

8/10/2022

# Washington Immigrant Network Annual Report 2021-2022



**WASHINGTON**  
IMMIGRANT NETWORK

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## Letter from the Chair

As an immigrant born and raised in the Philippines, moving to the United States as a teenager was an experience full of both challenges and new opportunities. My mother struggled to come to the U.S. to provide a better life for my family and me, from holding a tourist visa to an expired visa, to becoming undocumented, to sponsorship, and then, finally, to citizenship. I may share similar immigrant stories with some of you. But even the immigrant experience is itself varied and diverse.

My personal and professional goal is to push for us to continue to advocate for laws and policies that protect human rights, support immigrant communities, foster empathy, and build a more inclusive society. This year, we did this by sharing stories of immigrants and refugees. I took on the role of the Chair for the Washington Immigrant Network for the fiscal year 2021-2022 with the support of my agency, the Department of Enterprise Services, and my leaders, Trisha Cronin, Pat Seigler, Wendy Endress, Cindy Guertin-Anderson, and our Director, Tara Smith, and my Leadership Development Team. A shout out to my mentor, Kendrick Stewart, Deputy Director at the Department of Commerce.

I worked in partnership with a fantastic team of 18 state employees who also volunteered their time to help expand opportunities for immigrants who are current and future employees within the Washington state government. The Team also helped provide resources for all immigrants who are state employees to connect, share, and educate each other and Washington state agencies on the skills, expertise, and cultural value of a diverse workforce.

Thank you, our executive sponsor, Lorraine Lee, for supporting our efforts throughout the year! Special thanks to Julie Campos for stepping into the Vice-Chair role in the year's second half and being our secretary for the first part of the year. I also want to thank our members, allies, other BRGs, and partner agencies for supporting Washington Immigrant Network this year. I also want to thank our partners at OFM for supporting WIN efforts throughout the year and Dr. J and the Team at the Equity Office.

I am excited to support the new Executive Leadership team as past Chair. This year has been an incredible learning experience serving as Chair and working alongside my Team and our members. I want to leave you with this quote from Pramila Jayapal, Congresswoman.

**"I am not a woman on Monday, an immigrant on Tuesday, a worker on Wednesday, and a mom on Thursday. I am all of those things all of the time, and I am going to fight for all of those things all of the time."**

It has been an honor to be on this journey with you all.  
Thank you again for the opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joanne Lee".

Joanne Lee (she/her), WIN Chair (2021-2022)  
[You Belong](#) here!



## Executive Summary

Washington Immigrant Network hosted a series of events for our members and allies this year.

- 2 Solidarity Gatherings for our Afghan / Ukrainian Communities
- 3 Lunch and Learn Sessions (Asian Heritage Month, Civic Engagement Case Study, and Destigmatizing Mental Health in the workplace)
- 5 Public Speaking Group Sessions
- 1 Resume Workshop and Roundtable Discussion
- 10 General Monthly Membership meetings
- 10 Immigrant stories from 10 countries at our membership meetings
- 4 Quarterly Meet & Greets
- 20 Newsletter Issues
- A dozen WIN presentations and membership outreach activities throughout the year
- WIN Annual Celebration
- Posted several hundred job postings through our social media

About WIN Membership:

- We have members from several agencies, averaging 50-60 participants/members at our monthly meetings.
- 317 LinkedIn connections
- We've also reached almost 2,500 newsletter subscribers

In 2021-2022, Washington Immigrant Network held ten (10) monthly meetings from July 2021 to June 2022. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Washington Immigrant Network met online via Zoom or Microsoft Teams for all of its meetings. Meetings typically lasted an hour on the first Tuesdays of the month.

Washington Immigrant Network has an email circulation list of over 2,500 contacts participating in WIN meetings. Of this, approximately 40 to 50 members regularly attend monthly meetings consistently. From July 2021 to June 2022, we held virtual meetings.

