



IES REMEMBERED

The 12th Annual National
Immigrant Entrepreneurs Summit

FFA Enrichment Center • DMACC, Ankeny Campus



2019



A Letter from IES Planning Team

Dear IES sponsors, supporters, participants, and volunteers,

In light of this holiday season, I feel a great sense of thanksgiving and the warmth of community. There are so many pieces to putting on an impactful event, and I am grateful for your part in it.

We concluded the 2019 IES with one major change: we have a new Executive Director who will be building community and business support for IES and managing event logistics. In 2020, we are excited for three Regional IES summits alongside the National IES.

IES is truly redefining the role and impact of first generation immigrants in this country. By creating a trusted space for public discourse and building meaningful connections, immigrants have more opportunities as entrepreneurs. The creation of a safe space cannot be underestimated because it brings down the barriers so many put up in thinking they cannot succeed. But the American Dream is for everyone, and they can succeed if fostered in a supportive and educational environment.

Above all, IES is a unifier. We welcome immigrants and nonimmigrants; business owners and employees; nonprofit, public, and private sectors... we all need each other to grow and we need diverse ideas to build a better future.

IES reflects the contribution of immigrants and their daily lives in this country. The data we have are from business owners who have formed companies as a result of IES.

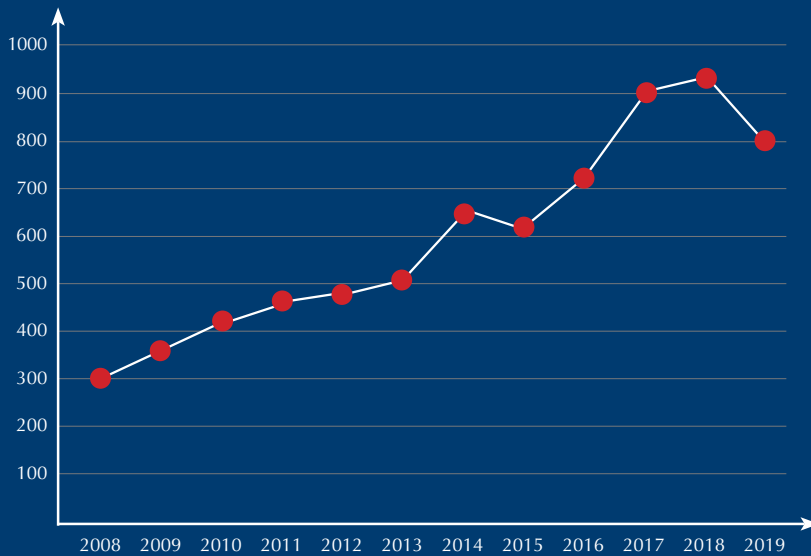
During the past twelve years, 1,415 new companies were formed, creating 7,415 new jobs!

My sincerest gratitude for what you have done for IES this year. I hold dear the fact that IES can never be a one-person mission. It takes a village – an active community – of diverse talents, passions, and experiences to make this dream happen. I look forward to working with you and achieving new heights in 2020.

With warm gratitude,

Ying Sa, Co-Chair of IES

NATIONAL IES PARTICIPANTS BY YEAR



ASIA

Bangladesh	Bhutan	China	India
Indonesia	Japan	Malaysia	Myanmar
Nepal	Philippines	South Korea	Thailand
Vietnam			

AFRICA

Cameroon	Chad	Dem. Rep. of the Congo	
Egypt	Ghana	Kenya	Liberia
Mali	Nigeria	Somalia	Tanzania
Uganda			

AMERICA

Argentina	Canada	Colombia	Ecuador
El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Mexico
Peru	United States		Uruguay

EUROPE

Bosnia and Herzegovina	France	Germany
Russia		

800 Registrants from **40** Countries



“We are proud to be associated with the Immigrant Entrepreneur Summit since its inception. The educational component in the sessions, the networking, and the sharing of stories of success in the awards and recognition luncheon are most inspiring. All the components combine to build and support a pipeline of future successful business owners.”

– Michael J. Helak
US Bank

“Once again, IES has put together another great summit with learning opportunities for immigrant and refugee entrepreneurs across Iowa. The sessions were excellent; they have provided many foundational skills to become successful entrepreneurs.”

