

“

The greatest gift this country offers to refugees and immigrants is that of agency: *the ability to make decisions about their own lives.*”

—DR. GATLUAK THACH,
President/CEO

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“

From the beginning, we wanted to connect our mission with the city at large to build strong relationships between the refugee and native-born communities.”

—DR. GATLUAK THACH,
President/CEO

President/CEO's Note

Migration occurs either by choice or by force. Prior to arriving in the United States, nationless refugees rarely experience the provisions of justice, liberty, and representation that the democratic system affords. The greatest gift this country offers to refugees and immigrants is that of agency: the ability to make decisions about their own lives.

In 2005, a small community of refugee leaders and native-born Nashvillians began building a common understanding of refugee and immigrant community needs in Nashville. These people became the founders of what is now the Nashville International Center for Empowerment (NICE). Today, NICE seeks to develop confidence, skills, and awareness in new immigrant communities, enabling them to participate in public life and ultimately overcome barriers of exclusion and marginalization. However, integration of refugees and immigrants is not something these communities can achieve on their own. **Our mission is only successful when it is rooted in cohesive public participation.**

Strong communities are built on warmth and welcome. As a naturalized U.S. citizen with a Nuer and South Sudanese cultural background, I believe that the strength of a community can be assessed by how well its civic institutions accommodate the intersectional identities of its communities. To this end, **NICE identifies the gaps in services in our community and develops a refugee-specific, culturally and linguistically sensitive approach.**



Since its inception, NICE has been addressing the diverse needs of a global community thriving in Nashville. Our primary goal has been to provide services to refugees and immigrants in Middle Tennessee's urban areas and assist them in navigating the complex process of migration. Social inequality is at the root of the refugee experience, which in turn contributes to discrimination and generational poverty. While NICE recognizes these challenges facing our New American brothers and sisters, we also recognize the strengths that exist within these communities, and use these strengths to advocate on their behalf. Through NICE, refugees and immigrants who have lived through marginalization, exclusion, and entrenched discrimination in their homeland are able **to rebuild their lives with dignity here in the United States.**

NICE's organizational framework is built on the core principle of social participation. From the beginning, we wanted to connect our mission with the city at large to build strong relationships between the refugee and native-born communities. Shared principles between a nurturing network of partners, community leaders, staff, and volunteers create a sense of belonging, inclusion, and recognition for our new clients. **NICE brings people together around a common cause by putting humanity at the center of our work.** I have seen different ethnicities and cultures come together in our office; reaching beyond identity to form relationships based on shared values and visions.

NICE attributes its success to a myriad of factors, but we would not be here without your commitment. **We have learned from our generous funders, individual donors, and volunteers that when we share our lives, we continue to grow and learn together.** We look forward to our continued partnership with you in the upcoming year.

