

COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER

IMMIGRATION POLICY CENTER

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE CENTER

LEGAL ACTION CENTER



**AMERICAN
IMMIGRATION
COUNCIL**

**2010
ANNUAL REPORT**



BACK ROW (left to right): Benjamin E. Johnson, Seth Hoy, Walter Ewing, Lois C. Magee, Travis Packer, Wendy Feliz Sefsaf

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Honoring Our Immigrant Past, Shaping Our Immigrant Future

In 2010, the American Immigration Council continued to bring intelligent, committed people together to make a positive change in how America thinks about and acts towards immigration. Our organization has emerged as a powerful voice for sensible, humane immigration policies that are consistent with fundamental constitutional rights and reflective of our proud history as a nation of immigrants.

As you will read inside the pages of this report, our Immigration Policy Center, Legal Action Center, Community Education Center, and International Exchange Center are a force for positive change in the lives of people and communities across the country. Through our work we are committed to standing up against injustice and intolerance, and laying a foundation for a deeper understanding of what it means to be a nation of immigrants that is committed to equality and fairness.

2010 was a challenging year for everyone who cares about immigrants. Congress was once again unable to find consensus and pass meaningful immigration reform, including a heartbreaking failure to pass the DREAM Act during the lame duck session. We also found ourselves swept up in the dramatic events that took place in Arizona when the state passed SB1070 into law.

While these setbacks are disappointing, they fuel our belief that our work is as critical as ever. The American Immigration Council will continue to stand up for immigration policies that reflect America's greatest hopes, not our darkest fears. We will continue to demand that our laws be implemented in accordance with fundamental principles of fairness and due process of law. And we will continue to celebrate our proud history as a nation of immigrants.

On behalf of the entire Board and staff of the American Immigration Council, we thank our supporters for the time and resources they have given and continue to give. We are the organization we are today because of the support we receive from groups and individuals across the country, and we look forward to working with them to create an even more effective and dynamic organization in the future.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Johnson".

Benjamin Johnson
Executive Director
American Immigration Council



The Community Education Center (CEC) works across the country to provide young people the opportunity to explore immigration issues in their own communities and learn about the benefits immigration brings to the nation. Through a wide range of educational resources and programs—including the annual Creative Writing Contest, community grants programs, and partnerships with local educators—the CEC has reached thousands of students and teachers who want to participate in thoughtful dialogue about immigration in their classrooms and communities.



Students attach cards with the names of immigrants from their family trees on a classroom world map.

Resources and Publishing Partnerships

The CEC provides book reviews, film reviews, lesson plans, and other materials to educators, community leaders, and students via www.communityeducationcenter.org. In addition, the CEC produced a video titled *"What Makes Us American"*, which is posted on YouTube. The video narration is in both English and Spanish and is now available to educators across the country.

The CEC hosted several book signings in 2010 and launched a new "e-store" to sell books. Proceeds from the sale of each of the books support the Council's educational initiatives. This is in addition to book sponsorship campaigns where individuals pledge a book which is sent to schools and libraries located in identified "hot spots" or areas that have a high incidence of hate crimes against immigrants.



High School Service Learning on Long Island

The CEC, in collaboration with [Street Law](#), a legal education group, launched a two-year project on Long Island in the winter of 2010. The program increases and improves teaching about immigration law and policy to high school students in Long Island, NY. In select socioeconomically and culturally diverse communities, the program pairs volunteer immigration lawyers with teachers of high school government, civics, and/or elective law courses. The lawyer-teacher teams receive materials, training, and technical support that prepare them to deliver a series of model classroom lessons to high school students. They also design and implement service learning projects related to immigration law, relevant to local circumstances, and tailored to fit the needs of the school community.

The two-year program is generously funded by the Hagedorn Foundation, a Long Island-based foundation. The funding will provide the schools with a website which they can develop into a resource and collaboration forum, training workshops, mini-grants to implement service learning projects, and a set of text books.

The participating schools are: Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School in Copiague, Suffolk County; Lawrence High School in Cedarhurst, Nassau County; Brentwood High in Brentwood, Suffolk County; and Walt Whitman High School in South Huntington Station, Suffolk County.

