Greetings from IRCO’s Leadership

Dear Friends and Supporters of IRCO,

In the last three decades, more and more immigrants and refugees have been resettled in the Portland area. Many arrive with just a small plastic bag of personal belongings. The rest of what they own is left in refugee camps or discarded during their journey.

For 39 years, IRCO has been offering essential services to immigrants and refugees rebuilding their lives, coinciding with our mission: To promote the integration of refugees, immigrants, and the community at large into a self-sufficient, healthy and inclusive multiethnic society.

2014 was another successful year for IRCO. A steadily improving job market allowed us to increase job placements for new arrivals. All of our 2011-2014 strategic plan goals were successfully met, with the accomplishments of many exceeding expectations. We also began the strategic planning process for 2015-2018, looking toward IRCO’s future – how we can continue to provide and improve our services to the community. In that spirit, in June 2014, more than 140 immigrant and refugee leaders gathered at IRCO for our Community Needs Assessment to identify and prioritize the needs facing their diverse communities. This is a vital and unique event, and we rely on this input from the communities we serve.

None of what we do at IRCO would be possible without the strong support of our funders, donors, partners, volunteers, advocates, and the steadfast dedication of our staff and Board members. We look forward to seeing what we can accomplish together in 2015!

Valerie S. Palmer,
IRCO Board President

Sokhom Tauch,
IRCO Executive Director
The Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO) serves the holistic needs of immigrants, refugees, and mainstream community members in Oregon and SW Washington. Since our founding in 1976, we have served over 180,000 new Americans through programs and services that meet needs related to training and employment, health and aging, English language learning, naturalization and social adjustment, community development, early childhood, parenting and youth development, education, interpretation and translation.

**Total clients served by IRCO in 2014 | 33,049**

- **Family & Domestic Violence Services | 13,680**
- **Employment Services | 7,238**
- **Youth Academic Services | 6,712**
- **Senior Services | 2,234**
- **Economic Development | 149**
- **Community Development | 1,909**
- **Children’s Services | 1,127**
Established in 1994, IRCO Asian Family Center (AFC) was the very first culturally-specific community center targeting the diverse needs of Asians and Pacific Islanders. AFC is guided by its own advisory board and its bilingual, bicultural staff ensure that service delivery strategies reflect the norms and values of our rich local Asian Pacific Islander cultures. In addition to serving over 8,000 Asians and Pacific Islanders, highlights of our accomplishments include:

- **Providing utility payment assistance** and energy conservation education to more than 1,100 households.

- **Helping more than 60 households stabilize housing and income** through rent assistance and employment-focused case management; more than 95% of participants were stably housed at program exit.

- **Delivering educational programming** to children, youth and parents centered on key milestones and transitions such as kindergarten readiness, 3rd grade reading, 9th grade transition and high school graduation; more than 70% of students demonstrate improved math and literacy skills.

- **Helping over 600 youth exit or avoid gang involvement.**
IRCO Africa House is in its ninth successful year as the only culturally-specific one stop center targeting the increasingly diverse and rapidly growing number of African immigrants and refugees living in Oregon. It is led by an advisory board of community leaders, and is recognized nationally as a center with the capacity to specialize in conflict management and reconciliation. Africa House served over 1,500 Africans from more than 20 ethnic and cultural backgrounds in 2014. Our accomplishments include:

- **Piloting two successful fee-for-service programs:** Immigration counseling provides services such as permanent resident status adjustment, citizenship applications, and family reunification; and diversity training for leaders from businesses, community groups and local governments to increase their understanding of immigrant/refugee communities.

- **Helping more than 75 African elders** improve their English, and assisting them with other basic needs, including managing electric bills and energy assistance.

- **Engaging over 170 youth from 15 different African countries** in individualized mentoring, academic support, confidence skill building, and family engagement activities. We worked with 55 children and their parents to promote healthy parent-child relationships and help prepare children to enter school ready to learn.

- **Providing utility payment assistance to more than 290 households**, and helping 24 families obtain housing.

- **Providing gang prevention and intervention education to 150 youths from 15 different African countries.**
IRCO’s community development programs cultivate civic engagement to address disparities and equity issues for our newest Oregonians. We empower communities of color to identify and understand governance structures and power dynamics, build structures to encourage and maintain communication among community members and public agencies, develop leadership opportunities, and foster effective representation on boards, committees, and commissions.

- **The Slavic Leadership Project** provided civic engagement workshops to more than 260 Slavic community members; 200 adults learned to advocate for their children’s welfare, and 60 youths were educated on voting rights.

- **The African Leadership Development Institute**’s involvement in various community action projects have made an impact on over 1,500 individuals in their communities.

- **The Asian Pacific Islander Leadership Development Project** trained 14 community members in leadership skills, including public speaking, advocacy skills, community organizing, conflict management, coalition building, and cross cultural communication.

