



Annual Report

FY 2022



LEAH ZALLMAN CENTER
FOR IMMIGRANT HEALTH RESEARCH



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Director's Note

It's fall in New England! Every year when the air gets cooler and students, families, and educators transition into a new school year, I feel excited, renewed, and reflective. Time to put away our flip-flops, roll up our sleeves, and celebrate our accomplishments – we launched a Center! Also, a moment to pause and see if we learned anything from the previous year.

Have we learned from history yet? Will this be the year that we create policies and practices so that all children have [healthcare and enough food to eat](#), regardless of immigration status or the [fear incited by harmful public charge narratives and policies](#)? Will we finally make a dent in occupational segregation – a key underlying determinant of health inequities – by [supporting essential workers \(who are disproportionately foreign-born\)](#) or creating [career pathways for newly arrived refugees](#)?

We're laying the groundwork. Research has a key role to play in transformative social change. This past year, [we launched the Leah Zallman Center for Immigrant Health Research](#) at the [Institute for Community Health](#) and are leading research studies to produce actionable, policy-relevant, and narrative-changing findings to advance immigrant and community health. It is an honor and joy to be building this Center around Dr. Leah Zallman's legacy and a [vision of social science that is grounded in social justice](#). At the same time, I am reminded that this type of participatory, rigorous research takes time, depth, and stamina. There are no short-cuts.

Stay tuned! We will share what we learn as we grow. Expect findings and policy recommendations from our research, reflections as we disrupt traditional research power dynamics, inspiration as we [grow a network of immigrant scholars](#), and data. Lots of data.



Dr. Jessica Santos
Director, Leah Zallman Center



Jessica Santos



Emily Daman



Danielle Chun



Cristina Aguilera



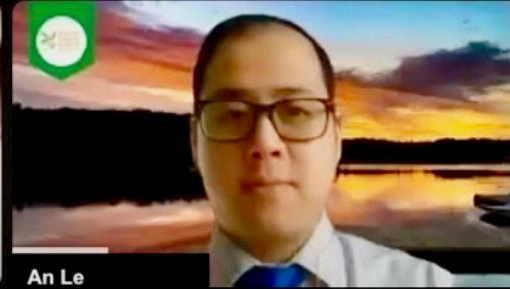
Luiza Souza



Sarah Kimball



Julia Curbera



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Amy Smith



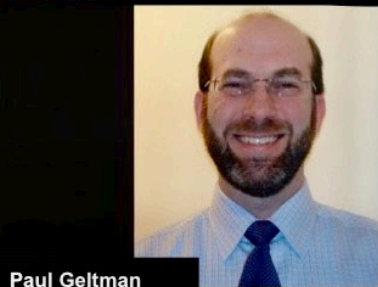
Diya Kallivayalil



María R. González



Lenita Reason



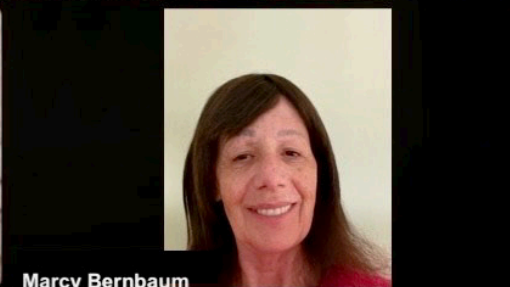
Paul Geltman



Carrie Fisher



Ayatt Elawad



Marcy Bernbaum

Who We Are and What We Do

Who We Are

Mission Statement: To partner with immigrant communities, advocates, policymakers, and social and health systems on actionable research to improve immigrant health and well-being.

[The Leah Zallman Center for Immigrant Health Research](#) is a research center at the [Institute for Community Health \(ICH\)](#). We are a team of interdisciplinary social science researchers with expertise at the intersection of immigrant, economic, and health justice.

We advance immigrant health through:

- **Research** – rigorous, actionable inquiry to advance immigrant health and well-being.
- **Networks** – engagement with immigrant communities, advocates, policymakers, funders, and social and health systems.
- **Capacity and Learning** – space to experiment with anti-racist, anti-assimilationist methods and grow future leaders.
- **Impact** – community and public engagement to share knowledge, inform policy, and advance social change.

We are proud to build on ICH's history of using participatory methods to ensure that community voices in research are amplified to the state and national level as part of evidence-based policymaking, drawing on our core values pictured below.

