WIN
- 6:20 PM Presentation
- Immigration timeline exercise: Personalize your ancestor, picture what they look like, some of us are lucky to have pictures, what did they look like, what were they wearing...why did they come? What were their lives like? And for those that have experienced this directly, think about what did it feel like? Were you nervous? Excited?
- Data facts - Various ways on how immigrants participate and contribute to American society & economy.
- Who are Highly Skilled Immigrants
  - Statistics- National/ State, local
  - Why is this problem? Brain Waste Brain Drain
  - Barriers
  - Solution- what research says- How WIN is contributing
  - You now have an opportunity to be part of the solution
- 6:50 PM Panel
- 7:10 PM Question & Answers
- 7:20 PM Evaluation & Networking

Appendix E: Workshop Presentation

"Once I thought to write a history of the immigrants in America. Then I discovered that the immigrants were American history." — Oscar Handlin

**SUPPORTING HIGHLY SKILLED IMMIGRANTS**

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**WIN!**  
The Welcome Immigrant Network

**Mission:** create social change and empower immigrant communities by validating impact of immigrant experience while providing orientation, advocacy, and support.

<b>Outreach</b> Trainings Presentations Recruiting	<b>Direct Service</b> Focus Support Group Orientation Language Education Job Community Immigrant Chiefs	<b>Supportive</b> Adult Education Food Event community Interpreting Translation	<b>Advocacy</b> Workshops Initiative Solidar Immigrants International Professional Network Immigration Reform
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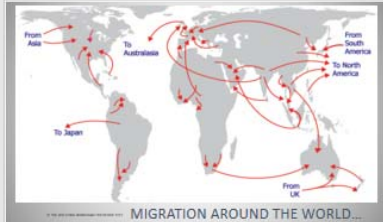
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**VISION:** Immigrants will be better able to actively engage and advocate for themselves in us civic and economic life upon arrival to the U.S. while being able to maintain dignity, seek opportunity and find security in their lives.

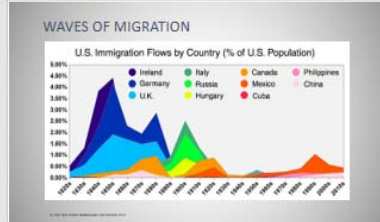
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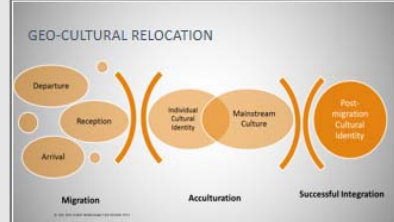
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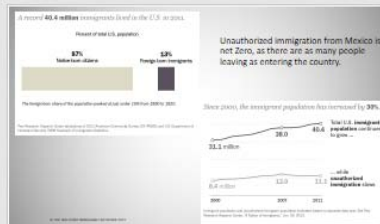
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### IMMIGRANTS, TAXES AND USE OF WELFARE

- \$11.2 Billion** Paid in in state and local taxes by households that are headed by unauthorized immigrants.
- \$20,000 to \$80,000** Amount paid more in taxes than they will receive in local, state and federal benefits over their lifetimes by average immigrant family.
- \$7 Billion annually** Paid into the Social Security System by undocumented immigrants. 70 to 75 % of the undocumented population pays Social Security tax.

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### ENTREPRENEURS

In 2013, 18% of business owners in the United States were foreign born.

Immigrant entrepreneurs now account for 28.5% of all new entrepreneurs in the U.S. (Source: Foundation, 2013)

- Immigrants continue to be nearly twice as likely as the native-born to become entrepreneurs.

41% of new companies are started by immigrants.

28% of the owners of Main Street Businesses make up fully.

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### INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ARE INTEGRAL PART OF THE ECONOMY

**\$26.8 billion** contribute to the economy in academic year 2013-2014 by the 888,032 foreign students who were in the country (via: Association of International Education).

**340,000 jobs** created or supported by international students and their families.

- For every 7 international students enrolled, 5 U.S. jobs are created or supported.

In 2008, "non-resident aliens" comprised 39.8% of master's degrees and 44.7% of doctorate degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) field.

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### WHO ARE HIGHLY SKILLED IMMIGRANTS?

