



---

In Her Presence

# ANNUAL REPORT

2021

---





**540**

Women served



**29**

Job placement



**12**

Nationalities



**92%**

are black or  
Hispanic

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Executive Director Word
2. Why In Her Presence
3. Programs
  - a. Language Acquisition
  - b. Job Placement
  - c. Professional & Leadership Development
4. Special Projects
  - a. In Her Kitchen
  - b. Foreign Health Trained
  - c. Mother's Circle
  - d. Parents Coaching & I am your neighbor
  - e. Substance Use Disorder (SUD)
5. Program Results
6. Activities & Events
7. Success story and Numbers
8. Looking Forward



---

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WORD

As I reflect on year 2021, three words come to me: Impact, Connection, Gratitude

For our 2021 annual report, we have a lot to share with you. 2021 was quite an amazing year. So much was accomplished despite the existential challenges and hectic pacing that Maine and the world faced since 2020.

IHP transitioned from being entirely volunteer driven to being led by a full-time Executive Director. With the support of organizational and individual donors, IHP succeeded in hiring a full-time Bridge for Career Fulfilment (BCF) Director to support students' job skill education and extend career opportunities and

outreach to businesses. We conducted strategic planning and reduced programming to those that are most valuable: Language acquisition, Career trajectory, and Community initiatives. Helping capable, skilled, educated immigrants achieve financial stability is a cornerstone of our mission.

In 2021, In Her Presence (IHP) enhanced its ability to support immigrant women and families in numerous significant ways. IHP directly served more than 540 immigrant women and their families, and we continue to flourish. Members of this group are 91.7% women of color from Africa and 79% are considered low income or below poverty line.

71% of language acquisition participants showed growth on the Pre-Post Speech Test. 18% maintained their growth and 18% lost growth in points. IHP also placed 29 new Mainer's participants in various professional and non-professional positions. Our Career Counselor provided 569 career counseling contacts assisting 37 participants

---

18 of those realized increases in salary and benefits and 15 of them obtained entry or mid-level professional career positions.

For our communities to learn from each other and grow our mindset, IHP now offers cross-cultural dialogue and recruiting services and in 2021, we made significant progress in creating partnerships and collaborations to reduce racial bias and open opportunities for diversifying the workforce. We found that the perspective and voice of a New Mainer is of critical help to businesses that are transparent about their barriers and actively working to diversify their workforce. This approach has been documented through our work with Hannaford, Allagash Brewery, and Trader Joe's.

Our women thank you for supporting them on their path to full participation in Maine society.

Thank you, community partners and donors for believing in us and honoring us with your trust. The In Her Presence family is growing and thriving in ways we could never have imagined because you have generously shared your resources. I can't wait to see what we accomplish next!

## WHY IN HER PRESENCE

### Access to Language Acquisition


When immigrant women arrive in the United States, they are lost and disoriented due to English language limitations and racial bias. IHP women do not have equal access to basic needs, multiple career pathways and employment opportunities. IHP serves immigrant women who are struggling to find meaningful work. Many are employed in jobs far below their capabilities. Some have not entered the job market at all. Currently, 46% have earned an Associate degree or higher, yet 78% report being low income or living at the poverty level. A common barrier to getting a job, keeping a job, and being promoted in a job is lack of practical job-related English language skills and lack of experience navigating the U.S. workforce.

At In Her Presence, we work together with immigrant women to improved language skills to allow them to have increased financial security to shop, negotiate with landlords, seek higher paying employment, and more. Our vision is that Through connecting with immigrant women and girls, we grow our collective empowerment so that our voices may lead in our communities and define a new pathway for a racial equity and justice.