Core Values of the Leah Zallman Center



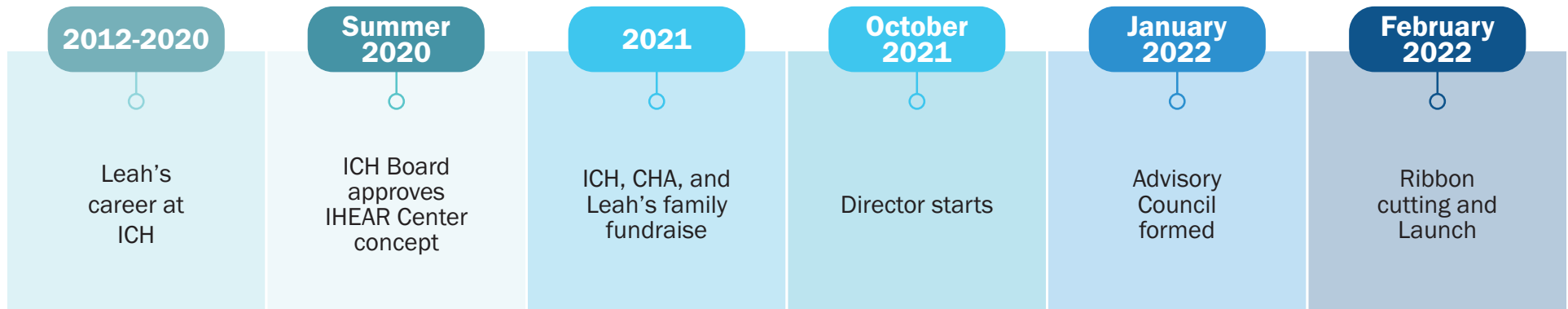
History

In July 2020, the Institute for Community Health (ICH) Board of Directors voted to start a new research center focused on immigrant health, to be led by Dr. Leah Zallman, then-Director of Research at ICH. The idea for the research center was originally conceived by Dr. Sarah Jalbert, ICH Executive Director, and Dr. Zallman as a way to focus Dr. Zallman’s academic research. The Center would house ICH’s immigrant-focused research and work closely with policymakers to advance policies that directly affect immigrant health. A few months later, ICH chose the name “Immigrant Health Research Center,” or IHEAR, to signal that ICH was listening closely to community leaders and “hearing” what was needed. Dr. Zallman spearheaded this work until she died suddenly and tragically in November 2020.



Dr. Leah Zallman

Leah Zallman Center Timeline



“

Marcy, Leah's mom, enjoys reminding us all that Leah was born in Panama City on International Human Rights Day. She wrote in her fellowship application... 'I have a deep belief that I have a role to play in elevating the voices of the most vulnerable...' The legacy will be to yearn for justice and be guided by curiosity.

- Dr. David Bor, Chief Academic Officer, Cambridge Health Alliance and Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School

In December 2020, after Dr. Zallman's death, ICH leadership worked closely with Dr. Zallman's family and loved ones to form a legacy committee that would carry her original idea for a Center forward and make her dream a reality. In 2021, the committee raised funds to hire a director and the ICH Board voted to create the Leah Zallman Center for Immigrant Health Research. Dr. Jessica Santos was brought on as the inaugural Director in October 2021. The Leah Zallman Center for Immigrant Health Research was publicly launched with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and virtual launch event in February 2022. The Center honors Dr. Zallman by embodying the spirit of her work through our core values, the content of our research, and our commitment to producing evidence to aid policymakers, healthcare systems, and advocates seeking to improve the health and well-being of new Americans and all Americans.

“ *[Leah's] hope for the future and her passion for justice have shaped every aspect of the creation of the Leah Zallman Center.*

- **Dr. Sarah Jalbert**, Executive Director, Institute for Community Health

“ *Leah knew that health is more than what happens in the doctor's office and she understood that health is how our society is structured. Our research agenda at the Center reflects that. Our research will focus on policies, narratives, institutional practices, the impact of immigrants on community health, and the environmental factors that shape welcoming, equitable environments for all.*

- **Dr. Jessica Santos**, Leah Zallman Center Director

“ *Leah was a natural mentor. It really felt like you could go to Leah for anything. She was always willing to teach and focus on your growth. I remember... expressing interest in wanting to continue a career in medicine.. and she immediately, without a thought, started talking about her own path and spent every meeting with us talking about our goals... She would make anyone on her team feel confident when we were there. I remember her always pushing us to speak up for ourselves and for our research, so it always felt like she was on our side.*

