

BILINGUAL INTERNATIONAL 2020 ANNUAL REPORT





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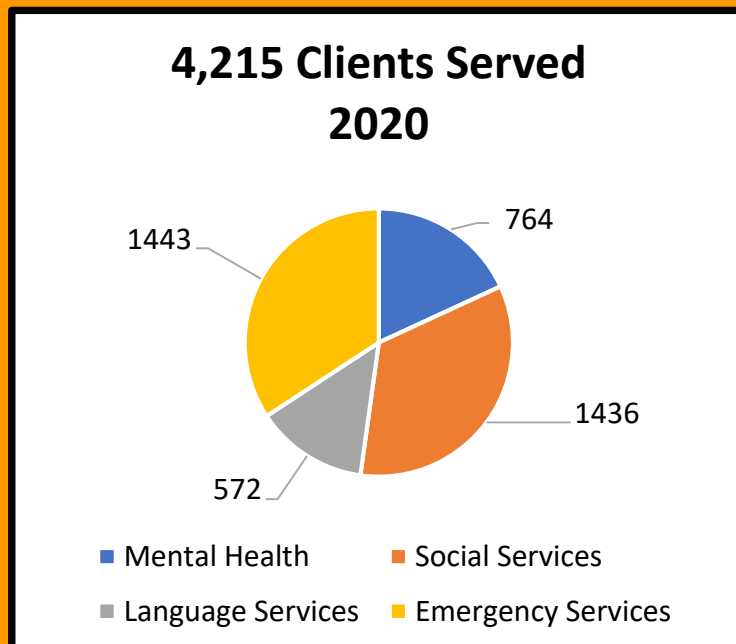
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Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

When news of the COVID-19 pandemic reaching US shores started intensifying in March 2020, I was at the annual conference for torture treatment programs in Washington, D.C. – my one work trip outside the St. Louis region each year. There was a lot of hand-shaking, close-talking, convivial dining and drinking together, sharing transportation, and so on. Programs from all over the country had big plans on how to improve their work with some of the most vulnerable newcomers. Within 2 weeks of my return to St. Louis, we had shut everything down (March 17).

For several days, we sat at home, watched TV, realized that our wi-fi wasn't as strong as we thought it was, learned new words like "intubation," and strategized about how to find everyday household items.

And then we got to work.

We began assessing which of our regular programming lines could continue with modifications and which would need to be paused indefinitely. As we sought out best practices on workarounds to continue service, quickly mastering video conferencing, we realized that there was no ethical or safe way to continue providing services through our senior center or with any programming that involved one-on-one, in-person work with older adult populations.

So we began running supplies.

Multilingual Community Access Workers called all older adult clients served within the last two years and inquired about their needs. We sought out and received generous support from a coalition of concerned funders to secure and deliver needed food, personal, and cleaning supplies to our homebound foreign-born clients. This soon expanded into running supplies to larger racial and ethnic minority homebound and senior communities in North City/North County, and we brought on an ad-hoc volunteer coalition of pre-med and medical students calling themselves the St. Louis Food Angels to assist in this effort. For most of 2020, we carried on 85% of our typical service lines, and were bold/stupid/crazy enough to take on a broad portfolio of additional services that eventually became an Emergency Services Department.

And speaking of crazy, what better time to forge a three-year strategic plan than in the middle of a global pandemic with an uncertain outcome? We did that too, with our Board and key staff collaborating for over a year of organizational assessments, visioning, and strategic planning that culminated in an approved and implemented plan in December.

With 2020 in the books (and let's please never do this again), we are vaccinating and educating our clients on vaccination options, but we don't hope that everything returns to "normal." We've all been changed by the last year. We've seen how our society and systems of care respond in an extreme stress test, and – for the most part – it wasn't pretty. But there were a few encouraging signs that we will try to build on. We've got a lot of work ahead of us, and we've made a lot of friends over the past year that feel the same way.

So keep those sleeves rolled up, St. Louis.

Better days ahead,

Jason Baker, PhD
Executive Director





2020 Emergency Response

Every program at the agency adapted to COVID-19 circumstances this past year with remote services and new strategies to continue serving clients. In addition, BIAS staff stepped up to form new partnerships and take on new challenges during 2020 including:

Census Education and Assistance

- 602 target-language Census education/counseling sessions
- 118 households direct Census completion assistance

Food and Supplies to Homebound – 2 cycles

- 587 households

St. Louis Food Angels – Packaged Meal Delivery

- 8,524 meals delivered via volunteer initiative to partner agency homebound and high-risk clients for HOSCO/St. Louis Housing Authority, Fit and Food Connection, Kindness Groceries, LifewiseSTL, LifeSource Consultants, and Councilwoman Aja Owens



CARES Act Rental and Mortgage Assistance

- 254 applications processed through December 2020





Mental Health Services

A Right. Not a Privilege.

Bilingual International Assistant Services maintains certification from the Missouri Department of Mental Health for its multiple lines of adult and youth behavioral health programming. For almost two decades, we have worked to break down stigma around counseling and mental health work in the communities we serve.