# OUR PROGRAMS

---





Career  
Counseling  
and  
Job Placement  
& Support

Community  
Building  
Projects

Foundational  
English  
Language

Cross-cultural Conversation

## ENGLISH LITERACY

English is our foundational program and integrates into every aspect of work we do. Our programs are timely helping our participants navigate their new home as well as learn a new language. Participants are clustered in beginner, intermediate, and advanced classes

## BRIDGE TO CAREER FULFILLMENT

Since 2020, In Her Presence has run the Bridge to Career Fulfillment Program which aims to equip immigrant women with the tools they need to find fulfilling employment and achieve success in the workplace.

## PROFESSIONAL & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Professional & Leadership programs address specific career paths and professional needs as well as advocacy and leadership skills to help participants enter into the public discourse.

# SPECIAL PROJECTS

---

## IN HER KITCHEN

In Her Kitchen is a space where IHP women can cook and share their cultural recipes with the mainstream community. Through In Her Kitchen, In Her Presence also introduced a community gardening space for our senior women. The community gardening is the best way to bring mainstream and seniors to learn different seeds, cultivating style and how to maintain a land and harvesting. This improves our seniors' nutrition in their everyday lives.

## FOREIGN HEALTH TRAINED

The Foreign Trained Health Professionals is a space for Foreign Trained Health Professionals already residing in Maine who wish to return to practice. Each participant develops a plan of action with short and long-term goals. With the support of mentors and coaches to navigate the steps outlined in their plan, they access needed resources to achieve their individual goals which will help them to return to their desired medical field.





## MOTHER'S CIRCLE

The Mothers Cycle's goal is to empower immigrant women to become doulas in order to improve maternal and child health outcomes and the childbearing experiences of newly resettled immigrant and refugee women in Maine. These sessions help our women to increase understanding of maternal health and improve communication between medical providers and refugee and immigrant women of reproductive age. They also reduce healthcare barriers, language barrier and lack of translators in healthcare setting for women who are not fluent in English or who do not speak English.

The session went as far to get each family paired with coaches who are invested to help families reach their goals.



## PARENTS COACHING & I AM YOUR NEIGHBOR

The Parent Coaching Program is a peer-to-peer program that respects the cultural identity of participants and helps to build and empower families to become their children's first teacher and advocate for the educational needs of their children. The program helps parents to understand that there are many ways a child can learn and that it's not only in a traditional classroom but rather a combination of outdoor learning and other resources necessary to reach their potential.

## SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER (SUD)

In Her Presence (I.H.P.) initiated discussion groups on its own and two others with the New Mainers Public Health Initiative (N.M.P.H.I.). More than twenty people from the Democratic Republic of Congo, the People's Republic of Congo, Gabon, Burkina Faso, Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan and Angola joined the discussions. The purpose of these discussions is to break the silence and start the conversation about substance use disorder (S.U.D.) in a true conversation and manage to break the silence and the taboo around substance use disorder. These discussions sheds light on treatment and acces to services and reduce harm among immigrant youth and adults.



# PROGRAM RESULTS

---

## CONTEXTUAL ENGLISH

71% of our English language classes increased language acquisition/fluency as assessed through a pre/post language acquisition speaking test; 18% maintained their current skill level (from Jan. '21-June '21.) Data for current classes (Oct. '21-June '22) will not be available until the next cycle of testing.

Pronunciation pilot was successfully completed with all five participants demonstrated increased confidence and self-awareness. Four participants should growth in pronunciation and one participant, testing at 100% intelligible, maintained status.

The immersion pilot for non-English speakers had inconsistent attendance due to a variety of barriers but useful observations were made to restructure the future expansion of the program to better meet the needs of the women.