Hold at least a bachelor degree or higher. **32% of immigrants**

Majority have migrated legally to the U.S.

Are unemployed or underemployed: working on jobs that do not draw on their skills.

Over 2 Million underemployed, at higher rates than U.S. born (22% vs. 18%).

Each 100 immigrant workers with advanced degrees is associated with 44 new jobs for other workers (88 new jobs when only STEM fields are considered).

44 new jobs created for every 100 employed highly skilled immigrant.

They paid on average \$22,500 in taxes while using less than \$2,300 in benefits from government programs in 2009.

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### BRAIN WASTE/ BRAIN DRAIN

Brain waste occurs when college graduates cannot fully utilize their skills and education in the workplace despite their high professional qualifications.

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### EDUCATION OF HIGHLY SKILLED IMMIGRANTS

21% of highly skilled immigrants have a doctorate degree, compared to 13% of U.S. born.

21% of highly skilled immigrants have a master's degree, compared to 13% of U.S. born.

27% of highly skilled immigrants have a bachelor's degree, compared to 23% of U.S. born.

23% of highly skilled immigrants have a high school diploma or GED, compared to 18% of U.S. born.

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### BARRIERS

- Difficulties with credential recognition
- Lack of English language skills
- Lack of familiarity of US labor market
- Lack of social capital
- Gaps of education or US experience
- Discrimination

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### HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION

42 respondents from Essex County

38% Bachelor's, 22% Master's, 18% PhD, 12% Some College, 10% Tech school/Cert/Trade

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### WHAT WAS YOUR LAST JOB PRIOR TO MIGRATING?

- United Nations Official
- Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy (ENERG)
- Logistics Manager
- Teacher
- QA/QA
- Accountant Manager
- Lawyer at Texas University
- Responsible for developing and managing international business development activities for
- Investment credit analyst (Bank)
- Chemical Lab at a Mill
- Self-employed Designer
- Accountant
- Attorney
- Accountant
- Mechanic
- Star
- Accounting Associate
- Administration
- Manager
- Administrative Assistant
- Marketing Associate (Print Ad)
- Secretary
- Entrepreneur
- Real Estate Broker
- MOI Director & Investigator
- Vice Principal Elementary School
- Director of Child Welfare Agency
- Financial Analyst

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### WHAT JOB DO YOU HAVE NOW?

- Unemployed
- Home Health Aid
- Assistant Child Care Provider
- Cook
- Bagging Groceries
- Carpenter
- Driver
- Community Organizer
- Paraprofessional
- CNA
- Assistant Teacher/ Substitute Teacher
- Social Services Advocate
- Housekeeping
- Patient Observer
- Assembly

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### How well would you say you speak English?

100% (10/10) Very Well, 70% (7/10) Well, 10% (1/10) Not Well, 10% (1/10) Not at all

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### Would you be interested in being connected with a mentor in your professional field?

60% Yes, 30% No, 10% Maybe

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### MEASURING SUCCESS- BOSTON SURVEY

	Immigrants with English proficiency	Immigrants with limited English proficiency	U.S. born
Employment/Unemployment	67%	48%	58%
Median Income	\$28,000	\$18,000	\$28,000
Home Ownership	28%	12%	38%
Home Value	\$180,000	\$120,000	\$180,000

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### BENEFITS

- Skilled workers are a good return on investment through increased tax revenues, elevated consumer power (e.g. education, housing, purchasing) and civic engagement
- Hiring bilingual and bicultural workers can open new consumer markets locally and abroad
- There are many highly qualified immigrants in your area who do not need visa sponsorship for employment
- Investing in skilled immigrants can support a foundation's funding priorities in poverty alleviation, social justice, economic development, family economic independence and more.

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### WHAT'S NEXT?

International Professional Network  
Dream Again Scholarship  
Mentorship  
Professional Development

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### THE PLAIN TRUTH IS THAT AMERICAN PROSPERITY DEPENDS ON THE SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION OF OUR IMMIGRANTS.

-SUZETTE BROOKS MASTERS

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Appendix F: Flyer

APRIL 17. 2018  
6-8PM  
135 LAFAYETTE ST, SALEM, MA

# SUPPORTING HIGHLY SKILLED IMMIGRANTS

Hear directly from International Professionals and their journeys.

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**WIN!**  
The Welcome Immigrant Network