# Introduction

## History

The Washington Immigrant Network (WIN) started as an initiative by Lorraine Lee, Chief Administrative Law Judge of the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH), which serves as the sponsoring agency. Judge Lee convened meetings to organize WIN in early 2017, inviting state workers interested in forming a Business Resource Group (BRG) for immigrant state workers. WIN officially began on June 8, 2018, with a kickoff event at the Governor's Residence. For the inaugural year, Christine Stalie served as Chair, Nam Nguyen served as co-chair, and Kim Sauer served as secretary.

Find us on [Youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)! Meet the Washington Immigrant Network Leadership Team and some of our outstanding members and volunteers [here](#).

## Purpose

WIN is a Business Resource Group for Washington State's employees, the fourth such BRG, with a mission to:

- Expand opportunities for immigrants who are current and future employees within the Washington state government.
- Serve as a resource for all immigrants who are state employees to connect, share, and educate each other and Washington state agencies on the skills, expertise, and cultural value of a diverse workforce.

WIN's general goals are to:

- Retain and support immigrant state employees by providing a support structure, education, career progression, and leadership development assistance.
- Recruit immigrants to state service through outreach and educational activities.
- Serve as a resource for the Office of Financial Management (OFM) State Human Resources and state agencies in creating and sustaining a diverse and inclusive workforce an immigrant here is defined as a person born in a foreign country or a person who has a foreign-born parent.

# Leadership, Committees, and Membership

## Organizational Chart



**Chair: Joanne Lee, Department of Enterprise Services**

**Vice-Chair: Lolo Arevalo, DOC (July 2021- Dec 2021)**

**Interim Vice-Chair: Julie Campos, OMWBE (Jan 2022 - July 2022)**

**Secretaries: Julie Campos, OMWBE (July 2021- Dec 2021), Joanne Lee, DES (Jan 2022 - July 2022)**

**Treasurer: Amel Alsalman, DSHS**

**Executive Sponsor: Lorraine Lee, OAH**

**Inaugural Chair: Christine Stalie**

**Immediate Past Chair: Kim Sauer, DES**

**Social Media Communications Volunteer: Elia Mendoza, OMWBE**

**Newsletter Volunteer: Colin Helsley. ESD**

**Intern: Michael Nepomuceno, U.S. Army veteran (May 2021 - Oct 2021)**

## **Subcommittees**

### **Advocacy Committee**

Chair: Christina Pourarien, ESD

Co-Chair: Leonard Nnamdi Jideonwo, DSHS, and Visu Cherukari, ESD

Purpose:

Advocates for Washington Immigrant Network members, WIN BRG is committed to participating in progressive conversations about immigrant communities and their importance to the state. Advocates for policies and laws, and engage with legislators and other leaders on immigrant issues.

### **Professional Development**

Chair: Gwen Willis, ESD

Co-Chair: Diana Deshayee, LCB

Purpose:

Provides tools and resources for WIN BRG members to grow professionally through training, webinars, conferences, books, articles, and mentorship. The Professional Development Subcommittee strives to serve WIN's members through accessible conference programming to help them grow.

### **Membership Outreach Subcommittee**

Chair: Anu Rao, DSHS

Co-Chair: Amandeep Puri, WSP

Purpose:

Oversees and manages WIN BRG outreach efforts through various agencies and communities. The Team coordinates outreach events and oversees all immigrant and allies' membership outreach and retention.

### **Career Development Subcommittee**

Chair: Raquel Rice, DOR

Co-Chairs: Alejandro Sanchez, DOL and Sanyu Tushabe, ESD

Purpose:

The Career Development Subcommittee provides career resources on behalf of WIN BRG to immigrant state employees and prospective immigrant applicants. The Team develops and guides workshop topics from cover letters, career mentoring and career development, tips and strategies for job interviews, preparing for promotions, search and accessibility, completing job applications, dressing for success, networking, and more.

## Special Project Subcommittee

Chair: Philip Muirhead, OAH  
Co-Chair: Larry Delgado, DFW

### Purpose:

This subcommittee is focused on special projects to help immigrant members and communities. This subcommittee also supports WIN's goal to serve as a resource for state agencies in creating and sustaining a diverse and inclusive workforce. We are seeking members to help us with this effort.

