

1. What problem were you addressing?

Trump Administration continued to adopt anti-immigrant policies and made immigrants' life difficult in the U.S. In much of 2020, immigrant advocates fought the proposal to expand what constitutes "public charge," which makes immigrants ineligible to adjust to lawful status, has expanded, incorporating more need-based programs and further deterring immigrant seniors from accessing services. Public benefit usage, under the new changes to the public charge rule, could negatively impact immigrants' ability to become a Legal Permanent Resident, the first step toward U.S. citizenship. This, in addition to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, has created further dissonance in the lives of many senior immigrants, leaving them in an impossible situation of having to choose between utilizing benefits to meet their basic needs or a pathway to citizenship in a more precarious financial situation. In March 2021, the expanded public charge proposal was dismissed, which allows many immigrants and immigrant senior to apply and utilize services they need.

COVID-19 presented many challenges for everyone and exacerbated barriers facing immigrant seniors in accessing public benefits and social services. For a long period of time, state and federal agencies do not operate normally so it took longer for AFSC's social worker to apply or appeal benefits immigrant seniors need. The combination of a broken immigration system, coupled with the implementation of new and harmful immigration policies and a global health crisis has heightened anxiety, fear, and isolation and caused greater needs for services amongst our senior clients. AFSC's Immigrant Rights Program in New Jersey has found intensive case management to be a strong solution for navigating the additional barriers immigrant seniors face and the limited safety net services available to this population.

2. What change did you expect to create? What were the desired objectives, outcomes and outputs of the program and progress made toward each during the reporting period?

Through this project we set these goals to effectively assist ten new senior immigrants by providing them with at least three services, connecting them to programs and benefits to address their needs. AFSC's Social Worker Jonnelle Rodriguez was able to achieve most of these goals through several actions. Our original objectives for this project were:

1. At least ten new senior immigrants will receive services and benefits that improve their quality of life, and
2. At least 100 service providers, 50 immigrant seniors, and two agencies serving seniors will have an increased understanding of immigrant eligibility for public benefits.

Since the onset of this grant cycle October 2020, the Social Work has managed a caseload of 13 senior immigrants simultaneously with a caseload of 21 individuals from our mental health project, from various ethnic backgrounds with diversified needs. Clients in total have received 38 different services including completed applications, phone calls for services and referrals for

benefits addressing needs for medical, mental health, housing and food access. On average, each client received 2 to 3 services.

Many needs being addressed through case management services stemmed from the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many individuals lost employment, were unable to pay for housing costs and/or feed their families. The Social Worker allocated resources to address these needs which primarily included food distributions, rental assistance, healthcare access and financial assistance for other basic needs. AFSC also received funding through the National Day Laborer Organizing Network and New Jersey Pandemic Relief fund where 3 of our senior clients in need were able to receive financial assistance totaling \$2,100 in the form of gift cards.

The Social Worker has also conducted 2 presentations and participated in 1 panel regarding case management services for immigrants and immigrant seniors, public benefit qualifications, and health care access for immigrants during the COVID-19 pandemic. The presentations were with the Princeton Senior Resource Center and YWCA of Union County and the panel presentation was conducted through the NJ Alliance for Immigrant Justice. She also attended trainings organized by NJ Department of Health and [MHP Salud](#) in spring 2021 geared towards accessing the COVID-19 vaccine for Black and Latinx communities and the effects COVID-19 has had on the mental health of older Latinos.

3. How did you measure success--both quantitative and qualitative? A chart of objectives, actions, and results is helpful. Include numbers and demographics of people touched by the work. Explain your organization's efforts toward diversity, equity and inclusion.

AFSC measured quantitative success in the form of post-service surveys, number of completed applications for benefits and services, benefits received and the value of those benefits, presentations completed, and the number of service providers and community members reached. Qualitative success was measured through individual client stories.

All of the clients received and responded the survey said they were very satisfied with the services that they have received from AFSC's social worker; their needs were met; services received helped them obtain some form of stability. One client said that they would like clients and the community to be updated and educated more on the services we provide and to increase awareness of these services. Clients said,

"I just want to say that I am so appreciative of the help that I received from you and the facility. Keep up the good work with helping every citizen that is in need of your help"

"My family and I are so grateful for your assistance and continuous support"

Original Objectives	Actions	Results
At least ten new senior immigrants will receive	Served 10 new senior clients and 3 clients from the	11 completed applications for benefits

