

**For Immediate Release**

April 4, 2016

**Contact**

Zulma Maciel, Assistant to the City Manager  
Strategic Partnerships and Office of Immigrant Affairs  
(408) 535-8146, [zulma.maciel@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:zulma.maciel@sanjoseca.gov)

## **City of San José Hosts White House Regional Convening on New Americans**

**SAN JOSE, Calif.** – The City of San José recently hosted a White House Regional Convening on New Americans that brought together multiple sectors and levels of government to further strengthen welcoming and immigrant integration efforts in the greater San José area.

Held on Friday, April 1, 2016, the White House Regional Convening included more than 100 federal, state, and local officials along with service providers, the private sector, and local community leaders. One of several convenings held across the United States, San José was selected to host the one-day event in order to help highlight the region’s efforts at welcoming and integrating immigrants from all over the world.

“We are a city of immigrants,” said Mayor Sam Liccardo, who delivered welcoming remarks at the convening. “Our immigrant community is a critical thread of our DNA, and while San José is well on its way to becoming the most successful multi-cultural city on this planet, we still have work to do.”

Here are a few statistics about the local immigrant population:

- 39 percent of San José’s adult population are foreign-born
- 44 percent of the immigrant population in Santa Clara County has college degrees
- 25 percent of the immigrant population in Santa Clara County has less than a high school degree

The primary goals of the Regional Convening were to strengthen the federal/regional infrastructure to support welcoming and integration efforts, highlight best practices, and expand current multi-sector partnerships at the local level to advance civic, economic, and linguistic integration efforts.

A panel discussion, moderated by Doua Thor, Executive Director of the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, focused on the Silicon Valley landscape from multiple perspectives, especially highlighting the “Tale of Two Cities” – San José as the home of immigrant communities who

---MORE---

are low-income, under-educated and under-employed who struggle to make ends meet in stark contrast to the highly educated, highly skilled tech workers of Silicon Valley.

To further the dialogue, participants broke into different groups to discuss the following five topics:

1. Supporting Skills Development and Career Pathways for Immigrant Families
2. Fostering Entrepreneurship and Small Business Growth
3. Creating a Welcoming Community for Youth by Supporting Family Engagement and Academic Success
4. Strengthening Pathways to Naturalization and Promoting Civic Engagement; or
5. Advancing Access to Affordable and Safe Housing

Multiple City departments and offices participated in the White House's Regional Convening, including the Office of Immigrant Affairs, City Manager's Office, San José Police Department, San José Fire Department, Housing Department, Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services, Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, and the San José Public Library.

In addition, several federal agencies, including the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Small Business Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Social Security Administration, U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Commerce, and the U.S. Department of Labor, pledged their support to the welcoming and immigrant integration work in San José.

#### **About the White House Regional Convenings on New Americans**

The regional convenings are being organized by the White House Task Force on New Americans in collaboration with local agencies, cities, and counties that have joined the Building Welcoming Communities Campaign launched in September 2015. San José is one of 48 entities that have signed on to this campaign, which is designed to encourage communities to welcome all its residents so that the greater community can thrive. The campaign supports President Obama's calling on local communities to build inclusive, welcoming communities to advance civic, economic and linguistic integration. For more information about the White House Regional Convenings on New Americans, visit [www.whitehouse.gov/newamericans](http://www.whitehouse.gov/newamericans).

#### **About the Office of Immigrant Affairs**

The City of San José's Office of Immigrant Affairs was recently established to help improve the city's immigrant integration and create policies that make it easier for immigrants to fully participate in civic, cultural and economic life. Visit the Office of Immigrant Affairs website, <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?nid=4615>.

#### **About the City of San José**

About the City of San José Known as the Capital of Silicon Valley, San José is the nation's tenth largest city, and the largest city in Northern California, with an ethnically diverse population of more than one million. San José was founded in 1777, once served as the state capital of California, and now encompasses 180 square miles. Facts about San José can be found here: [www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/780](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/780). The City's website is [www.sanjoseca.gov](http://www.sanjoseca.gov).

###

*This news release is posted online at [www.sanjoseca.gov](http://www.sanjoseca.gov).*