

## Legal services needed for immigrants in Milford

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**By Liz Mineo – MILFORD DAILY NEWS**

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BOSTON — Many immigrants in town may not have access to legal services because of language barriers or lack of money, but a Worcester legal agency would like to change that.

The Legal Assistance Corp. of Central Massachusetts, which provides free legal services to low-income residents of Worcester County, has sent an attorney to reach out to the town's Ecuadorean and Brazilian immigrants.

The Ecuadoreans and Brazilians represent the most recent waves of immigrants in Milford and their arrival, in some cases, has been met with suspicion and animosity.

Attorney Nina Sá, who speaks both Spanish and Portuguese, has begun meeting with community and immigrant advocates and is concerned about what she has seen so far.

"There is divisiveness in the town," she said. "We're concerned people are not seeking services out of fear."

For now, Sá continues meeting with civic leaders to learn about the needs of immigrants, but in the next few weeks, she plans to hold presentations and workshops on rights and legal services at churches and other places frequented by immigrants.

Informing immigrants about their rights is important, she said, because many are unfamiliar with the U.S. justice system. Also, many don't know there are free legal services available.

She will also work on individual immigration cases based on humanitarian concerns such as refugee, asylum, self-petition for battered immigrants, and cancellations of removal based on family ties.

Sá's work is part of a renewed effort by the agency to increase its number of clients in Milford and other places far from its main office in Worcester.

"We're regularly trying to make sure we reach people who may not be able to come to our office," said managing attorney Faye Rachlin. "We want to serve people who may not have access to transportation to come to our office or may not know about us."

The corporation has an office at the Milford Senior Center, but not too many people know about it, said Sá, who is working with the agency as a Bart Gordon Fellow.

The fellowship was awarded to the corporation to provide legal services to people who may not have access to the justice system because of language, racial, cultural or disability barriers.