



Laying the Foundation- Community Partnerships for Workforce Growth

LeadingAge[®] MN
FOUNDATION

THANK YOU TO...

The **LeadingAge Minnesota Foundation (LAMF)** who is proud to lead this work, on behalf of our LeadingAge Minnesota members.

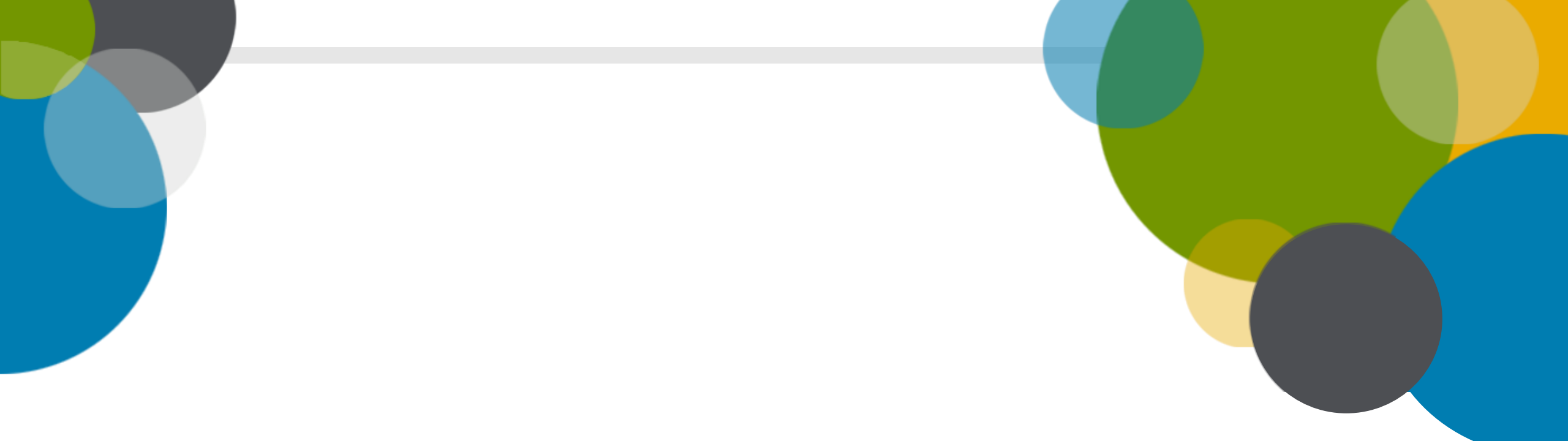
The **Employer Voices Advisory Council** and **Immigrant Voices Advisory Council** — comprised of LAMN members and partners.

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Westlund Enterprises — a valued consultant and LAMN member who helped create and facilitate the training you see today.

Laying the Foundation-Community Partnerships for Workforce Growth Training Topics

- Learn about Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and how they can interact with your organization
- Build genuine relationships that will lead to strong partnerships and higher retention
- Revising policies and programs that will better support New Americans within your organization



Presenter Introductions

Alight

- 50-year-old organization
- Used to be called the American Refugee Committee
- Work with new Americans from all nationalities, all walks of life
- Primarily work with individuals who have been in the country five years or less
- Create support systems and structures
- One area of focus is to support new Americans once they accept a job offer.
 - This includes completing the employer's onboarding process.
- Contact information: (612) 872-7060, <https://www.wearealight.org/>



Stacy Barnes
(Co-Director)



Najma Abdille
(Workforce Specialist)

International Institute of MN (IIMN)

- Serve all New Americans and focus on the whole range of the individual (personal life, career goals, etc.)
- Training includes housekeeping classes, dietary aide training class, CNA training, and customer service training
- There are also programs to help them learn English, gain job skills, and understand the American workplace so they are successful in their job
- The clients that they serve are older (30+) and they are looking for family sustaining wage, full-time jobs. Clients might be working two or more jobs.
- 80% of their clients are dependent on public transportation
- Contact information: (651) 647-0191, <https://iimn.org/>



Lynn Thompson
(Program Manager)

