IMMIGRANT NEEDS ASSESSMENT
for
St. Louis Metropolitan Area
of Missouri

June 2007

Prepared for the International Institute of St. Louis

by

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Funded by the Missouri Foundation for Health
Executive Summary

This study, funded by a grant from the Missouri Foundation for Health to the International Institute of St. Louis, was conducted from January through June 2007 to assist service providers in determining needs among immigrants and refugees/asylees in St. Louis City and six nearby Missouri counties (St. Louis County, Franklin, Jefferson, St. Charles, Lincoln, and Warren Counties) and to develop recommendations for addressing these needs. For the purpose of the study we will use the term “newcomers” to include immigrants regardless of their legal status as well as refugees and asylees.

Metropolitan St. Louis has a wide diversity of newcomers which enriches the larger community culturally, economically, and professionally. While many within the newcomer groups are economically and socially successful, and flourish in the American system, nevertheless, as with any other populations, some within this group of newcomers are not doing as well. Their needs are often due to a variety of factors such as forced displacement, socio-economic standing, language barriers, legal status, and the challenges of living in a new land. In assessing the needs among newcomers the researchers held more than 125 formal interviews and multiple informal conversations with community members and other social service providers. The following are the major findings and recommendations derived from those findings.

FINDINGS

Primary Concerns and Needs

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY: Perhaps the single greatest need for newcomers is to develop an adequate level of English language proficiency. For some newcomers the need is at a very basic level while for others it is learning nuances of American English.

CULTURAL FLUENCY: Perhaps one of the more surprising findings in these interviews was the widely stated desire for learning more about the American culture and, less surprising, for sharing their own culture with Americans so that they, too, have a greater understanding of the immigrant groups.

HEALTH CARE: Adequate health care is a problem for many immigrants. Without insurance, immigrants who have limited incomes must go to the emergency room for care, but often opt not to seek treatment or to wait until a condition has worsened to a dangerous point.

CHILD CARE: Women and service providers mentioned childcare as a major concern for women who have problems attending school, working, or carrying out family responsibilities if there is no free, easily accessible childcare.

TRANSPORTATION: Transportation was considered a major need by many and irrelevant by other, more financially viable, ethnic communities. Newcomers without resources were particularly crippled by a lack of good public transportation. These included those who have recently arrived, those with minimum wage jobs, women, and the elderly.

Secondary Concerns and Needs

SAFETY: Safety was not a critical issue for most ethnic groups; however, anti-immigrant feelings and religious discrimination were of concern to the undocumented, Hispanics, and Moslems in the area.
EMPLOYMENT: Not many mentioned employment as a major problem. Comments about employment had more to do with the level of employment available to them because of language or educational restrictions.
LEGAL ASSISTANCE: Legal assistance, while needed, was not considered a top priority for most of the immigrants interviewed, except for the undocumented.

The good news is that, generally speaking, the overall picture is one of enthusiastic and positive support over a range of services by American and ethnically based nonprofit organizations for assisting newcomers adjust to the larger American community. The down side is that, even with the larger religious and nonprofit organizations’ structures and support, the programs that are available are like so many patches spread out over the area, attempting to alleviate problems and offer solutions. Except for the larger organizations, there is still little knowledge about exactly what resources are already available in the area, much less how these resources can be shared. The problem is one of breadth and depth. The breadth refers to the wide geographic area covered and the depth refers to the large number of ethnic and linguistic communities involved. The needs of a small ethnic group, such as the Liberians or Afghans, are just as critical to the individuals involved as the needs of a large, well-represented ethnic group, such as the Bosnians or Mexicans. We need to be mindful that our solution to newcomer problems does not inadvertently privilege one group over another, thereby denying the basic American tenets of fairness and equality.

What is needed in order to bring increased strength to the St. Louis region, is an underlying structure to pull the above mentioned resources together, something that will make a cohesive patchwork quilt out of these random (yet essential) patches. That structure demands closely bound, collaborative relationships among the organizations. It is difficult to see how any one organization can adequately serve the needs of the numerous communities spread out over such a wide area. It is also obvious that having same ethnic/same language communities involved in serving their members is highly beneficial. However, working collaboratively with others is also best here – to share resources (space, personnel, professional services), to network (since many problems are the same across communities as people try to integrate into urban America), and for professional and organizational development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The St. Louis area already has a wide variety of excellent service providers and programs available to newcomers. Despite these available resources, however, steps can be taken to strengthen efforts to meet newcomer needs. The following recommendations address these steps.
Assisting Newcomers
1. Without diluting the strength of working within their own area of expertise or within specific cultural and linguistic groups, service providers would increase their level of efficiency and effectiveness by sharing knowledge, expertise, and resources in an interagency and Metropolitan-wide network.
   a. Key to assisting the range and diversity of newcomers is to **interconnect the services already being offered** by general and ethnic-specific service providers
   b. Establish collaborative efforts that involve **sharing information** on the needs of particular clients (with clients’ permission).
c. Design on-going cultural fluency professional development programs for staff in social service, educational, law enforcement, and other agencies working with diverse newcomer communities.

2. Written and audio materials should be adapted or developed in appropriate languages to help newcomers understand American society.
   a. One pamphlet should provide information on relevant local ordinances regarding areas such as traffic, housing, and nuisance laws.
   b. A second pamphlet should provide general employment information regarding employer’s expectations and workers’ rights.
   c. A series of pamphlets should be developed to provide an introduction to “American” values, customs, behaviors, and variability.

3. Expand opportunities for newcomer communication through formation of social clubs, discussion groups, and workplace “brownbag lunches.”

4. Coordinate and expand opportunities for English language learning throughout the region.
   a. Place mini-centers in or near resident-dense areas (such as apartment complexes where a large number of newcomers live) and at employment sites.
   b. Provide childcare or arrange/facilitate a way for families to share childcare during class time.
   c. Develop and/or expand in-home English language tutoring.

Law Enforcement
Besides the above, law enforcement agencies should consider several steps to increase communication capability of the staff with newcomers

1. Expand language offerings to police personnel beyond the two-week basic courses offered in Spanish and Bosnian by the St. Louis County Police Academy.

2. Provide officers with a pocket-size handbook containing key phrases in frequently used languages in their jurisdiction.

3. Have available in every police station and patrol car translated copies of the Miranda rights in different languages.
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INTRODUCTION

This study, funded by a grant from the Missouri Foundation for Health to the International Institute of St. Louis, was conducted from January through June 2007 to assist service providers in understanding needs among immigrants and refugees/asylees in St. Louis City and six nearby Missouri counties, and to develop recommendations for addressing these needs.

For the purpose of the study we will use the term “newcomers” to include immigrants regardless of their legal status as well as refugees and asylees. However, since we are addressing needs, it is important to note that needs of newcomers might differ considerably based on these categories. Immigrants typically come to a country for perceived economic opportunities while refugees and asylees are here because of a recognized threat to their safety in their homeland. While immigrants choose an area of the country to live in, refugees, at least, initially will be placed in an area based on factors outside their control, such as the presence of organizations that can provide assistance in resettlement. Because they had to leave their homeland under extreme duress, they frequently come with little or no financial resources and have little or no English language skills. Even among refugees who have a professional background, it is often difficult to obtain employment equivalent to what they had in their homeland because of English proficiency or the loss of documents. While individuals who obtained the status of asylee did so because of a threat to their safety, they do not typically face the same level of challenges as refugees since they had often initially come to the United States as students or because of employment opportunities in a professional field and then sought asylee status.

Needs of immigrants can also vary considerably. While immigrants have come to America primarily for economic reasons, they have come with a wide range of skills that affect their ability to successfully adapt. For example, many come with a high level of professional skills and a relatively high level of English that allows them to fill high status positions in their chosen profession, but many others come as laborers with very low, if any, proficiency in English. Undocumented immigrants, many of whom have low educational levels, face additional challenges because of their legal status.

METHODS

Researchers used several primary data collection techniques. First, they reviewed census and other reports to obtain the most recent available estimates of immigrants in the study area. Information regarding English Language Learners obtained from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education was especially useful because it identified the number of immigrant students by language group who were receiving English Language Learner services in each district. Second, they conducted interviews with a sample of service providers in the areas of education, social services, health care, government, and law enforcement. Third, they conducted individual or group interviews with members of various immigrant communities. The

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1 Note Appendix C
2 The authors would like to thank all of the participants in this study who gave freely of their time and were willing to either answer questions in a formal interview or in informal settings.
3 It should be noted that people who work in the area of immigrants and refugees consistently express the view that these groups are underrepresented in the census data.
interviews\(^4\) were conducted either in person or, when needed, by telephone or email. Fourth, the researchers visited or participated in a number of activities sponsored by ethnic groups (note Appendix A).

Researchers formerly interviewed a total of 124 individuals; 36\% were service providers and others not identified as belonging to a specific ethnic group (mainstream Americans) and 64\% were members of various ethnic communities. The non-ethnic respondents were in the areas of education, law enforcement, social service, health, and government. Along with ethnic respondents who were interviewed as community members,\(^5\) 59\% of the social service providers (13 out of 22) were newcomers, and 11\% of those in education, government, health or law enforcement were newcomers (4 out of 37). In addition, researchers held informal conversations with community members representing a variety of ethnic communities such as Eritreans, South Asians, Liberians, Chinese, South African, Koreans, and Hispanics.

