



PRESIDENT'S CORNER BY GRANT CURTIS

The US Citizenship Honors Dinner returned!!

After COVID forced us to cancel in 2021, the QCAIR Citizenship Honors Dinner returned in force on November 6, 2021. Held at the Spotlight Event Center, 1800 7th Avenue in Moline, the dinner coincided with an open house for our offices in the same building. In keeping with the event's spirit, we featured four new Americans who shared their journey to becoming US citizens and QuadCitizens.

The first speaker was Enrique Rodrigues Hernandez, who came to the US as an asylum seeker from Cuba. The asylum process is not easy. While pursuing citizenship, he built a career at Costco, starting with a temporary, seasonal position at Costco and working hard to get subsequent promotions - leading to his current position as the store manager at the Davenport Costco. His inspiring story was followed by Weihua Hu, who arrived in the US at

with her family in 2002, at the age of 12. She shared a funny tale of how her first impression of the US was of the cornfields she saw flying from Chicago to the Quad Cities, which did not fit with what she knew of the US from tv and movies. A graduate of the University of Iowa, Weihua aspires to work in Human Resources, preferably at Green State Credit Union, her current place of employment.

Maryia Sukhotskaya shared a story different from the others, coming to the US as a green card winner. Maryia was born in Belarus and educated in both Belarus and Poland. She did a work-study in the US during college in the northeast, but during a visit to Chicago, she fell in love with the city. She won her green card in the lottery and arrived in the US in 2009, settling in Chicago. She became a citizen in 2015 and moved to the Quad Cities with her partner in 2020, working at HNI in Muscatine. The last speaker, Redeem Toko, shared the stage with her husband, John. They have recently opened a food store, "Mawua Food Market," on Locust Street in Davenport. Her journey was a little quicker than most because she followed her husband, who had previously immigrated to the US through the green card program. Redeem demonstrated ambition and a strong work ethic opening a business!

Attending the dinner was an incredible experience, combined with inspiring stories, a diverse assortment of international cuisines from local minority and immigrant-owned restaurants, capped off with a successful silent auction of items donated by Quad Cities businesses. The night made me proud to be the Director of QCAIR, and I am already looking forward to next year's US Citizenship Honors Dinner.

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BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: SAMANTHA WRIGHT



Why are you a part of QCAIR and what do you like about it?

I joined QCAIR because I am passionate about immigrants' rights and accessible resources for all. A large struggle people face when they migrate is finding resources to help them live day-to-day, and that's exactly what QCAIR offers. Resources, opportunities, and friendly faces to those who are coming from some not so friendly places. I like that QCAIR has a variety of

immigrants involved on the board, in leadership positions, and helping QCAIR reach a wider audience.

How did you become interested in immigration?

I became interested with immigration, specifically immigration policy, after taking Political Science classes at Augustana. I grew to be more interested in their personal stories after internship at Palomares Social Justice Center in 2018. I also spent the summer of 2018 studying abroad in Ecuador and Peru, and this raised my awareness of US immigration problems and also grew my passion for learning Spanish and communicating with immigrants who speak Spanish. Through my involvement with the local Latino community at Palomares, I learned of immigrants' persevering attitudes and unthinkable pasts, which motivated me to want to make their paths here in the US easier. To think that they went through so many barriers just to get here to live in the US and hit more barriers is

unfair, and I wanted to be involved in any way I could at this time. So, I do this through my involvement at QCAIR.

What are your hopes for the future of QCAIR?

hope that we can hire more people as the years pass, and to have our name well established and well known as the local hub for helping immigrants and refugees. I also wish that QCAIR influences policy in some way, being the poli-sci nerd I am.

