

OCTOBER 2026



Save the Date for the Immigration Summit!

The Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MIMA), in collaboration with Baltimore County and Towson University, is pleased to bring you the 14th Annual Baltimore Immigration Summit, *The Future is Ours: Cultivating Courage, Community, and Growth*. The next summit will take place at Towson University on **June 4, 2027**.

The upcoming summit's theme investigates how immigrant communities and the broader network of stakeholders can play an active role in building the future we want to see, rather than simply responding to external circumstances.

The Baltimore Immigration Summit is a free, one-day event that brings together those working with and for immigrants in our region. Applications for presenters will open this fall, and general registration will open next spring. Mark your calendars now, share with your networks, and stay tuned!

Updates from Our Office

BNAAC Request for Proposal (RFP)



MIMA is now accepting proposals from organizations to participate in the Baltimore New American Access Coalition (BNAAC), with a particular focus on capacity in languages such as French, Swahili, Kinyarwanda, Tigrinya, and Amharic. This partner will join an existing coalition of three community-based organizations who provide bilingual and bicultural case management services to immigrant families in Baltimore City.

The deadline for proposals is **November 16**. Please see the full RFP for additional details. Contact BNAAC Program Manager Caitlin Cumerma with any questions or bring them to the virtual office hours on **November 3** at 1:30 PM.



Introducing Our New Interns

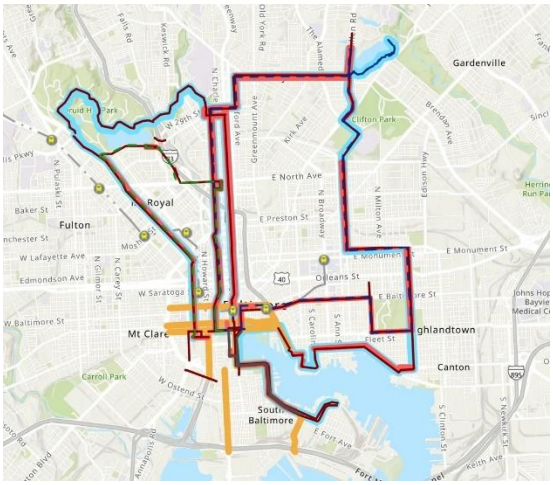
Maya Gincherman is joining MIMA as a second-year master's student and is currently working toward her degree from the University of Maryland School of Social Work. Having graduated with a BA in Spanish and Psychology from George Washington University in 2025, she brings a strong interest in cross-cultural engagement and resource accessibility for immigrant communities throughout Maryland and the broader United States. In her free time, Maya likes to bake, write, attend concerts and watch sports.



Melona Johnson is a senior at Loyola University Maryland, majoring in Economics with a minor in Philosophy on the pre-law track. Originally from New Jersey, Melona is passionate about law, public policy, and supporting communities through advocacy and service. As an intern with MIMA, she will work with BNAAC, supporting outreach and communications efforts that connect Baltimore's immigrant communities with important resources and information. Outside of school, Melona enjoys baking, practicing yoga, exploring Baltimore, spending time with family and friends, and collecting all things Hello Kitty.

City Services

Department of Transportation (DOT): Traffic Closures for Baltimore Running Festival



DOT would like to advise motorists of temporary road closures, lane closures, parking restrictions, and commercial vehicle restrictions due to the annual Baltimore Running Festival, taking place on Saturday, **October 17**.

Traveling from inside the race route to outside the race route (as well as outside to inside) will be very difficult throughout the day. Traffic stops will be implemented for the safety of participants, and motorists will encounter significant delays.

The use of public transportation, including the Light Rail, Metro Subway, e-scooters and e-bikes, is encouraged. Visit this interactive map to see when city neighborhoods will be affected by the races throughout the day.

Department of Public Works (DPW): Drought Response Update



Baltimore's water supply is changing temporarily as drought conditions continue. DPW is preparing to use water from the Susquehanna River to supplement the declining reservoir supply. Susquehanna water will be blended with reservoir water and then treated and tested for customer use.

The change in water source **will not** affect the safety of Baltimore's drinking water. Most residents should notice little to no difference, although some customers may notice **minor changes in taste, odor, or color**. Please continue to conserve water.

Office of Information Technology: Digital Equity Resource Fair

Celebrate Digital Inclusion Week with free technology resources, hands-on support, and opportunities to build your digital skills on **October 8** from 3 to 6 PM at the Factory: A West Baltimore Opportunity Center (5 N Calhoun St, Baltimore, MD 21223). Registration is not required, and this event is free! Free food and raffles for laptops and tablets will also be available. Find more information on the event page.

Live Baltimore: Buy Back the Block Grants Available

The Buy Back the Block program provides grants to Baltimore City residents living in and then purchasing within a grant-eligible area. These grants do not have to be repaid.

- The $15,000 home purchase grant reduces the amount of money you will need up front to buy a home.
- The $20,000 home purchase & renovation grant reduces the amount of money you will need up front to buy and renovate a home.



To obtain Buy Back the Block funds, you must complete an eligibility quiz, have your eligibility verified, and receive an approved grant application. Additional terms and conditions apply. Visit Live Baltimore's website for more information!

Local Events and Resources

Economic Action Maryland Fund: Help Your Community Save on Housing Costs

Securing Older Adult Resources (SOAR) is expanding outreach to Spanish- and Korean-speaking communities across Maryland to help residents learn about and access Maryland Homeowners' and Renters' Property Tax Credits. SOAR provides information and assistance to help residents understand whether they may qualify and complete their applications.

