

WTC St. Louis and St. Louis Mosaic Project bring skilled immigrants into the local economy

ST. LOUIS, MO, U.S.A. -- The St. Louis region is number 19 in terms of U.S. population, but only 43rd in terms of foreign-born inhabitants. With less than 5% foreign-born, St. Louis trails other top 20 markets that average 20% foreign-born. A 2012 study by Professor Jack Strauss of St. Louis University showed that immigrants in St. Louis are more highly educated than the native born population, and are 60% more likely to be entrepreneurial. Therefore, the economy and cultural climate would be improved by creating a welcoming atmosphere for foreign-born talent, and developing programs that attract and retain foreign-born workers.



First Professional Connector, Cathy Dunkin, meets for coffee with Miguel Cedeno, the program's first participant; Miguel, arrived in St. Louis last December from the Dominican Republic

Based on the data above, it was determined that this immigration initiative fit with the World Trade Center St. Louis' goals for making the St. Louis region internationally welcoming. As part of the WTC St. Louis, the Mosaic Project's goal is to promote "Regional Prosperity through Immigration and Innovation." The St. Louis Mosaic Project has a steering committee of 21 community leaders from the bi-state region. The goal is that by 2020, the St. Louis region will be the fastest growing for foreign-born population among the top metros in the U.S. By focusing on foreign born entrepreneurs, there have been over 60 media stories, including Bloomberg, [CNN's Anderson Cooper](#), and the [Wall Street Journal](#). Tim Nowak, the Executive Director of WTC St. Louis, brings his vision for regional growth to this program, in connection with other WTC St. Louis programs for advancing results of international companies and the Sister Cities program.

In January 2014, the Mosaic Project Connector Program was launched, based on an award-winning program in Halifax, Canada. This program helps college educated foreign-born people holding long term U.S. work authorization to find jobs. Participants can go to the website: www.StlMosaicProject.org to see the criteria. Thirty Professional Connectors have been recruited, all globally minded professionals in the St. Louis region, who each agree to meet with a skilled immigrant, then make three more career introductions for that participant in their shared field.



St. Louis Mosaic Project Mugs are given to Professional Connectors and participants at first network coffee/tea event

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