

Lt. Governor and English Works Honor Businesses that Support English Classes for Immigrants



Lt. Gov. Murray Presents a Certificate to Morgan Memorial Goodwill Industries

BOSTON, MA – "This should be on the front page of every paper," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today at a non-profit in Lynn crammed with almost a hundred state officials, business leaders, labor organizers, community workers, and immigrants. "This is a good news story: how business working cooperatively with government is creating opportunities to realize the American Dream."

The Lieutenant Governor was speaking about the English Works Campaign, which had organized the gathering to honor 18 businesses that have partnered with government and the non-profit sector to offer their immigrant workers the chance to learn English.

["Breaking the Language Barrier,"](#) a recent report by the Boston Foundation, details the tremendous shortfall in English Language Instruction across Massachusetts, with many programs burdened with waiting lists of a year or more. The English Works Campaign offers a solution by creating public-private partnerships and opportunities to learn at work.

"People embrace the idea of learning at work," said Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development Joanne Goldstein, who talked about her experience with an organization that saw nearly 100% attendance when their immigrant workers were offered the chance to learn English. Said the Secretary, "It's good for business, it's good for workers, it's good for the Commonwealth, and it's good for us as a community."

As many of the speakers stressed, the programs being honored were helping those who help themselves. "Refugees and immigrants come from lives full of struggle," said Natasha Soolkin, Director of Russian Community Association/New American Center, which hosted the gathering. "Their main goal is to become self-sufficient in the shortest possible time."

The programs honored offered testimony to that desire. As Fitzroy Alexander, CEO of honoree Traditional Bread put it, "I think the real people who should be up here getting the award is the workers. They make me who I am."

Speakers at the event included:

- **Timothy Murray**, Massachusetts Lieutenant Governor
- **Joanne Goldstein**, Massachusetts Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development
- **Josiane Martinez**, Executive Director, Massachusetts Office of Refugees and Immigrants
- **Judith Flanagan Kennedy**, Mayor of Lynn
- **Fitzroy Alexander**, CEO of Traditional Bread
- **Ayan Mohumad**, Somali immigrant, student at Russian Community Assoc, and worker at Traditional Bread
- **Natasha Soolkin**, Director, Russian Community Association/New American Center
- **Warren Pepicelli**, Executive Vice President, Unite Here!, Manager of New England Joint Board
- **Eva Millona**, Executive Director, MIRA Coalition
- **Claudia Green**, Director, English for New Bostonians

Awardees:

1. **The Langham Hotel**, Boston, in partnership with the YMCA International Learning Center
2. **Kripalu Center**, Stockbridge, in partnership with So. Berkshire Educational Collaborative
3. **North Shore Medical Center**, Salem, in partnership with Jewish Vocational Services (JVS)
4. **Harvard Bridge Program (Harvard Univ., SEIU 615, HUCTW, & UNITE HERE Local 26)**, Cambridge
5. **The MetroWest ESL Fund, Framingham**
6. **Morgan Memorial Goodwill Industries**, Roxbury/Boston, in partnership with La AlianzaHispana
7. **Traditional Breads**, Lynn, in partnership with Russian Community Association of MA
8. **Children's Hospital**, Boston, in partnership with JVS
9. **Notre Dame Health Care Center**, Worcester,
10. **Mass General Hospital**, Boston, in partnership with JVS
11. **South Cove Community Health Center**, Chinatown/Boston, in partnership with Asian American Civic Association
12. **Lahey Clinic**, Burlington

13. **Wrentham Developmental Center and AFSCME Local 646**, Wrentham, in partnership with the Worker Education Program
14. **Melville Candy Corporation**, Weymouth, in partnership with Massasoit Community College
15. **United Plastics Group, Inc.**, Chicopee, in partnership with Holyoke Works
16. **UMASS-Amherst Labor-Management Workplace Education Program**, (UMass, AFSCME Local 1776, USA/MTA, PSU/MTA), Amherst
17. **Southwick Apparel LLC and UNITE HERE!**, Haverhill, in partnership with Northern Essex Community College
18. **Christopher House of Worcester**, Worcester



Traditional Bread CEO Fitzroy Alexander and Secretary of Labor Joanne Goldstein examine his award