Creative Writing Contest

Over 5,000 students participated in the 2010 Celebrate America Creative Writing Contest. First place winner, Julia Culbert, from Northern California, had her winning entry read into the *Congressional Record* and she received an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., where she read her essay during the American Immigration Council's Annual Benefit. The top five winners received flags that were flown over the Capitol in their honor. The winning entries were judged by authors Firoozeh Dumas, Belle Yang, Warren St. John, and Gish Jen.



Connecting with Communities

The CEC was invited by New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg to present during the 7th Annual Immigrant Heritage Week in New York City. The CEC held several sessions for educators, school administrators, librarians, community leaders, and parents interested in teaching immigration issues to elementary school students. The sessions were held at Queen's Library in Long Island City and the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in Manhattan. Other workshops and book events during Immigrant Heritage Week were held at Columbia University's Teachers' College and Ellis Island.

The CEC partnered with George Washington University's Graduate School of Education and Human Development, for the third year in a row, as presenters of curricula related to immigration law and policy for student teachers from the Greater Washington D.C. area. The course, The Immigrant Experience, is attended by 200 educators and administrators annually.

The Community Education Center participated in Johns Hopkins University's summer institute introducing incoming honor students to the diverse communities of Baltimore and engaging them in a discussion about how immigrants form communities and continue to contribute to the success of Baltimore and the nation.

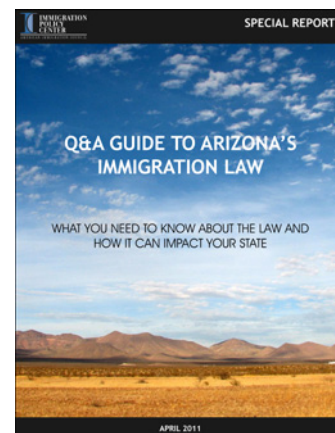
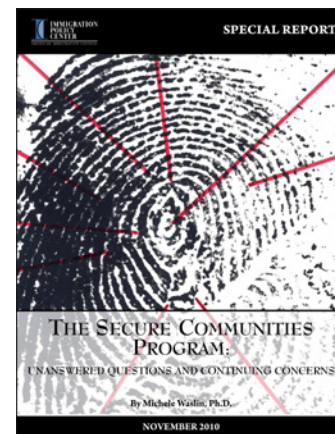
Michigan State University, in collaboration with the CEC, designed and implemented a program with a focus on Asian Americans that was piloted with student teachers. These pre-service teachers returned to their communities and taught lessons about Asian Americans during the different waves of immigration as part of their internship.

Naturalization Ceremonies

Several AILA chapters held naturalization ceremonies in their communities to welcome new citizens and celebrate the winners of the annual creative writing contest. The Houston Chapter held a children's ceremony where two dozen young immigrants between the ages of 2 and 18 became U.S. citizens. The Northern California Chapter also held a ceremony that celebrated the citizenship of 1,300 new Americans from around the globe and honored creative writing contest winners.



The Immigration Policy Center (IPC) strives to enhance the quality of the debate on immigration by providing facts about immigrants and immigration. The IPC provides a bridge between academics and advocates, informing the public, the media, Congress, state and local legislators and advocacy groups about the best research and ideas in the immigration field. Through a combination of original research, publication of outside authors, and timely fact sheets, blog posts, and other easy to understand and use documents, IPC has made its mark on the immigration policy world.



The Immigration Policy Center's most notable reports in 2010 include "Why Immigrants Can Drive the Green Economy," "Raising the Floor for American Workers," "The Secure Communities Program," and "Q&A Guide to Arizona's Immigration Law."

In 2010, IPC issued 73 publications and over 270 blog posts. A few of the highlights of the last year show the range and depth of the IPC's work.

