



Staff FY08

Ali Noorani **Executive Director**

Ali Noorani joined the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA) as Executive Director in November of 2003. Under his leadership, MIRA has more than tripled its staff and programs, and greatly increased its capacity to advocate for the rights and opportunities of immigrants and refugees. In partnership with its members, MIRA continues to pursue its mission across Massachusetts and other regions of New England through education, training, leadership development, organizing, policy analysis and advocacy. Before coming to MIRA, Ali worked on a variety of community health and social justice issues at community health centers and for the City of Boston. Ali is a graduate of the University of California, Berkeley and received his Master's in Public Health from Boston University.

Angela Amell **Administrative Assistant**

Angela joined the MIRA Coalition in 2008 after several years working in the adult education field. Most recently, she worked at the Boston Adult Literacy Fund.

Carlos Saavedra **Organizer**

Carlos Saavedra has been organizing in the immigrant community for many years. As an immigrant himself from Peru, he has seen the hardships of being an immigrant in Massachusetts. For years Carlos has been part on the campaign to ensure that immigrant students in Massachusetts are able to fulfill their dreams of a college education and a better future. Recently, Carlos was chosen as the 2006 Recipient of the New Bostonian Youth Leadership award presented by the Mayor's Office of New Bostonians. His goal with the Student Immigrant Movement is to train and develop new student leaders to improve the lives of the immigrant community.

Carly Burton **Policy Associate**

Carly Burton is a Policy Associate at the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition. A graduate from the Boston University School of Social Work, Ms. Burton works to improve access to public programs for immigrants and refugees in the Commonwealth. During her time at MIRA, she has focused on legislative advocacy in trying to improve immigrant access to health care and increase funding for services for immigrant victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. She also works on a campaign to increase funding for the Citizenship for New Americans program which provides community based organizations funds to

help immigrants become naturalized citizens. Ms. Burton currently is on the Board of Directors of the African Community Health Initiatives. She has also participated in the Massachusetts Institute for Community Health Leadership. Prior to working at MIRA, she coordinated a literacy tutoring program at the Bird Street Community Center in Dorchester. Her experience also includes research on improving training in social policy and legislative advocacy for geriatric social workers at the Institute for Geriatric Social Work of Boston University.

Claudia Green **ENB Project Director**

As Project Director for the English for New Bostonians Initiative (ENB), Claudia focuses on raising public awareness and resources to address the need for ESOL classes Boston immigrants and refugees. Her advocacy work is conducted in collaboration with ENB's ethnically and geographically diverse ESOL programs across Boston, as well as funders, business leaders and other advocates. Claudia's background is in workforce development and community economic development. Claudia holds a Masters' degree in City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Claudia has led the development and early implementation of MIRA's growing *English Works* campaign.

Diana Bell **Campaign Organizer**

Diana joined the MIRA Coalition in 2007 as Campaign Organizer on the Education Opportunity Act. More recently, she has helped develop the English Works campaign. Diana worked as a legislative aide for State Representative Jeffrey Sanchez and also worked at SEIU Local 615.

Elena Blanco **Organizer**

Elena has worked with MIRA since 2007 as an organizer. She has extensive experience throughout the region and has worked at Jobs With Justice and City Life/Vida Urbana.

Eva Castillo **New Hampshire Organizer**

Originally from Caracas, Venezuela, Eva has been in NH since 1983. She is married and have 2 teenage boys. Eva has been working with the Latino community in NH since she moved to the state.



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Eva Millona Policy Director

Eva has been with MIRA for nearly 10 years serving in a variety of roles. As Policy Director, Eva leads all legislative and administrative advocacy efforts for MIRA at the state and federal levels.

Fatima Lopez Development Director

Fatima Lopez is MIRA's Development Director, and focuses her efforts on special event fundraising and individual donor giving. She began as an intern at MIRA before being hired as the Business Manager in 2004. She graduated from Brandeis University, where she received a Bachelor's in Sociology and Anthropology. She immigrated to the U.S. from the Philippines when she was seven years old.

Frances Ceron Central and Western Massachusetts Organizer

Frances joined MIRA in 2007 after spending several years working in the Fitchburg/Leominster area on a variety of issues.

Marcony Almeida Organizing Director

Marcony Almeida is the Director of Organizing, and now leads and supports a team of five organizers at MIRA. Before his current position, Marcony was the Policy Associate. Prior to MIRA, Mr. Almeida was the Assistant Director of the Brazilian Immigrant Center, in Boston, working primarily on worker's rights issues. At MIRA Coalition, Mr. Almeida is responsible to analyze federal immigration policy, coordinate Advocacy actions among MIRA's 100 members' organizations, provide training in citizenship and advocacy, and coordinate the work of the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Committee.

Samuelle LaCombe Business Manager

Includes, contract compliance, personnel management, records keeping and office administration. The Business Manager is supervised by the Executive Director and works closely with the Finance Committee of the Board of Directors, the Auditor, and other staff on Coalition projects.

Shuya Ohno Communications Director

Shuya Ohno came to MIRA in the fall of 2005 after steering a successful Boston City Council campaign. Born in Japan, Shuya immigrated to the US when he was 6 years old. Although he struggled as a child to learn English, Shuya now manages communications at MIRA and enjoys the challenges of moving a pro-immigrant message across and beyond Massachusetts.