*Members of the Asian Pacific Islander Leadership Development Project at a retreat*
IRCO’s Children Programs are designed to keep children healthy, safe, and ready to learn.

- **Transferring knowledge:** 919 individuals with children from over 17 different cultural groups were served through home visits, which focus on parent education, skill building activities, developmental and health screenings, kindergarten readiness and transition, and general support and referrals to community resources.

- **Keeping families together:** 65 families received the support necessary to keep their children safely in their home or be reunified with their children after time in foster care.

The Mona family has faced many obstacles, first emigrating from Burma to the U.S. and then adjusting to life in Portland. Mr. Mona is blind, making the transition to life in the U.S. even more difficult. They had to move again soon after they arrived, forcing the four children to change schools and the family to lose the networks they’d built, as well as their financial livelihood. IRCO helped ease the housing transition and provided bikes to the children so they could stay at their school, allowing the oldest child to graduate from high school. Today the Mona family continues to thrive.
IRCO Senior Services assist immigrant, refugee, and mainstream elders by providing direct services, as well as connecting elders to the community services they need to live independent, healthy lives.

- **Providing food and community**: Over 7,000 seniors received culturally appropriate meals.
- **Securing housing**: More than 574 seniors and their families were supported to stay in their homes.
- **Easing the transition to the U.S.**: More than 70 refugee seniors received case management, meal services, naturalization classes, and guidance through U.S. rules and paperwork.
IRCO’s Family Programs work to strengthen families by providing workshops, education, outreach, and intervention to help new families thrive.

- **Feeding families in need:** IRCO’s SUN schools have two food pantries that serve thousands of families each year. In 2014, our SUN site at Madison High School opened the Madison Community Food Pantry. In its first 6 months, it distributed over 40,000 food items (of which over half were frozen or fresh fruit and vegetables) to 1,434 individuals.

- **Creating opportunities for kids outside of school:** In the summer of 2014, the Refugee and Immigrant Family Empowerment program collaborated with local summer camp providers to place 47 youth in summer camp programs with full scholarships.

- **Engaging with families:** IRCO organized 16 family events last year, including trips to the Portland Children’s Museum, the Oregon Ballet, Oregon Zoo, local libraries, and visits with the Portland Police.
**Empowering New Oregonians**

**IRCO’s employment and training programs** provide intensive employment and support services for refugees, immigrants, and the mainstream population, including job training and certification courses, job development and placement, job coaching, and retention services. IRCO also offers youth employment services, which include job placement services as well as academic support geared towards identifying and preparing students for college and beyond.

A highly motivated, fiercely intelligent 17-year-old from Iraq, Reem entered IRCO’s **New American Youth Opportunity Project** after a few years in the United States. She wanted to prepare for life after high school and was immediately enrolled in IRCO’s **Work Readiness Training**. “I paid attention to every single detail offered by my instructor. We created our own resumes with essential things about ourselves and practiced correcting job applications until I knew what was required on an application.”

After the training, Reem took on a challenging **Summer Works** internship at the Beaverton Hispanic Center, which became much more challenging than anyone expected. “In the first weeks that I was in the Center, the secretary quit and there was no one to fill her space, so I was the manager’s choice to be the next secretary. It was a huge decision for me because I was new to the work environment, and that was a big step to take.”

Reem rose to the occasion, putting her Work Readiness Training directly to work. “One day a man came to the center to fill out a job application. I was the only one in the office to help him. He knew little English and I cannot speak Spanish, but I used what I learned in class and applied it to his application. After a week or so he came back and said he got the job. I was very glad that I actually helped him and I felt I had a sense of responsibility.”

Reem now works part time at the Tualatin Library and is applying for the Gates Millennium Scholarship.

- **1,390** total clients served in our refugee Employment Services
- **68** clients served in our Vocational Case Management Program
- **86,330** hours worked in our Summer Works Youth Program
IRCO’s Economic Development programs provide support to immigrants and refugees who want to start their own businesses or expand an existing business. We provide training, coaching, technical assistance, and targeted referrals to our clients, so they can contribute to the economic development of the State of Oregon overall and the City of Portland in particular.

- **Creating entrepreneurs:** We helped 24 small business owners start up businesses, write business plans, develop marketing strategies, and secure loan packages.

- **Creating incentives for economic development:** We became a Kiva Zip Trustee, allowing clients to get a small business loan up to $5,000 with a 0% interest rate.

- **Empowering immigrant and refugee women to gain skills and credentials:** We trained 38 refugee women to be child care providers, creating business opportunities with stable incomes for these entrepreneurs and culturally-specific child care options for immigrant and refugee families.

*Jean-Paul Kodegui, an IRCO client, exports goods to Togo, West Africa*
Inspiring Young Minds

Immigrant and refugee youth face a multitude of obstacles, especially when it comes to education. IRCO’s Youth Academic programs work to ensure that students receive a quality education to break down the barriers that cause inequality.

