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Mabel Center for Immigrant Justice awarded \$100,000 Cummings grant
Arlington, nonprofit receives four years of funding from Cummings Foundation

Arlington, MA, May 26, 2021: Mabel Center for Immigrant Justice is one of 140 local nonprofits to receive grants of \$100,000 to \$500,000 each through Cummings Foundation's \$25 Million Grant Program. The Arlington-based organization was chosen from a total of 590 applicants during a competitive review process. It will receive \$100,000 over four years.

Mabel Center for Immigrant Justice provides expert pro bono legal services to asylum-seeking families that have been separated, detained in family detention centers, and/or returned to Mexico upon seeking asylum at the southern border. After previously operating under a fiscal sponsor, Mabel Center is on track to provide free legal services to 100 asylum-seekers that have relocated to the Greater Boston area in its first year as a separate 501c3 entity.

"Mabel Center firmly believes that every human, regardless of status or place of origin, deserve the dignity and respect of legal representation. With so much uncertainty at the border due to constantly changing policies, migrant families are the ones that suffer. We are deeply grateful for the support from Cummings Foundation, which will allow us to serve a community that is too often overlooked and under resourced," shared Jill Seeber, co-founder and executive director of Mabel Center.

Mabel Center will use funds from the \$25 Million Grant Program to operate its two asylum programs: Full Legal Representation and the Pro Se Clinic. The Full Legal Representation program will deliver competent, free, and full legal representation to indigent asylum-seekers. The Pro Se Clinic will coordinate with asylum-seekers to provide them with support in meeting deadlines and preparing a strong asylum application. Both programs will build off of the experiential knowledge that Mabel Center's two attorneys have gained from working directly at the border and in family detention centers.

The Cummings \$25 Million Grant Program supports Massachusetts nonprofits that are based in and primarily serve Middlesex, Essex, and Suffolk counties.

Through its place-based initiative, Cummings Foundation aims to give back in the area where it owns commercial building, all of which are managed, at no cost to the Foundation, by its affiliate, Cummings Properties. This Woburn-based commercial real estate firm leases and manages 10 million square feet of debt-free space, the majority of which exclusively benefits the Foundation.



“We aim to help meet the needs of people in all segments of our local community,” said Cummings Foundation executive director Joel Swets. “It is the incredible organizations we fund, however, that do the actual daily work to empower our neighbors, educate our children, fight for equity, and so much more.”

We the help of about 80 volunteers, the Foundation first identified 140 organizations to receive grants of at least \$100,000 each. Among the winners were first-time recipients as well as nonprofits that had previously received Cummings Foundation grants. Forty of this latter group of repeat recipients were then selected to have their grants elevated to 10-year awards ranging from \$200,000 to \$500,000 each.

“We have adopted a democratic approach to philanthropy, which empowers an impressive roster of dedicated volunteers to decide more than half of all our grant winners each year,” said Swets. “We benefit from their diverse backgrounds and perspectives; they benefit from a meaningful and fulfilling experience; and the nonprofits often benefit from increased exposure and new advocates.

This year’s grant recipients represent a wide variety of causes, including social justice, homelessness prevention, affordable housing, education, violence prevention, and food insecurity. The nonprofits are spread across 43 different cities and towns.

The complete list of 140 grant winners, plus more than 800 previous recipients, is available at www.CummingsFoundation.org.

Cummings Foundation has now awarded more than \$300 million to greater Boston nonprofits.

About Mabel Center for Immigrant Justice:

Mabel Center provides expert pro bono legal services to asylum-seeking families that have been separated, detained in family detention centers, and/or returned to Mexico upon seeking asylum at the southern border. Mabel Center serves approximately 100 individuals annually. Mabel Center’s clients predominantly reside in Chelsea, East Boston, Lynn, and Waltham. To learn more about Mabel Center, visit www.mabelcenter.org

About Cummings Foundation

Woburn-based Cummings Foundation, Inc. was established in 1986 by Joyce and Bill Cummings and has grown to be one of the three largest private foundations in New England. The Foundation directly operates its own charitable subsidiaries, including New Horizons retirement communities in Marlborough and Woburn, and Veterinary School at Tufts, LLC in North Grafton. Additional information is available at www.CummingsFoundation.org.

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PHOTO: Mabel Center's namesake, Mabel, and her daughter after being granted asylum and Mabel Center's co-founders, Jill Seeber, Esq. and Daniel Santiago, Esq. at the border providing legal support to migrants.