## Subcommittee Highlights

### Professional Development

Over the last year, WIN's Professional Development Subcommittee hosted five (5) Public Speaking Sessions for the members. The events were created to provide a safe space for immigrant state employees and allies to practice public speaking and gather feedback from the committee chairs.

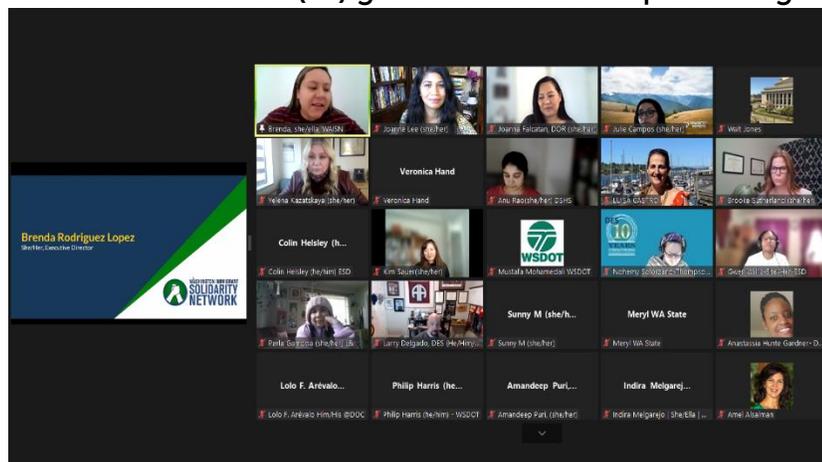
### Membership Outreach

The committee hosted a Resume Workshop and Roundtable Discussion in October. They also worked on preparing the general FAQs for immigrants and state H.R. professionals who might help to check out some options with state jobs. In collaboration with the Career Development subcommittee team, the committee also presented tips on preparing resumes, cover letters, interviewing skills, and applying for state jobs. The committee members contacted various state agencies' diversity, equity, and inclusion teams to inform them about this resource.

## General Membership Meetings

Washington Immigrant Network hosted ten (10) general membership meetings.

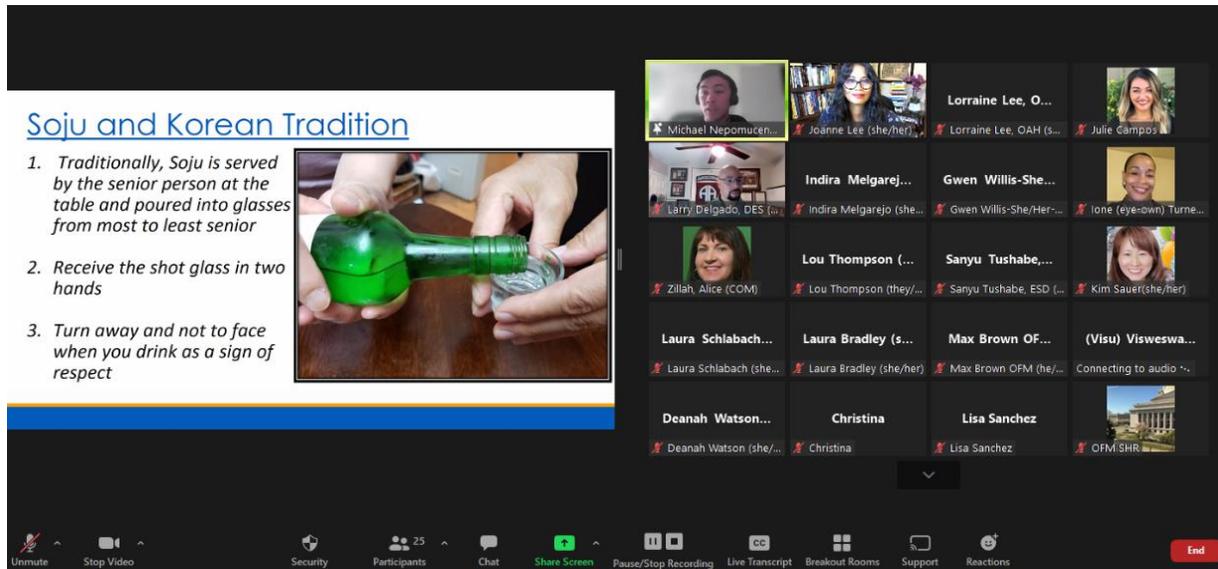
WIN invited several immigrant state employees to share their immigrant stories and asked a few guests to share resources with our members. We had approximately 40 to 50 regularly attend monthly meetings consistently. From July 2021 to June 2022, we held virtual meetings.



