

## **HONORING CONTRIBUTIONS;**

### **IMMIGRATION'S TRUE FACE**

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### **Body**

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As Washington works up its anti-immigrant obsession, Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights has been busy showing the genuine **faces** of American immigrants. The message to a forgetful people: We Are Them.

At its awards dinner tonight in Minneapolis, the human rights group will celebrate immigrants' **contributions**, focusing on five outstanding Minnesotans born outside the United States. The focus is timely and important. This country has been and is being built by immigrants. The five to be **honored** are:

M. Nazie Eftekhari, a native of Iran and chief operating officer of the Araz Group, an independently held health care preferred provider organization.

Jose Lamas, a native of Mexico, a recent Worthington High School graduate who plans to study law.

W. George Meredith, a native of South Wales in the United Kingdom, who is an executive vice president of 3M Co.

Viet Ngo, a native of Vietnam and founder and CEO of Lemna Corp. and a well-regarded sculptor.

Rocky Ralebipi, a native of South Africa who is Humphrey Fellow and library scientist.

The United States finds itself in an especially thick nativist stew now. The world is in a profound state of flux. **Immigration** demographics make many more newcomers stand out by their race or ethnicity in what has been a Eurocentric nation. The disproportionate impact of illegal **immigration** in the southern United States is driving necessary but exaggerated responses from policy-makers. But most of all, the political spin has degenerated so profoundly that a citizen who channel-surfs or scans headlines to form ideas about **immigration** gets a distorted picture.

Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights reminds the community that on the whole, the picture of immigrants is positive.

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