Pamoja Women

- Focus on clients in resettlement and we work with a lot of other organizations to kind of help the new refugees
- Focus on career pathways, help with training as PCA and CNA trainings
- Pamoja helps connect clients with jobs through forums, social media, and person-to-person interactions
- Many New American families already have strong caregiving values
- They help clients connect their respect to elders with showcasing the benefits of employment in aging services
- Contact information: (507) 226-8101, <https://www.pamojawomen.org/>



Khadija Ali (Executive Director-Pamoja Women, Owner/Director-Healings Home Health Care)

Ukrainian American Community Center

- The center has been around for more than 60 years
- Ukrainian immigrants did not plan to come here – they might not be as prepared for the workforce due to the haste in which they left Ukraine
- Focus on jobsite training, ELL, etc.
- LTC Workforce training includes vocational training, mentorship and support services, and job placement with ongoing support
- Work with employers for facility tours as Ukraine does not have long-term care facilities
- Ukraine = 1 interview for a job ... U.S. = 5-6 steps interviews
- Ukrainians are very trust based – pipelines are very important to ensure reliability and connections (i.e. person-to-person culture)
- Contact information: (612) 379-1956, <https://uaccmn.org/>



Iryna Petrus
(Program Manager)

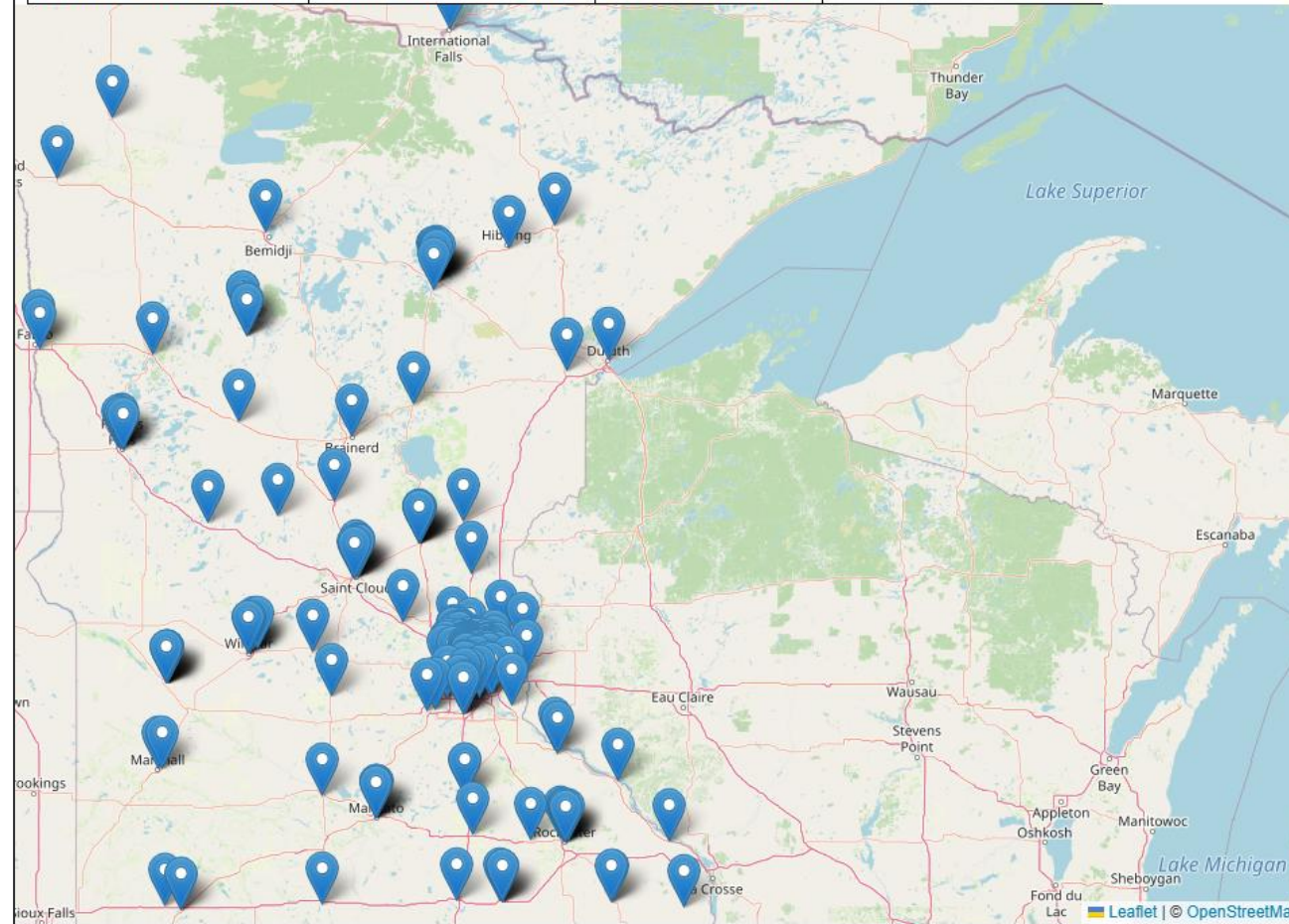
New American Resource Map

Minnesota's Community Supports & Connections for New Americans

WHAT'S ON THE MAP?

WHO THIS MAP IS FOR

WHY IT MATTERS



Zip Code

Search

Sort

Afghan Cultural Society (ACS) of Minnesota

301 Cedar Ave. S, Minneapolis, MN 55454

African Assistance Program