- **Meeting the needs of children:** IRCO created two new programs targeting middle school transition for English language learners in 2014. Bilingual and bicultural staff provide academic advising, parent engagement training, and after school group activities to improve math and literacy skills, school attendance, and knowledge of career opportunities. Summer Youth Adventures brings families to natural areas to experience nature, camping, and outdoor activities.

- **Closing the achievement gap:** IRCO expanded its SUN Community Schools program from 6 to 10 schools, providing even more kids with after school programming that links immigrant and refugee students and families to culturally-specific services only provided by IRCO.

- **Committed to higher education:** 75% of high school seniors in IRCO’s Upward Bound program enrolled in post-secondary education by the fall term immediately following graduation.

- **Easing the transition:** 75% of students we worked with at David Douglas High School advanced a level on the Oregon State English Language Proficiency Assessment.

- **Hayma contracted polio shortly after birth.** When her family moved to Oregon from Burma, her parents did not enroll her in school, unaware of the special-need services available to their daughter.

  One year after IRCO began working with the family, Hayma is enrolled in Oliver Elementary School and making significant progress. Hayma now reads and talks through an eye gaze communication board and wants to go to school every day, even when she’s sick. Hayma’s parents, who work with IRCO advocates to facilitate home-to-school and school-to-home communication, are now comfortable working with her teachers and supporting their daughter in her educational goals.
Volunteers are crucial to IRCO’s ability to provide services to our clients. Our volunteers perform a variety of services, including administrative tasks, tutoring, mentoring, and much more.

“I work with the PET program as a classroom assistant, helping the teacher with English interview skills. I like to think that I am really assisting the clients with getting used to living in Portland. I find that I am one of the first people the clients have met in this culture that is not a service provider. I am just a normal guy off the street and I try to bring that perspective into the classroom.

I have nothing but admiration for the people who come here and the challenges they face. I realize the difficulties that they must be experiencing on a day to day basis. My grandparents were Eastern European immigrants who came around the turn of the century. They did not speak English and were poor, so I can relate to what it is like to be a new arrival in a different country.

Walking into class is like walking through the looking glass and brings me to a place where I am very comfortable and have spent most of my life.”

Marcus Woods, Volunteer with IRCO’s Pre-Employment Training Program

Volunteer Hours: 15,284

Active Volunteers: 325
## Statement of Activity & Financial Position

### IRCO Statement of Financial Position

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
<td>7,232,946</td>
<td>7,367,554</td>
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<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
<td>2,138,764</td>
<td>2,052,260</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>5,094,182</td>
<td>5,315,294</td>
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### Statement of Revenues, Support and Expenses

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<td><strong>Total Revenues and Support</strong></td>
<td>13,236,981</td>
<td>14,157,845</td>
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### Expenses

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<th>2013</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Services</strong></td>
<td>11,442,045</td>
<td>12,551,984</td>
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<td><strong>Management and General</strong></td>
<td>1,136,580</td>
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<td><strong>Fundraising</strong></td>
<td>47,852</td>
<td>30,872</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>12,626,477</td>
<td>13,936,733</td>
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**Increase in net assets**: 610,504 in 2013, 221,112 in 2014

**Net assets at beginning of year**: 4,483,678 in 2013, 5,094,182 in 2014

**Net assets at end of year**: 5,094,182 in 2013, 5,315,294 in 2014

- **10%** goes to overhead costs
- **90%** of all money is spent on program services
Thank You IRCO Supporters

Community Investors

Azumano International Inc.
CareOregon, Inc.
Certified Languages International
Chess for Success
City of Portland
City of Portland Office of Neighborhood Involvement
City of Portland Office of Youth Violence Prevention
The Collins Foundation
David Douglas School District
East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District
Hillsboro School District
Home Forward
“I Have a Dream” Oregon Foundation
J.P. Morgan Chase & Co.
Lutheran Community Services Northwest
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Multnomah County Dept. of County Human Services
Multnomah County Health Department
Multnomah Education Service District
Native American Youth and Family Center
Neighborhood Partnerships
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Northwest Health Foundation
Open Hearts Open Minds
Oregon Community Foundation
Oregon Community Health Workers Association
Oregon Department of Education
Oregon Department of Human Services
Oregon Department of Justice
Oregon Health Authority
Parkrose School District
PGE Foundation
Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette
Portland Children’s Levy
Portland Development Commission
Portland Housing Bureau
Portland Public Schools
Providence Cancer Center
Reynolds School District

Rose City Mortgage
Sabin Parent-Teacher Association
Safeco Insurance Foundation
Social Ventures Partners
TriMet
U.S. Department of Education
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
United Way of the Columbia-Willamette
Workforce Investment Council of Clackamas County
Worksystems, Inc.

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IRCO’s mission is to promote the integration of refugees, immigrants and the community at large into a self-sufficient, healthy and inclusive multi-ethnic society.