Rapid Response

IPC monitors and quickly responds to anti-immigrant rhetoric, particularly arguments that blame immigrants for crime, the bad economy, job losses, or other social ills. IPC excels in de-mystifying flawed statistics and bad logic. For instance, IPC created a primer for candidates, advocates, and the public addressing the major myths about immigration and how to rebut them in ["Giving Facts a Fighting Chance: Answers to the Toughest Immigration Questions"](#).

Advancing Immigration Research

The IPC works with new and established scholars, journalists, and other researchers to develop an affirmative agenda that explores the impact of immigration on the major social, political, and economic questions of the day. For instance, IPC launched 2010 with the publication of ["Raising the Floor for American Workers"](#), an analysis of the long-term benefits of legalization. The top-line figure from that report—legalization of the undocumented would add 1.5 trillion to the Gross Domestic Product over a 10-year period—has become the accepted and oft cited figure on the impact of legalization, even appearing on signs at immigration rallies.

Policy Tools and Solutions

IPC experts offer legislative and policy solutions and advice, providing materials that help to shape and influence the broader debate on immigration reform.

This work includes legislative analysis and policy commentary, as well as daily takes on the best research, ideas, and current events through ImmigrationImpact.com, the American Immigration Council's popular blog. In addition, IPC's analysis of immigration enforcement measures in publications such as ["ICE's Enforcement Priorities and the Factors That Undermine Them"](#) and ["The Secure Communities Program: Unanswered Questions and Continuing Concerns"](#) consistently number among the most popular publications.

The Year in Review

IPC published reports and perspectives pieces in 2010 that took on the major immigration issues of the day. IPC issued reports on the impact of remittances during the response to the Haitian earthquake, a study of DHS immigration policy in the first year of the Obama administration, critiques of Secure Communities and other immigration enforcement programs, and consistent and timely rebuttals of arguments pushed by the immigration restrictionists. IPC also promoted the concept of immigrants as innovators and entrepreneurs in economic analysis and publications such as ["Why Immigrants Can Drive the Green Economy"](#) by Richard Herman.

The spring and summer were dominated by work on SB 1070. The IPC played a vital role in educating the public and providing necessary information to push back on the inaccurate claims made by supporters of SB 1070. IPC initially focused on assessing the implementation costs (fiscal and societal) of the law, as well as disentangling the issues of violence and immigration at the border.

IPC's ["Q&A Guide to Arizona's Immigration Law"](#), published within weeks of the enactment of the law, quickly became one of the key documents used by advocates around the country to explain and debunk the myths of SB 1070. IPC also published a series of Perspectives on Arizona, including the long history of immigration-related conflict on the border, ["Back to the Border: A Historical Comparison of U.S. Border Politics"](#), and myth-busting fact sheets and blog posts, including one discussing the myth of rampant kidnapping in Arizona, ["Separating Fact from Fiction: The Truth about Kidnapping in Arizona"](#). IPC also commissioned research to go into greater depth on these issues, such as an important analysis of the implementation plans (or lack thereof) for SB 1070, ["Enforcing Arizona's SB 1070: A State of Confusion"](#), by author Jeffery Kaye.

Another mid-year accomplishment came with the completion of the popular state fact sheet series, which provides a concise summary of the economic impact of immigrants and other benefits of immigration for each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia: ["New Americans: The Political and Economic Power of Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians State by State"](#).

In the fall, with increased attention on the mid-term elections, immigration rhetoric took a particularly nasty turn and brought on renewed attacks on birthright citizenship and the Fourteenth Amendment. IPC was among the first groups to provide timely analysis and thoughtful rebuttals to the efforts to repeal the Fourteenth Amendment. Similarly, the midterm campaign cycle was marked by an increase in anti-immigrant rhetoric, yet saw victories for pro-immigrant candidates who were able to

draw on the growing power of Latino and New American voters. The IPC documented all of these developments, providing important demographic analysis of the New American voter in [The New American Electorate](#), an updated analysis of the voting characteristics of naturalized citizens and their native-born children.

As 2010 ended, IPC staff and outside authors contributed to the economic and moral arguments supporting the DREAM Act, culminating in a December marked by the first major immigration legislative floor battle of the 111th Congress—the DREAM Act votes.