With the 2014 introduction of children's trauma counseling and the 2016 merger with the St. Louis Center for Survivors of Torture, we took on a service mandate for some of the most difficult trauma treatment in the field. We embrace this challenge and know firsthand that rehabilitation work can be successful and benefit whole communities. BIAS employs only fully or provisionally licensed mental health clinicians across all of its programming, because our clients deserve no less.

St. Louis Partnership for Survivors of Torture and War Trauma

Our St. Louis Partnership program helps families and individuals who are traumatized, isolated, and struggling to adapt to life in the United States. We understand that those who have experienced war, torture, sexual violence, or forced migration need more than mental health counseling and psychiatric services. As a complement to our specialized mental health services, we also provide legal services for citizenship and asylum cases, and case management to connect individuals to housing, medical care, employment, and other resources.

Total unique Partnership clients: 543



Clients by Service Line*

Case Management – 236

Psychotherapy – 156

Psychiatric Stabilization – 36

Legal Assistance – 343

*As part of the integrated, holistic treatment model, clients often access multiple services simultaneously.

Torture: - *An act committed by a person acting under the color of law specifically intended to inflict severe physical or mental pain or suffering (...) upon another person within his custody or physical control. [See 18 U.S. Code § 2340]*



Mental Health Services

A Right. Not a Privilege.

Project Safe Space:

Trauma-Focused Counseling for Immigrant and Refugee Children

Free, trauma-informed mental health services to immigrant and refugee children ages 5 through 19 in St. Louis City and County. Project Safe Space therapeutic services empower youth to be attuned to their feelings, both emotional and visceral so that they have the ability to self-regulate. Self-regulation empowers people with healthier coping skills, and a better understanding of their emotions and needs and a happier, more successful pathway in life.



1. Comprehensive trauma-informed assessments (with the team of the caregiver, teacher, and child).
2. Trauma-focused individual and group therapy utilizing somatic-based and EMDR interventions.
3. Caregiver support: Trauma-informed psycho-education sessions and coaching.
4. Teacher support: Trauma-informed trainings and individualized coaching (upon request).

156 Participants from partner schools:

St. Louis Public (SLPS), Ritenour, Premier Charter School, Bayless, Pattonville, Hazelwood, Lindbergh

STEPS to Better Health

It's no secret that physical health and mental health are inseparable, which is why our STEPS program provides home-based therapeutic and clinical services for St. Louis City **racial and ethnic minority residents battling comorbid mental health and chronic illness**, often diabetes and/or obesity. We provide education, support, and practical frameworks to empower our clients in owning their recovery and achievement. In most situations, this empowerment and independence is a very realistic goal. Along with better management of symptoms of mental health conditions, clients experience physical success such as increased strength and endurance through exercise, weight loss, BMI reductions, lower blood pressure, etc. Many clients are able to sustain these successes through modified behavior after the intervention and live the lives they thought were behind them.



65 STEPS Clients



Social Services

Forging Connections

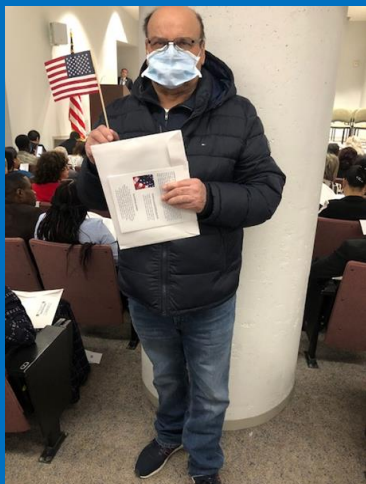
Imagine trying to comprehend the many different varieties of Medicare in something other than your native language. Now tackle food stamp applications, recertification of, MoHealthNet benefits...

Our multilingual Social Service professionals help mitigate the anxiety and confusion of navigating systems of care for foreign-born adults – especially seniors. Anchored by our *Macklind International Senior Center* (shuttered for 9 months of 2020 due to COVID), our Community Access Workers provide direct services – including citizenship assistance – in the communities we serve. We ensure that everyone can obtain supports for which they are legally eligible.

- 605 Medicaid Reassessments
 - 385 Medicare Sessions
 - 269 ACA Appointments
 - 244 Benefits Assistance
 - 477 Care Coordination and Case Management
- (...and much more!)

Naturalization Services for Older Missourians

Our long-running State of Missouri-funded program for adult citizenship clients assisted 175 adults over 60 years of age. Although the program was stalled with the closure of USCIS during the pandemic, and despite the shift to remote tutoring and legal services, we were still able to help 49 clients finally become United States citizens. We were also able to form a new partnership to extend project services to Southern Missouri, bringing on *Hand in Hand Multicultural Center* (HIHMC) in Springfield as a project contractor.



