

# THE AMERICAN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

*Under the*

# OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS

*In partnership with*

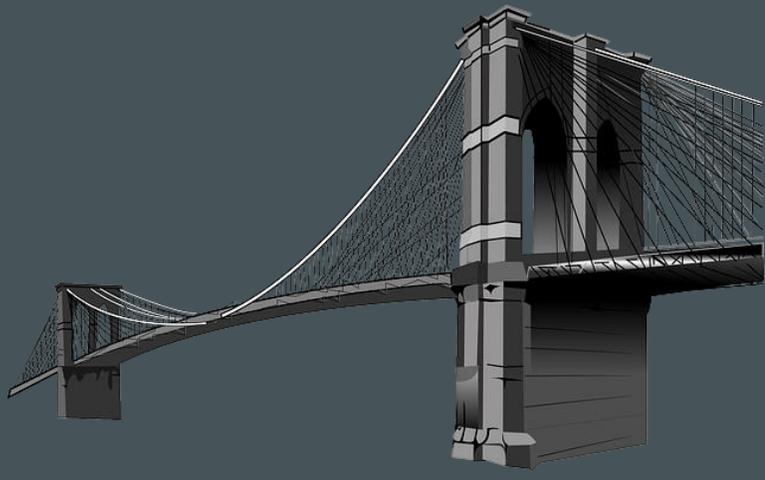
# JOURNEY'S END REFUGEE SERVICES





# MISSION OF THE AMERICAN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Building Bridges of Understanding  
Across Cultures



- A Non-profit Organization
- Founded in 1939
- Provides immigration services, refugee services, and serves as a multicultural welcome center for the community at large.
- Hours of Operation  
Monday - Thursday: 9am - 4pm  
Friday: 9am - 3pm



TO ENCOURAGE  
THE SPIRIT OF  
BROTHERHOOD  
AMONG NATIONS  
AND PEOPLES



TO SPONSOR  
CITIZENSHIP  
EDUCATION



TO ASSIST PERSONS  
SEEKING TO SETTLE  
AND WORK IN THE  
UNITED STATES



TO PROMOTE  
RACIAL AND  
POLITICAL  
UNDERSTANDING



TO CULTIVATE  
FELLOWSHIP  
BETWEEN NATIVE  
AND NATURALIZED  
CITIZENS



TO SAFEGUARD AND  
DEFEND THE  
CONSTITUTION OF  
THE UNITED STATES

## MAYRA C. GARCIA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



- Mayra Garcia has worked for the American Civic Association since June 2009, working first as an Immigration Case Consultant
- She was promoted to Executive Director/CEO in 2015.
- Mayra has a bachelor's degree from Fordham University in Science and Sociology with a minor in Psychology. She later went on to obtain a Master's in Science from Hunter College, with a specialized focus on youth in the criminal justice system with behavioral and emotional disorders.
- She is an accredited representative of the Department of Justice (DOJ) as well as a Notary Public registered in the Broome and Tioga Counties.
- Since becoming the Executive Director/CEO of the American Civic Association, Mayra has helped transform the organization into a multicultural center, while maintaining a welcoming atmosphere towards refugees and immigrants who are in need of any kind of assistance.
- Consequently, in May 2017, Mayra was awarded the Liberty Bell Award by the Broome County Bar Association, and most recently the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. award for a decade of loyal and dedicated service in Immigration.



# AMERICAN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

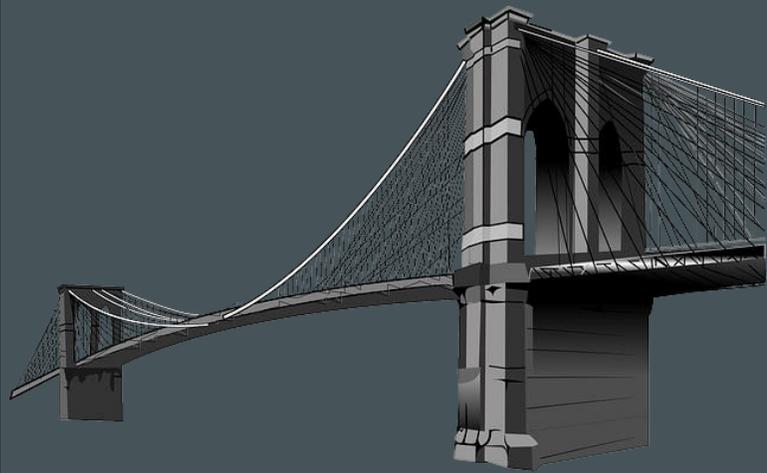
*Building Bridges of Understanding  
Across Cultures*

