



Vision

The Denver Immigrant and Refugee Commission advocates for the immigrant and refugee communities of the City of Denver. Our Commission connects communities with allies, stakeholders and resources in Denver and provide valuable community context and input to policy makers. The Commission engages communities in an integrative and meaningful way and provides education by raising awareness about resources that will make their integration into the Denver community constructive.

Purpose

The purpose of the Commission is to link the Immigrant and Refugee community and the Mayor's Office, Agency for Human Rights and Community Partnerships and other City Agencies and Offices and to respond to emerging issues of importance to the Denver Immigrant and Refugee communities in areas most critical including, but not limited to, education, women's rights, access to resources and integration into the community. On September 16, 2015, DIRC hosted its first Community Listening session. This session aimed to improve the well-being and quality of life for immigrants and refugees in the city of Denver. Various community organizations, non-profits, and educators collaborated with the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs to present and identify the emerging issues of the immigrant and refugee communities in Denver.

Accomplishments, Goals, Highlights

- ✓ 2016 – DIRC members recommended that the Mayor support a Language Access Assessment of all City Departments. The effort will be carried out by the Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs. DIRC held a meet & greet with the newly appointed members of the Aurora Immigrant & Refugee Taskforce. The Commission, in partnership with the Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs (DOIRA) selected 12 recipients of the Immigrant Integration Mini-Grants.
- ✓ 2017 - DIRC Members met with Mayor Hancock to have an open dialogue about federal action concerning immigrants and refugees <https://www.denverite.com/denver-immigrants-refugees-thank-mayor-hancock-words-ask-action-28755/>
- ✓ Supported the Mayor's "**Immigrant and Refugee Community Forum**" at Place Bridge Academy. The forum included City leaders from DPD, CAO, elected officials, Acting US Attorney Bob Troyer, community leaders and many more.
- ✓ DIRC partnered with the Denver Public Library, Spring Institute, and World Denver to host a space for local refugees to tell their stories. "**Refugees: In Their Own Words**" aimed to educate citizens on the process of vetting, resettlement, and successful integration of refugees into their new communities.
- ✓ In response to Executive Orders released by the current administration, DIRC created a support statement and resource list as a commitment to our immigrant and refugee communities that stated "We know that Denver has a history of welcoming immigrants and refugees and we will continue to act as a welcoming city and an ally for all new arrivals"
- ✓ Mayor Hancock Proclaims March 21 "Denver Immigration day of Action" a press release was held to highlight the contributions of immigrants in the Denver community. Denver joined city's around the country to reaffirm our commitment to supporting immigrant and refugee communities.

What's next? DIRC to host the 2017 Mayor's Diversity Awards, Immigrant Integration Mini-Grant selection and distribution, sharing Commissioner Success stories (Perhaps through the Mayor's new Our Immigrant Stories site). The Commission and Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs will collaborate with the Colorado Coalition for Genocide Awareness and Action to conduct a community mental health assessment in the summer of 2017. The Commission will continue to respond to community needs and concerns as they develop and evolve throughout the year.