## BRIDGE TO CAREER FULFILLMENT

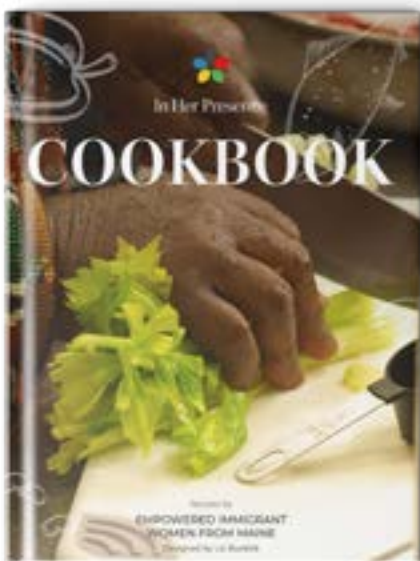
IHP made significant progress in creating 17 partnerships and collaborations to reduce racial bias and open opportunities for diversifying the work force. We found that the perspective and voice of a New Mainer is of critical help to businesses that are transparent about their barriers and actively working to diversify their workforce.

With the help of the Career Counselor and the business employers' partners, IHP placed 45 new Mainer's participants in various professional and non-professional positions. The Career Counselor provided 569 career counseling contacts assisting 37 participants. Of these, 18 realized increases in salary and benefits and 15 of them obtained entry or mid-level professional career positions. From the Cultural Broker's services (case management), IHP served 47 households (121 individuals including children and husband) and placed 16 New Mainers in basic jobs. Even during Covid, 81% of our targeted goal maintained 3 months of employment

# ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

## COOKBOOK - IN HER KITCHEN

With a collaboration with the Maine College of Art and Design (MECA) since 2018, In Her Presence women prepared and shared their recipes from their home country. This collaboration started as a way for our women to showcase their food culture through short videos and today, with the help of MECA, In Her Presence Cookbook was born. These are recipes from all around the world.



## CROSS-CULTURAL DIALOGUE

The cross-cultural dialogue is a conversational space where In Her Presence women and the mainstream community in Maine discuss about issues that exist in their community such life as an immigrant in Maine, working in an environment that may not understand them. By sharing these experiences, the immigrant and mainstream communities are able to understand and unpack bias that they may not be aware of.

## END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

The end of school year in 2021 was a big and memorable celebration for our women who were celebrating their achievements. Women shared their experiences of how they started with In Her presence and where they are now. Learning English was the first step. These were stories of starting over with courage, empowerment, and much more.

## FUNDRAISING

In 2021, In Her Presence was able to fundraise \$42,716.45 through online fundraising events, Giving Tuesday, and the End of Year Appeal. The fundraising events are hosted by supporters of In Her Presence in collaboration with In Her Presence.

# SUCCESS STORY

---

In Her Presence outreach to individual businesses has significant impact on many individual's and family's stories. In 2021, IHP and Hannaford established a formal partnership of hiring and supporting immigrants in the workplace.

Scan the QR Code to watch the video emphasizes the importance of relationship building, continued dialogue to change mindsets, creating trust and a feeling of community. Hannaford paid to have this professional video made for IHP's use.



## BERNADETTE TSHIYOMBO

Overcoming obstacles wasn't easy, and it still isn't, but when you decide to accomplish your goals, you can do it! I remember the first time that mama Micky told me that in the library when I joined IHP in 2017. A while later mama Claudette told me she thought I was ready to change my current job, but my answer was the same: My kids need my assistance and help. So, I want to keep my flexible job doing laundry and make sure I have time

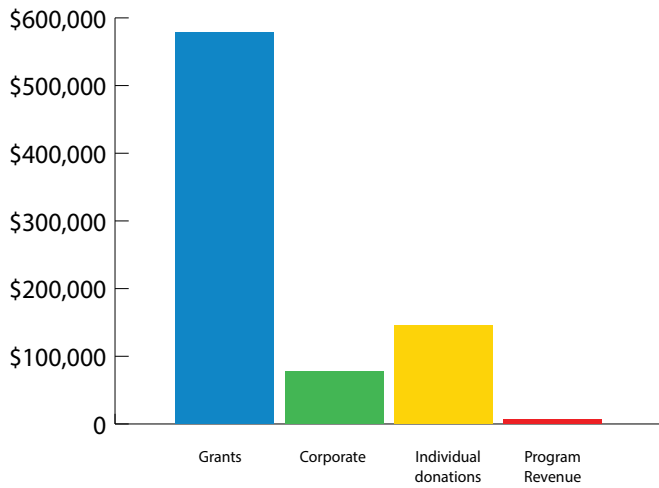
to take care of them. And then came Mary to encourage and push, at the same time talking about learning about and trying different jobs. I remember we went to my class placement interview with Mary and mama Claudette. When they saw me, they asked me to go home and they will contact me. Good news for me, I listened and did it. I joined the English class as they suggested.