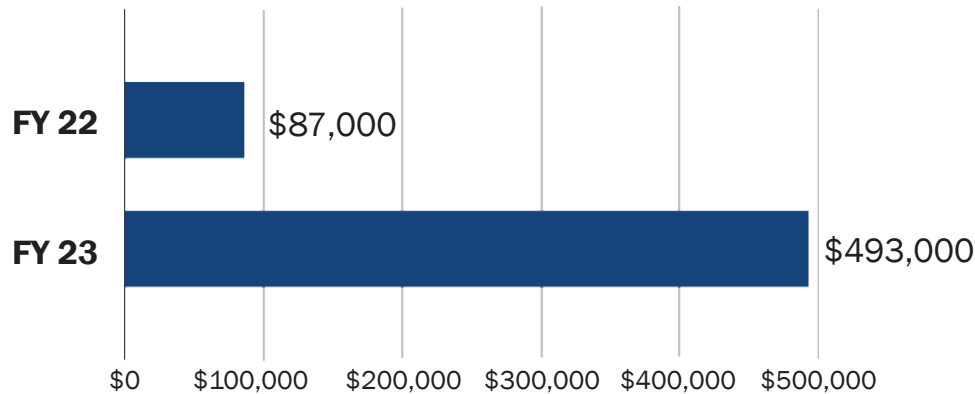
- **Sofía Alejandra Ladner**, Research and Evaluation Project Manager, Institute for Community Health and Community and Staff Engagement Manager, Leah Zallman Center

Budget and Operations

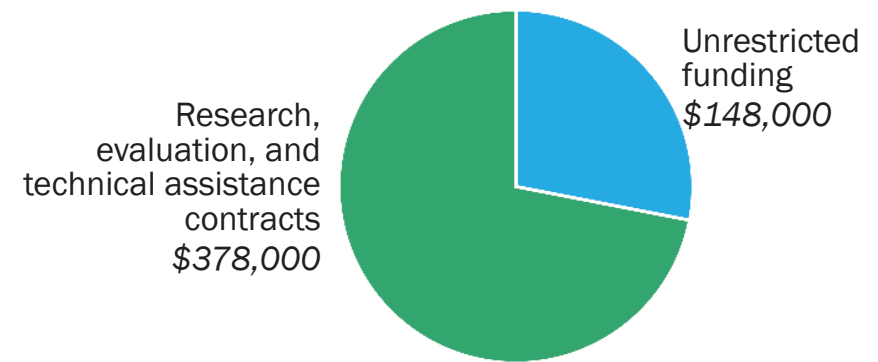
The total operating budget for the Leah Zallman Center in FY22 (a partial year) was \$87,000.* ICH and the Leah Zallman legacy committee raised a total of \$148,000 in unrestricted seed funding, which provided the operational base to launch the Center. We raised an additional \$378,000 in FY22 in research, evaluation, and technical assistance contracts. The Center's operating budget for FY23 is \$493,000. We anticipate continuing to grow our revenue and establishing a sustainable hybrid model of contracts and unrestricted donations to support our community-engaged methods.

The operating budget of ICH in FY23 is \$3.8 million.

Leah Zallman Center Operating Budget



FY 22 Fundraising



*FY22 ran from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. The Leah Zallman Center's operations formally began on October 1, 2021, when Dr. Santos started as director.

The Center's funding model is designed to leverage the following sources of revenue:

- Unrestricted individual donations, including large gifts and small-dollar donations
- Unrestricted foundation support for operations and community-led research
- Targeted donations to support the Immigrant Scholar Internship Program or other established programs
- Funded post-doctoral candidates seeking academic and research mentorship sites
- Research grants to support investigator-led studies
- Evaluation contracts funded by partners
- Foundation-driven support for field-level inquiry and knowledge dissemination
- Training and technical assistance (TTA) contracts



By drawing on these diversified sources of revenue, the Leah Zallman Center aspires to conduct fully funded traditional research and evaluation studies as well as community-initiated studies that respond to the pressing immigrant health issues of our time, as they arise. Through our advisory council and extensive networks with immigrant leaders in Massachusetts and nationally (see Networks on p 17), we collectively prioritize work for maximum impact. We compensate immigrant leaders equitably as experts for their contributions, advice, and participation in research. Unrestricted funds received through donations ensure that this community-engaged approach is possible.

As a Center at the Institute for Community Health (ICH), the Leah Zallman Center is embedded within a strong organization with decades of history working in public and community health in Massachusetts. ICH is a nonprofit consulting organization that provides participatory evaluation, applied research, assessment, planning, and data services. ICH helps healthcare institutions, government agencies, and community-based organizations improve their services and maximize program impact, and strives to incorporate culturally responsive and equitable evaluation methods to create value for all communities impacted by programs and interventions. With projects across diverse areas, ICH is able to provide rigorous and high-quality research to partners locally and across the country.

ICH is housed at and contracts with Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA) for human resources, information technology, finance and accounting, marketing, and other support such as the use of their Institutional Review Board (IRB). Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA) is a vibrant, innovative health system dedicated to providing equity and excellence for everyone, every time. With over 140,000 patients in Boston's metro-north region, CHA is proud to offer the healthcare people need most in their lives.