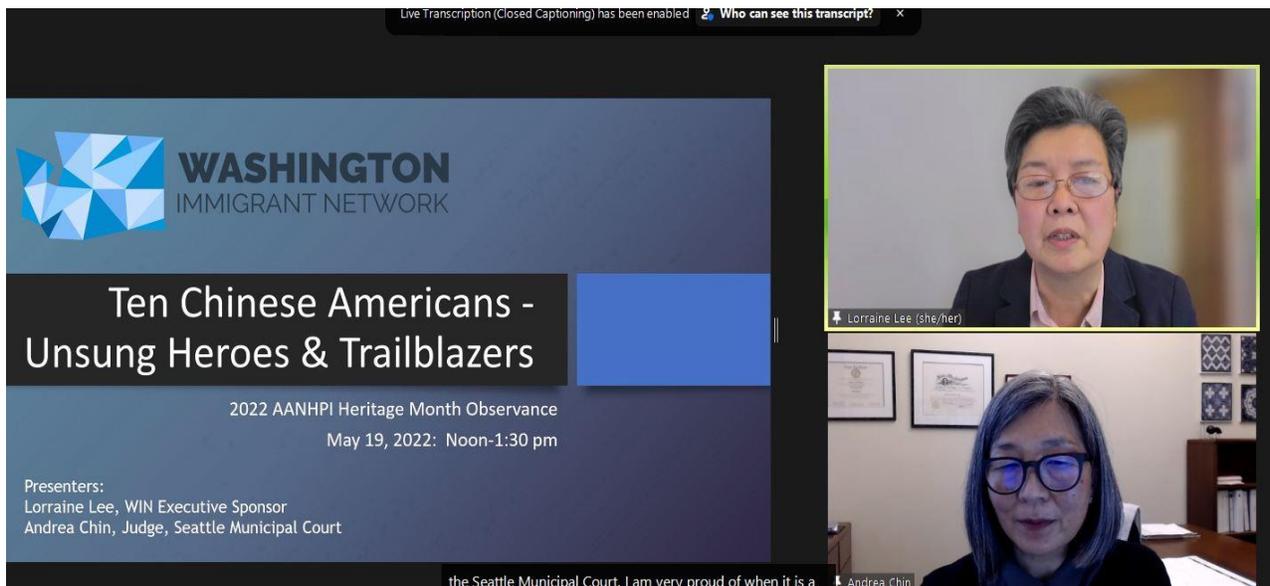
# Special Events

## Lunch & Learn

Washington Immigrant Network hosted and participated in three (3) Lunch and Learn Sessions. These were the Soju Civic Engagement Case Study, the AHPI Heritage Month: Ten Chinese Americans – Unsung Heroes and Trailblazers and Destigmatizing Mental Health in the workplace.



*(Soju Civic Engagement Presentation, presented by Michael Nepomuceno, Intern, November 2021)*



*(Ten Chinese Americans – Unsung Heroes & Trailblazers, presented by Lorraine Lee, WIN Executive, and Andrea Chin, Judge at Seattle Municipal Court, May 2022)*



Please join RAIN, DIN, VERG, LLN and WIN in having

## Crucial Conversations:

Destigmatizing Mental Health In the Workplace

on

Thursday, May 26 at 12:00 pm–1:30 pm

[Register Now!](#)

Please note when you register that time will say 11:30am. We will be admitting at 12 pm.