Later, IHP organized the Charting Your Course class, an amazing and wonderful idea that teaches you how to use skills and training you learned back home for jobs here in the U.S. It was with this course that one of the participants was an inspiration for me. And I decided to meet with Jim, the Career Counselor, and we worked together. He was and is very patient and added much more detail to my resume and all that I wrote. With this help and support, I was able to get a job as a Financial Assistance Counselor at Greater Portland Health this year. I work in an office. I am using my education that I earned in Africa. I am supporting my children on my own. I am on track to a real career in America.

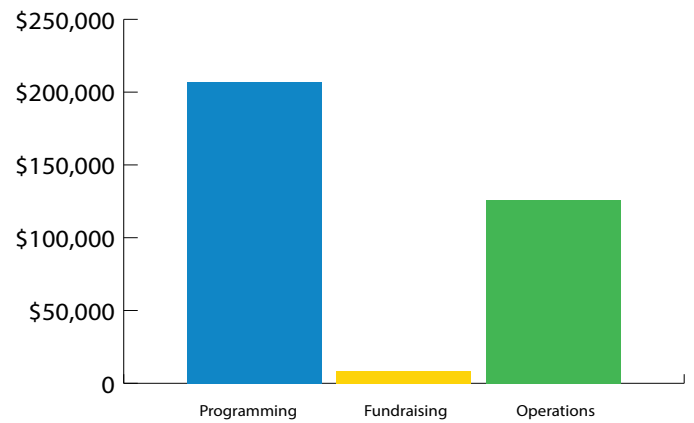
So, thank you IHP, thank you to Jim. Please, listen when your teacher advises you!

# OUR NUMBERS

## REVENUE SOURCE



## EXPENSES



**540**

Women served



**29**

Job placement



**12**

Nationalities



**92%**

are black or  
Hispanic

## LOOKING FORWARD

Structurally, there are a number of organizational protocols and processes that will be critical to support as we grow in meeting our focus of career trajectories and financial stability for our participants. Some of which are in process:

- To enhance IHPs accountability, our database will be expanded allowing IHP to collect, analyze, and report results-oriented data. We will enable the electronic collection of student data, resulting in a secure, searchable directory of student profiles and accomplishments. In addition to providing granular data about job acquisition, job changes, and income improvement (IHP Job Tracker), other functions will streamline access to student contact information and class scheduling, registration, and attendance.
- Expand laptop accessibility to all levels of Language Acquisition participants with targeted electronic/computer instruction as part of curriculum. This will require support from a technology expert that can do instructional classes and maintain equipment.
- Successful pilot projects become sustainable programs
- Grow cross-cultural conversation consulting with businesses
- Establish IHP as a consultant platform for focus groups, leadership and empowerment
- Deepen women's leadership capacity by hiring more immigrant women
- Financial stability



---

## SPECIAL THANKS

In Her Presence would not have made it through 2020 without the generosity of partners and donors. The overwhelming support and encouragement we received helped us counter the pandemic and continue serving immigrant women and their families.

---

## **In Her Presence**

# EIN: 47-5518548

PO BOX 8828  
179 Mechanic street  
Westbrook, ME 04092

[www.inherpresence.org](http://www.inherpresence.org)  
[contact@inherpresence.org](mailto:contact@inherpresence.org)