During the DREAM Act debate, IPC offered analysis and background in a variety of papers, including fact sheets such as [“The DREAM ACT: Creating Opportunities for Immigrant Students and Supporting the U.S. Economy”](#), as

well as more in-depth analysis in [“Investing in the American Dream: The DREAM Act Would Allow Undocumented Youth to Give Back to America”](#), by University of Washington professor Roberto Gonzalez, which addresses the challenges and obstacles undocumented students face as they try to obtain a college degree without papers.

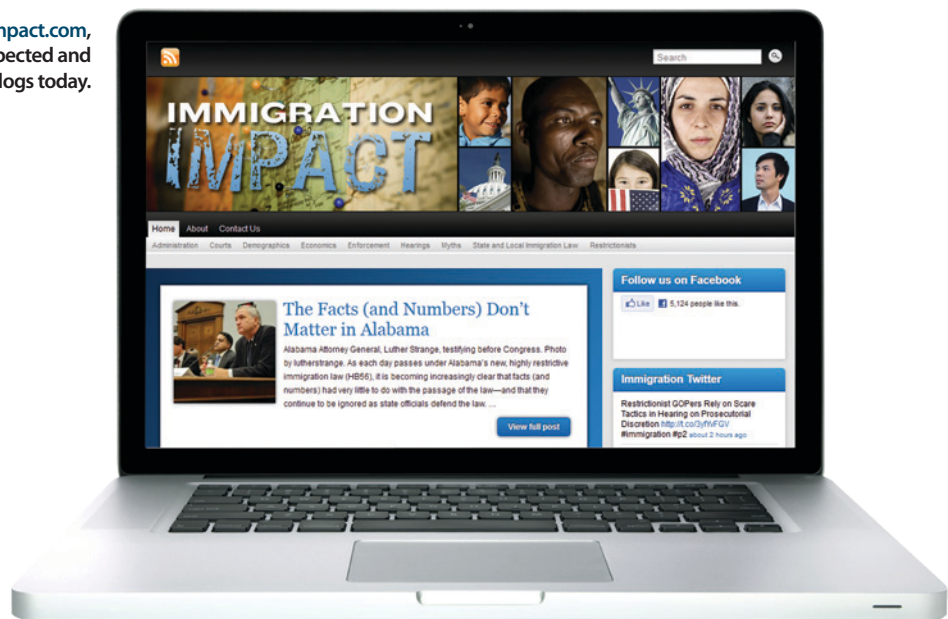
Communicating IPC’s Message

The IPC’s impact depends on having a robust and engaged communications and outreach strategy. In 2010, IPC significantly extended its reach, making greater use of social media, taking the show “on the road” with a series of roundtable visits to cities around the country, and reaching more people than ever before. IPC’s blog [ImmigrationImpact.com](#) is one of the most popular and respected

immigration blogs today. With an average of 600-700 readers a day, Immigration Impact’s audience continues to grow as IPC builds an online presence and capacity. Interest varies by topic and timing (some posts, for instance, received 1,200 hits in a day), but on the whole, Immigration Impact continues to be referenced and cross-posted throughout the blogosphere, especially through advocates and fans on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

In an effort to make the web site more user-friendly, IPC resources are being organized as “resource pages” that serve as a one-stop shopping information source on a specific immigration topic. For example, view the most up-to-date information on birthright citizenship: [Defending the Fourteenth Amendment: A Resource Page](#).

IPC’s blog, [ImmigrationImpact.com](#), is one of the most respected and read immigration blogs today.





AMERICAN IMMIGRATION COUNCIL

The International Exchange Center (IEC) facilitates dynamic opportunities to bring people across borders to connect, learn, share, and innovate. When J-1 trainees learn new skills and competencies, their organizations and communities benefit back home. When J-1 interns contribute to new ways of thinking at American companies, everyone benefits from the resulting creativity and progress. The lasting ties between international exchange visitors and American citizens lead to a more interdependent world in which people learn that cultural similarities far outpace differences.



Josue Jeanty, J-1 Intern

J-1 Participants

The International Exchange Center story is best told by describing the exchange visitors themselves.

