



Rick Snyder, Governor
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News Release

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Snyder Officials, Mayor Duggan Attend Opening of Detroit Office for Skilled Immigrants

Upwardly Global's Michigan location will help highly educated new Americans overcome barriers to professional employment

June 23, 2014 — Michigan has become a leader in skilled immigrant workforce integration, providing resources for legal foreign-trained individuals to obtain employment within their chosen profession. Snyder Administration Officials and Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan today attended the opening of an office in Detroit that will provide new Americans with face-to-face customized training to help them integrate into Michigan's workforce. The new office is a continued partnership with Upwardly Global, a national, nonprofit organization that helps legal skilled immigrants and refugees rebuild their careers

"Michigan continues to demonstrate that we are open to the world. The new workplace will provide foreign professionals with the unique resources they need to achieve their full economic potential," said Michigan Office for New Americans Director Bing Goei. "Many legal immigrants are already trained in high-demand professions. We are focused on ensuring these talented individuals can resume practice in their field and play an important role in our economic comeback."

The office space, donated by Michigan State University at the school's Detroit Center, is located at 3408 Woodward Avenue. The architect of the building, Albert Kahn, was a successful Prussian immigrant himself and was responsible for many of Detroit's historic buildings.

The new office places Michigan at the forefront of integrating legal skilled immigrants into the workforce as Detroit joins the San Francisco Bay Area, New York and Chicago with an Upwardly Global office. There, immigrant entrepreneurs will receive the unique training they need to attain skill-appropriate employment.

Upwardly Global's job search preparedness and training includes:

- Résumé revision, interview preparation, and salary negotiation
- One-on-one advising from staff and opportunities to network and connect with U.S. mentors
- Acculturation training for adjusting to the U.S. workplace environment
- Direct referral to professional positions with employer partners
- Specialized resources for professionals in high-demand technology and engineering fields, including guidance in relicensing

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Goei was joined by Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan, who supports Governor Snyder's plans to assist our skilled immigrants in obtaining employment in their chosen profession.

"These new resources can maximize the professional potential of our foreign professionals," Duggan said. "The governor's efforts to help legal skilled immigrants secure positions in their chosen fields will create jobs and benefit Detroit, the region and the entire state.

Michigan is the first state to sponsor Upwardly Global's Global Engineers in Residence (GEIR) professional internship program, originally piloted with Greeley and Hansen Engineering. GEIR participants are internationally trained engineers with diverse cultural backgrounds across a range of engineering disciplines. They need no visa sponsorship because they have come to the U.S. legally as refugees, asylees, or permanent residents. They are experienced, but need to gain meaningful U.S. work experience in their field and connections to the workforce. Michigan is the only state to offer incentives to employers through the GEIR program.

Upwardly Global estimates that Michigan has 47,000 immigrants with the training and skills necessary to serve in our workforce.

"While these global professionals arrive with the skills employers are seeking, they often lack the networks and the tools to navigate a U.S. job search and contribute at their full potential," said Upwardly Global President and CEO Nikki Cicerani. "Michigan is a national leader in recognizing the value of this talent pool and we are proud to strengthen our partnership by expanding our on-the-ground services to Detroit."

In addition to these resources for Michigan's skilled immigrants, the Michigan Dept. of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) partnered with Upwardly Global to create online guides that explain the professional licensing requirements for individuals who were educated or have work experience in foreign countries. Guides for 15 high-demand professions have currently been developed and can be found at: www.michigan.gov/skilledimmigrantguides.

LARA has also created a dedicated telephone service, **517-373-0104**, where skilled immigrants are connected to a state professional licensing specialist who will answer licensing-related questions regarding any of Michigan's approximately 180 professional licenses.

"These resources will be invaluable to the many immigrants who arrive into the United States with professional credentials, but cannot use them," said Gilberto Guzman, chairman, Michigan Hispanic Latino Commission. "There are doctors, engineers and attorneys who are underemployed in Michigan and these tools will help them resume their careers and contribute to the local economy."

Governor Snyder has become America's most pro-immigration governor and these initiatives are just the latest example of how Michigan has established itself as a prime destination for legal skilled immigrants.

Snyder created the Michigan Office for New Americans to attract more legal skilled immigrants to the state. The federal government recently approved the governor's application for Michigan to become only the second state with a state-sponsored EB-5 regional center to attract investment and create jobs for Michigan workers. Snyder has also urged federal action on his proposal to add 50,000 employment-based visas for Detroit's immigrants.

In addition, the governor has testified before Congress regarding the need for common-sense immigration reform at the federal level. He also implemented the Global Michigan Initiative, designed to recruit skilled immigrants and make Michigan an even more welcoming state.

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