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## Governor Deval Patrick

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DEVAL PATRICK  
GOVERNOR

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## Governor Patrick Proclaims October-14 November 14 Immigrant Entrepreneurship Month

BOSTON – Tuesday, October 15, 2013 - Governor Deval Patrick today celebrated the economic, civic and cultural impact of immigrant population on the Commonwealth by proclaiming October 14 – November 14, 2013 as the third annual Immigrant Entrepreneurship Month.

"Immigrants have always been a key component to our state's wealth and success, both in economic and cultural terms," said Governor Patrick. "I am proud to recognize the achievements of immigrant entrepreneurs in Massachusetts and their significant contributions to the Commonwealth's growth."

According to a study by the Partnership for a New America, immigrant-owned businesses in Massachusetts generate \$2.8 billion each year, accounting for 14 percent of the Commonwealth's income. Immigrant Entrepreneurship Month, first proclaimed in 2011, recognizes these organizations' critical role in creating jobs and expanding opportunity across Massachusetts.

Immigrants currently make up 14.4 percent of the state's population, according to the 2010 U.S. Census. Of these immigrants, approximately 700,000 have lived in the U.S. for ten or more years. Massachusetts' immigrant population is a crucial and vital

component of its labor force and business community's successes. Latino and Asian immigrant-owned businesses alone employ over 65,000 people in Massachusetts.

The Commonwealth's Office of Refugees and Immigrants (ORI) administers a four-year entrepreneurial program called the Massachusetts Refugee Enterprise Achievement Program (MassREAP). The program, funded by the U.S. Office for Refugee Resettlement, is designed to both create new business and augment existing refugee-owned businesses by utilizing the entrepreneurial network which fuels and drives the state's refugee populations. MassREAP has facilitated business expansion and loan distribution to 45 new business to date.

"Immigrant entrepreneurs are brave business owners who overcome barriers of adapting to a new country, succeed and give back to our communities," said Josiane Martinez, Executive Director of ORI. "ORI's MassREAP program helps to create new businesses and strengthen existing refugee-owned businesses in the state by tapping into the entrepreneurial experience and drive that exists in the state's refugee populations."

During today's ceremony, Governor Patrick presented proclamations to Jerry Rubin, CEO of Jewish Vocational Services, Charles Mwangi, founder and owner of Comfort Care Resource Group, Victoria Amador, co-founder and co-owner of Tremendous Maid and Suren Masumyan, proprietor of SurriMassini, Inc. at the Jewish Vocational Services center in Boston. These immigrant entrepreneurs have achieved inspiring success with small business startups and each proclamation presented recognizes that immigrant entrepreneurs are vital to the Commonwealth's strong economic growth, continued job creation and innovative edge.

The proclamation for Immigrant Entrepreneurship Month was first issued based on recommendations from the Governor's Advisory Council for Refugees and Immigrants, stemming from the Patrick Administration's New Americans Agenda.

On July 9, 2008, Governor Patrick signed Executive Order No. 503, "Integrating Immigrants and Refugees into the Commonwealth," launching the New Americans Agenda for Massachusetts. The Executive Order calls for the Massachusetts Office for Refugees and Immigrants and the Governor's Advisory Council for Refugees and Immigrants, in partnership with community organizations, to develop and deliver a series of policy recommendations that emphasize the positive integration of these communities into the economic and civic life of the Commonwealth.

Click [here](#) to view the official proclamation.

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