Josue Jeanty came to the United States from Haiti in August 2010. Holding a degree in Environmental Science from his home university, Josue came to the U.S. on a J-1 visa to train with Custom Polymers, a plastic recycling company in North Carolina. Josue's work was lauded by his company and received [local media coverage](#). Now back in Haiti, he hopes to use what he has learned about recycling to tackle Haiti's pollution and generate jobs in a country which currently does not have a recycling system.

Seref Onder, along with his wife and their two young children, came to the U.S. from Turkey in 2010. As a senior police officer, the purpose of his training was to share ideas on how law enforcement and issues of justice are handled in the United

States and in Turkey. When the Onder family first arrived, they were unsure of what to expect. They had heard the U.S. was not a welcoming or a family-oriented environment. However, they were pleasantly surprised by their new surroundings, describing their temporary home as "peaceful, green, silent, and safe." The Onder family enjoyed local parks and libraries. "The U.S. library system is very successful and quite interesting to me, especially events, books, and puzzles for the children," said Seref. The Onders also enjoyed visiting the local museums and short trips to other national parks and cities including New York, Amish country in Pennsylvania, Niagara Falls, Virginia Beach, and Florida. They came with an image of America formed by popular media and riddled with misconceptions. They left with an image of America as a family-oriented, vibrant community of diverse people and ideas.

More snapshots of the experiences of the J-1 trainees and interns can be



Seref Onder and his two children.

found on the IEC website under the feature [Exchange Visitor of the Month](#).

Expanding Communications & Social Media

Throughout the year, the IEC developed several new communications tools. These included a new series of “Quick Tip” sheets to provide succinct answers to commonly asked questions, a practice advisory for attorneys, a revised Host Company Handbook, an enhanced application packet,

and automated reminders for required participant evaluations.

The IEC has expanded its use of social media and is using it as a tool to communicate with J-1 participants and share information about American culture. Major changes came to the [Facebook](#) page in 2010. For example, “City Weeks” were created to encourage exchange visitors to explore the U.S. beyond their local host communities. Each day during the “City Week” a different cultural activity or place is featured. The week wraps up with a list of regional publications so that participants can stay connected to their local news and events. The Facebook page was also home to the Annual Photo Contest, which asked participants to submit original photography that depicted their life in America.

In addition to Facebook, the IEC began creating videos for the [YouTube](#) page. These videos allow the staff to connect directly to participants on important announcements and reminders. Once J-1 participants return home, they now have the opportunity to

stay in contact with the growing alumni network on [LinkedIn](#). The increased use of social media has provided new ways to interact with participants sponsored by the IEC, both while they are in the U.S. and after they return to their home countries. Most importantly, the use of social media allows the participants to feel connected to the staff and increase their understanding of American culture.

New Final Rules for J Intern and Trainee Programs

New final rules became effective Sept. 9, 2010 for J intern and trainee programs. To summarize the significant changes established by this regulatory change, IEC published a Practice Advisory: [Understanding the Final Rule for J-1 Trainee and Intern Programs](#). This was part of a larger effort to educate immigration attorneys across the United States through presentations at both local chapter meetings and the Annual Conference of the American Immigration Lawyers Association on the value and role of the J-1 visa.



AMERICAN IMMIGRATION COUNCIL

The Legal Action Center (LAC) strives to promote the just and fair administration of America's immigration laws and to protect the constitutional and legal rights of immigrants, refugees, and other noncitizens. The LAC engages in impact litigation, including appearing as amicus curiae (friend of the court) before administrative tribunals and federal courts in significant immigration cases on targeted legal issues.



Leadership

In 2010, the LAC introduced a new leadership team. Melissa Crow was named Director, bringing a wealth of immigration law and policy experience to the LAC. She previously served as a Senior Advisor in the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Policy. Prior to joining DHS, she was a partner with Brown, Goldstein & Levy in Baltimore, Maryland. She also served as Counsel to Senator Kennedy during the 2007 debates on immigration reform. Beth Werlin was named Deputy

Director of the LAC. Since joining the LAC in 2001, Beth has litigated significant immigration cases in the federal courts and at the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA). She is the author of numerous practice advisories and successfully launched the LAC's Litigation Clearinghouse, turning it into a national resource for immigration litigators.