A center at



Staffing

The Leah Zallman Center draws from ICH's talented pool of interdisciplinary staff. When research and evaluation projects are developed and/or approved as contracts, ICH leadership and the Leah Zallman Center Director work together to discuss the appropriate allocation of staff based on methodological and content expertise, lived and professional experience, racial/ethnic/linguistic congruence, staff capacity, and other factors. ICH and the Leah Zallman Center strive to give all staff ample opportunities to develop expertise in multiple areas and with multiple research methods using a matrix management model. Supervisors also work closely with staff members to conduct team-based annual performance evaluations and discuss professional development and career goals and opportunities. We strive to create a healthy and meaningful work environment at the Leah Zallman Center where professionals can grow and thrive.



ICH staff members make our work possible

The following ICH staff members have dedicated roles and a percentage of their time allocated for Leah Zallman Center operations:



Jessica Santos, PhD
Director



Danielle Chun, MPP
Strategy and Partnerships Manager



Sofia Ladner, MPH
Community and Staff Engagement Manager

The following people contributed significantly to the Leah Zallman Center's launch, operations, and success in FY22:

- **Emily Chiasson**, MSW, MPH, ICH Chief Operating Officer
- **Sarah Jalbert**, PhD, ICH Executive Director
- **Alan Orellana**, ICH Senior Finance Manager
- **Luisa Raleza**, ICH Office Manager
- **Cristina Aguilera**, MPA, Chair, Advisory Council (see Networks, p 17)
- **Emily Daman**, MPP, MBA, Launch Organizer (see Impact, p 24)
- **Sylvia Stewart**, MPP, Design Consultant

The Center also relies on the contributions of paid interns (see Learning, p 23).

The Leah Zallman Center thanks the ICH Board of Directors, who worked closely with Dr. Sarah Jalbert to launch the Center and continues to provide advice through the Research Committee:

- **Paul Geltman**, MD, MPH (Chair), Chief Medical Officer, Upham's Corner Health Center
- **Gregory Hagan**, MD (Vice-Chair), Chief, Pediatrics, Cambridge Health Alliance
- **Craig S. Andrade**, RN, MPH, DrPH, Associate Dean of Practice, Associate Professor of Practice in Community Health Sciences, Director of The Activist Lab, Interim Chair of the Department of Community Health Science, Boston University School of Public Health
- **David H. Bor**, MD, Chief Academic Officer, Cambridge Health Alliance
- **Leonor Fernandez**, MD, Health Equity Senior Advisor, Beth Israel Lahey Health; Primary Care, Healthcare Associates, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
- **Brian Herrick**, MD, Chief Medical Information Officer, Cambridge Health Alliance
- **Ellen Lawton**, JD, Senior Fellow, HealthBegins
- **Kiame J. Mahaniah**, MD, Chief Executive Officer, Lynn Community Health Center
- **Aviva Must**, PhD, Professor and Chair, Dean, Public Health and Professional Degree Programs, Department of Public Health and Community Medicine, Tufts University School of Medicine
- **Joseph D. Restuccia**, DrPH, MPH, Professor and Everett W. Lord Distinguished Faculty Scholar, Operations and Technology Management Department, Boston University Questrom School of Business
- **Deborah Klein Walker**, EdD, Public Health Consultant, President, Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice



Research

The Leah Zallman Center's Braided Pathways of Inquiry and Impact

The Leah Zallman Center's primary research focus is immigrant health and well-being. Our mixed-methods research agenda is rooted in a set of core beliefs and a rich evidence base, leading to three main paths of inquiry and impact in service of health equity.



Path 1. Health and Healthcare

We believe that all people are equal and have a right to optimal health. However, research shows that in the United States, a person's race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, citizenship status, religion, ability status, socioeconomic status, and more directly affect their health. This is partially due to the fact that our health and social systems were not designed with equity in mind. Therefore, it is not entirely surprising (though unacceptable) when we see evidence of disparities in healthcare access, treatment, and outcomes for immigrants.

We partner with healthcare organizations and go beyond documenting disparities to:

- Investigate patterns and causes of disparate health outcomes for immigrants in healthcare organizations and systems
- Test promising or evidence-based practices from pilot programs and interventions designed to advance health equity
- Identify the impacts of specific place-based or organizational health equity efforts
- Research and analyze potential policy solutions or recommendations with partners

Path 2. Community Health and SDOH

We believe that uniting immigrants and longstanding residents around common goals builds healthier communities. However, we acknowledge that past and present federal, state, local, and institutional policies and artificial constructs of borders have separated people in our communities, making many immigrants feel unwelcome. These destructive policies are rooted in settler colonialism and anti-Black racism and perpetuate many of today's health inequities. More work is needed to undo the complex and intertwined structural inequities that shape the well-being of immigrants in the systems where we live, learn, work, pray, and play.

