

# Application: Siena Supports Asylum Seekers

Siena Literacy Center  
Administration of Justice Grant Program

## Summary

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## Administration of Justice Grant Final Report

Completed - Feb 27 2026

## Administration of Justice Grant Final Report

### Project Outcomes

**1. Describe actual results that were achieved through the use of the grant funds. Include outcomes identified in your grant application.**

Through this project to support asylum seekers, Siena Literacy Center supported our adult learners in acquiring the knowledge they needed to prepare their asylum and employment authorization applications. We achieved this through a contract partnership with Michigan Immigrant Rights Center (MIRC) and referrals between other community partners, such as the Southwest Detroit Immigrant and Refugee Center. Siena served 103\* English as a Second Language (ESL) participants during the grant period, providing access to immigration legal service referrals, basic needs case management, one-to-one and small group English language instruction, and access to an online self-paced learning program for tailored English acquisition. Siena's Community Resource Navigator led the legal referrals and case management initiatives, and worked closely with our bilingual Student Support Associate to provide orientations and case management meetings in Wolof and French, as needed. Siena also hosted MIRC for three asylum and immigrant rights and responsibilities workshops, and one full-day onsite clinic for participants to speak with MIRC's attorney's and legal assistants about their individual cases.

\*Siena served 103 unduplicated ESL learners during this project. The case numbers below exceed this number because many participants had two or three cases total over the course of the grant period.

**2. Where there any unanticipated challenges or outcomes? If so, describe below:**

Participants encountered unanticipated challenges with prolonged asylum case timelines and work authorization delays. Documentation barriers, including difficulties obtaining prior academic records, also affected educational outcomes. Despite these challenges, participants demonstrated strong persistence, high motivation, and emerging peer leadership.

Another challenge was the initial rollout of the program. We aimed to begin workshops for participants in February 2025, but the administration began implementing strict Immigration and Customs Enforcement practices in Detroit and around the country; this created a “chilling” effect for our participants who were fearful to leave their homes. Our team pivoted and helped participants access this information virtually or by phone until this initial wave of fear passed and they were comfortable attending the program again.

Lastly, and most unfortunately, the first bilingual Program Support Associate we hired in December 2024 to support this project’s objectives was detained by ICE three months ago. He was also dual enrolled in our advanced ESL and pre-GED programs, with aspirations to work in healthcare. Although he is still being held at North Lake, we are grateful for this project because he was introduced to MIRC during one of our workshops at Siena last year, and they are now representing him and doing all they can to facilitate his release.

Provide “actual” numbers of how many people will be served by completing the chart below. (Enter numbers without punctuation: 1000 rather than 1,000.00)

Type of legal problem	Cases closed after limited service	Cases closed after extended service	Total cases closed
Consumer/finance	5	6	11
Education	5	12	17
Employment	12	68	80
Family	5	8	13
Juvenile	0	0	0
Health	22	60	82
Housing	10	22	32
Income Maintenance	0	0	0

Individual rights	6	23	29
Other*	20	24	44
Total cases	85.0	223.0	308.0

**3. If applicable, explain if all the grant conditions set forth in the grant award letter were accomplished. If not, explain why.**

Yes, grant funds were spent according to the proposal, and no changes were made to the budget.

**4 If applicable, describe the plans for continuing or expanding this project following exhaustion of MSBF funds.If not, explain why.**

Siena has continued to expand funding opportunities to support this work moving forward. Both the Community Resource Navigator and Student Support Associate positions are fully funded, ensuring that case management and referrals to our immigration rights partners will continue. In addition, Siena's Executive Director and Board of Directors meet quarterly to review and implement Siena's strategic plan, which includes identifying new and recurring funding opportunities to secure long-term financial health for initiatives such as this.

**5. Should this project be tried elsewhere? If so, what changes would you suggest and/or what partners should be involved? If not, explain why.**

Yes, we believe that now more than ever this work is needed for communities across the state. We would suggest that organizations conduct assessments of their own capacities and then determine key partnerships to provide both the case management and legal referrals for their asylum-seeking participants. This project helped Siena focus on what we do best (ESL tutoring) while strengthening our referral network to enhance our services, which increased participant program completion and future success. Formal MOA's with clear objectives, timelines, and resource allocation (such as ours with MIRC) can be helpful in bringing accountability to partnerships and elevate shared services to participants.