Protecting the Right to Counsel

The LAC has long advocated for a meaningful right to counsel in immigration proceedings. To that end, in 2010, the LAC filed an amicus (friend of the court) brief with the BIA in a case highlighting the lack of procedures to protect the rights of immigrants whose competency issues prevent them from participating meaningfully in their removal hearings. Chief among our recommendations is that counsel must be appointed. Together with other immigration and disability rights groups, the LAC also undertook administrative advocacy with the De-

partment of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security to attain greater procedural safeguards in removal proceedings for immigrants with serious mental disabilities.

In addition, the LAC, in collaboration with the American Immigration Lawyers Association, developed an access to counsel questionnaire and distributed it to immigration attorneys nationwide. LAC received hundreds of responses detailing problems with access to counsel in a variety of settings, including inspection at the border, visa interviews, and investigations. This information will be used to advocate for full access to counsel before the immigration agencies.

Holding the Immigration Agencies Accountable

The LAC filed a lawsuit against the Department of Homeland Security seeking the public release of records concerning agency policies and procedures regarding certain temporary visas, which DHS has historically kept

secret. The suit is brought under the Freedom of Information Act, a law which is intended to promote transparency. Through the litigation, the LAC is hoping to shed light on government processes that affect thousands of workers and employers. Even before the suit was filed, in response to the threat of litigation, the government turned over numerous documents it previously had withheld.

Protecting Access to Court Review

In a continuing effort to promote greater oversight of immigration decision-making, the LAC submitted amicus (friend of the court) briefs in several cases involving the scope of a court's review of immigration decisions. In one case, the LAC convinced the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals to withdraw a precedent-setting decision that would have prevented federal courts from hearing cases challenging government delays in adjudicating immigration applications.

LAC also challenged the government's unlawful limitations on motions to reopen. For noncitizens facing removal from the United States, a motion to reopen (an opportunity to present new evidence in a case) may be the last and only way to pursue their claims for lawful residency in the United States. Failure to allow such a motion might prevent anyone—from an asylum seeker to a U.S. citizen's family member—from presenting new evidence that could prevent deportation. However, the government takes the position that if a person is deported before his or her motion is decided by the agency, that person no longer has the right to seek reopening. Following up on an earlier success on this issue with one federal court of appeals, the LAC argued in 2010 in several cases before other courts of appeals that the

government's policy conflicts with the immigration statute and unlawfully deprives immigrants of a fair process. In addition, LAC petitioned the government to withdraw the regulation that serves as the basis of the government's position.

Fixing the Broken Employment Authorization Asylum Clock

In 2010, the LAC, along with Penn State Law's Center for Immigrants' Rights, issued a comprehensive report, ["Up Against the Clock: Fixing the Broken Employment Authorization Asylum Clock"](http://www.legalactioncenter.org/practice-advisories). The report examines laws, policies, and practices of the "Employment Authorization Document (EAD) asylum clock"—a clock which measures the number of days after an applicant files an asylum application before the applicant is eligible for work authorization. The law requires asylum applicants to wait 150 days after filing an application to apply for a work permit. However, the report reveals that due to problems with the asylum clock, applicants often wait much longer than the legally permitted timeframe to receive a work permit. During this time, applicants must support themselves or rely on others for financial assistance. Some eventually are forced to work without authorization at serious risk of exploitation while they wait for decisions on their asylum cases. The report recommends solutions to asylum clock problems that will ensure asylum applicants become eligible for employment authorization without unnecessary delays and closer to the timeframe outlined in the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Practice Advisories

The LAC writes and distributes authoritative, timely Practice Advisories to assist lawyers with complex areas

of immigration law. The advisories provide in-depth analysis of select issues and offer practical guidance and possible arguments. In 2010, the LAC issued six new or updated practice advisories on various aspects of federal court procedure; issues related to removal proceedings; and immigration benefits. All the advisories are available at <http://www.legalactioncenter.org/practice-advisories>.