THE STUDY AREA

As stipulated in the MFH grant, the study focused on immigrants in the following geographic area: St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and five adjacent counties: Franklin, Jefferson, St. Charles, Lincoln, and Warren Counties. In order to understand immigration patterns in an area, it is helpful to look at basic demographic indicators such as population density, family income, and housing values. Table 1, below, shows the population and density based on the 1990 and 2000 census, the shift in density within the last full decade, as well as three economic indicators:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Population Density</th>
<th>Median Family Income</th>
<th>Below 185% Poverty</th>
<th>Median House Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis City</td>
<td>396,685</td>
<td>348,189</td>
<td>6407</td>
<td>5623</td>
<td>-12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis Co</td>
<td>993,529</td>
<td>1,016,315</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Charles Co</td>
<td>212,907</td>
<td>283,883</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson Co</td>
<td>171,380</td>
<td>198,099</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin Co</td>
<td>80,603</td>
<td>93,807</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Co</td>
<td>28,892</td>
<td>38,944</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren Co</td>
<td>19,534</td>
<td>24,525</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^4\) The International Institute produces Community Links, a resource guide on community groups in St. Louis. Along with the snow-ball technique, the researchers used this resource guide as a data source for community members.

\(^5\) Community members were interviewed individually or in focus groups. Of the 33 community members interviewed individually, 10 were telephone interviews, 23 were personal interviews. The focus groups included Congolese, Liberians, Mexicans (documented and undocumented), and Moslems.
median family income, percent below 185% of the poverty rate (see Figure 1.), and median house values. As shown, while St. Louis City lost population during the last full decade, the population grew in all six counties with the greatest growth in St. Charles, Lincoln, and Warren County. Among the counties, St. Charles had the highest median family income and median house value while having a smaller proportion of low income residents. Undoubtedly, the prosperity in St. Charles County is largely related to a number of corporations located there such as Citigroup, MasterCard International, Century Tel, and MCI-Verizon. These corporations have also contributed to an increase in the number of professional immigrants in St. Charles County.

![185% Poverty Rate by County/City](image)

**Figure 1. 185% Poverty Rate by County**

The relatively high population growth in Lincoln and Warren Counties reflects the continued west corridor expansion that started a generation ago in West St. Louis County as the cost of land and homes in West St. Louis County rose and employment opportunities increased in St. Charles County. While the population density of St. Charles County is still well below that of St. Louis County, the westward expansion into Lincoln and Warren Counties continues to be linked to the affordability of land and homes. As shown in Table 1, both median family income and median house values were the greatest in St. Charles County while the percent below 185% of the poverty level was the lowest.

Since 2000, St. Charles, Lincoln, and Warren Counties have continued to have the greatest amount of growth. As shown in Table 2, since 1990, Lincoln County has led this population trend with an increase of 74.5 percent followed by St. Charles County (59.1%) and Warren County (52.0%). While Jefferson and Franklin County have exhibited slower growth (26.3% and 24.1% respectively), their rate of growth is considerably higher than the State average (14.2%). Estimates for 2006 show a slight loss of population in St. Louis County and a slight increase in St. Louis City pointing to a possible stabilization of what has been a continuing

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6 Members of the Indian community indicated that MasterCard employs approximately 200 Indians.
decline in St. Louis’s population over the last several decades. The picture we have then is a region characterized by continuing population expansion from its urban centers.

Table 2. Total Population change in study area from 1990 to 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis City</td>
<td></td>
<td>396,685</td>
<td>348,189</td>
<td>353,837</td>
<td>-12.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>-10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Louis Co</td>
<td></td>
<td>993,529</td>
<td>1,016,315</td>
<td>1,000,510</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>-1.6</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Charles Co</td>
<td></td>
<td>212,907</td>
<td>283,883</td>
<td>338,719</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>59.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson Co</td>
<td></td>
<td>171,380</td>
<td>198,099</td>
<td>216,469</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin Co</td>
<td></td>
<td>80,603</td>
<td>93,807</td>
<td>100,067</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Co</td>
<td></td>
<td>28,892</td>
<td>38,944</td>
<td>50,123</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>73.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren Co</td>
<td></td>
<td>19,534</td>
<td>24,525</td>
<td>29,685</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,117,073</td>
<td>5,595,211</td>
<td>5,842,713</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OVERVIEW OF IMMIGRATION PATTERNS

Information, obtained by the 2005 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau indicated that the average number of immigrants per 10,000 in the St. Louis region was 399 compared to an average of 1289 for the 35 largest metropolitan areas. Additionally, the region has a higher proportion of non-Hispanic Whites (78.2%) and African-Americans (17.9%) compared to the average of the 35 areas (72.8% and 14.2%) while the percent of Asians (1.7%) and Hispanics/Latinos (1.8%) was considerably lower than the average of 35 metropolitan areas (4.7% and 14.0%). While the proportion of immigrants in the St. Louis area is well below the average for the 35 largest metropolitan areas these figures do not adequately reflect the growing diversity of the region.

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7 The estimated population for St. Louis City differed based on the source of information. The U.S. Census QuickFacts provided a lower estimate for the City (347,181) than the data provided by the Missouri Census Data Center (353,837). In this report we will use the MCDC figures for St. Louis.
9 MCDC data, p.openses.moscom06. Missouri Census Data Center, Jefferson City, Missouri.
At this point we can begin to estimate the number of newcomers in our study area. Although we are more than six years past the last full census, our first step is to use the 2000 census data. Table 3 provides the number of foreign born, the percent that foreign born are of the total population, the percent that entered the US in 1990 or after and a breakdown into five areas of birth. As shown, the percent of foreign born ranged from .6% in Lincoln County to 5.6% in St. Louis City. While St. Louis County had the highest number of foreign born, St. Louis City had the highest proportion and the highest percent entering after 1990. This is due to the large number of refugees resettled in the City.

The counties vary somewhat in area of birth of the foreign born. While we will be discussing this fact in greater detail, it should be noted that the largest percent of European birth resided in St. Louis City and Jefferson County, reflecting the large number of Bosnian refugees resettled in the 1990’s. Also, while not very large in absolute terms, the highest proportion of immigrants from Mexico and other Latin American countries was in Lincoln and Warren Counties.

Table 3. Foreign born population and area of birth in 2000.11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Foreign Born Number In 2000</th>
<th>Foreign Born % of Total Co Pop</th>
<th>Foreign Born Entered US 1990 or after</th>
<th>Area of Birth Percent of Foreign Born in 2000*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Euro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis City</td>
<td>19542</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>72.9%</td>
<td>43.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis Co</td>
<td>42702</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
<td>32.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Charles Co</td>
<td>5841</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson Co</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>51.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin Co</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>44.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Co</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren Co</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percent might not total to 100% because of rounding  
+While Mexico is part of Latin America, this table treats it as a separate category.

While we have only incomplete census data beyond 2000, sampling information by the U.S. Census Bureau does allow us to estimate the number of two major classifications— "Hispanic" and "Asian" (note Table 4). Based on this information, we can estimate a total number of about 37,000 Hispanics and 42,000 Asians.12 In comparing Tables 3 and 4 we find considerable change in the number of newcomers in each of the outer counties. For example, the total Lincoln County foreign born population was 217 as reported in the 2000 census while the estimated Hispanic population alone in 2006 was 752. Although the apparent growth rate was not as steep, a similar pattern exists in the other counties.

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12 Asian includes the Far East, Southeast Asia, and South Asia.
Table 4. Estimated 2006 Hispanics, and Asians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Estimated Hispanic</th>
<th>Estimated Asian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis City</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>8,492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis Co</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>17,009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Charles Co</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>6774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson Co</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin Co</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Co</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren Co</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>37,249</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perhaps the most explicit picture of the change that is occurring in the greater St. Louis region is the ELL (English Language Learner) data for public school districts. Figure 2 provides a graphic display for this change in the entire study area. In reviewing Figure 2 (and Figures 3 and 4) it should be noted that the apparent drop in 2006 is related to changes in government reporting requirements and should not be interpreted as a recent drop in the ELL population. Beginning in 2006, the ELL category no longer includes students in a 2-year monitored status. Interviews, with school staff indicated the ELL population continues to grow.

![Total ELL students in Study Area 2000 - 2006](image)

Figure 2. Total number of public school ELL students between 2000 and 2006 in the study area.

As Table 5 and Figures 3 and 4 show, the increase in the ELL population has been remarkable, even in the most historically receptive area, St. Louis City. While the City had 12.4% growth for a total of 2,735 public school ELL students in 2006, St. Louis County grew by 75.8% to a total of 3,250, up from 1,849 in 2000. The actual numbers in the outer counties are not as dramatic; however, the percent of increase is impressive, indicating that striking changes are occurring in
these counties as well. Jefferson County, for example, has gone from 21 ELL students in 2000 to 130 in 2006, more than a 500 percent increase. These dramatic increases can be expected to require additional staff and resources such as staff development, relevant instructional materials, and classroom space.  

