



STATEN  
ISLAND

NEWSLETTER  
Spring/Summer 2018



## New Americans Welcome Center

### ANNUAL READING CELEBRATION!

Our annual Reading Celebration that took place on June 6, 2018 was a huge success this year. A highlight of the event was a reading by one of our students, Ansberto Moran. What follows is a transcript of his beautiful reading:

“Good morning everyone. My name is Ansberto Moran. I am from Mexico. The reason I’m here today is because I want to share my American experience.

On May 8, 1993, I married my wife Belem. We had three children: Angel, Maria, and Adriana. At the beginning, we struggled financially. That is the reason that in October 1996 I decided to come to America.

When I first arrived, I was having trouble finding work. I asked friends and family to help me find a job, as I was barely getting by. At the time, I was only making \$120 a week, most of which I sent to my wife and kids back home, in Mexico. It was a difficult time in my life. I was living on a bare minimum. There were times when I only had a bag of chips

and a soda for the whole day. Because of my financial situation, I was forced to live in a small basement room, and I was asking myself if I could get through this.

One morning, as I came out of the basement, it was a beautiful day, I looked up at the sky and I started to cry. I knew then I had hit rock bottom. I felt I couldn’t live like this anymore. After a series of phone calls, a friend finally found me a job at a restaurant. I started working all the time. After eight months, I decided to bring my wife and children to America. They arrived on November 28, 1997.



Ansberto (left) is pictured at the reading celebration with others.

After months of working two jobs, I was able to get an apartment for my family. My children went to school. My economic situation improved. But, holding two jobs at night took a toll and I started to drink. This just added another problem to my life, my marriage, and my relationship to my children suffered. The time came when I thought of separating from my wife, making my emotional life even more critical. Finally, in December of 2004, I sought help and started living my life sober. My life improved in all areas, physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

My wife and I always encouraged our kids to stay in school. They were very worried about our status as undocumented. They thought they would never be able to go to college. We never stopped encouraging and believing in them. We assured them that we were always there to help them. I always believed that something good would happen. Thanks be to God, in 2012, President Obama announced the DACA Program. From that time on, my wife, my children, and I did everything possible to be enrolled in the program.

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Staff Spotlight Jill Patel

# ASK

## YOUR NAI?

Q: I applied for Citizenship 3 months ago – how long until I have my interview?

A: At the present time most applicants are waiting several months after they have had their (biometrics) fingerprints and pictures taken.

Q: I'm not sure if I am eligible for citizenship – How can I find out if I am eligible?

A: Here at New Americans, we help people with citizenship all the time. Call to make an appointment and we can guide you on the right path. We have an attorney on-site once a month.

Q: Can I visit my child's school if I am undocumented?

A: Yes. But you need to have an official form of photo identification. Schools in the DOE (Department of Education) accepts IDNYC, The free municipal ID card issued by New York City.

Q: How can I get a IDNYC?

A: You can sign up for a free IDNYC at [IDNYC](#). IDNYC does not collect immigration status information.

# READING CELEBRATION

My wife and I have remained united and our relationship has improved tremendously. As a result, on May 12, 2018, we were happy to celebrate 25 years of married life. Now, it has been less than a year since my wife and I joined the YMCA ESL program to learn English and it has had a marked improvement in our ability to understand and being able to communicate in the language.

Through this program, at our El Centro ESL program in Staten Island, we have met some wonderful people, the teachers Deborah and Francesca, as well as our classmates and all other people involved in the program.

To conclude, I want to share with you, that on May 30th and 31st, we have had two of our children graduate from College, thanks to DACA. I have learned that if we really want something, we can achieve it. Both my wife, who is also my partner, and I, are eternally grateful for allowing us to share this moment with you.



Ansberto Moran

I wish you all a wonderful day. Thank you.”

Ansberto Moran  
June 6, 2018



Citywide New American Participants at The Reading Celebration.

# The Doll Project

A Wish, a dream, a prayer, a statement, a drawing, a person's name.

This is the prompt that Everet Curry started her workshop with. She asked the students participating to write their own choice on a piece of paper that they would then crumble up and use as the base for the doll's head. The remainder of the workshop was spent with the students as they created their doll.

They constructed Arms, legs and hair and decorated their dolls. During the creation process Everet continued to ask the students:

"What is your doll thinking?" At the end of the session she asks that the students write down exactly that. She then takes pictures of the dolls and their statements. The photos of these dolls will all be displayed later this year as part of the Doll Project.

All the dolls were very unique and had their own personalities. And reading what the dolls were thinking was very interesting. A great time was had by all. If your organization and its participants would like to participate in this unique community art project call Everet Creative/Designer 917-447-7352.



A new addition to Staten Island's New American Welcome Center, Jill grew up in the South and got her BA degree, Master's in Education, and MBA from Harvard University. She started the first day care center at Harvard and taught adult education as well as preschool. After finishing her MBA she worked as an administrator at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital before moving to the New York area where she worked as Director of Workforce Health and Safety at New York Presbyterian Hospital in 2016. She and her husband Pankaj Patel MD live on Staten Island and have a daughter, son-in-law, and two adorable grandchildren in Florida.

Jill has volunteered in



Jill (Left) helps her students in her casual conversations class.

Laura Jimenez' Citizenship Prep Tuesday class since July 2017. She is now offering her own class "Casual Conversations" to give students an opportunity to practice real-life conversations. The class will feature a series of videos from "We are New York" that illustrate everyday experiences and will give students a chance to practice casual conversations in English.

When she's not volunteering with the New American Welcome Center, Jill and her husband love ballet and theater in New York City. Jill also volunteers with the Board of Integration Charter School on Staten Island and works with a group of Harvard Business School alumni who are developing a new career track in healthcare billing for adults.

When asked why she volunteered at the Y Jill said "The work that the YMCA's New Americans Welcome Center does is extremely important and the students are a real pleasure. It is so encouraging that so many talented, charming, and motivated immigrants are coming to our country and it's very gratifying to help them join our Staten Island community."

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