Litigation Clearinghouse

The Litigation Clearinghouse serves as an online point-of-contact for immigration litigators nationwide. In 2010, the LAC maintained over 15 web-based Litigation Issue Pages, which provide timely updates about ongoing immigration litigation. The LAC also provides information about immigration cases that are pending or decided by the Supreme Court. The Clearinghouse resources are available at <http://www.legalactioncenter.org/litigationclearinghouse>.

Litigation Training and Litigation Strategy Meeting

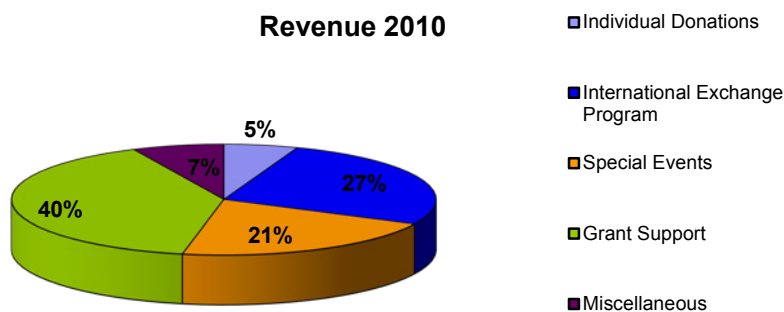
The LAC developed and conducts the innovative Litigation Institute, an intensive, interactive, participatory weekend workshop for immigration lawyers. The annual program enables lawyers to acquire new skills, practice their litigation technique, and become more knowledgeable and confident about litigation in immigration and federal courts.

The LAC also convened a two-day litigation strategy meeting focused on challenging and responding to immigration enforcement issues. The meeting brought together immigration litigators and representatives from immigrants' rights and civil rights organizations to discuss current issues and learn how to support each other's work.

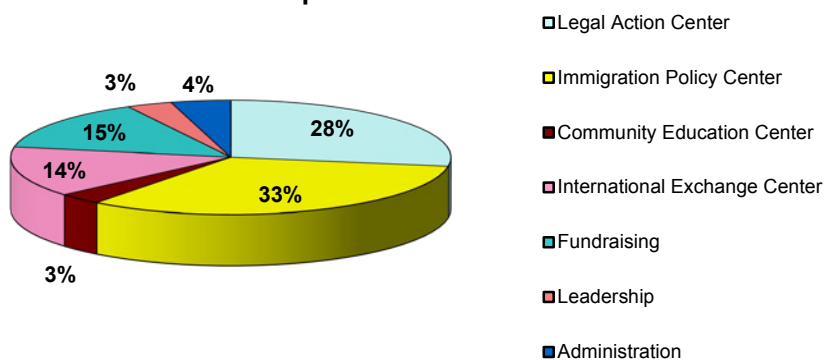
2010 FINANCIALS

| | 2009 | 2010 |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| REVENUE | | |
| Individual Donations | 188,116 | 143,800 |
| International Exchange Program | 533,478 | 681,260 |
| Special Events | 472,460 | 530,265 |
| Grant Support | 1,230,292 | 1,017,687 |
| Miscellaneous | 115,237 | 178,274 |
| Total Revenue | \$2,539,583 | \$2,551,286 |
| EXPENSES | | |
| Legal Action Center | 565,850 | 699,539 |
| Immigration Policy Center | 972,224 | 834,532 |
| Community Education Center | 59,769 | 81,861 |
| International Exchange Center | 350,147 | 361,525 |
| Fundraising | 378,628 | 367,036 |
| Leadership | 77,793 | 84,833 |
| Administration | 126,288 | 111,358 |
| Total Expenses | \$2,530,699 | \$2,540,684 |

Revenue 2010



Expenses 2010



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Benjamin Johnson, Henry Cejudo, Julia Culbert, Cokie Roberts, Nelly Rico and Steve Roberts (left to right) at the 2010 AIC Annual Benefit.

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