Table 5. Change in ELL Population from 2000 to 2006.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis City</td>
<td>2433</td>
<td>2735</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>3013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Louis Co</td>
<td>1849</td>
<td>3250</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>3391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Charles Co</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>112.2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson Co</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>519.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin Co</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>188.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Co</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>333.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren Co</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>118.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4577</td>
<td>6766</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>7204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. Patterns of recent public school ELL population change in St. Louis City and St. Louis County.

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13 Note that table 5 includes Non-public ELL students for 2006. Data for Non-public ELL students were not available for 2000.
14 DESE, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Figure 4. Patterns of public school ELL recent population change in St. Charles, Franklin, Jefferson, Lincoln and Warren Counties.

Figures 5 through 11 show the top ten languages represented in the public schools in each county. At this point in time, there is little ELL diversity in Warren County and Lincoln County with the large majority being Spanish speakers; however, considering the diversity and ELL growth in the other counties, these counties will undoubtedly experience an expansion in the number of languages represented among their students.

Figures 5-11 do not fully reflect the distribution and diversity of language groups within these larger political entities. While 22 of 24 districts in St. Louis County and 4 of 5 districts in St. Charles County reported ELL students, only 6 of 11 districts in Jefferson County, and 6 of 10 districts in Franklin County reported ELL students. In Jefferson County the two districts with the greatest number of ELL students (Fox C-6 and Northwest R-1) are adjacent to St. Louis County, reflecting the southward movement of newcomer populations.

With more than 30 languages, the St. Louis Public School District’s ELL population is only slightly less than the combined ELL populations of the 24 St. Louis County Districts. One high school alone in the St. Louis Public Schools (Soldan) has students who speak 25 different languages. Among nine of the top ten languages, the large majority represent refugee populations. In addition, there have been a growing number of undocumented students in St. Louis. In comparison to typical voluntary immigrants that make up the majority of St. Louis County newcomers, many refugees and undocumented immigrants often lack economic resources, English language skills, and adequate formal education.

The distribution of language groups varies considerably within St. Louis County districts and reflects both historic migration patterns and the socio-economic standing of newcomer groups. (See Appendix B.) South County districts such as Affton, Bayless, and Mehlville have a high proportion of ELL students with the majority being Bosnian. For example, Bayless ESL staff reported that their school district is considered to be the most diverse per capita with the ESL
population making up 40% of their student body and Bosnians, alone, making up 27% of the total student body. The next two highest groups are Vietnamese (6%) and Spanish speakers (2%). The high proportion of Bosnians reflects a southward movement out of St. Louis City spurred by the affordability of homes and perceived higher levels of safety.

Some districts have a high degree of diversity, without a clear predominate language group. Perhaps, the best example is Rockwood R-VI which had a total of 45 different languages among 411 students in 2005-2006. While the largest single language group was Spanish, it made up only 18.5% of the total ELL population which included sizable numbers of various Indian languages, Chinese, Russian, Korean, Arabic, and Vietnamese speakers. Parkway, with a 430 ELL students had total of 30 languages with the largest groups made up of diverse Indian languages (21%), Korean (18%), Spanish (18%) and Chinese (10%).

St. Louis County districts' language distribution also reflects the general socio-economic characteristic of those districts. For example, the heaviest concentrations of Spanish speakers, many of whom are laborers, are in the Ritmoir, Pattonville, and Hazelwood Districts. Similarly, Bosnians are heavily concentrated, in Affton, Bayless, and Mehlville Districts. On the other hand, Indians/Pakistanis, Chinese, and Koreans are more frequently in higher socio-economic districts such as Parkway, Rockwood, and Clayton, reflecting a larger percent of these immigrant groups in higher income occupations.

At this point, we will discuss the major study findings regarding newcomer needs and will then offer recommendations for service providers as they continue to address these needs.
Figure 9. Top ten languages in Jefferson County Districts

Figure 10. Languages in Warren County Districts

Figure 11. Languages in Lincoln County Districts
FINDINGS

As discussed above, the St. Louis area has a wide diversity of newcomers. This population enriches the community culturally, economically, and professionally. While all populations have economic, social, and other needs, many newcomers bring additional needs due to a variety of factors such as forced displacement, socio-economic standing, language barriers, legal status, and the challenges of living in a new land. We will now turn to needs of newcomers and the challenges of meeting these needs.

Given the insight and concern individuals had, depending on their positions, perhaps the most remarkable finding in this needs assessment was the degree of agreement and consistency among the various interviewees. Using a structured interview schedule format with open-ended questions, researchers gave participants every opportunity to express the range of their community members’ needs. These categories of needs were English language proficiency, cultural fluency development, health and dental care (and in particular, health insurance), childcare, and transportation. Secondarily, the interviewees mentioned personal safety, employment, and legal assistance.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Perhaps the single greatest need for newcomers is to develop an adequate level of English language proficiency. For some newcomers the need is at a very basic level while for others it is learning nuances of American English. Although English as a Second Language classes are widely available in the area, this was still one of the primary needs mentioned by immigrants and refugees.\[15\] Currently, many study participants feel a considerable number of newcomers are not able to take classes for a variety of reasons, such as lack of previous formal schooling, perceived lack of time because of a heavy work load, lack of childcare, and lack of transportation.

Newcomers, service providers, and others all recognize that many challenges newcomers face are related, at least in part, to a lack of adequate English skills. While many professionals have a level of knowledge and ability to be successful in their profession and to participate in the daily routines of living in a new land, many non-professionals come with little or no knowledge of English. This severely limits employment opportunities as well as participation in daily activities such as shopping and using public transportation. The lack of English also leads to isolation, especially among the elderly and “stay-at-home moms.”

An issue related to English language proficiency is level of literacy in one’s home language. Most voluntary immigrants have a high level of literacy; however, refugees and the undocumented represent a highly diverse group, from the well educated to the pre-literate. In trying to reach their newcomer constituency, government, church, and social service providers all mentioned that they provided translated materials which were “never” or seldom used. One priest noted “Not many people can read Spanish. We have books in Spanish, but people can’t read the materials.” This indicates how important it is to use alternative systems of communication to reach these populations, such as radio, word of mouth, announcements at church, through community organizations, and school events. Personal contacts

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\[15\] Interestingly, it was the American-born (non-ethnic) service providers, law enforcement officers, and government officials who were the ones to mention the need for more bilingual services.
through ethnic networking systems are the most important communication channels when trying to reach individuals with the greatest needs.

**Comfort Level**
Many different ethnic groups strongly expressed a need to learn English in order to be more comfortable within their new environment. While newcomers pointed out that it is possible to exist within certain language communities in St. Louis City - such as the Bosnian, Mexican, and Vietnamese - without knowing English, once outside the City, English is necessary for almost all activities. As one Spanish speaker who had been living in California for many years noted, she has always been able to get along without English because her language community was large and she could shop, go to church, and get professional services (health care) within the Spanish speaking community. She could also do this when she moved to St. Louis City. However, since moving to St. Charles County, it is no longer possible to live within a Spanish-speaking community. Now she very much wants to learn English so that she can integrate into the neighborhood, school system, and town. A social service provider also noted:

"Some of them (Hispanics) have told me, that where they have lived before – Texas, Colorado, Florida, or St. Louis they really did not need to learn English very well, because there was always a large community of Spanish speaking people so they could go to work, shop, go to church, access health services, etc, and did not have to know English. Here in St. Charles and Troy, that is not so. Many people are interested in learning English."

The connection among language, integration, and degree of comfort was also mentioned for the elderly as a Bosnian leader noted:

"We still have older people who are not good in English and are not comfortable; they still feel like a guest."

This Bosnian leader went on to state that language and comfort were related.

At the same time, learning English is often quite difficult, even at a more basic level due to other related issues. As stated by a Vietnamese leader:

"Older Vietnamese have problems learning English due to post traumatic stress. Younger couples work long hours. They don’t have time."

An ESL teacher stated:

"... what I am finding (or what I feel personally) is that the immigrant who has had very little formal education in their own country and who is over age 40 often drops out because our ESL classes are too difficult for them."

Language is often coupled with other needs newcomers expressed, such as socialization and knowing their neighbors. As a Bosnian participant stated:
"If people would learn English society will accept them more and they will fit better into the neighborhood and be more productive in work."

Without English, it is very difficult to get to know one's neighbors beyond the superficial level. And for Bosnians, and many African groups, neighbors can be as important as kin. They truly miss the sense of community they had—and that especially involved close ties with their neighbors. Here they feel their neighbors are strangers, not necessarily hostile, but not really friends, either. The lack of English keeps them isolated from the general population of ethnically-mixed people living around them, whether in small towns, suburbia, or St. Louis City.

It is also important to note that when speaking about the desire to learn English, the better educated also wanted more English language training and exposure—Many, such as Taiwanese or Russians, were literate in English; they could read and write it, but had difficulty in conversational, idiomatic English. They would like to have a place to go to socialize with Americans, to drink tea or coffee and to converse in English. In other words, to have an informal, yet somewhat structured, place to go to learn conversational English, this would help them in their relationships with their co-workers and improve their work environments.

