



## Activation Toolkit for Elected Officials



# Get Involved!

As an elected official, you play an important role in your community. We encourage you to get involved and help us celebrate Immigrant Heritage Month (IHM) during the month of June by engaging constituents, faith leaders, civic organizers, businesses and other local elected officials and the media in events that celebrate each person's unique immigration story.

This toolkit contains ideas and sample materials for celebrating Immigrant Heritage Month in your community, including:

- Background on Welcome.us and IHM
- Ideas for community events, including IHM launch and beyond
- Sample materials to help support your IHM events
- FAQ on IHM



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### **Fast Facts About Welcome.us & Immigrant Heritage Month**

**In the United States, with a good idea and enough hard work, anything is possible.** The entrepreneurial drive and spirit of our country is built on our diversity of origins. It is what drew the first people to the U.S. and what continues to drive American business. American success is a result of our many distinct experiences, not in spite of it.

**Welcome.us, a new non-profit organization, is dedicated to celebrating a United States that is fueled by immigrants from around the world.** Immigrants past and present – and their subsequent generations – have always been united by the common cause of building a better life for themselves and their families.

- Beginning with the launch of the first-ever Immigrant Heritage Month (IHM) in June 2014, Welcome.us will partner with corporations, media outlets, organizations, celebrities, athletes, faith, civic, and political leaders to gather and share inspirational stories of American immigrants.
- Our goal is to encourage as many Americans as possible to tell the story of how they first felt welcomed to the American experience. Our history and stories will help determine our future—at Welcome.us, we want everyone here to be a part of that history.
- Through a campaign driven by social media, earned media, partnerships, and outreach, we aim to help our nation remember and celebrate the richness of our immigrant history – the source of our greatness.
- We are a not for profit, non-political organization supported by FWD.us, which was founded by Mark Zuckerberg, Marissa Mayer, Reid Hoffman, Bill Gates, Padmasree Warrior, and other tech leaders. Led by Tolu Olubunmi, an immigrant and DREAMer, our organization will be focused in the coming months on launching the Welcome.us campaign as well as establishing Immigrant Heritage Month to honor the ways in which America and the immigrants who have built our country are linked in a shared, productive history.
- Welcome.us is assembling a diverse honorary board – made up of business leaders, including Mark Zuckerberg and others; policymakers, including Congressmen Valadao, Crowley, Honda, Polis and others; athletes; faith leaders; media personalities and celebrities, including Jared Leto, Russell Simmons, Jamie Lee Curtis, Michael Bolton, Kenny G, and more – to help elevate the work of Welcome.us.



## IHM Themes

To help celebrate the many aspects and impacts of immigrants, we will be highlighting four key themes throughout the month.

### **Telling the story of American immigrant ancestry**

Throughout the month, we will highlight America's rich immigrant ancestry. We are in the process of reaching out to elected and community leaders in cities across the country to help organize events or walking tours to celebrate each city's unique immigrant history. Simultaneously, we will launch the IHM social media campaign, joining with our partners to encourage the public to share their "welcome stories" via the Welcome.us social media platforms and website. Additionally, Welcome.us will join FWD.us and others in co-sponsoring a Silicon Valley-based Hackathon—bringing together marketing executives, growth hackers, and data scientists. In addition, we will be working with our partners to celebrate our nation's newest citizens at naturalization ceremonies across the nation. We will facilitate the attendance of federal, state, and local political and civic leaders at these ceremonies.

### **Highlighting immigrant contributions to the economy and culture**

IHM will also emphasize storytelling, and through partnerships with nonprofit organizations, members of Congress, and corporations, we will highlight immigrant contributions to the U.S. economy and culture throughout history.

### **Celebrating modern immigrant families**

IHM will also seek to celebrate modern immigrant families, kicking off with Father's Day on June 15th. We are engaging museums across the country, as well as the faith community, to honor America's Founding Fathers, and celebrate the fathers of today who are laying the foundation for an even brighter tomorrow. Welcome.us is co-hosting a film screening at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial on the National Mall in partnership with The Memorial Foundation on June 19th, co-branded PSAs with nonprofit organizations featuring a variety of celebrities will be released during this time.

### **Honoring immigrants who serve our Nation in the armed forces and through civil service**

Throughout the month we will also celebrate immigrant service to our nation. We will release videos honoring renowned immigrant members of armed forces, civil servants, and NGOs.