We partner with immigrant integration advocates, practitioners, and policymakers to:

- Analyze inequities in employment, education, and other social determinants of health (SDOH) that affect the health and well-being of immigrants, and identify leverage points for change
- Assess the links between degree of welcome/integration and health
- Identify mechanisms that contribute to welcoming organizations and communities
- Study and lift up the ways in which improvements in immigrant health benefit us all

Path 3. Policies and Narratives

We believe that part of building new equitable systems involves acknowledging past and present harm, bringing people together in ways that challenge longstanding power dynamics, and elevating knowledge from within immigrant communities. Health and longevity are correlated with the ability to self-determine our lives and the path of our communities through political and civic participation.

We build immigrant power through our participatory research methods and partner with advocates and policymakers to:

- Understand the effects of specific public policies or programs on immigrant health
- Center immigrant voices in policymaking through participatory action research
- Analyze narratives and develop new evidence-based counter-narratives demonstrating the contributions of immigrants to the health and prosperity of our communities

Our Current Research

FY22 ran from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. The projects listed below were active during this period.

Mass General Brigham (MGB) Substance Use Disparities Study:



In partnership with Mass General Brigham (MGB), ICH is conducting a qualitative study on disparities in substance use disorder (SUD) treatment among patients who identify as Black, Latinx, or who speak limited English at MGB. This study was developed by Dr. Ranjani Paradise and builds on her extensive research portfolio on SUDs and health disparities. Interviews and focus groups with providers and patients focus on understanding barriers to treatment for immigrant patients and patients of color and revealing institutional and systemic solutions to advance equity. Project findings will inform changes to MGB's SUD treatment programming and upcoming service expansion.

PI: Jessica Santos, PhD

Senior Advisor: Ranjani Paradise, PhD

Research Team: Julia Curbera, MCP; Ben Goldberg; Nubia Goodwin, MPH; Ana Vasconcelos

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) New American Cities Evaluation:



In 2019, Dr. Santos partnered with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) to inform the design of New American Cities, pairing career pathway programming for refugee and immigrant professionals with interventions to support community institutions as they work to become more welcoming and equitable for all. The Leah Zallman Center is now leading a two-year evaluation (2021-2023) to study the individual, household, and city-level impacts, including the social return on investment (SROI), of the New American Cities program in six mid-sized cities across the United States.

PI: Jessica Santos, PhD

Research Team: Danielle Chun, MPP; Kristin King, MPPM; Marcia Bernbaum, PhD; Patricia Mello Ferrao, PhD; Pallavi Goel; Jonathan Jacob, MA; Nicole Restrepo; Maya Singh

Pathways of Inquiry Key:

 Health and Healthcare

 Community Health and SDOH

 Policies and Narratives

Boston Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement (MOIA) Mental Health Mini Grant Evaluation:



City of Boston
Immigrant Advancement

Through a connection with Ân H. Lê, JD, MSW, Advisory Council member, the Leah Zallman Center is partnering with the Boston Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement (MOIA) to co-fund and conduct a small-scale, participatory pilot evaluation to identify community-led, non-clinical mental health supports in immigrant communities, a critical immigrant health need. This study will evaluate the approaches and outcomes of seven projects by immigrant-led organizations in Boston. Findings will directly inform the Boston Mayor's Office as they set priorities and allocate resources to extend mental health supports to immigrant communities.

PI: Jessica Santos, PhD

Research Team: Danielle Chun, MPP; Anisha Erasani; Jonathan Jacob, MA; Maya Singh; Ana Vasconcelos

HEAL Winchendon Evaluation:



In 2019, HEAL Winchendon partners reached out to Dr. Santos for assistance developing a health equity intervention based partially on lessons learned from Empowerment Economics. The HEAL Winchendon coalition's work began formally in 2020, funded by the Massachusetts Health Policy Commission's Moving Massachusetts Upstream (MassUP) Investment Program, with Dr. Santos' team as evaluators. The HEAL Winchendon coalition prioritized the social determinants of health of economic empowerment, food access/justice, and social inclusion, in part because of social conflict around public assistance and racism that bubbled up in the region as new immigrants moved to the area. The Leah Zallman Center is conducting a developmental evaluation looking at how the growth of social, financial, and community assets improve the health and well-being of Winchendon residents and create a more welcoming and inclusive community for new migrants.