**Law Enforcement & Police**
Among the most basic needs for communication is with police. As one Asian interviewee noted,

> "Those with little proficiency in English have trouble dealing with police officers. They assume the worst since they cannot understand what the officers are saying."

Communication was mentioned several times by law enforcement personnel who referred to the language barrier as a "primary problem," particularly at first contact, since there are translators for cases that go to court. Recognizing this language problem, some members of the law enforcement community in the area have been pro-active and learned basic Spanish or Bosnian (key words and statements) through courses offered by the St. Louis County Police Academy.¹⁶

Language compounds the mixed feelings newcomers have toward the police. Many newcomers, especially the refugees, come from societies where the police are not trusted; their presence causes more concern and anxiety on everyone's part. So, learning to trust the police and to see them as a part of the social support system is not easy. However, many service providers noted that they encouraged their clients to call 911 when necessary and to trust the police. Unfortunately, as one interviewee noted, if someone has an accent, the "police won't take a report if a kid runs away." While this may be an overstatement, and not a fair assessment of all police-newcomer interaction, it is a perception that exists, especially in the City of St. Louis.

**Education**
The outlying county areas noted that an increasing number of students are coming to school with no English at all. While St. Louis City and some St. Louis County school districts have years of experience in this area, many school districts in the study area are challenged, both monetarily and structurally, by the

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¹⁶ In other cases, the immigration status of the individual was of primary concern. As one officer, who was fluent in Spanish, noted while the law was there to protect everyone, the undocumented still "feels careful and suspicious" and may not call them when needed.
growing numbers of non-English speaking students entering their districts. As one school administrator noted, this challenge is further complicated by the fact that since the students are young, they have both a weak command of the target language (English) and a weak understanding of the home language (such as Af Maay\textsuperscript{17}). The language issue affects every aspect of the school experience, from the students’ ability to learn subject-area content to their congregating in language groups and not socializing with other students, to the parents participating in school functions and communicating with the teachers.

The response to this challenge has been quite varied. All school personnel that were interviewed appeared committed to helping their newcomer students as best they could even when limited somewhat by their limited available resources. The St. Louis Public School system offers a premier, comprehensive ELL program for its students and their parents. Their administrative, teaching, and social work staff are probably the most experienced and knowledgeable in the area, and are an important resource for other schools dealing with a growing ESOL student population. Another school system with a well-developed ELL program is Rockwood School District, a large and financially strong district. When Rockwood had an influx of about 40 Somali Bantu students in the district – all arriving at one time - they recognized that to truly serve these students they needed to develop a more intense and specially designed curriculum. This new curriculum, and the staff required to carry it out, was to respond to the special needs of young teenage, non-English speaking, pre-literate students. Therefore, Rockwood School District’s ELL administrator designed and set-up a unique program to help integrate these students into the normal school curriculum. The program appears to be working successfully at this point.

On the other hand, a small, homogeneous, more rural, school district is severely challenged by the rapid influx of non-English speaking students – whether literate or semi-literate in their home language. The administration, staff, and teachers seem to be energetically working at helping their ELL students in their studies and in acclimating to the school environment. This is accomplished in the face of a rapidly changing student population. One problem, however, is that these smaller, more rural school districts are trying to handle this transformation in their student population without adequate resources – in money or in professional development – to meet these challenges in a timely manner. Such conditions put stress on everyone involved - school administrators, teachers, students, and parents - and eventually, on the community at-large since every failed student at some point enters the larger community as a less-than-successful citizen.

Generally, school personnel identified a need for interpreter services when working with their ELL students’ parents. However, while all districts had one or more dominant language groups – most often Bosnian or Spanish - each district also had language groups consisting of as little as one family. The issue became one of privileging one language group over another by providing interpreters for the larger group(s) versus the practical problems of providing interpreters for all groups. The magnitude of this problem is apparent when you consider that some school districts have 30 and more language groups represented in their student population. For example, Bayless School District, which is known for its large Bosnian population, now is reported to have students from 35 language groups. St Charles County, which is known for its large Spanish-speaking population, has 54 countries represented in the Community College’s ESL program. The way a few school districts have dealt with this problem is that they offer no interpreters for anyone; parents must bring their own interpreter (often their child) with them to the meeting.

\textsuperscript{17} Af Maay, sometimes spelled as Af Mai or referred to as Maay Maay, is the home language of the Somali Bantu, a people from Somalia in Eastern Africa.
Employment
While it is not difficult to find employment with limited English, it is almost impossible to move up or out into a higher paying position with more responsibility and authority without English. Many ethnic groups discussed the problem of having to take very low skilled jobs at first because of their lack of English.

“People who are not very fluent in English have to work at the worse hard jobs, the most miserable ones.” (Bosnian community member)

“I used to think people didn’t need the language (English), but now I feel people need to learn English so they can get ahead more quicker. But, lots of people equate learning the language with changing their culture.” (Hispanic leader)

“I know an engineer who doesn’t speak English. He’s been here 8 years and still is in a low level, hard job. He should have spent one year learning English.” (Bosnian leader)

The interviewee went on to say that people should be forced to learn English when they first come - the ramifications would be better for the individual, his family, and the society.

Even those who get employment within their language community are not necessarily better off, since, as one interviewee who works with a large number of newcomers, pointed out, some of the worse violations in working conditions come from co-ethnics. They are the ones who demand that fellow ethnic members work longer hours for little pay and give them the worst jobs. Without English these newcomers are trapped in their jobs, without alternatives.\(^{18}\)

As a part of the employment picture, the issue of professionally trained refugees who have very low-end jobs was mentioned by several different groups. One of the main problems, besides English language ability, was the issue of recognition of their certification or degrees. People felt that there needed to be a mechanism established to review the degrees or certifications and accept them from foreign universities or institutes, thereby allowing the newcomers to move into more professional occupations, similar to what they had before leaving their home country. Alternatively, it was expressed that as soon as possible the newly arrived refugee should be given counseling on what they need to do to re-establish their professional standing: such as where to get the appropriate language, educational, licensing training.

CULTURAL FLUENCY

Perhaps one of the more surprising findings in these interviews was the widely stated desire for learning more about the American culture and, less surprising, for sharing their own culture with Americans so that they, too, have a greater understanding of the immigrant groups. This is something that immigrants as well as refugees and the undocumented expressed an interest in.

Cultural fluency entails many levels of knowledge and this was reflected in the comments people made. Our interviewees noted that newcomers, including those coming on work visas, require basic information about the local culture; what is interesting in Metropolitan St. Louis; and where to go for various needs.

\(^{18}\) For some, particularly Spanish-speakers, the Wage and Hour Enforcement Unit of the Federal Government has an active outreach program, letting people know where they can call for a Spanish-speaking agent to complain about employment abuse.
such as dentists or medical care. All newcomers should learn about the law and how it affects their personal lives – relationships between spouses, parents and children, neighbors, and even co-workers. In particular, they would like information on laws involving domestic abuse, child abuse, truancy, nuisance laws, and sexual harassment. And, as noted above, they want to know more about American culture in general and to share their culture with Americans.

Many people, such as Bosnian, Chinese, Congolese, East Indian, Korean, Mexican, Somali and Somali Bantu expressed the desire to know more about American culture. Specifically, they wanted to know so that they will better understand their children, their co-workers, and their neighbors. A couple of immigrants noted that it was important for newcomers to know about the variability within American culture and to learn about American history, in particular about race relations and how the past has informed the present.

**Children**

Many study participants, particularly of the larger newcomer groups, indicated the older generation could live easily in Metropolitan St. Louis because there were adequate ethnic grocery stores where they could get traditional foods, ethnic restaurants, and the availability of movies and television programming from their home countries through satellite and cable. However, their children were not interested in these things; they were fluent in English, not in their parents’ home language, and were growing up with another set of values and behaviors. Whether refugee or immigrant, professional or laborer, highly educated or pre-educated, parents feel they do not understand their children and they have lost control over them. They do not know what disciplinary technique is allowable.

A Liberian elder reflected another view when he pointed out that raising children in America is a problem for the parents since they cannot beat their child when he needs to be corrected. As a result, parents think they cannot discipline their child at all. He considers discipline to be a cultural issue. He went on to say that parents need to learn other techniques and they should know they can call the police if the child does not come home. In St. Louis the police are here to help, whereas in his home country the police will discipline even more, so it is better not to involve them in a family matter. Another person from Sierra Leone noted that whereas the children were doing well before, problems were beginning to develop among young people in his community, too.

"Teens 'know' their parents can't do anything [when they misbehave], even if they get into fights at school everyday."

He went on to say that the police have told the parents that they could discipline their kids, just not beat them. As a leader within his community, parents have asked him to intervene with their children.

It is the perception of loss of control over their own children that haunts every immigrant community. Many people feel their children will be taken away from them if they try to discipline them because their disciplinary techniques usually involve corporal punishment, perceived to be unlawful in the United States.

