

CITY OF NEW BEDFORD

IN CITY COUNCIL

November 09, 2021

RESOLUTION HONORING THE IMMIGRANTS ASSISTANCE CENTER, INC., ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

WHEREAS, Members of the local Portuguese Community established the Immigrants Assistance Center, Inc., in 1971; and

WHEREAS, The Immigrants Assistance Center, Inc., was organized to help immigrants overcome social, cultural and economic barriers and become integrated into the American way of life; and

WHEREAS, The By-Laws state that the purpose of the Immigrants Assistance Center, Inc. is to assist, promote, develop and coordinate civic, educational, charitable, governmental, business, medical, legal and religious organizations and firms in advocating, upgrading and organizing in the interests of persons immigrating to the United States, particularly to Southeastern Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS, The Immigrants Assistance Center, Inc., provides direct or indirect services to Immigrants and non-English speaking persons, including referral to any and all existing public and private agencies, which will assist them to satisfy all their social, economic and cultural needs, to actively solicit financial and other assistance for the above purposes and in general to improve the quality of life in the Immigrant and non-English speaking Community within the exclusively charitable meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Act of 1954; and

WHEREAS, Today the Center translates mail, teaches English and civics, offering citizenship counseling and assistance with job-related computer skills and serves as the point of access to every type of social service publicly available in the Greater New Bedford Area, and the IAC is also a member of the Emergency Food and Shelter Program through United Way and the National Board; and

WHEREAS, The Center helps non-English speaking clients access information and services for any problem or need, collaborates with the Azores and Cape Verde to transmit information regarding deportees and exchange information regarding health and social issues and has multi-lingual Case Managers, speaking six languages; and

WHEREAS, Helena S. Marques has been with the Immigrants Assistance Center since 1984, starting in an administrative position, going to school part-time to earn degrees from Newbury College and University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth and eventually being named Executive Director in 1996, the first woman to hold the position, and has become one of the area's foremost authorities on advocacy for immigrants; and

WHEREAS, The Center provides escort and advocacy, on-going interpretation, access and supportive services to non-English speaking elders and caregivers, services include assistance in navigating through all of the changes in the health care system, connecting elders to existing benefits and programs that meets their economic and social needs; and

WHEREAS, The Immigrants Assistance Center, Inc., is a vital link between the non-English speaking Community and all of the other public and private Human Service Agencies and Providers in the area, including offering counseling to non-English speaking elders and their caregivers, help understanding the health care system and the benefits and programs that meet their economic and social needs; and

WHEREAS, The Immigrants Assistance Center will celebrate its 50th Anniversary in November 2021:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the New Bedford City Council hereby congratulates and commends the **IMMIGRANTS ASSISTANCE CENTER, INC., ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY**, thanks them for all their hard work welcoming and providing help to our new residents and wishes them continued success in the future.

Offered by:

Brian K. Gomes, Councillor at Large

Joseph P. Lopes, City Council President

Ian Abreu, Councillor at Large

Naomi R.A. Carney, Councillor at Large

Debora Coelho, Councillor at Large

Linda M. Morad, Councillor at Large

William Markey, Councillor Ward One

Maria E. Giesta, Councillor Ward Two

Hugh C. Dunn, Councillor Ward Three

Derek Baptiste, Councillor Ward Four

Scott J. Lima, Councillor Ward Five