



INSPIRING HOPE. BUILDING NEW LIVES.

CENTER FOR CITIZENSHIP AND LEGAL IMMIGRATION



The Morris County Organization for Hispanic Affairs (MCOHA) is an important resource for low-income Morris County residents regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation. MCOHA's vision is to inspire hope and community integration, and to help build a community that promotes cultural heritage while ensuring that everyone is respected, self-sufficient, and engaged in making a difference. To this end, the MCOHA Center for Citizenship and Legal Immigration (CCLI) has made great strides toward truly welcoming eligible immigrants who seek a permanent home in the United States.

Citizenship represents the ultimate symbol of belonging to the U.S., but it can be extremely difficult to obtain, even for those with ample resources—money, education, family and friends in the U.S., and command of the English language. For those without such resources, it can be almost impossible. According to the 2010 New York Immigrant Representation Study, individuals facing deportation who are not detained are successful in their cases 74% of the time when they have counsel, but only 13% of the time when they don't.

Until the CCLI opened its doors in August 2014, Morris County lacked a legal center dedicated to assisting low-income immigrants who are eager to become U.S. citizens. Morris County residents had to either seek expensive private legal services, or travel to nonprofit centers in Essex and Hudson County. Both of these options placed significant burdens on immigrants who do not have financial means and who often rely on public transportation.

We are proud of our achievements over the past year and are most grateful for the generous philanthropic support we have received from our community – support that enabled us to serve hundreds of residents in our community.

In its first year, the Center fulfilled its projections and promise, helping nearly 500 Morris County residents navigate the complex and costly citizenship process. CCLI's early success confirms our assessment of the need for affordable, accessible citizenship services, and affirms our community-based approach to providing them.



MCOHA CCLI and its Legal Staff

In this Annual report you will learn more about the services provided last year and the vision for Year Two. Through the CCLI, MCOHA is able to continue helping all immigrants in the area to achieve legal status and economic self sufficiency.

CCLI'S INAUGURAL YEAR

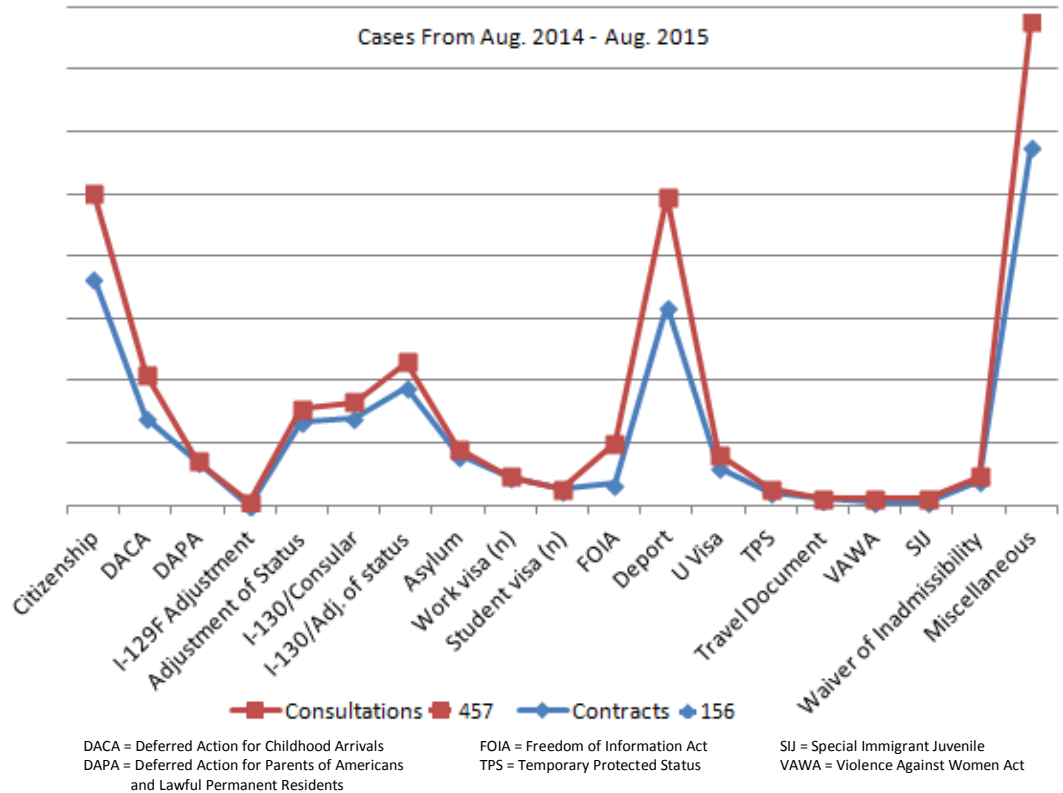
Soon after the CCLI opened, a one-month waiting period for initial consultation developed and the great needs of our immigrant community became apparent. Our cases have been diverse in nature from the elderly seeking to become U.S. citizens to families with mixed legal status trying to keep their families together. Our efforts resonate with a deep commitment to help keep families together. Other CCLI's clients are unaccompanied minors seeking relief and requesting asylum because they were victims of rape, gang threats, or had witnessed violent crimes. Before arriving in Morris County they were caught and detained in shelters run by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. From there they were often released to family or family friends who then sought services and legal help on their behalf. CCLI proved to be uniquely capable of providing these individuals with legal help in their own language.