<p>services and benefits that improve their quality of life</p>	<p>previous year.</p> <p>Conducted intakes, assessed needs and applied for public benefits or community services.</p> <p>Provided case management that included: completing applications for benefits, assisting clients with basic needs stemming from COVID-19 pandemic, making referrals, drafting support letters and materials and continued advocacy until benefits were granted.</p>	<p>and services.</p> <p>4 approvals for NJSNAP for a year, resulting in food access valued at \$13,584. This includes the temporary 15% increase NJSNAP recipients received due to the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>2 approvals for COVID-19 rental assistance resulting in housing security for one year valued at 19,600.</p> <p>2 seniors were approved after assistance with applying as non-filers to receive COVID-19 stimulus checks totaling \$3600.</p> <p>1 pending application for low-income senior housing.</p> <p>10 phone calls for services</p> <p>4 referrals for community-based services such as food distribution and other mutual aid efforts.</p> <p>2 successful ICE check-ins for clients conducted via email by the social worker.</p>
<p>At least 100 service providers, 50 immigrant seniors, and two agencies serving seniors will have an increased understanding of immigrant eligibility for public benefits.</p>	<p>Conducted 2 presentations and participated in 1 panel with immigrant eligibility information to service providers who service or work directly with senior immigrants in the community.</p>	<p>A total of 41 seniors and 58 service providers from several social services agencies working with immigrants, including the aging population, increased their capacity to serve their immigrant clients through the information discussed and disseminated in AFSC presentations.</p>

Jonnelle and our temporary social worker (covering Jonnelle’s maternity leave) managed a caseload of 14 immigrant seniors that are of Black, Caribbean and Latinx

origins. Each client had unique circumstances, some dealing with issues like homelessness, being previously detained in an ICE detention center, chronic health issues and disabilities. AFSC's social worker works to support senior clients' moving towards living a dignified life. Here is a story:

A 55-year-old woman originally from Jamaica arrived in the United States with hopes to create a better life for not only herself but her three children. With the assistance from AFSC legal team they were able to start the process of helping her become a U.S. Citizen. Throughout this process she realized she can achieve more now she has secured immigration status and did not want to let it go to waste. It encouraged her to pursue these opportunities and make long-term goals for herself. One of her goals was to pursue a college education as she did not have the opportunity in Jamaica. The social worker assisted her in filing her FAFSA for university and the client has expressed interest in becoming a teacher. Recently, AFSC's social worker assisted her in registering for the PRAXIS, the teacher certification exams, as well as provided her with the necessary information for a Special Education Certificate, which is the population she wants to work with. The client feels that gaining this education will allow her and her family to have a good life, and at the same time she is able to help others.

AFSC's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: As an organization, AFSC is committed to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion both with its staff and communities we work with. AFSC has developed a policy to guide internal conversation, staff conduct and relationships with constituents and partners. Additionally, AFSC's newly approved 10-year Strategic Plan reaffirms the organization's commitment to applying an explicitly anti-oppression framework to all of our work. AFSC's Immigrant Rights Program strives to hire staff that reflects the diverse immigrant communities we work with and values the experience our community members bring to us and to the larger society.

4. *Please note any collaborations that supported your work and/or ways that you leveraged resources. How did this project engage and empower staff from all levels of your organization?*

AFSC has added two more social workers to work with different communities. Our soon-to-be Senior Social Worker Jonnelle (funded by this grant) has organized monthly social worker staff meeting to share strategies, support each other's cases and learn emerging issues facing immigrants.

AFSC is a founding member of the NJ Alliance for Immigrant Justice. They reached out to Jonnelle to conduct annual and special presentations on services for immigrants and immigrant seniors. There is a group of close allies working on housing and other services for the aging that would reach out to Jonnelle to better work with their immigrant clients, such as United Way and Hudson County Office of the Aging.

5. *Please share any unanticipated outcomes or barriers encountered. Indicate any changes in the program's goals, strategies, personnel or timelines and the reasons behind the changes.*

Due to COVID-19, many of our senior clients are not enrolled in regular senior programs they might qualify for and working age seniors are not employed and fell behind on rent and other bills. AFSC distributed emergency cash assistance (via gift cards) when they were available to us.

Jonnelle went on maternity leave late May and will return early October. We hired a temporary part-time social worker to continue to check on senior clients and handle urgent new cases.

6. *How do you plan to share and replicate your results?*

We share results with funders and AFSC central office through reports and conversations. We send out newsletter via our CRM to share our work and the resilience of our immigrant community members. We also share our successes and resources with allies and on the internet whenever possible.

7. *Include a project financial statement (budget and actual) for the reporting period. Please explain significant variances from the original budget and reasons for the variances (with corrective measures if overages), as well as plans for future sustainability.*

See attached.

8. *Feedback on your interaction with FFA would be helpful. How have we helped? Made it harder? What else can we do to facilitate your work?*

Having simpler and streamline proposal and reporting process is really helpful. Having the opportunity to present our work and network with other grantees is also helpful.

9. *Additional comments:*