At the same time, parents feel that they cannot advise their children very well either. They appreciate that their children are living in two cultures and that it is difficult for them; that they may not know which culture, which set of values to follow. The parents, because they do not know a lot about American
culture, find it difficult to guide their children through these difficult times. As one professional newcomer admitted, he did very well at work, but he had no American friends outside of work, so he really knew little about American culture outside his specific workplace. While he did not live in an ethnic enclave geographically, he did culturally, socially, psychologically, and emotionally. This is a pattern we found to be prevalent among immigrants, refugees and the undocumented. Thus, the information people expressed needing about American culture was not to become more American, but to understand more about their own children and, therefore, how they can better relate to and guide them. Comments like “some adapt so quick” is common. Others point out that their boys especially “socialize too much and don’t study and drop out of school to get jobs and have girlfriends.” There is a serious generational gap between parents and their children, and these needs are not being met. This was a major concern expressed by every ethnic group and, in some severe cases, there will likely be another generation living in poverty if this issue is not successfully addressed.

Other comments indicate how complex the inter-generational problem is:

“America is the best country ever to raise kids. There are so many opportunities. But, my background is a problem. Whatever I did at home I can’t do here.” (A Middle Eastern parent)

“Our youth are okay; nothing at this point. They still have roots from back home, but more worried about the next generation. Some cases have problems, but parents don’t talk about it, drugs, bad friends.” (An Asian leader)

Newcomers would also like Americans to know more about them and their home cultures, for example, family relationships. In Liberia, for example, family members may “adopt” a brother’s or sister’s child. They may raise that child, educate him or her, but “give the child back” when s/he has grown. There is no permanent adoption. The idea behind this practice is that the whole family takes responsibility for the child. Problems arise for them here, when schools will not accept an extended family member as the guardian of the child if there is still a viable parent somewhere, even if the parent is in Washington, D.C. or Chicago.

Co-workers
Among the problems with co-workers is what one person described as social mores. For example, one interviewee indicated that patting someone on the shoulder is considered a friendly gesture in her culture, but can easily be misinterpreted as sexual harassment here. The interviewee said that such confusion cost at least one person from her culture his job. An African leader also pointed to cultural barriers:

“It’s hard to get jobs when you first come. Then there’s a problem getting better positions even later because of language and culture issues.”

A few respondents indicated that they felt some Americans discriminated against them because of their clothing, for example women wearing *hejab* in the work place or men wearing traditional dress. A Pakistani man talked about clothing being a cultural difference that causes misunderstanding. He stated:

“Traditional Pakistani clothing is not a religious statement, it’s cultural. Americans think it is a Islamic religious statement and this makes many uncomfortable. This problem can be solved by
more interaction with Americans. Once people learn more about Pakistani culture, Pakistanis will become more accepted.”

**Neighbors**

The need for cultural fluency training is also a neighborhood issue. Recognizing the importance of the larger community and its impact on the school environment, the St. Louis Public School ESOL, Bilingual Migrant Program has developed an Action Plan for neighborhoods that would involve home meetings, block meetings, and block parties. They have mixed parent meetings so that the parents can hear each others’ stories.

Sometimes neighbors call the Division of Family Services on a newcomer because they perceive the mother and/or father as being negligent. In one case, for example, neighbors called DFS on a family because the baby was not wearing diapers. Fortunately, the DFS caseworker recognized that parenting classes for the mother would be appropriate in this instance. In some cases, DFS has been called in because the home was considered an environmental endangerment to the child. Again, the main problem was determined to be lack of knowledge on how to maintain an urban apartment. In these cases, cultural involved learning how to keep a house or apartment clean and what was expected in terms of personal hygiene for a baby. American standards for hygiene are issues for some adults and students when they first come to the U.S., and it seems to be an area that requires reinforcement.

**Schools**

School staff, as well as parents and other social service providers, mentioned the importance of teaching about cultural differences in the schools. This is for the benefit of students, teachers and staff. They usually give priority to the groups represented in the student body first. Perhaps, because of these efforts by schools, minimal problems were reported generating from cultural differences. Nevertheless, occasional instances of anti-newcomer incidents were sometimes reported.

Examples of anti-newcomer feelings in the St. Louis City schools is native born students telling others that “they stink” or making fun of the girls because they wear their hair in a pony tail instead of the weave that African American girls favor at this time. These problems were most prevalent among various Muslim girls who were maintaining their traditional practices of wearing long outer garments and a *hejab*. In the St. Louis Public Schools, the ESOL social workers addressed these tensions by meeting with the ninth grade social studies classes and talking to the students about refugees and the refugee experience. This worked very well. Unfortunately, the next year they had the same problem all over again with the new group of ninth grade students. In another situation, the ESOL teacher at an elementary school used her own funds to purchase toiletry kits for several female refugee students and reviewed appropriate hygiene practices with them.

School district staff in the study all indicated that they take steps to encourage cross-cultural understanding. Along with addressing specific incidents, schools often post displays such as flags and map displays that recognize their students’ various countries of birth, and celebrate, or at least recognize, their students’ important holidays and religious days, as well as dietary issues. FOCUS St. Louis is

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19 When such situations arise they are dealt with on an individual basis and the Islamic Foundation Center helps Moslems in the workforce deal with discriminatory practices through legal means.
working with the International Institute, several school districts, and the St. Louis Community College system to encourage cross-cultural dialogue among high school and community college students. In these activities, as the schools encourage understanding, they also discourage stereotyping. For example, a staff member in Washington School District, which has a large Hispanic population, noted the “huge cultural differences” within the District’s Hispanic community.

**Women and Women’s Rights**

A significant area of contention and misunderstanding is women and women’s rights. Many social service providers and some of the educators mentioned this problem across the cultural landscape – whether Latin American, European, Asian, Middle Eastern, or African. It is not unusual for men from different cultures to feel that their families are threatened by women becoming “too American.” They are afraid that even as their children are changing, they are losing control over their wives, too. Some will not let their wives go out of the house, get a job, or have American friends because they believe their wives will become too independent. A few social service providers indicated that among their Middle Eastern clients, under the guise of being protective, husbands do not allow their wives to come out of the house, even for parent meetings at the social service agency. Some African husbands expressed suspicion of their wives’ American friends, saying, for example, that the American friends encourage her to waste money and challenge his authority in the house. Generally, husbands note that women within their communities know that they can call 911 if threatened with domestic violence and they claim that the women use this “power” (which the men see as unfair) against them. On the other hand, service providers often find that abused women still prefer to stay with their husbands.

It is possible that some of this domestic violence is culturally based. As one African man told us, he did not know he was not supposed to hit his wife because in his home country that was how men maintained authority and guided their families. Now he has learned a new way of behaving. He felt that others just needed to learn other ways of interacting with their wives. In other cases, domestic violence is associated with alcohol or drug abuse. Clearly, domestic violence is a complex issue: it involves cultural expectations, psychological problems (such as depression expressed through alcoholism), and individual aberrant behavior. For the first of these - cultural expectations - teaching about local laws on domestic violence and about alternative ways of communicating, may be a viable option.

**Interpersonal Relations**

In many parts of the world, as soon as girls mature physically they are considered to be of marriageable age, or at least as potential partners. This would be when girls here are in middle school or the first year of high school. When some of these cases reach the notice of the American social service or legal system the male can be charged with statutory rape among other things. For example, in an outlying county where there are a number of young Hispanic males about 18 – 20 years old, who are here without families, the young men have gotten involved with American girls who are about 12 to 14 years of age. Some of these cases led to the girls trying to run away with their partner or getting pregnant. In the St. Louis City area, girls from within various ethnic communities may be married off in their early teens by their families in order to protect their virginity. In either case, this represents a clash of cultures which may eventually involve some level of legal intervention.

**Information**

Although there are many organizations, non-profits, churches, schools, and government agencies providing information and referrals to newcomers for a variety of areas, the need for referral information
was mentioned often. People need to know where to take a child to the dentist for little or no fee, where to get free or reduced legal services, how to enroll their children in school. This is an example of how even though there is considerable assistance available, the need is even greater. Also, people undoubtedly do not pay attention to what they hear unless they need that particular service at that time. Therefore, it is imperative for all organizations to continue to outreach and maintain a regular, updated referral service for their clients working through ethnic media, churches, ethnic associations, social service agencies, grocery stores, and even web sites.

Essentially, one Indian interviewee expressed the view of many of the newcomers: “Many Indians want to maintain their cultural traditions while at the same time trying to become a part of American culture. It makes for a delicate balance.” Training in cultural fluency will help this process of merging two cultural traditions.

HEALTH CARE

Adequate health care is a problem for many immigrants. Without insurance, immigrants who have limited incomes must go to the emergency room for care, but often opt not to seek treatment or to wait until a condition has worsened to a dangerous point.

Insurance
An area of overwhelming concern to newcomers is health and dental care and how to pay for it. Even many of those with full-time employment do not have health insurance. Many newcomers are small business owners or drive trucks and do not have health insurance because of the cost. A Bosnian woman, for example, told us that she went to the doctor for her headaches and the charge was $600. Her husband, a truck driver, makes $850 a week before taxes and other expenses such as gas. Others mentioned that the elderly immigrants have a problem with health insurance because they have such a small income. Several interviewees noted that their community members rely on home remedies because they can not afford to see a doctor.