ASL Interpreter will be provided. This event will not be recorded.



*(Crucial Conversations: Destigmatizing Mental Health in the Workplace Flyer, created by Joanne Lee, WIN Chair, May 2022)*

## Solidarity Gatherings

Washington Immigrant Network hosted two (2) Solidarity Gatherings for our Afghan and Ukraine communities in partnership with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) in response to the crises in Afghanistan and Ukraine.

# SOLIDARITY GATHERING

Presented by:

Joanne Lee, Chair – WIN and  
Nancy Board, Clinical Services Manager, WA State EAP  
with interpretation support from Raina Diallo



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*(Screenshot: Solidarity Gathering first slide)*

## Solidarity feedback from our members

"Thank you so much for organizing the Solidarity Gathering. It was a wonderful experience for me to be able to talk to complete strangers about the feelings I was having trying to process and cope with my sadness and feelings of helplessness regarding the Russian and Ukrainian conflict. As a manager with staff that are both Russian and Ukrainian, it had been a rough week, emotionally, for all of us." – Leah F.

"This was so supportive, cathartic even, on some levels. It was all good. I'm still in the numb phase but each time we see or hear some show of support, we relax if only for a moment. So, thank you." – Lara S.

"I loved the event and having the opportunity to lend support to fellow workers as they face troubling times. It was also wonderful to see so many others struggling with not being able to do more." – Jenny S.

"Thank you for continuing to provide opportunities for us to process emotions, support each other, and listen to other's experiences and perspectives as they relate to our global connectedness and identities. I'm so grateful for WIN and your leadership!" – Elizabeth F.

"I greatly appreciate the thought, support, and allyship from WIN, you guys are the most amazing. Thank you so much again for providing the space for these things in your life and the life of this organization." Yelena K.

# Special Projects

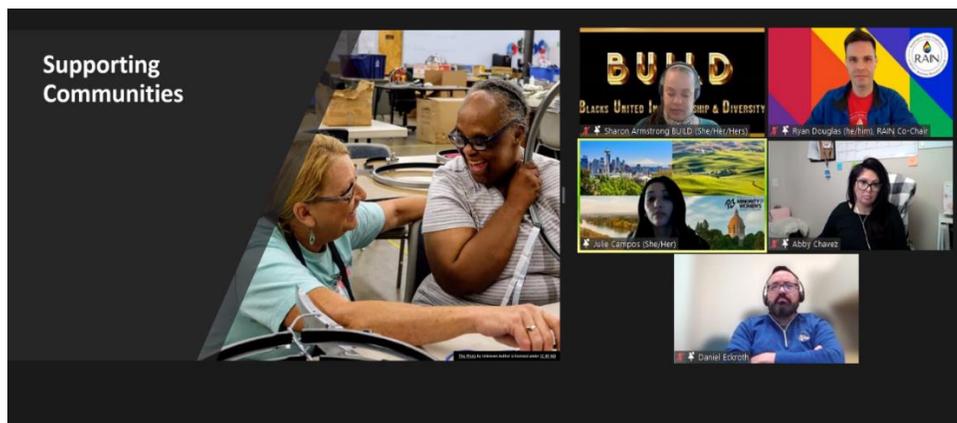
This year, we participated in enterprise-wide events and hosted significant events for our members and allies. Three highlights from this year are WIN's involvement was with the ICSEW event, our Annual Celebration, and the "You Belong" project.

## Allyship: You and I Together

Julie Campos. WIN's Interim Vice Chair presented at ICSEW Conference in partnership with other Business Resource Group leaders about Allyship and Supporting our communities in November 2021.