Services included:

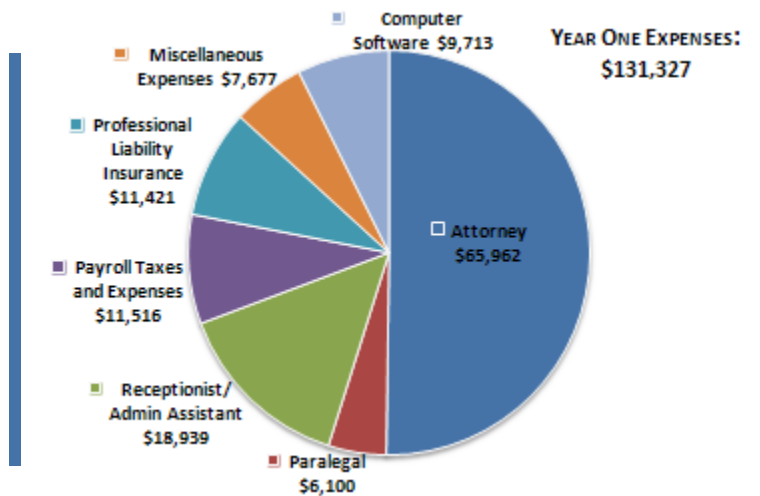
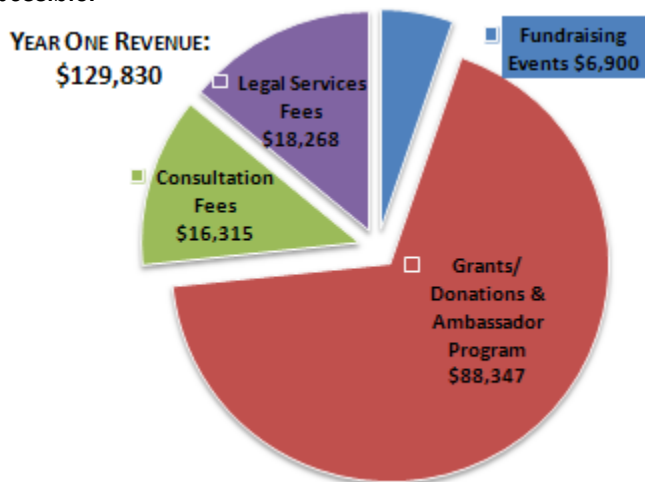
- immigration consultations
- deferred action for childhood arrivals
- family petitions
- support for refugees and those seeking asylum
- citizenship/naturalization applications
- assistance for unaccompanied minors
- assistance for victims of domestic violence and other violent crimes

CCLI's clients received the attention of our professional team that included the full-time immigration attorney, Marlena Moersdorf, Esq., a paralegal and an administrative assistant. Rates were affordable, and reduced or waived fees were available as well for the clients who demonstrated financial need. Through the CCLI's affiliation with MCOHA, our staff was also able to connect the clients to other community resources to help them integrate into their schools and communities.