The American Civic Association has been dedicated to its mission of helping immigrants and refugees and building bridges of understanding between foreign- and native-born communities since 1939. We are a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

## WHO WE ARE

## WHAT WE DO

- Immigration Services
- Law Clinics
- Citizenship Classes
- Community Engagement
- ESL/GED Classes
- Girl Scouts Multicultural Troop
- Refugee Social Services Program
- Multi-cultural and Multi-ethnic Events



# STATISTICS (APRIL 1, 2018 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018)

Clients Served: 2,650

Students Enrolled in ESL Classes: 210

Students Enrolled in Citizenship  
Classes: 100

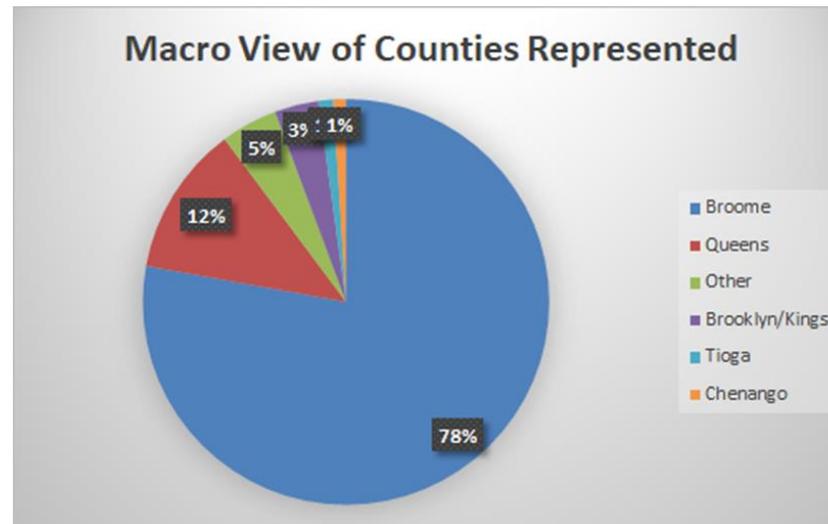
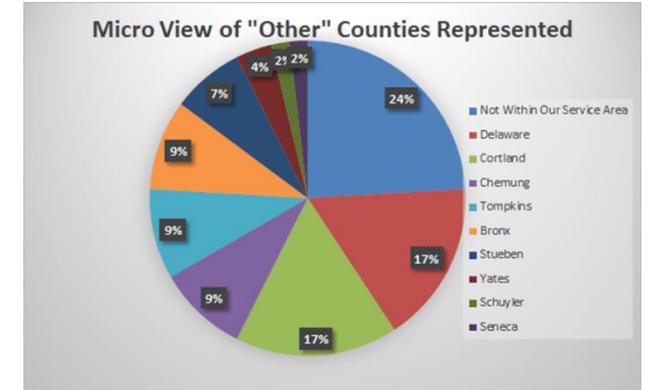
Clients in USCIS Mobile Service  
Program: 130

Clients in the Talk to a Lawyer  
Program: 80

Countries of origin clients come from:  
Ukraine, Guatemala, Haiti, China,  
Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic,  
El Salvador, Mexico, Honduras, India,  
Iraq, Jamaica, Sudan, Korea, Italy,  
Germany, Burma (Myanmar), Laos,  
United Kingdom, and many others.

## Other Current Counties Represented:

- Delaware: 17%
- Cortland: 17%
- Chemung: 9%
- Tompkins: 9%
- Bronx: 9%
- Steuben: 7%
- Yates: 4%
- Schuyler: 2%
- Seneca: 2%
- Not within our service area: 24%



Counties Within Our Service Area but not yet represented:  
Livingston, Cayuga, Ontario

## Current Overall Counties Represented:

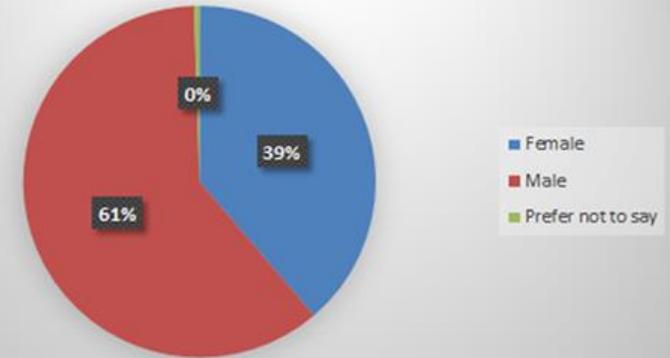
- Broome: 78%
- Queens: 12%
- Brooklyn/Kings: 3%
- Tioga: 1%
- Chenango: 1%
- Other: 5%