BOARD MEMBERS

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we're here to help you reach them

LET US HELP
YOU GET STARTED

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NOVEMBER 2021 CITIZENSHIP HONORS DINNER PHOTO REEL



DONATIONS NEEDED

World Relief has been welcoming Afghans to the Quad Cities area! They are in need of donations of furniture, small appliances, TWIN bedding, towels, other household items and gently used winter coats for Afghan refugees. Donations can be dropped off at World Relief, 1852 16th St., Moline, IL 61265. Mon-Fri 9am-3pm. Or visit World Relief's website at <https://bit.ly/3Jv9o8T>

ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

Applications for the Illinois Family Support Program are being accepted until April 2022, or until the funds run out. If you know of anyone who has not yet received assistance from this program and is an immigrant or a refugee, have them contact Amy DeHaven at adehaven@qcair.org or stop by the QCAIR offices, 1800 7th Ave. Suite 5 & 6, Moline, IL 61265. To see if you qualify go to <https://bit.ly/3sM01Ld>

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Larry Brown
Ronald Curtis
Grant Curtis
Amy DeHaven
Kimberly Feeney
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Susan Leuthauser

Ruth McAndrews
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Kent Pilcher
Maryia Sokhotskaya
Ben Weyrick
Douglas Wier





GRANTS RECEIVED

Quad City Community
Foundation/
Capacity Building

Rock Island Community
Foundation

Quad City Community
Foundation/Helpenstell
Foundation

Illinois Coalition for Immigrant
and Refugee Rights/State of
Illinois

GRANT FOR FURNACE REPLACEMENT

The City of East Moline is providing a furnace replacement grant program to its residents. This program will cover the cost of a replacement furnace up to \$4,999.

In order to qualify, residents must meet HUD income guidelines. You do not have to own your home to apply; tenants can apply and ask their landlords to sign off on the application and final payment documentation.

The deadline for this grant is April 30th, 2022.
Apply at <https://bit.ly/34OmJue>

HAVE YOU HEARD?

The Putnam Museum in Davenport is partnering with the Friends of MLK, and Azubuike African American Council, and World Relief to update their regional history exhibit so that it more accurately reflects the diverse history of the Quad Cities. The exhibits will be updated to be more inclusive of immigrants and refugees. The Putnam Museum is asking the community to participate by sharing ideas and suggestions for the update. If you have some local history that you would like to share with them, please email exhibits@putnam.org. Thank you!

OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT QCAIR



(309) 762-2999
Fax (309) 762-2757



Carmen's Jewelry

14k Gold Rings, Watches, Chains, Jewelry Repair

925-4th Ave.
Moline, IL 61265
Open Tuesday-Saturday 11am-6pm

CARMEN FUENTES
(Owner)



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International Money Transfers: Send money fast and easy with Vigo, available at our Moline & Muscatine Branches.



Financing for Immigration Services: Newcomers Initiative finances low-cost immigration services through select partners listed on ascentra.org/newcomers.



KINNA'S HOUSE OF LOVE INC'S MULTI-CULTURAL LOVE FEST

Special Performance

Kossi Liassidji
309-292-4519
liasedem25@gmail.com

Multi-Cultural Love Fest!

AFRICA TOGO KOSOVO INDIA SWEDEN ITALY
NIGERIA NORWAY
TURKEY LIBERIA
PAKISTAN USA Mali

Explore your taste bud with the exotic dishes from different countries!

Lulac Club
4224 Ricker Hill Rd, Davenport Iowa
Jan 22nd from 1-8pm
and Jan 23rd from 1-5pm
Contact Kinna at 815-995-8535
or Karene at 563-343-7831

CALLING ALL SPECIALTY VENDORS!
Seeking Performers, Dancers and Speakers!

Kinna's Multi-Cultural Love Fest took place on Saturday, January 22 and Sunday, January 23, 2022. The event was an open hearted, enthusiastic embracing of the cultural backgrounds of the many peoples residing in our Quad Cities community.