## IHM Events

During the first week of June, there will be IHM launch events around the country including marquee events in New York, Miami, Chicago and San Francisco. We encourage you to have an event in your city as well, using one of the following ideas:

- Kickoff event with a broad range of community groups and individuals
  - Suggested locations: historic districts, town hall, museum or other culturally significant sites
- Naturalization ceremony
- Host a screening of the critically-acclaimed film, [Documented](#)
- Offer a walking tour with historical narration of an immigrant neighborhood such as Little Italy, if appropriate, incorporate immigrant businesses in the event
- Host an event honoring veterans and service members who are immigrants
- Host an event where you announce an immigrant business is receiving an Small Business Administration loan, incorporate other immigrant entrepreneurs or business owners from the community
- Host an immigrant food festival
- Host a roundtable to discuss the impact of immigrants in your district. Invite prominent immigrant entrepreneurs and leaders to be ambassadors of the local immigrant community.
- Leverage existing community events during the month of June (e.g. Refugee Day, June 20)
- Offer a Commendation of Excellence for immigrants in your district/city

To help support these events, we have developed a set of templated materials for you to use including:

- Media advisory template
- Press release template
- IHM proclamation template
- Floor speech templates (*for state and federal elected officials*)
- Sample social media posts



## Media Advisory Template

[DATE]

PRESS CONTACT/NAME  
XXX-XXX-XXXX  
XXXXX@welcome.us

\*\*\*Media Advisory\*\*\*

**[NAME] AND WELCOME.us WILL HONOR [LEADERS/COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS/BUSINESSES] FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO CITY IMMIGRANT HERITAGE AND CULTURE**

*Nation-Wide Effort Includes Similar Events in [Chicago, Boston, NYC, San Francisco] to Launch Inaugural Immigrant Heritage Month in the US*

CITY, STATE –NAME will honor [Leaders/Community Organizations/Businesses] for distinct contributions to CITY. The effort is part of a nation-wide kick off to Immigrant Heritage Month, an initiative organized by the non-profit Welcome.us to partner with corporations, media outlets, organizations, celebrities, athletes, faith, civic, and political leaders to gather and share inspirational stories of American immigrants.

WHO: NAME  
RECIPIENT #1  
RECIPIENT #2  
RECIPIENT #3  
And many prominent members of the community

WHAT: Remarks from NAME and participants

WHEN: TIME  
DATE

WHERE: LOCATION

For questions or to request an interview, please contact XXXXX@welcome.us.

### **PARTICIPANT BACKGROUND –**

[INSERT FULL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AND ORG DISCRIPTIONS (ie why they are being recognized)]

### **ABOUT WELCOME.us (will be revised with most current information at release) –**

This event is part of a coordinated effort by Welcome.us, a new non-profit organization dedicated to celebrating a United States that is fueled by immigrants from around the world. Beginning with the launch of the first-ever Immigrant Heritage Month (IHM) in June 2014, Welcome.us is partnering with corporations, media outlets, organizations, celebrities, athletes, faith, civic, and political leaders to gather and share inspirational stories of American immigrants. Led by Tolu Olubunmi, an immigrant and DREAMer, Welcome.us is supported by FWD.us, which was founded by Mark Zuckerberg, Marissa Mayer, Reid Hoffman, Bill Gates, Padmasree Warrior, and other tech leaders. For further information, please visit welcome.us.

###



## Press Release Template

[DATE]

PRESS CONTACT/NAME

XXX-XXX-XXXX

XXXXX@welcome.us

\*\*\*Press Release\*\*\*

### **NAME AND WELCOME.us HONORS [LEADERS/COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS/BUSINESSES] FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO CITY IMMIGRANT HERITAGE AND CULTURE**

*Nation-Wide Effort Includes Similar Events in [Chicago, Boston, NYC, San Francisco]; Leaders from Mark Zuckerberg to Jamie Lee Curtis Speaking Out; and Launch of Inaugural Immigrant Heritage Month in the US*

CITY, STATE – Today Mayor [Congressman/etc] NAME honored three [Leaders/Community Organizations/Businesses] for distinct contributions to CITY. In [HIS] remarks, [HE] walked through how each contributed to the character of CITY – culturally, economically and historically – and made the city what it is today. The effort is part of a nation-wide kick off to Immigrant Heritage Month, an initiative organized by the non-profit Welcome.us to partner with corporations, media outlets, organizations, celebrities, athletes, faith, civic, and political leaders to gather and share inspirational stories of American immigrants.

#### RECIPIENTS:

- RECIPIENT #1
- RECIPIENT #2
- RECIPIENT #3

*[Full details on participants and organizations included below.]*

NAME spoke about the importance of immigrants in providing the cultural foundation for CITY's development and how the city's many distinct immigrant communities continue to [[character of the city]]

#### *QUOTE UNIQUE TO CITY OR DISTRICT*

Today's events in CITY are part of a coordinated effort by Welcome.us, a new non-profit organization dedicated to celebrating a United States that is fueled by immigrants from around the world. Beginning with the launch of the first-ever Immigrant Heritage Month (IHM) in June 2014, Welcome.us is partnering with corporations, media outlets, organizations, celebrities, athletes, faith, civic, and political leaders to gather and share inspirational stories of American immigrants.