Mexican parents said that they take their children to the emergency center since if the child is born in the US they can get Medicaid. Also, they noted that in some clinics the women can get free or reduced fee health care, but that there is none for their husbands. When he gets sick, it is a problem for the whole family, since he has no insurance and no clinic is set up to assist men. They asked that there be free language appropriate family health care clinics set up, particularly in the St. Charles area where there is a growing Hispanic population. In recognition of this need among the Hispanics, Sts. Joachim and Ann received a grant recently to open the Crabtree Clinic to serve everyone, including immigrants and the undocumented. A staff member indicated that immigrants in the area have never seen a doctor, more as a result of the lack of accessibility rather than due to cultural beliefs.

As an indication of how important this issue is to the immigrant community, the Chinese, East Indian, Hispanic, and Muslim communities all have at least one non-profit or religious organization helping them with health care. They each have language appropriate doctors coming to particular sites on a regular basis (once a year for a more encompassing health fair or monthly for general check ups). These immigrant communities have the advantage of being larger and having more professionals within their language/cultural communities.
Other types of assistance are exemplified by the nonprofits Accion Social Communitaria and La Clinica which help their clients get free medicines from doctors or pharmacies; and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce that negotiated with Shop n' Save to get a 40% discount for drugs for certain health problems, such as diabetes. While these are laudable efforts on everyone’s part, this piecemeal approach leaves out the dozens of other immigrant communities that have no intra-ethnic system of resources or access. As with the rest of America’s poor and uninsured, there needs to be a more systematic approach to health care for everyone.

Finally, mental health care was mentioned by several of the groups. Refugees have war trauma, loss, and grieving to contend with, and all groups have the stress of moving to a new country. For some of the African groups, young boys — who may have been given drugs during the war and lived traumatized lives in their home countries — are behavior problems, do not listen to parents or teachers, and are in need of mental health services. In another case recounted by an ESOL teacher, a mother had committed suicide; the father could hardly cope with his own grief and loss; and their little boy asked the ESOL teacher to kill him so that he could be with his mother. This teacher found that several of her families had to contend with the issues of death and grief. Still other social service providers mentioned depression and anxiety as a problem among the undocumented. Several people also mentioned alcoholism as a problem among some groups, perhaps masking depression. These mental problems lead to other issues within families and within communities, such as violence and unstable families. Mental health problems exhibited by even one individual have a significant affect on the rest of the family. Mental health problems in the parents, for example, can lead to behavior problems in their children at school. In all of these cases, helping the primary patient relieves the entire family and also assists the ethnic and larger communities.

CHILDCARE

Women and service providers mentioned childcare as a major concern for women who have problems attending school, working, or carrying out family responsibilities if there is no free, easily accessible childcare.

Another problem in almost all of the younger newcomer communities, as it is in the larger American society, is child care. It is difficult for the women to work outside of the home and pay for child care. Also, for those women who choose to stay at home with their children rather than work outside the home, having free child care service would allow them to go to school and learn English, so that by the time their children are ready for school the women with their new English skills could get better paying and more stable jobs.

In some cases, professional immigrant families have members of the older generation living with them in their homes and, in these cases, the grandma or grandpa provides childcare while the parents are working. On the face of it, this is a good solution to the problem; however, these older adults often do not speak English and end up being isolated by this situation. Also, while the children are born in the US, their primary experience until they reach school age is with their non-English speaking grandparents. As a result, these American children begin school as non-English speakers, needing ESOL program support in their first few years.
TRANSPORTATION

Transportation was considered a major need by many and irrelevant by other, more financially viable, ethnic communities. Newcomers without resources were particularly crippled by a lack of good public transportation. These included those who have recently arrived, those with minimum wage jobs, women, and the elderly.

Immigrant communities that have not been in the US long or those with a large number of members in the lower socio-economic strata mentioned transportation as one of their critical needs. Typical of the comments was one leader’s comment:

People could get better paying jobs; they could travel easily to jobs at a greater distance. As it is now, those living in the city could be on a bus for two to three hours, one way, in order to get to a job in west St. Louis County or in St. Charles County.

Stay-at-home moms mentioned transportation, along with childcare, as one of the chief barriers for studying English. Transportation was also a chief concern for them in doing the family shopping, going to the doctor, attending school activities. Essentially, they were “land-locked.” On the other hand, another ethnic social service provider pointed out that the location of their center was an advantage for those attending their elderly program – many of their clientele lived within walking distance, so there was no need for transportation.

SAFETY

Safety was not a critical issue for most ethnic groups; however, anti-immigrant feelings and religious discrimination were of concern to the undocumented, Hispanics, and Moslems in the area.

Bosnians mentioned safety as an important problem, in particular for their children. One interviewee suggested that all families should be told not to let their children play in the streets, a common practice in Bosnia, because it is too dangerous here.

Bosnians also mentioned safety for adults. One woman had been accosted in front of her house when she was coming home from work at about 10:00 pm. This story was mentioned by a couple of the Bosnian interviewees, as an example of how dangerous American streets and neighborhoods can be. On the other hand, other groups indicated that safety was not a problem for them. The latter included newcomers living in suburbia such as East Indians and Koreans, the outer counties such as Hispanics, and some newcomers living in the City (for example, Liberians).

On the other hand, several Muslim interviewees mentioned being concerned about the developing anti-Islamic feeling in the country. They date the rise of this feeling to 9-11, saying that before 9-11 they did not feel discriminated against.

“Muslims are really concerned about their welfare after 9-11.” (An African leader)
"I don’t think you should cover the hair in the US because you put yourself in danger. I tell my wife that, but she still does.” (A Muslim leader)

“There’s an Islamophobia due to lack of knowledge. There’s a sense of uneasiness, especially since 9-11 that wasn’t there before 9-11.” (A Muslim man)

Along with this rise in anti-Islamic sentiment, others working with the undocumented and Hispanics in general noted a rise in anti-immigrant feelings. Service providers who work with these groups noted that many undocumented and Hispanics have moved from the larger St. Louis region represented in this study because they perceived a strong anti-immigrant feeling in the area. This movement out of the area reportedly was reflected in a drop in the number of clients the service providers served this past year compared to the previous year or two.

EMPLOYMENT

Not many mentioned employment as a major problem. Comments about employment had more to do with the level of employment available to them because of language or educational restrictions.

Bosnians simply commented that they knew they had to work hard and to learn English to get ahead and out of the positions they saw as low level, poorly paid, dead-end jobs. A couple of ethnic groups mentioned the need for past education to be certified as legitimate so that they could move into professional positions commensurate with their past employment in their home countries, whether in medicine, engineering, accounting, or other professional occupation. For example, the Congolese focus group noted that even when people came here with advanced degrees they had to take low paying jobs in restaurants and hotels – “not nice air conditioned places, but in the back washing dishes.” They noted that many Africans have MD degrees, but that because US institutions do not recognized such degrees they are forced to take low-paying, low-status jobs.

Another person, from Sierra Leone, gave two refugees as examples of what happens to people when they come here. Both were teachers in Africa. One took a few classes at the community college, but did not continue and is now in a low level job; the second is working on a Masters degree at Washington University. He also mentioned a couple of other Sierra Leonians who finished their PhD programs at St. Louis University. They had been the “backbone of the community, but they both moved” to take positions in other parts of the country. A couple of underlying issues of how successfully people manage to re-establish their social status is their age when they come to the US and degree of family responsibility, ex., whether they are married with children or not.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Legal assistance, while needed, was not considered a top priority for most of the immigrants interviewed, except for the undocumented.

For the undocumented legal assistance was a major concern. As members of the Hispanic focus group pointed out, all other needs were irrelevant if they were not able to remain in the country. They were not concerned with immediate legal assistance; however, they were waiting to see what was going to happen
in the country with the new immigration bill that was to come up soon. A legal specialist who works with diverse clientele, made the same comment about waiting to see what the new immigration bill would be.

Those groups that mentioned legal assistance also noted that they needed free legal services. Again, the larger immigrant groups had some ethnic support for this, that is, the East Indians,\textsuperscript{20} Hispanics,\textsuperscript{21} and Moslems\textsuperscript{22} all had some access to free legal services if needed. The Islamic Foundation Center also included legal assistance in workplace discrimination cases. As the latter indicates, while we frequently think of immigration cases as the greatest need for newcomers, in fact newcomers have a wide range of legal needs from divorce and legal disputes, to involvement in criminal cases, just as other Americans do.

While there are other lawyers who are willing to assist on a pro-bono or fee-reduced basis, there is no major clearing house for parties to find out about who is available and for what type of cases.