PI: Jessica Santos, PhD

Co-PI: Carolyn Fisher, PhD

Research Team: Danielle Chun, MPP; Jonathan Jacob, MA

Pathways of Inquiry Key:

Health and Healthcare

Community Health and SDOH

Policies and Narratives

Neighborhood Partnerships (NP) Participatory Policymaking Methods for Economic Justice:

Neighborhood Partnerships

Neighborhood Partnerships (NP) is a statewide social policy organization located in Portland, Oregon, focused on “creating opportunity for all Oregonians.” In 2019, NP partnered with Dr. Santos by recommending and partially funding the creation of a case study on urban Native approaches to Individual Development Accounts, which Dr. Santos’ team conducted with the Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA). NP also partnered with Dr. Santos and the Asset Funders Network to create the Oregon Economic Justice Roundtable, a table of philanthropic leaders and immigrant and BIPOC community leaders with a goal of disrupting traditional grantee relationships. The Leah Zallman Center is now partnering with NP to create and institutionalize a participatory policymaking advisory council that would elevate the concerns of immigrants and other marginalized groups in setting economic justice policy priorities in the state of Oregon.

PI: Jessica Santos, PhD

Research Team: Danielle Chun, MPP

No Kid Hungry Public Charge Grants Evaluation



ICH researchers Dr. Zallman and Sharon Touw, MPH, made significant contributions to our understanding of the harmful “chilling” effects of the Trump administration’s public charge rulings. Immigrant families experienced confusion, fear, and isolation, which led them to unenroll in or avoid seeking public benefits, even if it meant going without food or other basic needs. No Kid Hungry recognizes that it will take targeted, culturally relevant, and community-embedded strategies to “thaw” this effect in immigrant communities. Due to a connection from Amy Smith, MD, MPH, Advisory Council member, the Leah Zallman Center is partnering with No Kid Hungry to lift up lessons learned from 19 Latinx organizations across the United States working to get food on the table and increase public benefit access and enrollment in their communities.

PI: Jessica Santos, PhD

Co-PI: Sharon Touw, MPH

Research Team: Danielle Chun, MPP; Anisha Erasani; Nubia Goodwin, MPH; Maya Singh

Pathways of Inquiry Key:

Health and Healthcare

Community Health and SDOH

Policies and Narratives

“ A research partnership with the Institute for Community Health on our New American Cities project allows us to evaluate the refugee and immigrant employment landscape to learn how we can best serve our clients through community health, belonging, economic empowerment, and supporting career pathways that allow them to not just survive, but really to thrive.

- **Krish O'Mara Vignarajah**, President and CEO, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service



Networks

The Power of Networks

The Leah Zallman Center sees network building and network weaving as organic and essential steps in high quality, participatory research. This year, Leah Zallman Center leadership and staff held 1:1s, attended local and national conferences and events, and engaged regularly in exploratory, relational, no-strings-attached conversations with partners for the primary purpose of listening. These dialogues informed the Center’s research agenda as well as our organizational priorities (see Capacity and Learning p 20). In Fall 2021, the Leah Zallman Center formed an advisory council to advise the Center’s start-up phase and ensure our decision-making and priorities are informed by a wide range of perspectives.

As a new Center, we are working to establish and maintain meaningful and equitable relationships that foster mutual learning and action. Our partners come from a wide range of social domains in Massachusetts and nationally. While we aspire to work with partners in each of the domains listed below, we also put immense value on the nature and quality of these relationships. The chart below provides a snapshot of the different types of community and partner engagement that we prioritized in the Center’s first year.

	Exploratory 1:1s and open relational conversations	Knowledge exchange for a specific purpose, including designing a study	Participated in research/secondary partner	Co-designed/developed study/primary partner	Dissemination, event, and/or action	Advisory council
Researcher or research organization	X	X		X		X
Healthcare provider or organization	X	X	X	X		X
Organization led by and central to immigrant community	X		X			X
Organization that provides services to immigrants	X	X	X	X	X	X
Employer/private sector leader	X	X	X			
Funder	X	X	X		X	
Advocate and/or community organizer	X		X		X	X
Policymaker/government	X	X	X	X		X

Advisory Council

To advise the Center's start-up phase and ensure our decision-making and priorities are informed by a wide range of perspectives, the Leah Zallman Center formed an advisory council comprising leaders in the immigrant community and healthcare and close connections of Dr. Zallman.

Advisory council roles for Center start-up:

- Share key research questions and priorities coming from immigrant communities across Massachusetts with the Leah Zallman Center
- Advise or co-develop research agenda and specific studies
- Disseminate and translate findings to policymakers, practitioners, and community members
- Grow the Leah Zallman Center network



Cristina Aguilera Sandoval, MPA
Chair, Leah Zallman Center Advisory Council; Social Impact and Strategy Consultant



Marcia Bernbaum, PhD
Qualitative Research



Ayatt Elawad, MPH
Director, Health Equity, ACEDONE



Paul L. Geltman, MD, MPH
Chair, ICH Board of Directors; Chief Medical Officer, Upham's Corner Health Center



María Rosario González Albuixech, MSPS
Director, Communications and Immigrant Health, Health Care For All



Diya Kallivayalil, PhD
Director, Training, Victims of Violence Program, Cambridge Health Alliance



Sarah Kimball, MD
Director, Boston Medical Center's Immigrant and Refugee Health Center



Ân H. Lê, JD, MSW
Senior Policy Advisor, Boston Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement



Lenita Reason
Executive Director, Brazilian Worker Center



Amy Smith, MD, MPH
Medical Director, Ambulatory Asynchronous Care and Primary Care Physician, Cambridge Health Alliance



Luiza Souza
Program Director, Massachusetts Immigrant Collaborative



Capacity and Learning

Building on Strong Foundations

The Leah Zallman Center is working to build internal and external capacity as we create and hold space for research that is grounded in immigrant justice, economic justice, and health justice.