*(Screenshot: Allyship: You and I Together slide 1 PowerPoint presentation, Nov 2021)*



*(Screenshot: Allyship: You and I Together presentation, Nov 2021)*

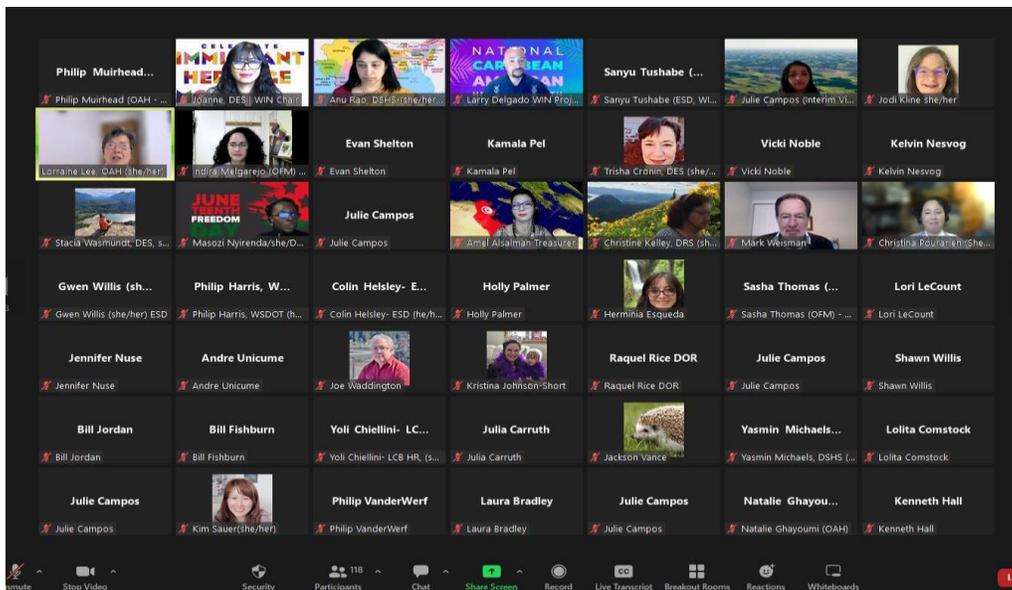
## Annual Celebration

Washington Immigrant Network's Special Project team put together the Annual Celebration virtually on June 17, 2022. The Team includes Larry Delgado, Philip Muirhead, Gwen Willis, Sanyu Tushabe, Anu Rao, Amel Alsalman, and Julie Campos. The theme was Our Immigrant Stories and highlighted the stories and experiences of WIN Members, partners, and their families as they journeyed to the United States. The celebration was welcomed by Congresswoman Marilyn Strickland. There were over 100 in attendance.



Congresswoman Marilyn Strickland

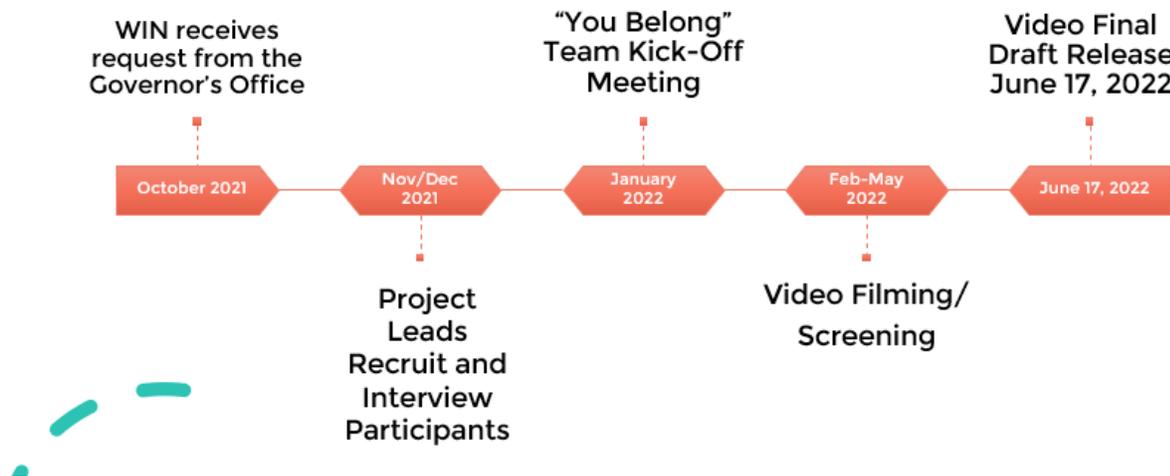
*(Screenshot: Congresswoman Marilyn Strickland, Keynote Speaker at Washington Immigrant Network Annual Celebration, June 2022)*



