



CMAA & Adult Ed Consortium Overview



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Mission Statements

CMAA

- Proudly founded by ethnic Chinese refugees in 1981, Chinese Mutual Aid Association (CMAA) is led by many prominent individuals from the Asian American community. Our purpose is to serve the needs, promote the interests, and enhance the well-being of low-income, diverse immigrant and refugee communities across metropolitan Chicago through social services, advocacy, educational programming and assistance for youth, adults, the elderly and small businesses.

Adult Education & Workforce Departments

- Adult Education and Workforce Development partners with individuals from diverse immigrant and refugee populations to realize their personal, educational, and professional goals by providing high quality tailored curriculum, instruction, and case management.



About CMAA

Originally founded by ethnic Chinese Vietnamese refugees in 1981, we predominantly serve immigrants and refugees in the Chicago Metropolitan area and offer the following programs & services:

- Social Services
- In-Home Care
- Youth Programming
- Citizenship
- Small Business Development Center (SBDC)
- Illinois Welcoming Center
- Workforce Development
- Adult Education



Adult Education Consortium Model

CMAA is the lead fiscal agent of a consortium of Adult Education providers in the city of Chicago. We are able to serve Adult English Language Learners throughout the city by:

- Partnering with other community based organizations in the city of Chicago
- Apply for and manage Illinois Community College Board grant funding for ourselves and partner organizations
- Subcontract grant funding to partner organizations
- Offer classes in-person, hybrid and online throughout the day and week
 - If one partner doesn't have availability, the student is referred to another partner.



Adult Education Consortium Overview

This fiscal year, the consortium as a whole has served over 700 students in FY23 in Pre-Literacy to Advanced ESL, ABE, Healthcare Bridge, Office Administrative Technology Bridge, and Culinary Training Program

FY23 Partners include:

- Bosnian Herzegovinian American Community Center
- Chinese American Service League
- Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago
- Erie Neighborhood House
- HANA Center
- Hanul Family Alliance
- Indo-American Center
- Touch Gift Foundation (only non-ESL providing partner)



Breadth of Programming

The Consortium provides all levels of programming

- Levels
 - Pre-literacy
 - Beginning literacy
 - ESL levels 1-6
 - ABE
- Options
 - Morning, afternoon, evening
 - In-person, virtual, hybrid
- Integrated English Literacy Civics Education (IELCE) funded classes
- Bridge & IET (ICAPs) courses



Integrated English Literacy/Civics Education (IELCE)

CMAA receives Federal IELCE funding to support programming in English Literacy and Civics Education. We do this by:

- Emphasizing reading, speaking, comprehension, and mathematics skills in lessons for our ESL population
- Incorporate Civics competencies into our curriculum
 - Democratic Process, Community Resources, US School System, Health and Wellness, Housing, Employment and Consumer Economics
- Provide transitions support to students regarding their personal development goals
 - Includes career pathway advising
- Designate classes for students with National Reporting System (NRS) Level 3 and up as IELCE classes



Bridge & ICAPS/IET

Bridge Courses act as a introduction and gateway to the workforce for intermediate to advanced Limited English Proficient students

- Healthcare Literacy/Preparation
- Office & Administrative Technology

ICAPs are designed for advanced speakers to earn an industry recognized credential upon completion

- Culinary Training Program



Supporting Students

CMAA & Consortium Partners are able to provide a level of personalized instruction and support:

- Diverse and mission-driven staff to collaborate and share
- Build strong, lasting relationships with instructors
- Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)
- Interdepartmental referrals
 - Workforce Development
 - In-Home Care
 - Social Services/Welcome Center
- Warm hand-offs to other programs (ex: Truman, Jane Addams Resource Center (JARC), Centro Romero)



Supporting Consortium Partners

- Christina works with partners and ICCB to ensure metrics, grant compliance and other funding needs are being met
 - Leads the consortium team in coordinating data collection and funding allocation oversight
- Ashley works with partners to ensure quality instruction and engagement
 - Leads instruction team in curriculum oversight and outreach efforts
- Lead ESL Instructor acts as a coach/mentor to all instructors and leads professional development initiatives
- Compliance Coordinator supports partners in timely programmatic reporting and financial review
- CMAA leads professional development events (PDIs), twice per year for a total of 9 hours per FY



Student Success Stories

Samson Abraha (from Eritrea)

- Attended a high beginning ESL morning class after his night shift and worked his way up for 2 years at CMAA
- His goals were to find another job, to learn to drive, and to buy a car and has now accomplished these
- Says he feels more confident speaking English at the post office, bank, doctor, and on the phone, and can do much more independently
- Future goals are to go to college and study engineering and to become a citizen
- Recipient of the ScaleLit Personal Achievement Award this year



Student Success Stories

Swarna Chinna (from India)

- HS graduate with some university education but low digital literacy
- Goals were to prepare for the workforce after spending some years raising a family in Chicago
- A few of her achievements so far in the OAT Bridge class include
 - Business card creation
 - Monthly budget and expenses spreadsheet and chart
 - Certificates of proficiency from NorthStar Digital Literacy in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Google Docs, Internet Basics
 - Improvements to typing through TypingClub.com
- Case Manager will work with her on employment opportunities upon completion
 - Employer partners, internships



Key Takeaways

- Priority is to provide critical English language instruction for immigrants and refugees so they can navigate their new communities
 - Bridges and ICAPS/IETs support student career goals, but language is the primary
- Accept all students looking for ESL classes regardless of immigration status
 - Partners served students at the hotels at O'Hare. One currently is directly serving students at one of the churches supporting
 - Not all students disclose accurate immigration status upon enrollment
- Provide access to services to remove barriers
 - Using IEPs to understand barriers to goals