Field-Building for Non-Exploitative Research

We seek to cultivate a deep knowledge base in participatory methodologies and become recognized nationally for how we do our work, in addition to the impact of our research. Dr. Zallman and Dr. Santos both engaged immigrant leaders and community-based organizations as thought partners and co-researchers in different ways throughout their careers, demonstrating the value of participatory methods in high quality research. Led by Dr. Santos, the Empowerment Economics research portfolio is nationally recognized for its approach in centering BIPOC leaders and voices and creating equitable power dynamics in research and policy. ICH is also well-regarded and known for its longstanding community-engaged approach to public health research.

We acknowledge that it will take time, ongoing learning, and culture change to establish non-exploitative, anti-assimilationist, and anti-racist norms within our organization. Ethically, the Leah Zallman Center will proceed at the speed of trust in developing equitable partnerships to strengthen the participatory process and become a leader in the field.

“*The goals of this Center to grow a pipeline of immigrant scholars and advance immigrant, economic, and health justice are very important to me as an immigrant and working in this field... What affects immigrants affects all Americans. We cannot take care of one group and not take care of another, because we all impact each other. And the fact that immigrants are more likely to be essential to our economic and physical well-being really drives the point home that the kinds of community participatory research we need needs to push that narrative... Accessing that research, generating narratives of immigrant essential workers, about immigrants' health, about their impact on American lives – please, let's get that out there.*

- **Denzil Mohammed**, Director,
The Immigrant Learning Center's Public Education Institute

Internal Learning Systems

This year, we built on ICH's professional organizational infrastructure and began to experiment with participatory decision-making processes to establish a basis for equity and best practices at the Center. We seek to establish a learning lab-styled organization where partners, staff, summer interns, post-docs, and visiting fellows can contribute their ideas and shape the direction of our Center.

The following are examples of structured processes that we are designing or considering with input from ICH staff, the Board of Directors, the Advisory Council, interns, and other experts:

- Staff allocation to LZC projects according to personal and professional positionality to maximize congruence by race, ethnicity, language, and/or geographic background and to center and grow immigrant researchers whenever possible;
- Strategic decision-making process for prioritizing research studies that will have a maximum impact on immigrant health and well-being;
- Advisory council make-up based on personal and professional positionality including areas of expertise in health, immigration, policy, lived experience, and more;
- Accountability and transparency systems including quarterly internal reporting to advisory council members and annual external reports for the public;
- Commitment to hiring immigrant scholars at all levels;
- Commitment to equitable partnerships with co-researchers, including sharing or raising resources so that immigrant participants, leaders, and co-researchers are equitably compensated; and
- Contracting with, purchasing from, and/or supporting immigrant-led or other BIPOC-led businesses in Massachusetts whenever possible.

Training and Technical Assistance

We seek to strengthen the capacity of researchers and practitioners to conduct high quality, immigrant-centered, social science studies and evaluations in their own work. We engage with all partners from a capacity-building perspective and provide training and/or technical assistance to external organizations to strengthen their own research capacity. This indirectly contributes to higher quality healthcare, social programs, and community-led studies and projects to improve immigrant health.

Immigrant Scholar Internship Program

This summer, we piloted a new cohort-based model to engage students at different stages in their education in immigrant health research.

The Leah Zallman Center [Immigrant Scholar Internship Program \(ISIP\)](#) is designed to offer immigrant scholars the opportunity to participate in Leah Zallman Center studies and inform the direction of the Center. We aim to fill three paid rotating slots on a semi-annual basis (summer and fall/spring) so that we have a consistent cohort of bachelor's or associate's, master's, and doctoral students working together at the Center. We work closely with interns to provide opportunities to develop their career and research interests through mentorship, supervision, and meaningful project work. This program is generously funded by private donations to the Leah Zallman Center.



Anisha Erasani, BS '22
Boston University



Jonathan Jacob, PhD '26
Brandeis University



Maya Singh, MPP '23
Brandeis University

“The best part of this internship has been the degree of trust and autonomy granted to me. The LZC staff not only try their best to accommodate project work to fit my research interests, but also trust that I will produce a quality end product. As an intern, I felt like my thoughts and inputs were valued by team members.