6040 Earle Brown Dr. Ste 200, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430

African Career, Education, & Resources Inc. (ACER)

6096 Shingle Creek Parkway, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430

African Community Services

1305 E. 24th St., Minneapolis, MN 55404

African Development Center

1931 S. Fifth St., Minneapolis, MN 55454

Working with CBOs

Working with a CBO – Pamoja Women

- Offer services like run food pantries, women's health programming, and after school programs, along with training programs for Aging Services
- They don't rely on flyers directly from employers – they will use targeted language to promote jobs
- Community relies on one-on-one communication as word of mouth is imperative to building a relationship
- Chat groups in WhatsApp, etc. are trusted within the group
- Some of the languages they serve include Swahili, Arabic, Somali, English



Working with a CBO – Ukrainian American Community Center

- Connect with community leaders through the Community Center
- Build trust - people will come to the center and ask for recommendations (“I trust that organization, go work there”)
- Partnerships where the processes are “easy” – work with organizations on ways to reduce the burden of onboarding
- Hosts Partner Days to highlight food, heritage, culture, religious background, etc. and learn about job/organization specifics



Working with a CBO – IIMN

- Facility tours and mock interviews help connect employers and International Institute of MN clients
- Send job openings and specify if there is an urgency to the need
- Use IIMN as a resource for training assistance, policy review, and partnerships for New American growth
- IIMN training can be modified to meet the needs of the industry!