**OVERVIEW & CONCLUSIONS**

Overall, there are two major points to be made about the needs found among the newcomer communities. First, there is a significant level of difference among voluntary legal immigrants, refugees, and the undocumented. Many of the voluntary immigrants' key family member(s) came to the US as professionals or as business people, and therefore, have adequate resources to meet their everyday needs and to develop supporting community structures, such as religious institutions. While there are community members within these groups who need services and who may not speak English well, if at all, as a rule the community itself is trying to respond to those needs. For example, within the South Asian community a community-based non-profit, SWERRA, assists women in need. While they target South Asian women, they service any woman who comes to them in crises. Within the Chinese/Taiwanese communities the St. Louis Christian Chinese Community Service Center (CCCSC) served more than 1700 clients – 90% of whom were Chinese/Taiwanese, and included another 10% of the larger community. They provide a wide range of services such as health care, legal services, and elderly services. These organizations can call on professionals who are often of the same language and/or ethnic group; they can also expect to receive a certain level of financial support from within their communities. Such organizations provide a core of essential services, professional expertise, and other resources.

Many of the refugee groups in the St. Louis area are relatively new to the region, such as Bosnians, Sierra Leoneans, Congolese, Somali and Somali Bantu, and Musketanian Turks. While within each of these groups there are strong leaders and influential anders committed to serving their communities, since they are largely refugee communities, they do not have the financial or ethnic-specific professional resources available to them that the more established immigrant groups have available to their community members. Even with these burgeoning ethnically based community organizations, larger, more established and experienced nonprofit organizations, such as the International Institute of St. Louis, are critical to the successful integration of these newcomers. Depending on their level of English and the degree of difference between their home culture and the American culture, it can be expected that this group of newcomers will need a full range of services for many years after their arrival in the US.

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\textsuperscript{20} Through the Hindu temple.

\textsuperscript{21} Several Hispanic organizations provide referrals to free or reduced fee legal assistance.

\textsuperscript{22} Through the Islamic Foundation Center.
The largest group of recognized undocumented in the St. Louis region is Mexicans. The undocumented, along with some of the refugee groups, have problems that are language and culture related, but many of their issues are the same as other Americans living in poverty in the region. As the working poor, they often work two or more jobs, but have no health or dental insurance, and barely make enough money for rent, utilities, childcare, transportation, and other needs raising a family entails. Fortunately, the larger Hispanic/Latino community and others, including the Catholic Church, have come together in many ways to try to provide needed services, at least at a basic level and highlighting the children. As with other voluntary immigrants, we found many similar characteristics among the Hispanic/Latino immigrants: highly educated, English speaking professionals and businesspeople who have the personal, social, political, and financial resources to assist those within the Hispanic/Latino community. As noted above, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce negotiated a discounted drug fee for certain illnesses for Hispanic clients, the Catholic Church has a wide ranging Hispanic Ministry which is active throughout the entire region represented in this study. Other non-ethnic specific organizations, such as the St. Charles city government, have also been supportive of the Hispanic newcomers in their area, encouraging businesses and nonprofit organizations to provide services.

Generally speaking, the overall picture is one of enthusiastic and positive support over a range of services by non-ethnic American and ethnically-based nonprofit organizations. Across the board, people want to support newcomers as they integrate into the larger American community. The down side is that many organizations and programs that are available are like so many patches spread out over the area, attempting to alleviate problems and offer solutions. Except for very large organizations, such as the International Institute, BJC, or religious organizations, and in spite of the success of such organizations as RIC or FOCUS St. Louis, there is still little knowledge about exactly what resources are already available in the area, much less how these resources can be shared. The problem is one of breadth and depth. The breadth refers to the wide geographic area covered and the depth refers to the large number of ethnic and linguistic communities involved. The needs of a small ethnic group, such as the Liberians or Afghans, are just as critical to the individuals involved as the needs of a large, well-represented ethnic group, such as the Bosnians or Mexicans. We need to be mindful that our efforts address newcomer needs do not inadvertently privilege one group over another, thereby denying the basic American tenets of fairness and equality.

What is needed in order to bring increased strength to the St. Louis region, is an underlying structure to pull the above mentioned resources together, something that will make a “patchwork quilt” out of these independent “patches.” That structure requires closely bound, collaborative relationships among the organizations. It is difficult to see how any one organization can adequately serve the needs of the numerous communities spread out over such a wide area. It is also obvious that having same ethnic/same language communities involved in serving their members is highly beneficial. However, working collaboratively with others is also best here – to share resources (space, personnel, professional services), to network (since many problems are the same across communities as people try to integrate into urban America), and for professional and organizational development.
RECOMMENDATIONS

The St. Louis area already has a wide variety of excellent service providers and programs available to newcomers. Premier examples of providers are The International Institute of St. Louis; the St. Louis Public Schools’ Bilingual, ESOL, Migrant Program; Youth and Need; St. Charles Community College; and St. Joachim and Ann. Despite these available resources, steps can be taken to strengthen efforts to meet newcomer needs. The following recommendations address these steps.

Assisting Newcomers

1. Without diluting the strength of working within their own area of expertise or within specific cultural and linguistic groups, service providers would increase their level of efficiency and effectiveness by sharing knowledge, expertise, and resources in an inter-agency and Metropolitan-wide network.

   a. Key to assisting the range and diversity of newcomers is to interconnect the services already being offered by general and ethnic-specific service providers. Many of the ethnic-specific service providers also worked with organizations, agencies, and individuals outside their ethnic or religious groups. An umbrella agency or core group of agencies should be established to provide the underlying structure for bringing these groups together, perhaps on the RIC model but more interdependent and interconnected. Meetings could be held virtually since this would minimize travel time and allow out-lying areas to participate more readily. A secure internet site for inter-group communication should also be developed.

   b. Establish collaborative efforts that involve sharing information on the needs of particular clients (with clients’ permission). These efforts would benefit the individual clients, especially refugees when they no longer qualify for Federal resettlement benefits and still have multiple needs.

   c. Design on-going cultural fluency professional development programs for staff in social service, educational, law enforcement, and other agencies working with diverse newcomer communities. Cultural fluency programs are needed by both American-born and ethnic-specific staff. Such programs need to be developed at three levels: general cultural fluency, culture-specific content, and the linking of these to providing services (such as in health, education, law). While the push may be to have ethnic-specific information first, due to the remarkable diversity of ethnic groups in the area and their mobility, it is critical that staff initially internalize a cultural fluency framework, since they will never be 100% sure of who their next client will be – that is, from which cultural group the client will come.

2. Written and audio materials should be adapted or developed in appropriate languages to help newcomers understand American society. The materials should be made available through a variety of channels such as social service providers, libraries, schools, ethnic
organizations, religious institutions, and the internet. The following are specific recommendations for pamphlets with accompanying tapes/CD/DVDs.

a. **One pamphlet should provide information on relevant local ordinances regarding areas such as traffic, housing, and nuisance laws.**

b. **A second pamphlet should provide general employment information regarding employer’s expectations and workers’ rights.**

c. **A series of pamphlets should be developed to provide an introduction to “American” values, customs, behaviors, and variability.**

3. **Expand opportunities for newcomer communication through formation of social clubs, discussion groups, and workplace “brownbag lunches.”** Conversation groups provide opportunities for increasing cross-cultural understanding as well as opportunities of non-native speakers of English to increase their English proficiency. Recent programs by FOCUS St. Louis and KETC are examples of the types of activities that can be developed.

4. **Coordinate and expand opportunities for English language learning throughout the region.** There are multiple opportunities for adults to learn English; nevertheless, several steps could be taken to more effectively reach newcomers who are not taking advantage of these resources — due to a range of intervening factors, such as childcare, transportation, or employment responsibilities.

   a. **Place mini-centers in or near resident-dense areas (such as apartments complexes where a large number of newcomers live) and at employment sites.**

   b. **Provide childcare or arrange/facilitate a way for families to share childcare during class time.**

   c. **Develop and/or expand in-home English language tutoring.** As discussed above it is very difficult for some individuals because of transportation or other limitations to go regularly to a center, therefore, providing a volunteer-based program is optimal for reaching this population. If these opportunities are expanded, the Immigrant & Refugee Women’s Program could serve as a model.

**Law Enforcement**

Law enforcement agencies should consider steps to increase communication capabilities of their staff with newcomers. In addition to the above recommendations regarding cultural fluency, two additional steps are recommended.