Most of CCLI's clients hailed originally from Central and South America, in particular Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru, and Dominican Republic. Most clients were currently living in Morris County, mainly in Dover, although our staff handled cases from ten additional counties as well as two from outside New Jersey.



As with most start-up initiatives, CCLI anticipated a Year One deficit. Most of our cases to date have fallen into the lower end of the sliding fee scale. In addition, CCLI assisted many victims of domestic violence currently living in shelters, who were not charged any fee. As a result, earned revenue fell significantly below projections. The generosity of the donors and community members who invested in our vision of affordable, accessible immigration assistance made the program's first-year success possible.



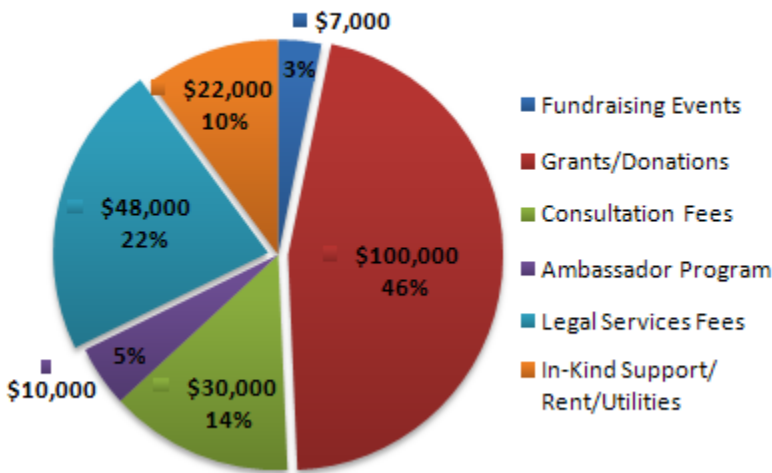
VISION FOR YEAR TWO

CCLI is eager to expand its capacity to accept clients, and to reach beyond its current Dover location. The addition of a second attorney and paralegal will enable CCLI to double its caseload and will provide critical backup for the current attorney/paralegal team. In addition, although CCLI helped satisfy the needs of many individuals living in and around Dover, there is room for growth in other communities served by MCOHA. In particular, Morristown is a large hub for the Hispanic community in Morris County, but substantially fewer cases than those from Dover were entered from Morristown. This location is also highly accessible via public transportation. A Morristown office would improve CCLI's reach to the wider Morris County region as well as areas outside the County.

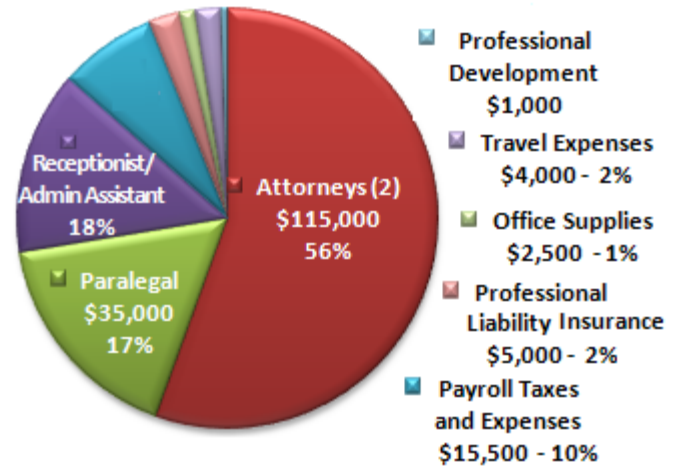
REALIZING THE VISION

Revenue expectations for year two have been adjusted to reflect the reality of CCLI's client base, and expense projections reflect program expansion, including the addition of a full-time attorney and paralegal, and the opening of a Morristown location. At this time, CCLI is anticipating a Year Two budget of \$217,000 in revenue and \$207,120 in expenses. Meeting these goals will require extraordinary support, so we thank each of you in advance for your help, which is so important to the CCLI's ability to continue to deliver affordable and accessible citizenship services to the residents of our community.