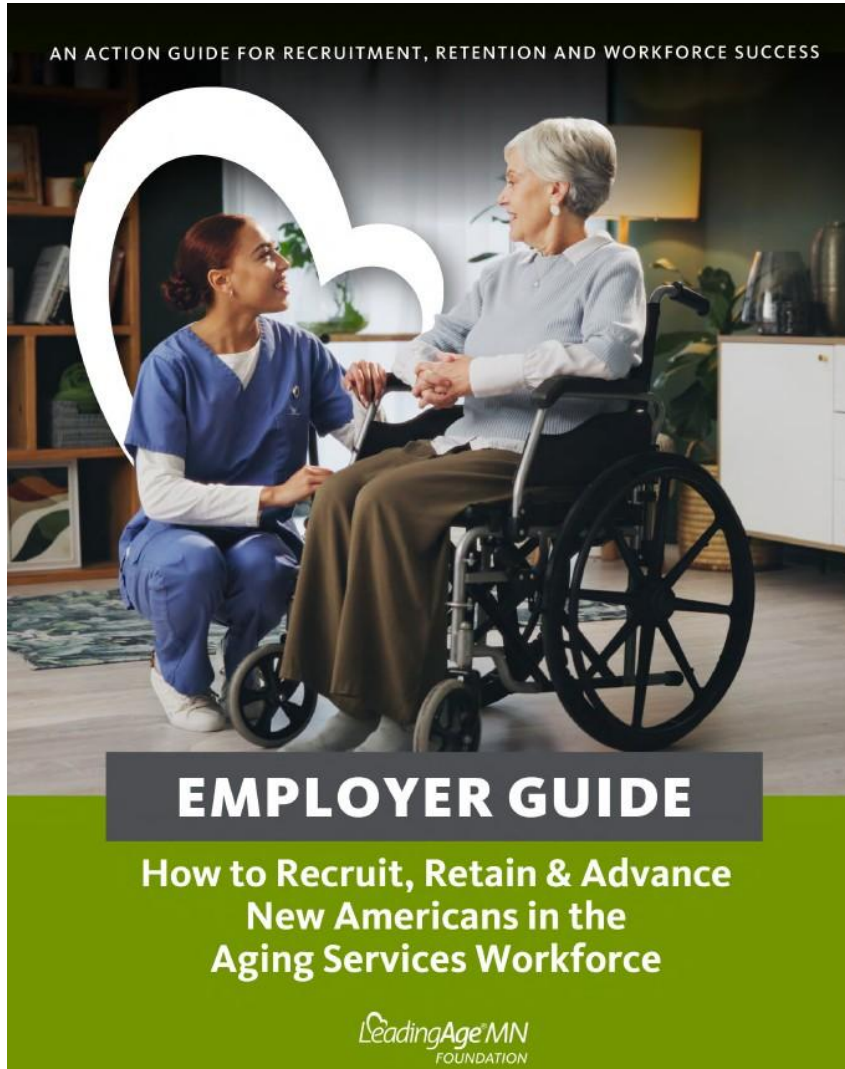


Working with a CBO – Alight

- Employee counselors will assist with explaining the job descriptions or what the job requires
- Support clients applying to jobs and beforehand, creating a resume or modifying a resume
- Creating or having a mock interviews
- New Americans can take longer to complete the training simply because there's a lot of background knowledge needed in the healthcare
- Employers can take part with mock interviews, job fairs, etc.
- Alight counselors will assist candidates with the employer's hiring process
- Applying to jobs is stressful!



LAMF's Employer Guide



Recruitment Strategies to Reach New Americans

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SECTION 4 TOOLS: RECRUIT & HIRE

- **Overview:** Recruiting has changed dramatically in the past few decades: many New Americans are not searching for jobs on mainstream platforms. Instead, they often rely on trusted networks — community organizations, faith groups, adult education programs, or ethnic media — to find opportunities. This resource provides strategies and a practical checklist for diversifying recruitment channels, strengthening job postings, and connecting directly with New American communities.

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TOOLS & TEMPLATES

- [Section 3 Tools: Partner & Prepare](#)
- [Section 4 Tools: Recruit & Hire](#)
- [Section 5 Tools: Welcome & Onboard](#)
- [Section 6 Tools: Educate & Retain](#)

Mount Olivet in Action

- Change doesn't happen overnight - people need to give themselves grace because culture change is difficult
- Employees might have a better answer to an issue or a problem than management
- One big realization – they didn't stand out to our immigrant employees at all
 - Immigrant culture = “everyone takes care of one another”
 - Transactional relationships will not carry an organization into success
- It's ok to manage in the GRAY
- They got to know people outside the organization's front doors (i.e. attend weddings, religious events, funerals, etc.)
- When you see the whole person, everything can change
- People talk – your reputation will spread
- Build a culture of community – good things will happen
- Mount Olivet genuinely care about the whole person
- Ex-employee vs. alumni – think of it like school (you're not an “ex-student”)



Adam White
(Head of People & Culture)



Roger White
(Chief Executive Officer)

Mount Olivet's Approach to Policies and Programs

- Employee referral programs are one of the best ways to hire talent
- They've gone from having new hire orientation from twice a month to once a month
- Bereavement flexibility | PTO flexibility | POLICY FLEXIBILITY



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How to Get to “Yes”

SECTION 3 TOOLS: PARTNER & PREPARE

Overview: This conversation guide helps supervisors respond to employee requests with a “Yes, and” mindset. By acknowledging requests, exploring what’s possible, and working toward solutions that balance employee needs and operational realities, this tool builds trust, signals respect, and supports retention.