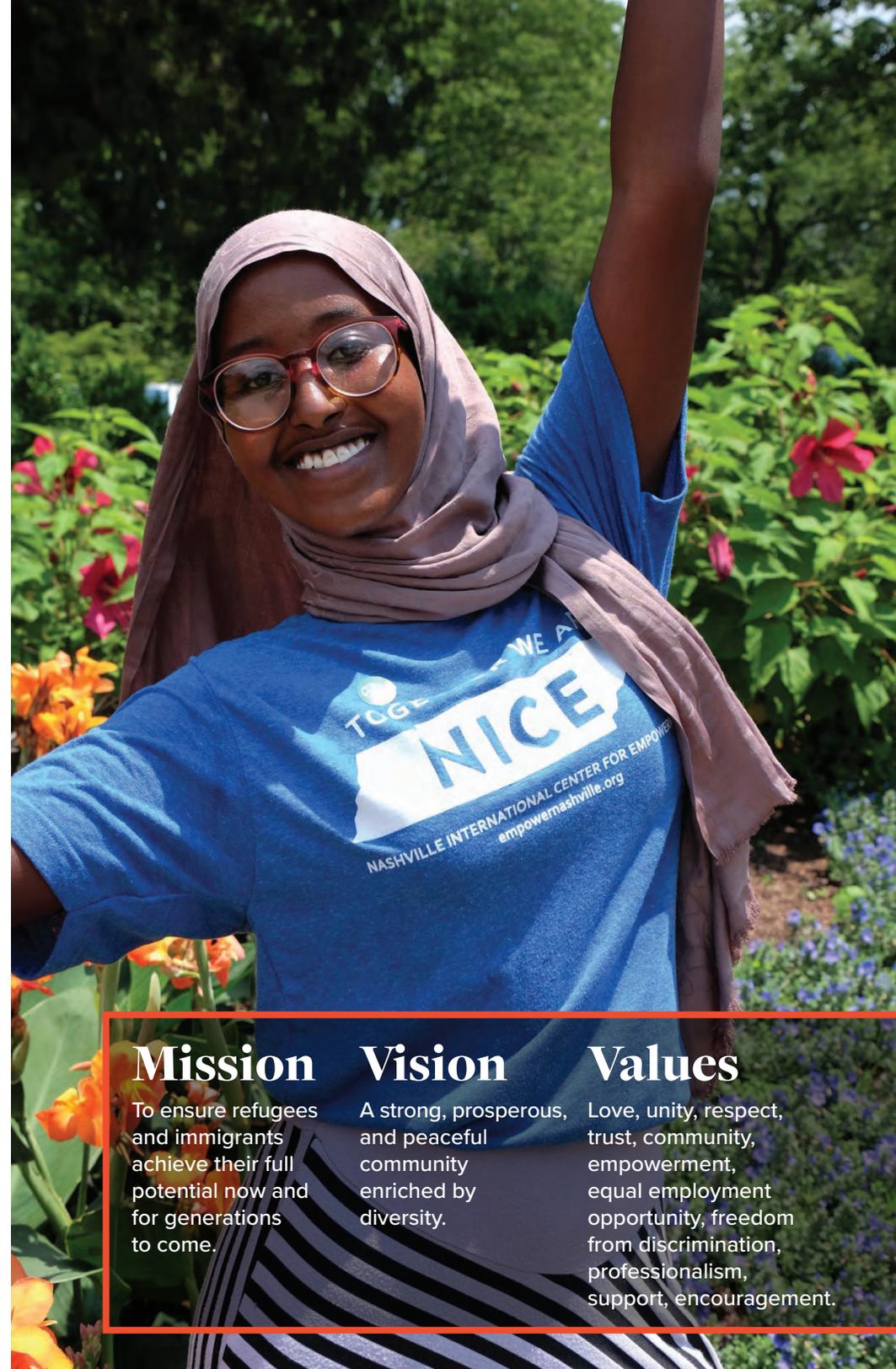
With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amithie".

Dr. Gatluak Thach, President/CEO

Who We Are

The Nashville International Center for Empowerment is made up of a diverse group of staff and volunteers who have come together with a mission to ensure **refugees and immigrants achieve their full potential** now and for generations to come. We have developed a deep understanding of the needs and long-term aspirations of refugees and immigrants because of our own professional and lived experiences. NICE is an Ethnic Community Based Organization (ECBO) with a multidimensional social services approach that is conducive to the **long-term integration of New Americans in Middle Tennessee.**



Mission

To ensure refugees and immigrants achieve their full potential now and for generations to come.

Vision

A strong, prosperous, and peaceful community enriched by diversity.

Values

Love, unity, respect, trust, community, empowerment, equal employment opportunity, freedom from discrimination, professionalism, support, encouragement.

Resettlement Facts



Setting Up the Next Generation of Immigrants for Success



From left to right: Anderson, Catherine and Josue

Resettlement and Employment Programs

In 2011, NICE began its refugee resettlement program with the support of the Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC). As an affiliate of ECDC, NICE is a beneficiary of the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program administered through the State Department. Since then, NICE has served and mobilized thousands of New Americans towards long-term integration in the U.S.