Before COVID-19's impact resulted in a lockdown, our Naturalization Services Client became a US citizen at the last Oath Ceremony in March, 2020





Language Services:

Confidential, Neutral, Professional

For nearly two decades, Bilingual International Assistant Services has provided professional language interpretation and written translation services for St. Louis and the surrounding region. A team of professional interpreters with working experience across a wide spectrum of settings offers services in over 40 languages. We adopt a non-advocacy model of interpretation, allowing the provider to take charge of each session and empowering a consumer to practice their right to *self-determination*.

572
Clients
Served

Skills demonstrated by our interpreters:

- Proficiency in both English and the target language
- General knowledge and understanding of both cultures
- Ability to communicate clearly and concisely in both languages
- General knowledge of the subject to be interpreted
- Strict compliance with government-mandated privacy laws



Major Translation Partners 2020

- Community Catalyst
- Washington University Institute of Public Health
- Parkview Place Apartments
- St. Louis City Recycles
- Premier Charter School

Top 5 Languages by Appointment

1. Spanish
2. Bosnian
3. Arabic
4. Albanian
5. Swahili



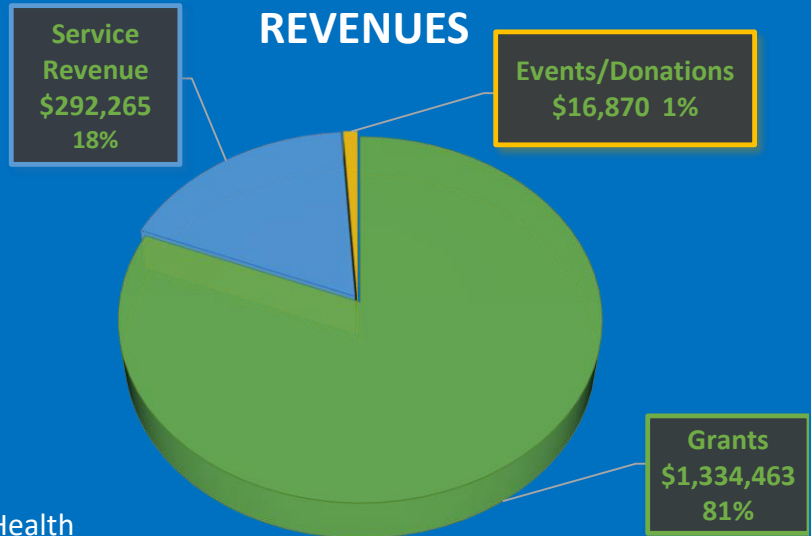
Financials and Support

Paying the Bills

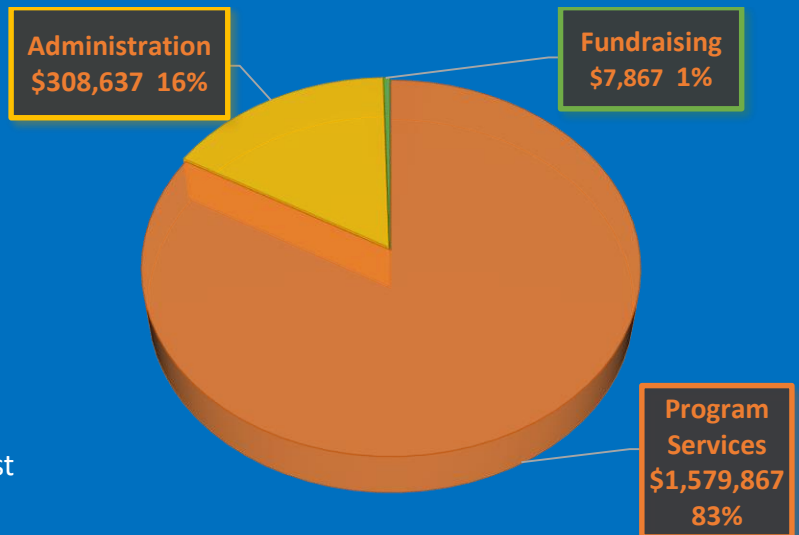
CRITICAL SUPPORTERS

St. Louis Mental Health Board
Federal Office of Refugee Resettlement
St. Louis Area Agency on Aging
City of St. Louis, Department of Health
Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
St. Louis County Children's Service Fund
Lutheran Foundation of St. Louis
Marillac Mission Fund
St. Louis Community Foundation
UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture
Trio Foundation
CLAIM/Primaris Foundation
Casa de Salud
Ameren
Enterprise Holdings Foundation
St. Louis Public Schools
LifewiseSTL
Bellwether Foundation
Saigh Foundation
Will Flores Fund
Episcopal Presbyterian Health Trust
St. Louis City Senior Fund
Bi-Lingual In-Home Assistant Services
Refugee Congress
JW Terrill

REVENUES



EXPENSES





Our Team

Your Partners in Service

Executive Staff

Jason Baker, PhD,
Executive Director

Reina Baez, LMFT,
Director of Mental Health

Dianne Mogilevsky Carty,
Director of Social Services

Victoria Barmak,
Director of Language Services

Kersten Horn, MA,
*Director of Emergency Services
and Special Projects*

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