Tolu Olubunmi, executive director of Welcome.us, provided national context for the events in CITY:

*"In the United States, with a good idea and enough hard work, anything is possible. The entrepreneurial drive and spirit of our country is built on our diversity of origins. It is what drew the first people to the U.S. and what continues to drive American business. American success is a result of our many distinct experiences, not in spite of it."*





*"Our goal is to encourage as many Americans as possible to tell the story of how they first felt welcomed to the American experience. Our history and stories will help determine our future—at Welcome.us, we want everyone here to be a part of that history.*

*"Visit 'welcome.us' for more information on how to share your story and learn more about our nation-wide effort."*

#### **PARTICIPANT BACKGROUND –**

[INSERT FULL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AND ORG DISCRIPTIONS (ie why they are being recognized)]

#### **ABOUT WELCOME.us** (will be revised with most current information at release) –

Welcome.us, a new non-profit organization, is dedicated to celebrating a United States that is fueled by immigrants from around the world. Led by Tolu Olubunmi, an immigrant and DREAMer, the organization is focused on launching the Welcome.us campaign and establishing Immigrant Heritage Month to honor the ways in which America and the immigrants who have built our country are linked in a shared, productive history. Welcome.us is supported by FWD.us, which was founded by Mark Zuckerberg, Marissa Mayer, Reid Hoffman, Bill Gates, Padmasree Warrior, and other tech leaders. Our Honorary Board for Immigrant Heritage Month includes: Congressmen Valadao, Congressman Crowley, Congressman Honda, Congressman Polis, Jared Leto, Russell Simmons, Jamie Lee Curtis, Michael Bolton and Kenny G. Learn more about the campaign and Immigrant Heritage Month by visiting Welcome.us.

###



### **Sample IHM Proclamation (For City/State)**

Whereas generations of immigrants from every corner of the globe have built our country's economy and created the unique character of our nation;

Whereas immigrants continue to grow businesses, innovate, strengthen our economy, and create American jobs in [DISTRICT/STATE];

Whereas immigrants have provided the United States with unique social and cultural influence, fundamentally enriching the extraordinary character of our nation;

Whereas immigrants have been tireless leaders not only in securing their own rights and access to equal opportunity, but have also campaigned to create a fairer and more just society for all Americans; and

Whereas despite these countless contributions, the role of immigrants in building and enriching our nation has frequently been overlooked and undervalued throughout our history and continuing to the present day:

**Now, therefore, be it resolved**

by the [BLANK] assembled, that June 2014 is designated as "Immigrant Heritage Month."

***For information on the impact that immigrants have in your state, please [click here](#).***



### **Sample Floor Speech (For State/Federal)**

**OPENING:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the immigrants of our great nation, a group that we are all connected to in some way or another. June is Immigrant Heritage Month and it is with great pride that I stand before you today to...

**OPTION 1 sharing personal immigration story:** [...tell you my own personal/own family's story of immigration. INSERT PERSONAL STORY]

**OPTION 2 recognizing immigrant contributions in the city/district:** [...share with you the tremendous benefits that immigrants have brought to the XX Congressional District.]

**OPTION 3 for June 20, World Refugee Day:** [...celebrate the refugees who have come to our country on World Refugee Day. Today we recognize the strength and courage of refugees who have fled their homeland out of fear for their safety, as a result of violence and war, or to escape political or religious persecution. They may not have come to America because they wanted to, but we want them to know that our commitment to refugees remains the same as it did to those who first immigrated to our country through Ellis Island. As the great Emma Lazarus quote on the Statue of Liberty reads:

“Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me:  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.”  
Here in America, we welcome you with open arms.]

**CONCLUSION:** We all have our own welcome story – a story about how this country opened their arms to us or to our forefathers, and welcomed us/them to this great land of hopes, dreams and freedom. A place where you can become anyone, do anything. Please join me to celebrate America's immigrants – past, present and future.



### **IHM Social Media**

During the month of June, IHM will have a large presence on social media. Make sure that you connect with us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. Here you should encourage your supporters and employees to upload videos sharing their own personal immigration story, a message about what IHM means to them and also showcase how your organization is celebrating IHM. And don't forget to use our official hashtag, #welcomeus, so we can follow your posts!

#### **SAMPLE TWEETS/FACEBOOK POSTS**

- We are proud to support Immigrant Heritage Month and we want you to as well! Visit [welcome.us](http://welcome.us) to join us. #welcomeus
- It is Immigrant Heritage Month. Tell us how your family was welcomed to America. #welcomeus
- IHM celebrates the diverse fabric of our country. RT and help us celebrate our nation of immigrants. #welcomeus
- See our #welcomeus stories on the [welcome.us](http://welcome.us) website and add your own in honor of Immigrant Heritage Month.
- Immigrants have a tremendous impact on our economy. What is your favorite immigrant-owned business? #welcomeus