TOTAL REVENUE BUDGET YEAR TWO: \$217,000



TOTAL EXPENSES BUDGET YEAR TWO: \$207,120



LEVERAGED COMMUNITY SUPPORT

CCLI's first year was marked by broad community support. The Center for Citizenship Ambassador's program engaged 25 community volunteers in raising funds toward the launch of the program. They organized local events and asked their friends to contribute. Several philanthropic organizations came forward as well, demonstrating leadership and support through grants to help cover the program's first-year costs.

CCLI leverages its work through strategic partnerships with Jersey Battered Women's Service, Inc., Zufall Health Center, Inc., the Family Justice Center (based in the Morris County Courthouse), the Morris County Bar Foundation, Atlantic Health System, and Drew University. CCLI is on the list with the presiding judge at the Morris County Superior Court for immigration consultations for low-income residents caught up in the criminal justice system, and is in process to be designated as a service provider on the Legal Aid list for Immigration Court in Newark. There is a growing awareness of CCLI's potential for gathering data that will be useful to researchers and public officials who are working to address immigration at the policy level.



Leaders of the CCLI Ambassadors Program, Wilson and Maria Trinidad Vasquez of Sabor Latino Restaurant and MCOHA Executive Director Xiomara Guevara

CALL TO ACTION

CCLI's potential for serving Morris County's immigrant residents is even greater. With adequate resources and your continued support, CCLI can double the number of clients served, shorten waiting time for initial consultations, and bring its services to a second location in Morristown that is more accessible via public transportation benefiting the lives of nearly 1,000 individuals and their families and contributing to the strength of our Morris County communities. Over time, CCLI will become a national model for providing low-cost, high-quality immigration legal services producing real change in the lives of thousands of people and supporting our vision of strong families and vibrant communities.

CCLI BEYOND THE NUMBERS

More important than the raw numbers of people guided through the legal process is the impact CCLI has had on the lives of the people it has helped. The services offered have been able to match the multitude of needs that people in the community have had and continue to have.

For Ana, who has been in the U.S. since she was seven years old, CCLI's aid in helping her attain deferred action for childhood arrivals (DACA) was vital to keeping her within the safety of the U.S. When she and her family escaped from dangerous conditions in their native country, they didn't pursue an asylum case because they lacked proper guidance. They later pursued DACA to provide some stability for both Ana and her older sister. While her sister was able to obtain DACA relief quickly, Ana faced problems stemming from a lack of evidence and inadequate legal representation. After the application filed by her first lawyer was denied, a second lawyer refused to take her case. Just as she was losing hope, her aunt referred her to the CCLI. "She [the CCLI attorney]...took the time to understand my case, know my name, and go to the appointments I had at the USCIS" Ana said. Ana was able to successfully obtain DACA protection and not only avoided the dangers she would have faced in her home country, but also gained a sense of stability in the U.S.

Another client, Mario, is currently a recipient of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) afforded to Hondurans. Prior to discovering CCLI, Mario and his wife had encountered poor legal representation. Immigration forms were filed with incorrect information three times, and the limited guidance offered by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) was more helpful than their actual attorney. Mario and his family suffered from the uncertainty of how long he would be able to stay in the U.S. But when his wife learned about CCLI, hope was renewed. The CCLI attorney was able to correct the information in his application, allowing it to be successfully processed and, most important, returning a sense of stability to Mario and his family.

Mary, a permanent resident in the U.S., wanted to become an official citizen for her own well being and that of her soon-to-be-born child. When she went to her first naturalization appointment, however, she struggled with the English portion of the exam. Although she was offered a second scheduled appointment, she was forced to miss it because it was scheduled near her baby's due date, which necessitated frequent visits with her doctor. Her case was denied due to the missed meeting, but, when she came to CCLI, the attorney was able to reach out to a naturalization supervisor and explain the circumstances behind the

missed meeting, resulting in a new appointment for Mary. Instead of a protracted legal battle through appeals or a restart of the whole naturalization process, Mary was able to become a citizen.

On July 7, 2014, the United Nations' Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights issued an article stating that in Latin American countries, like Honduras, "violence against women is widespread and systematic and it impacts women and girls in numerous ways..." Juana is one of those girls. She managed to escape her native country where violence is experienced every day. Family Intervention Service, Inc. referred her to CCLI. With the help of our attorney, she was able to obtain asylum and will soon be eligible for a green card.

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