

Resource Guide for International Student & Scholars with Families

We know that transitioning to life in the United States with a family can be challenging. Our office has collected the following resources to support you and your family's adjustment.

Finding Your Community

One of the many beautiful things about Worcester is the diversity of our city. We have a plethora of community organizations which provide a wonderful opportunity to build community with people from your home country or region.

[African Community Education](#) (ACE)

As articulated on their website, "the mission of African Community Education is to assist African refugee and immigrant youth and families in achieving educational and social stability through access to academic support, leadership development, cultural expression, and community outreach." ACE offers a variety of after school, Saturday, and family educational programming.

[Southeast Asian Coalition of Central Massachusetts](#) (SEACMA)

The Southeast Asian Coalition of Central Massachusetts (SEACMA) is an organization that works to "support Southeast Asian immigrants, refugees and long-term residents to meet their basic needs, overcome language and cultural barriers, successfully integrate into mainstream society, and become self-sustainable contributors in economic, social, and civic life." SEACMA provides a variety of educational programs and general support including English Second Language courses, biliteracy programming, a cultural urban gardening program, and more.

[Crocodile River Music](#)

Crocodile River Music is an organization that seeks to bring African music, art and dance to New England through performances and their community connections outreach program.

[Worcester Cultural Coalition](#)

The Worcester Cultural Coalition is an organization that seeks "to draw on Worcester's rich and diverse cultural assets to foster economic revitalization, support active, creative engagement for all and promote a strong cultural identity for Greater Worcester." They are made up of a variety of member organizations across the Greater Worcester Area that offer a wide variety of programming.

[Worcester Caribbean American Carnival Association](#)

The Worcester Caribbean American Carnival Association "is dedicated to the empowerment of people, preservation of Caribbean tradition and respect for cultural diversity." Among other things, they are responsible for putting on the annual Worcester Caribbean American Carnival.

English Resources

Below you will find a list of resources for a variety of English proficiency levels that allow you to practice English and learn at your own pace. Some resources offer structured instruction while others offer opportunities for more casual practice.

[Worcester Public Library](#)

The Worcester Public Library has two opportunities to practice English. The first is their English Conversation Circle every Tuesday from 5:30-7 PM in the Banx Room at the Main Library. The second is their Language Exchange Café every Saturday morning from 9:30-10:30 AM in the Food for Thought Café at the Main Library. Each provide the opportunity for you to practice English with other learners and native English speakers.

[Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester](#)

The Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester is an English language tutoring program in Worcester. They offer year-round English to Speakers of Other Languages courses and one-on-one tutoring opportunities.

[Training Resources of America](#) – English proficiency and basic adult education courses

The Training Resources of America offers a variety of adult basic education, English to Speakers of Other Languages, and employment preparation programs.

Childcare & Education Resources

[Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care – Guide to Choosing Child Care](#)

[YWCA of Central Massachusetts](#)

The YWCA states, “For more than 125 years, the YWCA Central Massachusetts has served as a life-long positive force for women and girls, their families and communities. By leveraging the reach, power and passion of our members and supporters, we have created lasting change.” The YWCA program offerings include, childcare, fitness programs and support for victims of domestic violence.

[Seven Hills Resource Catalog](#)

As stated on their Homepage, “Seven Hills Foundation provides exceptional integrated clinical, educational and community-based supports to children and adults with disabilities and significant life challenges”. They offer a vast array of programs and services that provide comprehensive support to families.

[Latino Education Institute](#)

The Latino Education Institute is a program put on by Worcester State University that seeks to “improve the academic achievement and well-being of Latino students (grades K-16) and their families.” The Latino Education Institute offers a variety of programming in education, literacy, leadership, civic engagement, health, and violence prevention.

Health Insurance Resources

Are you and your family in need of a health insurance plan? A great place to start is by visiting [Clark University’s International Center website](#) to learn more about health insurance in the United States. Below you can find more resources to assist you in finding the health insurance plan right for you and your family!

- [Health Insurance Plans: Which Plan is Right for You?](#) - a guide published by the Massachusetts State Government that provides an overview of the types of health insurance plans, ways to share the costs, and how to get a health insurance plan
- [Visit International Health Insurance](#) - offers individual and group health insurance plans for students, scholars, and families; visiting faculty and teachers; J-1 visa exchange visitor programs; vacation/holiday and business travel; and any travel outside of your home country.

Local Sports, Recreation, Cultural, and Arts Activities

Below are family-friendly activities in the Greater Worcester area waiting for you and your family to explore!

- [Creative Hub Worcester](#) - offers a variety of arts programming for youth and communities
- [EcoTarium](#) - a museum of science and nature in Worcester
- [Tower Hill Botanic Garden](#) - 171 acres of beautiful gardens and walking trails
- [Mass Audubon Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary](#) - a former farmstead that offers spectacular scenery and supports abundant wildlife throughout woodlands, wetlands, and meadows
- [Regional Environmental Council](#) - offer farmer's markets across the city and educational programming for youth to learn urban gardening skills
- [YMCA – Central Community Branch](#) - recreational facilities, indoor pool, and programming for children
- [Ritmos Dance Studio](#) - a dance studio specializing in Latin American dance for people aged 4-20
- [Old Sturbridge Village](#) - a recreated 1830s rural New England town

International Food Markets

Worcester has a wide variety of international food markets where you and your family can shop and buy foods from home.

- Asian Supermarket - 50 Mill St Worcester, MA 01603
- Kalamos Greek & Mediterranean Market - 118 A June St Worcester, MA 01602
- Patel Brothers - 504 Boston Turnpike Shrewsbury, MA 01545
- Binh An Market - 64 Green St Worcester, MA 01604
- Mekong Market - 747 Main St Worcester, MA 01610

Food Assistance

If you or your family need assistance in mitigating the high cost of groceries, Clark University and Worcester have resources to support our international students and scholars with families.

- [Jeremiah's Inn](#)-Clark works with this local organization to provide food assistance to Clark community members
- Swipe Out Hunger - a program created to support Clark students who are experiencing food insecurity. Under the program, a set number of meal swipes are deposited into a student's Clark ID account, free of charge; updates on the Swipe Out Hunger program can be found [here](#)

- [Woo Fridge](#) – a network of fridges across the city that provide food-insecure residents with fresh, healthy food of their choosing
- [Worcester County Food Bank](#) - a food bank located in Worcester that provides donated food to neighbors who need it
- [WIC \(Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program\)](#) -Your family may be eligible to apply for WIC (Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program). You do not need to be a US citizen to qualify for this program and participating will not have negative immigration consequences.

Driving in the United States

Do you or a family member need to obtain a Massachusetts driver's license to legally drive in the United States? A great place to start is by visiting [Clark University's International Center website](#) to learn more about obtaining a driver's license. Once you have reviewed our website, you can find out more information at the [Registry for Motor Vehicles website](#).

Hospitals in Worcester

If you or a family member faces a medical emergency, below are the top hospitals in Worcester!

- Saint Vincent Hospital – located at 123 Summer St, Worcester, MA 01608
- UMass Memorial Medical Center – located at 55 N Lake Ave, Worcester, MA 01655