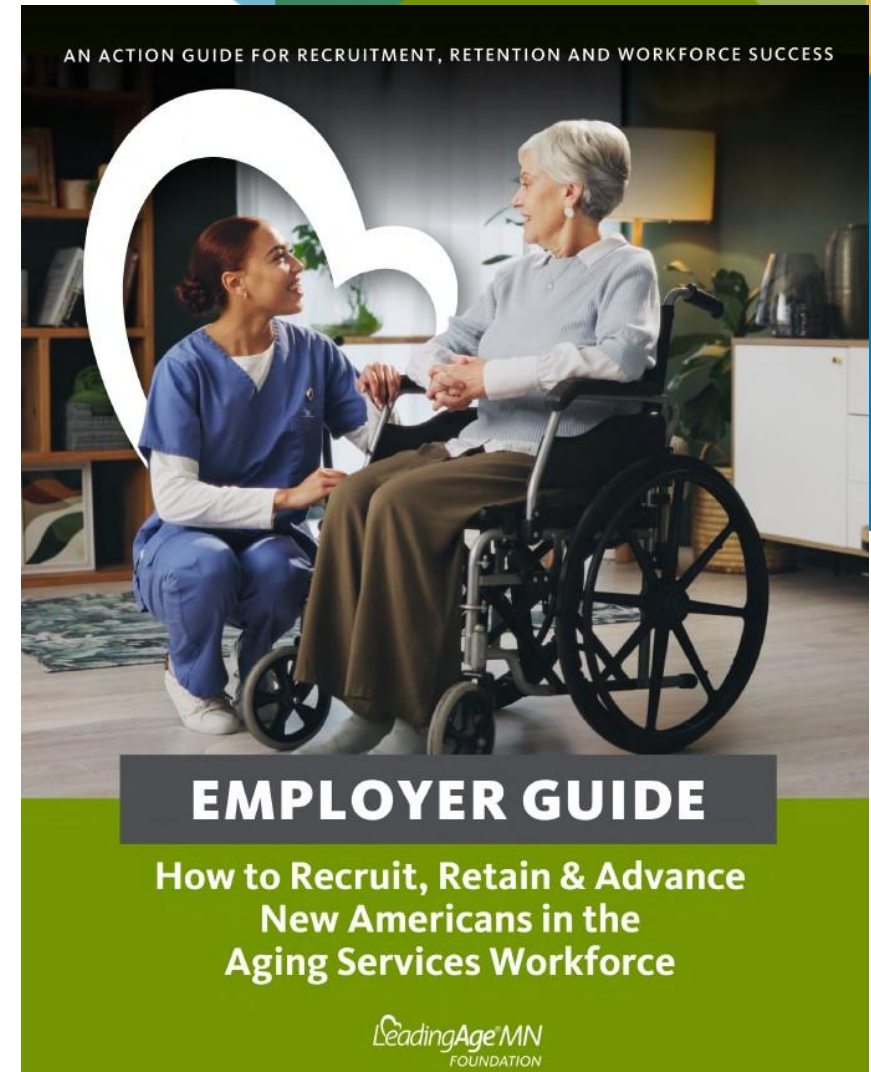
Situation	What a “No” Sounds Like (Inside the Box)	How to Get to “Yes” (Proactive Alternatives)
“My transportation doesn’t allow me to arrive at 7am — can I start at 7:30am?”	“The schedule is set — if you can’t work 7am, this job might not be a fit.”	- Allow flexible shift start- and end-times. - Poll staff to cover schedule gaps. - Explore rideshare or carpool opportunities.
“My family is in a 10-hour time difference. Can I schedule my breaks to call them?”	“Breaks are scheduled. You’ll have to wait until your set time.”	- Arrange a short, planned break during overlap hours. - Ensure coverage for urgent needs during that window. - Normalize international family needs in scheduling.

Tips for Employers

- **Lead with curiosity:** Ask, “What would help you stay successful here?” before defaulting to policy. “What would it take to make this possible?”
- **Document solutions:** If a “Yes, and” solution works once, explore how it can be formalized for fairness and into a policy.
- **Empower supervisors:** Give them authority to use “Yes, and” responses as part of problem-solving.
- **Balance fairness and flexibility:** Apply creative solutions and ensure flexibility is applied fairly across staff to avoid resentment.

Let's Recap

- Learned about Community-Based Organizations and how they can interact with your organization
- Build genuine relationships that will lead to strong partnerships and higher retention
- Revise policies and programs that will better support New Americans within your organization



Thank You!