# STATISTICS (JANUARY 2, 2019 TO JUNE 28, 2019)

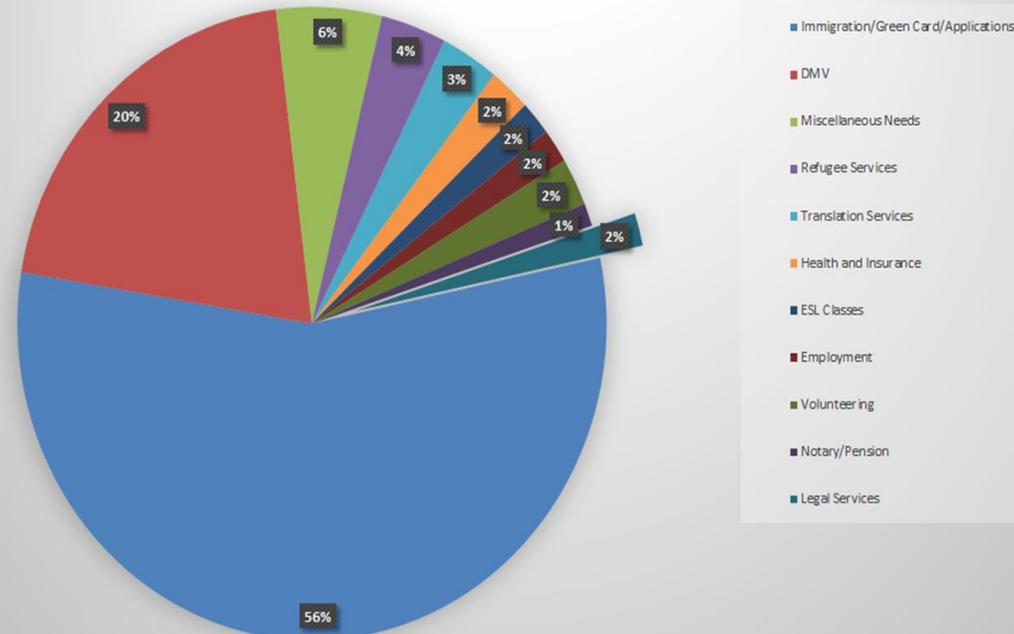
## Current Gender Ratios:

- Male: 61%
- Female: 39%
- Prefer not to say: 0%

January to June Gender Ratios



Reasons For Visit: January to June 2019



## Reasons for Visits to the ACA:

- Immigration/Green Card/ N-400 Applications: 56%
- DMV: 20%
- Miscellaneous Needs: 6%
- Refugee Services: 4%
- Translation Service: 3%
- Health Insurance: 2%
- ESL Classes: 2%
- Employment: 2%
- Volunteering: 2%
- Notary/Pension: 1%
- Legal Services: 1%

## RECOGNITION AND ACCREDITATION

- ❑ The **American Civic Association** is the **only** nonprofit organization in Broome County approved by the **Department of Justice (DOJ)** and in compliance with **USCIS** guidelines, to carry out a **comprehensive** list of immigration services.
- ❑ Currently, the ACA has two partial Accredited Representatives, who are authorized to represent clients in their immigration issues before DHS and help them file their immigration applications.
- **Pro Bono Attorney Consultations**

# REFUGEE SOCIAL SERVICES PROGRAM (RSSP)

1. Application and Assessment
2. Job Development Leading to a Job Placement
3. Employment Preparation
4. Follow-Up Retention
5. Transitional Supports

## Basic Needs Support

- To support employability and other services that will address self-sufficiency, work experience, and English proficiency.
- Employment services
- Referrals to health services
- 
- School enrollment for adults and children
- Assistance with registration for a variety of social services programs

As part of the network of 27 state-wide opportunity centers, we can now offer the following resources:

Previously, ACA required payment for assisting clients with filing N-400 and N-600 forms:

Now, these *fees are waived* by ONA and we are able to assist with the N-400 and N-600 without client cost!

1.

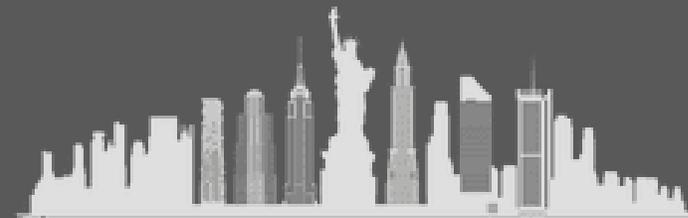
Instead of waiting weeks for the opportunity, clients with complex cases can now meet with our on-site *pro-bono immigration lawyers*, provided in association with Journey's End Refugee Services.

