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Mayor Hogsett Announces Second Class of the International Leaders Academy

Fifteen participants from nine countries to take part in leadership program

INDIANAPOLIS - Mayor Joe Hogsett joined the Mayor's Office of International and Latino Affairs (OILA) and the Immigrant Welcome Center to announce the second class of the International Leaders Academy. The cohort met with Mayor Hogsett as a part of their second session on September 5.

"Each and every resident of Indianapolis has the opportunity to shape its future. That includes those who called another country home before coming to the United States," said Mayor Hogsett. "Thanks to the International Leaders Academy, each participant will better understand the functions of city-county government, all while learning how they can bring their unique, valuable perspective to the table."

The International Leaders Academy is a free leadership program aimed at empowering and connecting with immigrant Hoosiers. It was established by OILA in partnership with the Immigrant Welcome Center. The mission of the program is to teach participants about the inner workings of local government.

"With Indianapolis become increasingly diverse, International Leaders Academy is designed to equip our immigrant neighbors with knowledge and tools to be civically engaged in the communities they live and work in," said Gurinder Kaur, Chief Executive Officer of Immigrant Welcome Center. "As a collaborative partner of International Leaders Academy, Immigrant Welcome Center is committed to fostering a deeper sense of belonging in Marion County."

This year's moderators are Ruth Morales (OILA Director) and Sergio Roldan (Immigrant Welcome Center). The class of 15 participants is highly diverse, illustrating the multitude of heritages that call Indianapolis home. Nine nationalities and 12 languages are represented in this class. This year's participants are:

Ro Lian Thang (Myanmar)
Farah Célestin Chéry (Haiti)
Eulalia Gomez-Lebario (México)
Nilofar Sherzad (Afghanistan)
Gisela Maria Perez (México)
Mohamed Yeslem Habib (Mauritania)
Sandra Doratt (El Salvador)
Alejandra Aguilar (México)
Rosangela Ponce (México)
Marie Dominique Dumornay (Haiti/Canada)
Eva Gonzalez (Spain)

Ghina Sadek (Lebanon)
Melani Rodriguez Escobar (El Salvador)
Costale Iyanla Martin (Haiti)
David Masamba (Democratic Republic of Congo)

A photograph of the class is attached.

About the Mayor's Office of International and Latino Affairs: The Mayor's Office of International and Latino Affairs (OILA) works to engage, support, and invest in Indianapolis' minoritized populations. The office is responsible for developing and managing all International and Latino outreach efforts. Additionally, OILA works with local community groups to identify and resolve issues facing the International and Latino community. Ruth Morales serves as the director for OILA. For more information, visit <https://www.indy.gov/activity/office-of-international-and-latino-affairs>.

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