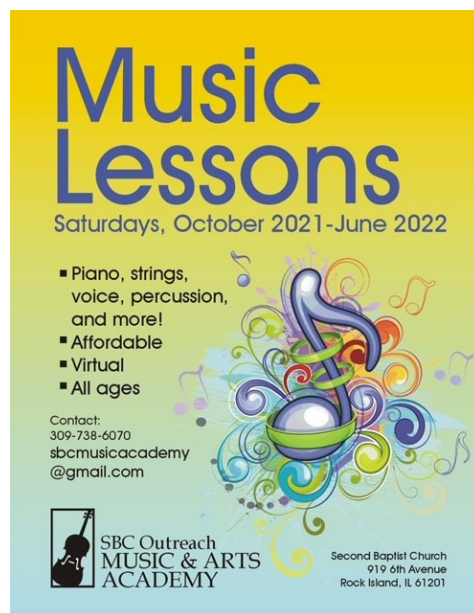
Kinna had a vision of recognizing and celebrating the cultural backgrounds of Quad Cities residents while emphasizing that we are all interdependent and part of one family of humanity. Kinna invited locally placed exchange students to talk about their countries and cultures; she invited drummers, dancers, and even a bagpiper! Other community organizations were present to talk with attendees about their services and missions. HyVee provided pizza, and Smokin Robs BBQ was there selling BBQ specialties.

Kinna's organizers invited newly arrived Afghan refugees to attend as special guests hoping to show them a warm welcome to our community. There was music, dancing, a raffle drawing, and a whole lot of LOVE!



GOOD WORKS AROUND THE QUAD CITIES

The mission of the SBC Outreach Music and Arts Academy is to provide students of all ages with high quality affordable instruction in the performing arts. We are dedicated to providing youth and adults with educational opportunities and experiences in the study of music and performing arts which would be otherwise unaffordable or unavailable to members of our community. We firmly believe that life-long benefits are obtained from the study of a musical instrument. These include self-discipline, leadership, and building self-esteem. The Academy is also rich in diverse cultures and ethnicities and we believe that everyone should be provided an equal opportunity to what we have to offer. To meet as many needs as possible we collaborate with several organizations within the community to include the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center, Quad City Symphony Orchestra Education Department, local churches, social organizations and social services. Despite the many challenges of the COVID pandemic we have been able to stay connected with our students and their families to help keep them encouraged.



Rev Carmen Ausborn, Executive Director
SBC Outreach Music & Arts Academy
919-6th Avenue
Rock Island, IL 61201
Phone: (309)738-6070/ (309)788-0677
Email: Sbcmusicacademy@gmail.com
Website: www.sbcra.org

VITA PROGRAM OFFERS TAX ASSISTANCE IN THE QUAD CITIES

VITA, or Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, provides free income tax preparation for those who earn up to \$57,000 annually.

In-person tax filing by appointment only is available Feb. 1-April 9th at

- Eastern Iowa Community College, 101 W. 3rd St. Davenport, Wednesdays 5 PM - 8 PM
- Friendly House, 1221 Myrtle St. Davenport, Tues/Thurs 6 PM-8 PM, Saturdays 9 AM -12 PM
- Palomares Social Justice Center, 135 4th Ave. Moline, Mon 5 PM - 8 PM

In-person tax filing walk-in only is available Feb. 1 - April 9 at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center, 630 Martin Luther King Dr., Rock Island, Tues/Wed/Thurs 5 PM - 8 PM.

Drop off tax filing by appointment only is available Feb. 2- April 13 at





- Davenport Eastern Library, 6000 Eastern Ave., Davenport, Mon 12:30 PM - 3:30 PM, Tues 9:30 AM -12:30 PM
- Moline Public Library, 3210 41st St., Moline, Mon/Wed 10:30 AM - 4:30 PM
- Rock Island Township, 2829 7th Ave., Rock Island, Tues 9:30 AM - 4 PM
- Rock Island County Senior Center, 2221 11th St., Rock Island, Saturdays, 9 AM - 1 PM

To make an appointment, dial 2-1-1 or call 563-355-9900. Visit [UnitedWayQC.org/VITA](https://www.unitedwayqc.org/VITA) for more information.

Please wear a mask at appointments for the health and safety of others.



Quad Cities Alliance For Immigrants and Refugees

1800 7th Ave. Suites 5 & 6, Moline, IL 61625
(563) 594 - 0854  qcair@qcair.org 
 [facebook.com/qcair.org](https://www.facebook.com/qcair.org)  [qcair.org](https://www.qcair.org)