3.

We also can further our commitment to community accessibility through *educational workshops* focusing on the naturalization process, in addition to free citizenship classes.

2.

## NEW YORK'S OFFICE FOR NEW AMERICANS



“We are a state of immigrants ...while other states build walls to keep people out, *we open our arms* and we invite people in.”

- Governor Andrew Cuomo,  
2012 State of the State address.

## OFFICE FOR New Americans Hotline **I-800-566-7636**

Information and referrals are available through the toll-free,  
multilingual Office for New Americans Hotline

- The hotline is available 9am-8pm, Monday through Friday
- Calls to the hotline are confidential and anonymous. Anyone can call, regardless of citizenship or documented status
- Assistance is available in 200+ languages





**JOURNEY'S END**  
**REFUGEE SERVICES**

## SOUTHERN TIER SATELLITE OFFICE

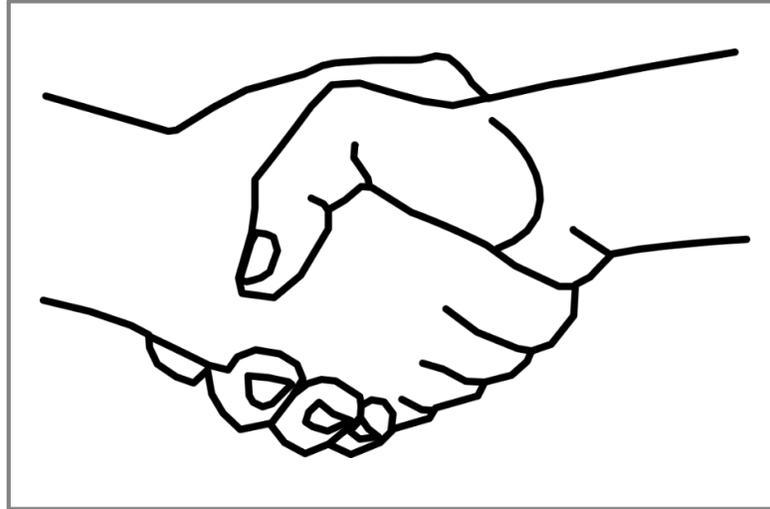
EMILY CAPONE, LDP STAFF ATTORNEY

YASSER GHONANEM, ONA STAFF ATTORNEY

SUSAN SCHNEIDER, ONA STAFF ATTORNEY

LAILA HERNANDEZ, LEGAL ASSISTANT

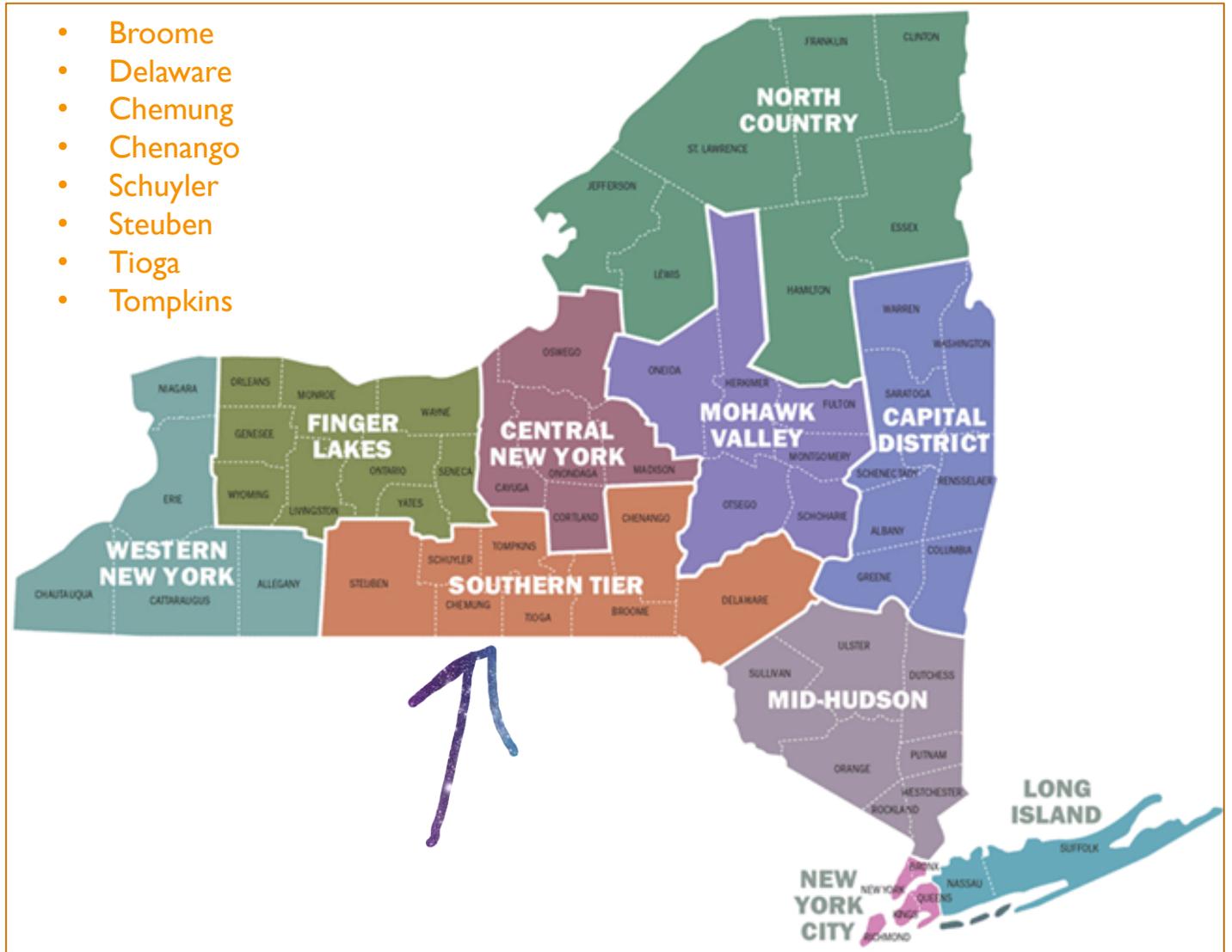
## JOURNEY'S END REFUGEE SERVICES



- Journey's End Refugee Services is located in Buffalo New York with a recent expansion in 2 new locations: Rochester and Binghamton New York
- JERS has partnered with the ACA to provide immigration legal services to the community in the Southern Tier Region serving 8 counties.

# COUNTIES THAT JERS SOUTHERN TIER SERVES

- Broome
- Delaware
- Chemung
- Chenango
- Schuyler
- Steuben
- Tioga
- Tompkins



## WHAT WE DO:

- Practice limited to U.S. Immigration and Nationality Law
- Representation is offered only to clients who meet our income eligibility guidelines and case acceptance policy
- JERS offers legal advice and representation to clients on a nominal fee or pro bono basis
- Currently offering monthly free legal walk in consultations that serves refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants, and U.S. citizens with their immigration needs (Binghamton and Ithaca locations)



## LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDED

- Permanent Residence (Green Card) & Citizenship Services