Chris Linthicum, our **Resettlement and Placement** Manager, is the first face that refugees see when they arrive at the Nashville International Airport. He meets clients when they land ascertaining that the resettlement process goes as smoothly as possible. “I have from a very young age been aware of giving service,” he says. “When NICE caseworkers and I connect with our clients from all over the world, we want to make sure they are supported across all our programs.” He met Catherine, a refugee from El Salvador, at the airport when she arrived. Catherine fled violence in her homeland with her sons, brother, and elderly mother. Their resettlement case-worker enrolled her sons in school and found jobs for both working adults in the family through our **Employment Program**.



“

When NICE caseworkers and I connect with our clients from all over the world, we want to make sure they are supported across all our programs.”

—CHRIS LINTHICUM,
Resettlement and
Placement Manager



Today, only a few months after her resettlement, Catherine is able to invite NICE staff to her home for an informal *pupusa* get together. While jobs in the U.S. typically demand some level of college, NICE employment staff seek opportunities where refugees and immigrants without transferable degrees can advance.

This year, NICE became one of the key collaborators on the Enter-View Program, along with renowned Chicago-based nonprofit, Upwardly Global, and The Temple Congregation of Ohabai Sholom in Nashville. This program, initiated by The Temple and funded by The Frist Foundation, welcomes mentors and mentees of any religious, ethnic, and gender backgrounds. Through Enter-View, clients who exhibit basic English fluency as determined by CASAS test scores and possess a combination of skills, education, professional licensure, and work experience are guided through the U.S. employment process. **The Enter-View program has successfully paired refugees with mentors who help refine career goals, craft resumes, develop networking skills, and prepare for interviews.**



144
Refugees resettled

295
Refugees sought
stable employment

296
(90%) were
employed

Advancing Equity Through Education and Health



337

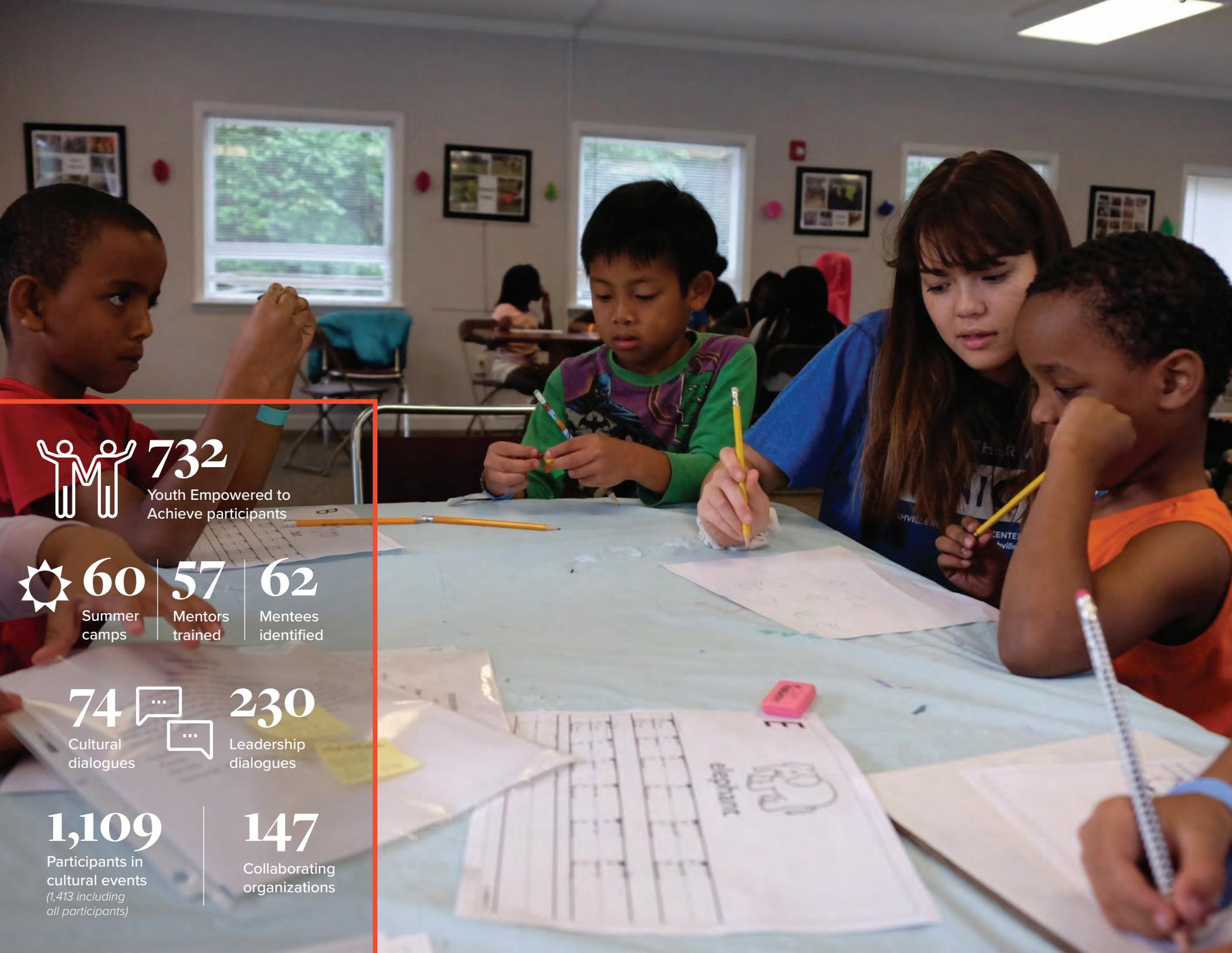
clients utilized our health program services