- **Jonathan Jacob**, MA, PhD '26

“Working at the Leah Zallman Center gave me invaluable experience to develop my research skills. A major highlight was the chance to work alongside colleagues passionate about driving equitable solutions centering immigrant well-being and economic security.

- **Maya Singh**, MPP '23



Impact

Impact

Our bottom line - the primary reason we exist as a Center - is to make a significant impact on the health and well-being of immigrants and communities in Massachusetts and across the United States by advancing immigrant justice, economic justice, and health justice. In this first year, in addition to developing the core strength and internal processes required to produce high quality research far into the future, we worked thoughtfully and strategically with partners to co-develop and share a clear and consistent vision for the Center that is centered on impact.

[This 4-minute video](#) summarizes the significance of the Leah Zallman Center for Immigrant Health Research as a Center that honors the legacy of Dr. Leah Zallman in advancing immigrant health and charts a course for community-engaged research going forward. Dr. Zallman was an incredible leader whose research transformed the way people view immigrants. Among other contributions, she provided evidence for the crucial role that immigrants play in the healthcare workforce and demonstrated for the first time that immigrants subsidize the healthcare of Americans. As our research moves forward, we aspire to and are poised to achieve a similar level of impact.

The Leah Zallman Center for Immigrant Health Research was formally and publicly inaugurated on February 9, 2022, in Malden, Massachusetts, with an in-person ribbon-cutting ceremony held at the Institute for Community Health (ICH). Despite COVID-19 and a last-minute reschedule due to a winter storm, we brought together ICH and Cambridge Health Alliance staff and leadership, friends and family of Dr. Leah Zallman, policy leaders, and advisory council members to mark the moment. Together, we honored and remembered the significant impact that Dr. Zallman had in her career, and celebrated the fact that her legacy will live on in the Center. The following week, on February 15, 2022, we hosted a virtual launch, “Hope in Power,” that was attended by over 200 people from across the United States.

Video Gallery:



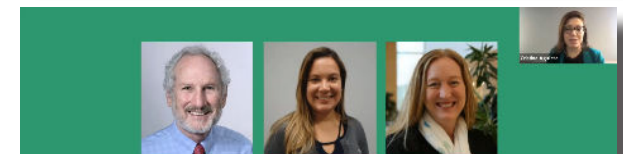
[Watch our launch video](#)



[Watch our ribbon cutting](#)



[Watch Sen. Markey's Remarks](#)



[The Inspiration and Vision for the Leah Zallman Center](#)

[Watch "Hope in Power"](#)

Hope in Power



HOPE IN POWER
WITH GUEST SPEAKERS:

Sam Hyun,
Former Chairperson for the Massachusetts Asian American Commission and Current Activist

Krish O'Mara Vignarajah,
President & CEO of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

Denzil Mohammed,
Director of The Immigrant Learning Center's Public Education Institute

“ I am the son of Korean immigrants... One of my most vivid memories is when I asked my mom to sign me up for Little League. I begged my mom, who somehow, some way, found a way to sign me up. She did this in spite of her broken English. And she did this despite her anxieties. She did this because of her love for me... that superseded her fears and anxieties. This is what so many immigrant parents do... That’s why the Center and the work that is done here is so critical. Research to truly understand the communities... is an absolute necessity.

- **Sam Hyun,** Activist and former Chairperson for the Massachusetts Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

“ “I have hope in ensuring that the voices of immigrants are being heard and considered.”

- **Ayatt Elwad,** Director of Health Equity, African Community Economic Development of New England and Member, Equity Now and Beyond Coalition

“ I am so pleased that this Center will honor the legacy of the late Dr. Leah Zallman. I congratulate the outstanding researcher and educator Dr. Jessica Santos... for bringing this vision to life and incorporating a much-needed emphasis on immigrant justice, health justice, and economic justice. The Center is poised to change and advance the way we think about immigrant health throughout the community... Massachusetts is stronger, more prosperous, healthier, and more beautiful because of our immigrant community.

- **Sen. Ed Markey,** United States Senator for Massachusetts

HOPE

by Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer

Hope has holes in its pockets. It leaves little crumb trails so that we, when anxious, can follow it. Hope's secret: it doesn't know the destination — it knows only that all roads begin with one foot in front of the other.

Contact us

Visit our website:

www.immigranthealth.org



A center at



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The work of the Leah Zallman Center is made possible by generous private donations that support our unique and intensive model of community-engaged, participatory research. Join us in centering the perspectives and knowledge of immigrants and growing future leaders.

Donate today!

www.icommunityhealth.org/donate





**LEAH
ZALLMAN
CENTER**
FOR IMMIGRANT
HEALTH RESEARCH