1. **Expand language offerings to police personnel beyond the two-week basic courses offered in Spanish and Bosnian by the St. Louis County Police Academy.**

2. **Provide officers with a pocket-size handbook containing key phrases in frequently used languages in their jurisdiction.** The handbook should also include cultural traits such as hand
gestures and other body language that impact communication for each of the key language groups. This handbook would be especially useful regarding Spanish, but should include other major languages appropriate to their area, such as Bosnian and Vietnamese in St. Louis City and South St. Louis County.
APPENDIX A

SAMPLE OF SERVICE PROVIDERS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Across the region there are multiple levels of service providers from those with specialized (boutique) ethnic/religious-specific services to those that provide multiple types of services. Below is a partial list, to give an example of what is available in the area:

Nonprofit Service Providers

Agape Ministry of Warrenton, Inc.
Warrenton, MO
- Works with all Americans and immigrants – Hispanics mostly
- Provides a food pantry, thrift shop, homeless prevention aid (rent, utilities), school supplies for Kids, weatherization, presents for kids birthday and at Christmas, prescription aid, day care assistance program, referrals

Barnes Jewish Hospital
St. Louis City
- Provides for multi-ethnic cliental – 35,000 encounters with interpreters (includes phone and on-site visits)
- Health services
- Interpreter services

Catholic Charities Community Services
St. Louis City
- Of immigrants, about 60-70% are Hispanics; some Vietnamese, Afghani, and Bosnians
- Social services
- Mental health services
- Youth programming

Catholic Immigration Law Project
Serves multiethnic cliental
- Law services for no fee for low income clients – immigration problems

FOCUS St. Louis
St. Louis, MO
- Works with school districts, community colleges, the International Institute and Cooperating School District
- Education services
- Advocacy and coalition building

International Institute of St. Louis (note Appendix C for a full description of their services)
- Served clients from about 135 countries since 2000
- Refugee resettlement
- Social services
Education services
Economic development
Mental health services
Community links programs
Youth and elderly programs

McCarty Counseling & Mediation Services
Serves Americans and immigrants (particularly Hispanics)

Missouri Migrant Education/English Language Learners (MELL)
Works with educators for English Language Learners
Educational programs

Metropolitan Congregations United
Metropolitan St. Louis
Serves mostly Hispanics, some other ethnic groups
There are 7 Catholic Churches that serve Latinos
Working for comprehensive immigration reform

Refugee and Immigrant Consortium
Metropolitan St. Louis
Networking among service and educational agencies

St. Charles Community College
St. Charles, Cottleville, Wentzville, Troy
ESOL classes serving students from ca 30 countries
Referral services – particularly for health and dental needs for free or small fee

Sts Joachim & Ann Care Services
St. Charles, MO
Serves Americans and immigrant groups – Hispanics (especially Mexicans from Michoacan,
Mayan speaking with little Spanish)
Provide case management
Children in Head Start
Medical and food assistance
Assist with landlord problems

Youth in Need
St. Louis and St. Charles, MO
Works with American and immigrant youth -- mostly with Hispanic clients in St. Charles and
multi-ethnic clients (ex., Afghani, Bosnian, Congolese, Hispanics, Kurds, Russian/Turks, Somalis,
and Vietnamese) in St. Louis City
Referrals
Education
Family/ personal assistance
Headstart
Counseling/therapy
Shelter, Transitional Living Program, Independent Living Program

Nonprofit Ethnic/Religious Specific Service Providers

Accion Social Comunitaria, Hispanic/Latino Community Social Action
St. Louis, MO
Provides:
Referral services for medical, dental, legal services
To St. Cecelia for money to pay emergency bills
To La Clinica
To food pantry
Job placement services
Education programs

African Mutual Assistance Association of Missouri (AMAAAM)
St. Louis, MO
Provides services to pan-African clients (ex., Congolese, Ethiopians, Eritreans, Sierra Leoneans, Somalis, Somali Bantus, Sudanese)
Case management
Social adjustment assistance
Referrals
Translation/interpretation services
Women's Initiative
Conflict Resolution
Advocacy

Boat People SOS
St. Louis City
Serves Vietnamese clients
Elderly services
Couples counseling
Citizenship classes
Vietnamese classes for young people

Caritas Felices Daycare
St. Ann, MO
Serves mostly Hispanic clients
Provides daycare and preschool instruction
Translation and interpreter assistance

Center for Survivors of Torture and War Trauma
St. Louis, MO
Serves a multi-ethnic clientele
Mental health services
Youth services
The Hindu Temple of St. Louis
St. Louis County
Serves South Asians in the area
Provides a variety of programs
Youth programs
Humanitarian Committee – to encourage volunteerism in the wider St. Louis area
Educational
Legal clinic – free services
Health fair once per year

Hispanic Ministries – throughout the region
Holy Rosary Catholic Church
Warrenton, MO
A variety of services

Sacred Heart Catholic Church
Troy, MO
Among newcomers, work mostly with Hispanics, some Filipinos and Koreans

Islamic Community Center
St. Louis City
Largest group it serves is Bosnian Moslems
Educational services

Islamic Foundation of Greater St. Louis
St. Louis County
Provides wide variety of assistance to multi-ethnic Moslems in the area, ex., Afghans, Bantus, Bosnians, Crasnadorians/Turks, Iraqis, Kurds, Kosovars, Pakistanis, Sierra Leoneans, Somalians
Educational programs
Employment assistance
Financial assistance for emergencies

Bilingual International Assistance Service
St. Louis, MO
Works with multiethnic clientele – Russians, Bosnians, and Middle Easterners
Case management
Social services
Mental health services
Interpretation and translation
Citizenship assistance
Transportation

La Clinica
St. Louis, MO
Serves mainly Hispanic clients but also other low income immigrants and refugees
Health
Legal services

PLAN (Professional Latin American Network)
St. Louis, MO
A network organization that pulls together agencies, individuals, businesses and other organizations concerned with Hispanics/Latinos in the area

SAWERAA
St. Louis County
A nonprofit that serves South Asian women and families suffering from domestic violence

St. Louis Christian Chinese Community Service Center
St. Louis, MO
Serves the Metropolitan Chinese and Taiwanese community
Basic health screenings
Elderly program
Legal clinic
Adult classes
Case management
Counseling
Community educational seminars

Southside Bosnian Collaborative
St. Louis, MO
Networking organization for agencies and businesses working with Bosnians

Community Organizations and Mutual Assistance Associations in the St. Louis area

African Refugee and Immigrant Services (ARIS)
Argentine Society of St. Louis
Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Greater St. Louis
Congolese Community of St. Louis (CCSL)
Ecuadorian Society of St. Louis
Ethiopian Heritage Association
India Association of St. Louis
Japanese American Citizens League, St. Louis Chapter
Korean American Association
Lao Mutual Assistance Association
Liberian Association of Missouri
Mesopotamian Center (Iraqi)
Organization of Chinese Americans
Pakistani American Association of Greater St. Louis
Red-Sea Eritrean Community Center
Russian American School
St. Joseph Croatian Church
Sierra Leonean Community Organization
Somali Bantu Community Organization
Soorya Dance Company (East Indian)
Vietnamese Association of Missouri

Plus several dozen ethnic organizations mentioned in *Culture Links* (a directory published by the International Institute of St. Louis)
# APPENDIX B

## LANGUAGES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### Table 1. St. Louis Public School District’s languages

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<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total ELL</th>
<th>Totlangs</th>
<th>BCS</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>Viet</th>
<th>Somali</th>
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<th>African</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Albanian</th>
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<th>Kurdish</th>
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<th>Farsi/Per</th>
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### Table 2. St. Louis County’s public school districts’ languages

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<th>District</th>
<th>Total ELL</th>
<th>Totlangs</th>
<th>BCS</th>
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### Table 5. Jefferson County’s public school districts’ languages

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<th>Russian</th>
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<th>India</th>
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### Table 6. Lincoln County’s public school districts’ languages

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<th>District</th>
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<th>Russian</th>
<th>India</th>
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### Table 7. Warren County’s public school districts’ languages

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+ Top ten language are in yellow.

* The different Indian languages are grouped under India.
Appendix C

CREDITS

The Missouri Foundation for Health
A grant from the Missouri Foundation for Health (MFH) supported this project. The Missouri Foundation for Health, the largest health care foundation in the state of Missouri, was established in January 2000 when it received assets accumulated under the nonprofit organization, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Missouri (BCBSMo) before BCBSMo was converted to a for-profit organization. MFH’s vision is to “improve the health of the people in the communities we serve.” The present study helps fulfill this vision by identifying the health and safety needs of a growing population in the area: newcomers including voluntary immigrants, refugees, and the undocumented.

The International Institute St. Louis
The International Institute St. Louis (the Institute) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit agency that assists refugees and immigrants in Metropolitan St. Louis. It is one of the largest refugee resettlement agencies in the Midwest and has developed a comprehensive set of services help refugees and other newcomers adjust to their new environment. More than 8,000 newcomers and 30,000 area residents benefit from their services annually. These services include services for:

- refugee resettlement,
- case management services,
- youth (after school tutoring, summer youth program, and youth career services),
- the elderly (elderly services),
- citizenship programs (citizenship preparation, voter registration & education),
- employment and career building skills (job placement services, life skills training, patient care assistant training, career planning, small business development services),
- community mediation training,
- education programs (English classes, GED preparation, financial literacy & asset-building),
- health & mental health services (including individual & group counseling), and
- income tax preparation assistance.

The Institute also provides a bridge to the larger community through its Business Solutions Center, that provides such services as translation, interpretation, consulting, and training, and its Festival of Nations, a once a year celebration of Metropolitan St. Louis’ ethnic diversity.

The primary researchers for the project
Ronald E. Mertz, PhD. Dr. Mertz is an expert in qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. As an educator and anthropologist, as well as a former administrator in the St. Louis Public Schools, he has had extensive experience in multicultural environments and with ethnically diverse populations.

Pamela A. De Voe, PhD Dr. De Voe is a nationally known applied anthropologist who has worked in the field of immigrants and refugees for more than 30 years. She has worked closely with ethnic leaders and influentials in the St. Louis area and has developed state-of-the-art curriculum for leadership and organizational development workshops as well as for training multiethnic community mediators.