- Immigration Status Issues
- Family Reunification
- Immigration Court Representation
- Travel Documents & Work Authorization
- Other Immigration Matters such as: Fee waivers of USCIS applications, Expiration of Parole Status, Response to USCIS Request for Evidence (RFE), EOIR Correspondence/Motions, BIA Appeals and other affirmative defensive immigration matters.



# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS PRESENTATIONS AND INFORMATION SESSIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY

- Protecting your rights
- Knowing your rights with ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement)
- Who is at risk with ICE
- Learn how to make a family plan in case you are confronted by ICE
- Laws and what to do if confronted by ice in any situation such as your house, your car or any where in the public
- Referrals for legal aid
- Rights of refugees and Asylees
- And much more

# JOURNEY'S END REFUGEE SERVICES

“ Every day our immigration system more closely resembles a *criminal justice system* without any of the associated protections...”



## Why is immigration legal counsel needed in this climate?

- Presidential Executive Orders of 2017, which expanded expedited removal, the capacities of ICE and similar organizations, and travel bans.
- Uncertainty in the future of DACA enrollees and applicants
- Stricter enforcement and harsher consequences for application errors
- For fiscal 2019, refugee admissions have been capped at 30,000, the lowest since 1980.

**Overall, the Immigration system is becoming more punitive than accessible.**

## Why is immigration legal counsel needed here?

- 77% of New York's immigration legal services are set in NYC, leaving the rural regions underserviced and under-resourced
- The Southern Tier is the region with the highest percentage of new immigrants, with 18% entering 2010 or after.
- In the first 6 months of 2019, the American Civic has recorded nearly 700 people seeking help with immigration applications

QUESTIONS  
OR  
COMMENTS?





Thank You for Your  
Attention!