**Media and Acknowledgements**

**1. Was the Michigan State Bar Foundation acknowledged? If so, describe how? If not, explain why.**

The Michigan State Bar Foundation was listed as a major funder in our Spring and Fall 2025 newsletters. There were 550 copies of the spring newsletter and 600 copies of the fall newsletter printed for distribution. In addition, the spring newsletter was sent digitally to 161 supporters, while the fall newsletter was sent digitally to 175.

**2. Describe how a sample individual or group benefited as a result of the project funded by the grant. (Do not mention names.)**

The coordinated support increased learners' confidence, stability, and career readiness. Overall, the program strengthened pathways to employment, economic mobility, and successful community integration for participants.

One prime example of this employment pathway is our current Student Support Associate. She was hired into this position earlier this month after enrolling in 2024 as an ESL participant. During her time as a participant, she received asylum assistance from our Community Resource Navigator and community partners, and applied for her work permit. Once she received work authorization, she joined our team and now provides support to our Wolof and French speaking participants.

**3. If applicable, describe to whom and when were materials or project results and information distributed.(Do not mention names.)**

Materials and information were distributed to attendees (both asylum-seeking participants, volunteer tutors, and Siena staff interested in acquiring this information) during MIRC presentations on April 8, 2025 and October 1, 2025. Additional materials in Wolof and French were provided to all ESL participants during orientations as part of their enrollment process. These were held every two weeks between March and November 2025.

**Financial Information**

1. Complete the chart below to reflect the project’s actual expenditures detailed by major line items. Include only direct needs for this project under “MSBF funds.” Explain any variances from the budget submitted in the application. (Enter numbers without punctuation: 1000 rather than \$1,000.00.)

Category	MSBF Funds	Other Funds	In-kind Support	Total	*Provide further details
*Personnel - Existing	10500	16250	38500	65250	A portion of the Community Resource Navigator's salary
*Personnel - New		15360		15360	New bilingual Student Support Associate
Employee benefits	2520	7586		10106	Community Resource Navigator benefits (health, dental, vision, LTD, STD, Life)
*Consultant fees	6390			6390	Contract with MIRC for educational workshops and services
*Travel	500			500	Mileage reimbursement to local trainings and partner meetings
*Space	6180	26220		32400	Prorated rent during workshops
*Equipment					
*Supplies		3360		3360	Office paper and materials for workshops and student orientations

Telephone	300			300	Phone service for Navigator and Student Support Associate
Postage					
Printing/copies					
Audit		8000		8000	Annual audit conducted by CPA firm
*Other					
<b>Total</b>	<b>26390.0</b>	<b>76776.0</b>	<b>38500.0</b>	<b>141666.0</b>	

**2. List all other revenues that were used to complete this project:**

Source	Amount	Description
Government grants (list)	112992	State of Michigan Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and City of Detroit Neighborhood Opportunity Fund
Foundations (list)		
Corporations (list)		
Religious institutions (list)	150000	Adrian Dominican Sisters (sponsoring institution)
United Way (list)		
Income from project		
Other (list)		
<b>Total</b>	<b>262992.0</b>	

## Grant Payment(s) and Request for Final Payment

Total MSBF Funds used	26390
Less amount previously disbursed (if any)	13195
Balance to be paid	13195

## Responses Selected:

The payment of \$ {{FinPmt[2]}} constitutes the final payment for this grant. Following this payment the grant will be closed and no additional funds will be available for this project from the grant funds.

## Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Feb 27 2026

## Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light gray background. The signature is cursive and appears to read "Cary P. [unclear]".

## Comments

Please add any additional comments you wish to provide.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide addition assistance to our immigrant communities. This has been an extremely trying year for our staff, participants, and volunteers, but this project helped us build resilience through partnerships with MIRC and other providers. It could not have come at a better time.