



## Driver's License: A month of great results!

It is with great pleasure that we share with you the results of the first month of enforcement of the Driver's License Act for immigrants in Massachusetts. During our Driving Families Forward coalition meetings we discussed reports of positive response from the community in the first 30 days of applications. We have also received excellent evaluations of the process and implementation of the legislation in our weekly meetings with the leadership at the Registry Motor Vehicles (RMV). Some tweaks are still being made based on the feedback we've received from community members and passed to the RMV, but the overall results are satisfactory. In the first year of the law, 40,000 applicants are expected to obtain a driver's license through the Working Family Mobility Act.

We were pleasantly surprised with the engagement and communication of the new state administration, which greatly facilitated the preparation process for the start of applications. The same has happened now, with a fixed meeting every Friday to exchange information about experiences at the registration centers and what the community has reported to us. Colleen Ogilvie, who works as a registrar at the RMV, has been visiting different RMV units to check on the progress of the work and suggest adaptations where necessary.



At the Brazilian Worker Center, our work continues to serve the community in the best way possible. There are still many questions, the main ones being: transferring a driver's license from another state (it is necessary to resolve pending matters first), presentation of a Denial Letter or Affidavit, and certified or notarized translations.

To help shed light on these and other questions, we've been taking information to churches, community events, and radio programs.

There was a period when we did translations, and the new thing now will be to offer free support for scheduling an appointment at the RMV.

We continue to warn the community to protect themselves from scams. We have received reports

from people who paid for an appointment even before the Working Family Mobility Act took effect, which was impossible.

We ask that applicants inform themselves as much as possible before scheduling at the RMV and studying for the test. You must know that it was challenging and expensive to pass this law and that the coalition still pays the costs. Therefore, our behavior as a society is fundamental to determining access and ease of

achievements.

I also invite you to read in this newsletter the highlighted activities of July. As always, we appreciate your support in our journey for social, economic, and political justice.

**Lenita Reason**

**Executive Director - Brazilian Worker Center**

**Co-Chair of the Driving Families Forward Coalition**





## Family Welcome Center is a reference for refugees

The Family Welcome Center (FWC), a pilot project being carried out by the Brazilian Worker Center, completed one month of operations in July and is already considered a reference for screening refugee immigrants and homeless people. The FWC is partnered with the Government of Massachusetts and connects families to essential services and also helps them with supplies, transportation, and referral to a safe location. Before the welcome center, many immigrants sought shelter in emergency health centers; some lived on the streets.

With the FWC, immigrant and refugee families have the initial support and shelter to get connected to the social services they need to thrive and make Massachusetts their new home. The FWC's mission aligns with the work the Brazilian Worker Center has been carrying out for 28 years, supporting and training immigrants. While new centers are yet to open, Massachusetts officials are looking for residents willing to take in newly arrived families in need of shelter. Hosts are welcome to provide a room or apartment for a few days until long-term accommodation can be arranged.

The Family Welcome Center is open from 4 pm to 8 pm on weekdays and from 12 pm to 7 pm on weekends. For more information, call (617) 783-8001.



## Worker safety is our mission

Empowering workers by training them to prevent accidents to live a healthy and productive life is at the core of the BWC's mission statement. That is why, in July, another 28 workers were trained in the "Fall Prevention" course taught by Rony Jabour from United Safety. The workshop was attended by Peter Barleta, representative of Region 1 of Osha (Occupational Safety and Health Administration).

Participants learned about methods that make the work environment safer. This was a significant learning opportunity for workers like Haitian Patrick Joseph. He was assisted by the new "Family Welcome Center" program and signed up for training.

## BWC starts the 8th class of Dreamers Fellowship

In partnership with the Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement (MOIA) from the City of Boston, the Brazilian Worker Center is promoting the 8th group of the "MOIA Summer 2023 - Youth Summer Work Experience Program" (formerly called Dreamers Fellowship). A group of 15 young Brazilians was selected to participate in this training, which will last six weeks.

The program focuses on the professionalization of participants, with activities aimed at preparing them practically for the job market.



According to the program coordinator at BWC, Gizele Bombardier, each student will receive a computer sponsored by Tech Goes Home, which will facilitate classroom work development. The Brazilian restaurant Minerão will provide lunch for the youth in the first week. Other food establishments will also provide lunch in the remaining time of the course.

The BWC is proud to have been part of the program for the last 3 years and to have supported dozens of young people with pre-college preparation and work skill training opportunities.

## 38th WILD highlights female community leadership

The Brazilian Worker Center participated in the 38th edition of the Summer Women's Institute for Leadership Development (WILD) on the last weekend of July at Bridgewater State University in Bridgewater, Massachusetts. With the theme "Building Power, Breaking Barriers, Leading the Way," the training offered workshops focused on workers' rights and women's empowerment.

The BWC has been part of the program for over a decade, considered an excellent opportunity for updating knowledge and training community leaders.

The BWC invested \$300 per participant to train and empower our future Brazilian female leaders.

BWC Executive Director Lenita Reason has been with WILD for 14 years. This year, along with Brenda Quintana of MassCOSH, she spoke about the types of immigration of status (or laws/Executive Order and MOU) which range from undocumented to Citizen. For example, there are several liminal legal statuses like DACA, TPS, work visa, green card, and the new MOU (Deferred Act), among others. Lenita and Brenda facilitated the workshops in Portuguese, Spanish, and English.

Participants: Lenita Reason; Gizele Bombardier; Lorraine Alves; Marlene Cristini de Abreu; Piera Cristine Varin; Nelia Cristina Moreira; Erika Cruz de Sousa; Priscilla Correa Martins; Neusa Maria R. dos Santos; Rosimere de Oliveira; Elisa Vitória Alves and two more MCDW worker leaders.





## Access of young immigrants to University

The Brazilian Worker Center is proud to announce another victory in favor of immigrants. The project that allows out-of-status students to pay in-state tuition was inserted into the state budget and passed on Monday, July 31. This victory has come after 20 years of struggle by many organizations, notably with the efforts of the former "Student Immigrant Movement", which now is called Stories Inspiring Movement (SIM).

The bill is now waiting for the Governor to sign it into law. The ability to pay in-state tuition makes higher

education more accessible to out-of-status immigrants because they won't have to pay an international students' rate for tuition, which is double the residents' rate.

The BWC, Centro Presente, and SIM (Stories Inspiring Movement) co-founded the Massachusetts Tuition Equity Movement (MTEC), which had been working on this bill since January. This is the third bill that the BWC has worked towards approval and the second under Executive Director Lenita Reason.



# JULY IN MOMENTS



## INTERVIEW

Our Executive Director, Lenita Reason, participated in the "La Hora del Café" show on the El Mundo Boston channel. She highlighted the activities of the BWC and the start of applications for the Driver's License.

The chat also featured Tiago Prado, a campaign supporter. Watch the video on our YouTube channel:



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