

## A Note from IICONN's New Executive Director



Dear Friends,

For more than 90 years, the Institute has helped thousands of new Americans with support from dedicated friends like you - from your generous donations of volunteer time, money or skills, to your partnerships and advocacy - without which our organization would not exist.

When the Board approached me in December to be the Institute's new Executive Director, I was handed the biggest honor of my life. In this role, I have worked closely with staff, partners and community to identify and address the various needs of Connecticut's foreign born. I have traveled to each corner of the state, talking to organizations and service providers on immigration, citizenship and refugee issues – from which I have received welcoming support.

But still, much more education is needed – continually, I find that many community members still don't understand the basics of immigration law or the difference between a refugee, immigrant, or foreign visitor.

In the upcoming year, I plan to continue these efforts to educate both immigrant and receiving communities, advocating that the many contributions of foreign-born persons add to the cultural and economic richness of America.

I thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter and for your interest in the IIC. If you aren't already a member, I ask that you take a look at IICONN membership by visiting our website (or click here). Lastly, I encourage you to stay educated on immigrant and refugee issues, to continue to be the IIC's ambassador out in the community, and continue celebrating new Americans.

Warm Regards,  
Angela Rossi Zurowski, Executive Director

## Pranaya IICONN's Bridge to America



Originally from Nepal, Pranaya SJB Rana joined IIconn in March 2010 first as an interpreter for the organization's expanding number of Bhutanese clients before becoming Refugee Case Manager in November 2010.

Pranaya says of his language skills, "language is the bridge; I'm the bridge between the refugees' past and their future in America."

Yet, language is only one on a list of Pranaya's many skills and accomplishments. A lieutenant in the Nepalese Army for 7 years, Pranaya earned an MA, Global Development and Peace, from the University of Bridgeport in December 2010. He has conducted online guest lectures in Peace and Conflict Studies for Tel Aviv University, Israel and Salisbury University in Maryland as well as provided program-based support to the Institute of Multi-track Diplomacy. In May 2010, Pranaya traveled to Haiti to conduct induction training for the UN Peacekeeping Mission.

Pranaya cites ensuring education for client's children and assisting clients to navigate through the often complex social service networks as two of his top priorities at IIconn and he works tirelessly to achieve these goals.

**Don't forget to  
visit our new Web site at  
[www.iiconn.org!](http://www.iiconn.org)**

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