Economic Action Maryland Fund wants to partner with organizations serving Spanish- and Korean-speaking communities! If your organization serves a Spanish- or Korean-speaking community and would like to host a workshop or arrange application assistance, please contact Francine Mitchell and Jamila Blake.

Baltimore Museum of Industry (BMI): *Bienvenidos al Museo*



BMI presents its new Community Days program, *Bienvenidos al Museo*! The next day of this program is **October 10**. Visitors receive free admission, guided tours with Spanish interpretation, audio guides available in Spanish, and opportunities to connect and participate alongside Latino community organizations and leaders. Find more information and register on BMI's website.

Nigerian Center: Nigerian American Festival

Get ready for the 2026 Nigerian American Festival, a vibrant three-day celebration of Nigerian culture, community, and connection on **October 16 to 18** at Guinness Open Gate Brewery (5001 Washington Blvd, Halethorpe, MD 21227)! Find more information on the Nigerian Center's website and RSVP for free on Eventbrite.

Catholic Charities of Baltimore: Journey to Social Justice Symposium

Join Catholic Charities for their 4th annual Journey to Social Justice, titled "From Stranger to Neighbor: An Immigration Call to Action" and featuring Sister Norma Pimentel, nationally recognized immigration advocate, on **October 21** from 6:30 to 8 PM at the Church of the Nativity (20 East Ridgely Road, Timonium, MD 21093). Admission is free, but registering for tickets is required.



Tola's Room and Baltimore Heritage: *El Barrio* Walking Tour

Join Tola's Room and Baltimore Heritage for *El Barrio* Walking Tour, a guided walk on **October 21** from 6 to 7:30 PM through Fells Point (once known as "*El Barrio*") exploring the history of Puerto Ricans in Baltimore from the 1800s to the present day. Learn how Puerto Rican migration, neighborhood life, and cultural traditions helped shape Baltimore's history and Latino communities! Find more information and register online.

Charm City Artists: Pop-Up Salsa Jam Celebrating *Día de los Muertos*

Come celebrate Día de los Muertos with Charm City on **October 24** from 4 to 9 PM in Fells Point for a special Pop-Up Salsa Jam celebrating life, culture, art, music, and community!

Creative Alliance: Great Baltimore Lantern Parade and *Día de los Muertos* Festival



Baltimore will come together on **October 24** from 4 to 9 PM in Patterson Park for the Great Baltimore Lantern Parade and *Día de los Muertos* Festival! Find the schedule of events and more information on Creative Alliance's website.

Creative Alliance: Patricia Massey Momentum Award Exhibition

The Patricia Massey Momentum Award supports emerging immigrant visual artists living in Maryland whose work reflects their cultural heritage and lived experiences. Congratulations to Bao Nguyen, the inaugural winner of the Patricia Massey Momentum Award! See their work and the work of the two finalists, Madyha Leghari and Ghazal Mojtahedi, at Creative Alliance at an exhibition on view now through **November 14**.



Welcome Quilt Project: Make a Square

Join others in a meaningful evening of conversation around immigration and decorate a quilt square with a message of welcome on **October 28** at 7 PM at Meander Art Bar. Your square will become part of the national Welcome Quilt Project, which joins squares into completed quilts that are displayed in immigrant neighborhoods across the country. All ages are welcome, and no art experience is needed. Register on Eventbrite.

Enoch Pratt Free Library: Lawyer in the Library, Immigration Information

Legal practitioners from Just Neighbors and World Relief will be available to speak with individuals seeking information on immigration-related matters at the Enoch Pratt Free Library Southeast Anchor Branch (3601 Eastern Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21224).

Practitioners can provide general information on basic immigration-related inquiries, distribute informational materials, provide referrals, and more. Services are available in Spanish. The next sessions are scheduled for **October 7**, **October 21**, and **November 4** from 11 AM to 2 PM.

National Developments

Federal Immigration Policy Updates



Judge blocks rule ending "duration of status": A federal judge has temporarily blocked a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) rule that would have replaced the "duration of status" system for F, J, and I visa holders with fixed admission periods. The rule was scheduled to take effect on **September 15**.

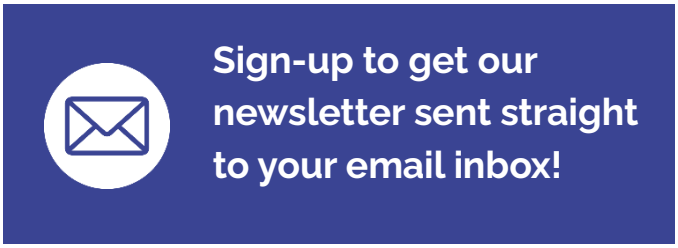
The preliminary injunction means the existing "duration of status" admission system will remain in place while the legal challenge continues.

USCIS narrows weekend and holiday extensions for certain paper filing deadlines: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will no longer extend certain immigration filing deadlines that fall on weekends or federal holidays when the deadline is tied to an *eligibility cutoff*, such an applicant reaching a certain age. The updated policy will apply to paper filings receiving on or after **October 23**. Applicants facing those cutoffs will need to make sure USCIS receives their filing before the eligibility period ends. For deadlines *measured in days*, the policy remains unchanged.

New public charge rules take effect: New public charge rules took effect **September 18**, giving immigration officers broader discretion to consider certain green card applicants' use of means-tested

public benefits. Programs such as Medicaid, SNAP, CHIP, and housing assistance may now be considered, although using a benefit does not automatically mean an application will be denied.

States and cities sue to block new public charge rule: However, two different coalitions of state, city, and county governments have sued the Trump administration over the new public charge rule. The legal challenges did not prevent the policy from taking effect on **September 18**, meaning the new rules will be in force while litigation continues.





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