– Vinh Nguyen
Des Moines Public Schools

“As a first time participant of the Immigrant Entrepreneurs Summit, I truly enjoyed hearing from the award winners about all the awesome work they’ve been doing across the state of Iowa. It was a fun day to learn and engage with others who are also pursuing entrepreneurship goals.”

– Heather M. Jones
Des Moines Resident





From left: Eric Rokitnicki,
Lorraine Rokitnicki, Penny Furgerson,
Russel Karim, and Sherry Gupta

"IES has given me the support to grow my business since 2015 and help me flourish as an entrepreneur. This is the event to be at if you are looking to network, gain valuable business skills and grow your business!"

– Russel Karim, Dhakai.com
Outstanding Immigrant Business Award Recipient

I am very honored to receive the 2019 Leadership Award from IES... the award belongs to the entire GDT organization past, present, and future. It was a joyful event. The hospitality and welcoming spirit of IES were so apparent, and the work you do to facilitate the entrepreneurship of immigrants is enormous.

– Penny Furgerson, Gateway Dance Theatre
Immigrant Entrepreneur Leadership Award

IES draws together a powerful mix of people who inspire and empower each other. For years I have enjoyed the luncheon and the top-quality service deployed to honor the award recipients. So I was thrilled to learn that CultureALL had been nominated as an Immigrant Champion. Many members of the Board recognized the prestige as well, saying the Immigrant Entrepreneur Summit is truly an amazing experience.

– Sherry Gupta, CultureALL
Karen Evans Immigrant Champion Award Recipient

2019 IES Award Honorees

Immigrant Entrepreneur
Leadership Award:
Penny Furgerson

Outstanding Immigrant
Business Award:
Russel Karim

Karen Evans Immigrant
Champion Award:
CultureALL

Immigrant Spirit Award:
**Eric and Lorraine
Rokitnicki**



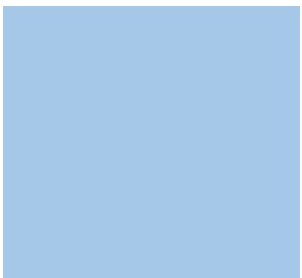
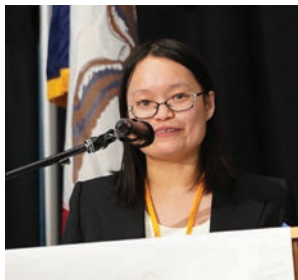
IES Underwriting Exposed is back to give back!



"I was inspired by the stories of all the businesses at the Immigrant Entrepreneur Summit. The 2019 Underwriting Exposed Competition was a great opportunity and learning experience. I was proud to see many women entrepreneurs. It was an honor to participate. Thank you to everyone who organized the event, the people that helped along the way, and the friends who came to support."

– Christine Tran, Cleva LLC
Winner of Underwriting Exposed Competition

Many thanks to our speakers!



"We had very good interactions with the attendees in the IES workshop. We were talking about how to save tax in 2019 after the new tax law. People were so eager to learn more about it and we went over all of the questions they have. The IES workshop not only helped people to understand how important tax are, but also helped us to understand how to improve ourselves to provide a better service to our clients."

- Jolene Wang, Community CPA

"IES is a valuable, respected, and well attended conference! The awards program is very inspiring for all attendees."

- Lori Day, FocusFirst Inc.

"It is both humbling and inspiring to celebrate the hard-earned and well-deserved success of these young and seasoned entrepreneurs. I wish I could bottle up the feeling in the room and share it with others who are chasing their dreams or need a little encouragement on their journey. For a second year now, I left the IES awards luncheon proud to call Iowa my home and determined to do my small part to welcome and encourage diversity and new cultures in our community."

- Jannay Towne, WHO13

"Hearing the personal stories of the winners was incredibly touching; we all came from different parts of the world and different walks of lives, yet we all share similar human values that drives for goodness! It was a day where my faith in humanity was recharged!"

- Shaimaa Aly, GDMLI class of 2020

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**Lijun Cheng &
Zhao Hua Gong**

Hosts