*(Screenshot of participants at Washington Immigrant Network Annual Celebration, June 2022)*

## "You Belong"

The WIN BRG recently released a video the group produced to raise awareness about the state as an employer of choice for immigrant communities. The video was created in response to a request from the Governor's Office in Fall 2021.



*(You Belong Project Timeline)*

After receiving the request, WIN Chair Joanne Lee and her Project Co-Lead, Mustafa Mohamedali, Department of Transportation, recruited and interviewed participants from several agencies. After the holidays, they launched a kickoff meeting with the group in January 2022. They filmed for several months and launched the screening in early May. After the final draft, WIN released the video to the public on Friday, June 17, 2022, at WIN's Annual Celebration event.

The video showcases the diversity of the state workforce and promotes Washington as a welcoming environment where immigrants can feel valued and appreciated – and where they can belong. It features several current state immigrant employees' stories that illustrate their experience with recruitment, applying for state jobs, being hired, and onboarding.

### Project Leads:

- Joanne Lee, Department of Enterprise Services | Philippines
- Mustafa Mohamedali, Department of Transportation | Kenya

### "You Belong" Participants

- Joanne Lee, Department of Enterprise Services | Philippines
- Mustafa Mohamedali, Department of Transportation | Kenya
- Rokaih Vansot, Department of Transportation | Cambodia
- Paras Joshi, Military Department | Nepal
- Alejandro Sanchez, Department of Licensing | USA
- Indira Melgarejo, Office of Financial Management | Venezuela
- Yelena Kazatskaya, Office of Administrative Hearings | Ukraine
- Sanyu Tushabe, Employment Security Department | Uganda
- Farid Baghirov, Department of Social Health and Services | Azerbaijan
- Yacob Zekarias, Department of Veterans Affairs | Eritrea
- Chulam Mohmand, Port of Seattle | Afghanistan

### Film Producers

- Erin Cahill - OFM |USA
- Rachel Friederich, Assistant Film Producer, OFM |USA

You Belong YouTube link - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kmi-MPtfJBg>



*(You Belong video screenshot)*

< 🔍 washington immigrant...

All Posts People Groups Photos



Governor Jay Inslee ✓ · Following ...

4 hrs · 🌐

June is #ImmigrantHeritageMonth. Diversity is one of Washington state's greatest strengths. Within our state government we strive to be an employer of choice for immigrant communities. This means making sure every employee knows they are valued and appreciated.

Thanks to the Washington Immigrant Network for sharing the voices of immigrant employees about their experiences. As WIN leaders Joanne and Mustafa said best: We believe you belong here!

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=kmi-MPtfJBg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kmi-MPtfJBg)



Home



Friends



Watch



Notifications



Menu

(Gov. Inslee's Facebook post screenshot acknowledging the "You Belong" Project)

## You Belong Photos

Several photos were taken during the filming and screening.



Left to Right: Mustafa, Joanne, Rachel & Erin



Left to Right: Yelena, Joanne, Rokaih, & Erin



Left to Right: Mustafa, Indira, Rachel, Rokaih, Sanyu, Joanne, Paras and Erin



Screening Session



Filming Session



Left to Right: Farid, Joanne, Rokaih, Mustafa & Yacob

***Salamat, Thank you!***

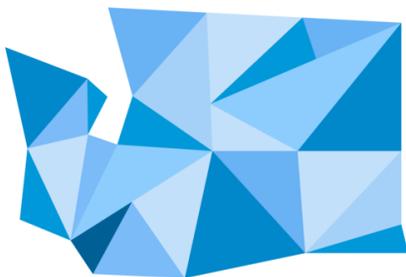
**Washington Immigrant Network**

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