Health and Community Empowerment Programs

Our response to refugee integration is to coordinate access to services through multiple delivery systems across departments. For instance, Catherine's mother, Paz, was referred to the **Nashville Refugee Health Initiative (NRHI)** at NICE after her 90 day resettlement period. Her health had deteriorated because of common workplace hazards in the textile industry in her homeland of El Salvador. Caseworker Kabita Poudel at the NICE Health Department has enrolled Paz to the Elder's Program where she will be assisted in overcoming health barriers such as health literacy, access to physical therapy, referrals, and learning ways to deal with social isolation.

In 2017, our **Community Empowerment Program** developed into the *Proactive Engagement to Achieve Community Empowerment (PEACE)* program in partnership with Peace Ambassadors USA through a two-year grant from the Department of Homeland Security. **This program is one of five programs nationally, and the only program in the South, to win this funding.** By the end of 2019, we aim to create community-led spaces for open dialogue, to increase access to resources, and to foster resiliency across diverse communities in the greater Nashville area. During the two-year period, the initiative aims to serve more than 1,140 people through its various outlets. The program focuses on the following three areas: Youth Engagement, Community Engagement, and Resource Expansion.





732

Youth Empowered to Achieve participants



60

Summer camps

57

Mentors trained

62

Mentees identified

74

Cultural dialogues



230

Leadership dialogues

1,109

Participants in cultural events
(1,413 including all participants)

147

Collaborating organizations

Results-Based Services Is Social Justice



Adult Education, Immigration and Citizenship Programs

NICE's Adult Education Department provides weekly HiSET and citizenship classes to over 700 immigrants, refugees, and asylees each year. Catherine is able to meet the demands of her job while also attending English classes as a result of our flexible, helpful, and convenient schedules for adult learners. "I'm eager to learn about my new homeland and give back to others the opportunities I have been given," she said. "We have been afforded a second chance in life after being resettled in Nashville."

“

We have been afforded a second chance in life after being resettled in Nashville.”

—CATHERINE,
Refugee from
El Salvador
and NICE client

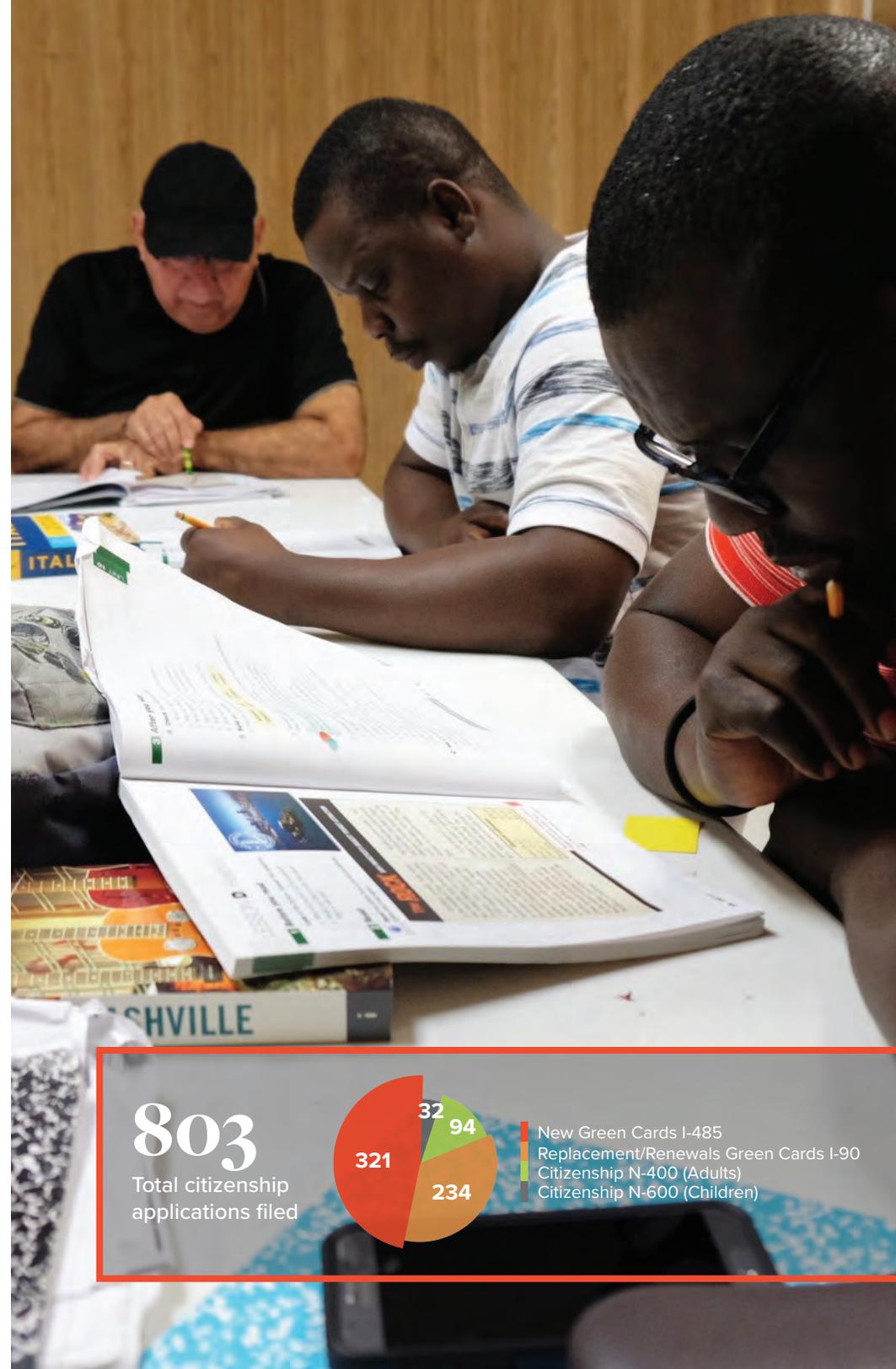
In El Salvador, Catherine worked in the police force. As a public servant, she has dedicated her life to keeping others safe. The NICE **Adult Education Program** is proud to have supported clients like Catherine in their journey towards furthering their education and careers. In the near future, Catherine will also be assisted by NICE's **Immigration Program**, which completes over 500 applications each year.



 **753**
 Total individuals served
 in ESL, Pre-HSE, and
 Citizenship classes

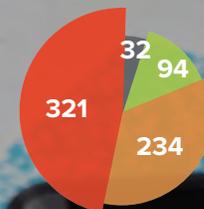
Our in-house **Citizenship Program** staff and educators who focus on developing civic knowledge, skills, disposition, practice, and action for long-term integration regularly help refugees like Catherine throughout the immigration process.

NICE's goal is to assist clients in overcoming challenges and to ultimately enable them to advocate for themselves. With close to 3,000 people served each year, NICE reaches a wide base of immigrant and refugee community members. We strive for our clients to contribute to society, to participate in the democratic process, and to live dignified lives.



803

Total citizenship
 applications filed



- New Green Cards I-485
- Replacement/Renewals Green Cards I-90
- Citizenship N-400 (Adults)
- Citizenship N-600 (Children)

Financials



Entity	Income	% of Total
Federal	\$781,316	44.8%
State & Local Gov't	\$535,243	30.7%
Foundations	\$187,999	10.8%
Organizations	\$95,671	5.5%
Program Revenue	\$70,471	4.0%
In-kind	\$36,893	2.1%
Individuals	\$19,568	1.1%
Faith Based	\$18,100	1.0%
Total Income	\$1,745,261	100.0%



Entity	Income	% of Total
Program	1,623,328	89.2%
Admin & Fundraising	197,314	10.8%
Total Expense	1,820,641	100.0%

Board/Executive Officers



Chair: Beatrice Gatebuke, MA | FASHA

V. Chair/Secretary: Rosemary Lokule | Self-Employed

Secretary: Muna Muday | Student

Treasurer: Nawzad Hawrami | Salahadeen Center of Nashville

Alex Sekwat, PhD | Tennessee State University

President/CEO: Dr. Gatluak Ter Thach | NICE

Advisory Members

Andrea Ayers | Law Office of Andrea M. Ayers

Asrar Babikir | Catholic Charities, Nashville

Bruce Buchanan | Office of Siskind Susser PC

Chuol Both | Toshiba

Joseph Dickson | HealthTrust Purchasing Group/HCA

Mahmoud Eltighani, PhD | Tennessee State University

Mohamed Shukri Hassan | Metro Nashville Arts Commission

Julia Lydon, PhD | Retired, Metro Nashville Public Schools

Tom Negri | Community Volunteer

Jeff Pack | Community Volunteer

Avi Poster | Nashville for All of Us

Anatina Sharma | Google

Dr. Stan Thangaraj | City College of New York

William Thompson, MD | Doctors Without Borders

Funders



Thank you to all of our community partners

- Alpha Kappa Alpha
- American Wonder Porcelain
- Belmont University
- Brooke and Darren Foster
- Carpenter's Square
- Catholic Charities
- Centerstone
- Center for Nonprofit Management
- Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints in Spring Hill
- Community Resource Center
- Cross Point Church
- Donelson Christian Academy
- The Donelson Fellowship
- Hands On Nashville
- Korean Blessed Baptist Church
- Korean Presbyterian Church
- Korean Unity Baptist Church
- Lentz Public Health Center
- Meharry Medical College
- Metro Nashville Public Schools
- Mother to Mother
- Nashville Adult Literacy Council
- Nashville Diaper Connection
- Nashville Public Library Foundation
- Nashville Soccer Club
- Newroz Market
- Peace Ambassadors
- Rasoul's Market
- Siloam Health
- Shelbyville Supermercado
- Soles for Souls Nashville
- St. Thomas Hospital
- Tennessee Foreign Language Institute
- Thriftsmart
- Tyson Foods
- Under Armour
- Woodmont Hill's Church
- Workforce Essentials





2018

ANNUAL REPORT



NASHVILLE INTERNATIONAL
Center for Empowerment

www.empowernashville.org