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NEWS

Self-Described "Opportunity Optimizer" With History of DEI-Style Jobs Set to Head Maine's Office of New Americans



BY [SEAMUS OTHOT](#) — JULY 1, 2026 — UPDATED: JULY 1,

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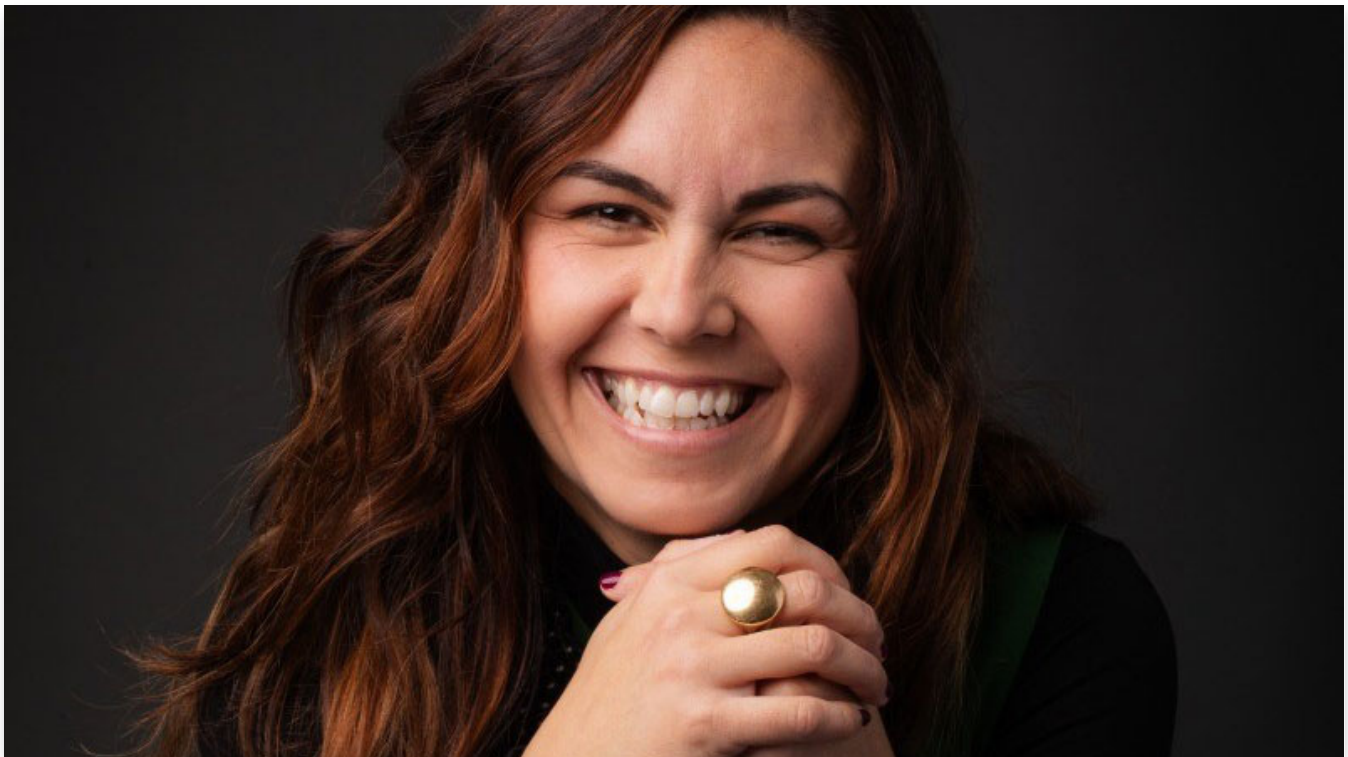


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Maine's [Office of New Americans](#) (ONA) announced that self-described "opportunity optimizer" and longtime Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and migrant services worker Julia Trujillo Luengo will serve as its new permanent director starting on July 30.

Luengo will be the office's first permanent director since Tarlan Ahmadvov resigned from the position in disgrace after just three months in 2025 after The Maine Wire exposed his history of anti-Armenian social media screeds.

[RELATED: [Ahmadvov Out: Janet Mills' Migrant Office Director Disappears from State Website Amid Maine Wire Investigation...](#)]

"The Maine Office of New Americans has announced a new permanent Director. ONA (Office of New Americans) only exists in the Governor's Policy Office; it is not written into statute. It can go away and cease to exist with a Republican Governor and a Republican legislature," said former State Representative and current State Senate Republican Candidate John Andrews in a [Facebook](#) post on the announcement.

"On the heels of today's SCOTUS decision on birthright citizenship, it is important to put the puzzle pieces together. In Maine we must understand the intersection of unvetted immigration and the cost in tax-funded resources. We must understand how executive policy offices funnel taxpayer dollars to non-profits and NGOs that are loyal to Progressive ideology. These non-profits and NGOs profit from their loyalty through jobs, salaries and access to power," he added.

**John Andrews for ME State Senate**

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The Maine Office of New Americans has announced a new permanent Director. ONA (Office of New Americans) only exists in the Governor's Policy Office; it is not written into statute. It can go away and cease to exist with a Republican Governor and a Republican legislature.

It won't go away with Hannah Pingree who ran Governor Mill's Policy Office where ONA lives. It will expand.

It won't go away with Rick Bennett who is on the ONA Advisory Board with long time Great Works Internet colleague Kerem Durdag.

ONA won't go away with Democrats continuing to control both chambers of the legislature. If Democrats maintain legislative control, they will put the ONA into statute and fully fund it. That infinitely increases the problem and expands the gift.

On the heels of today's SCOTUS decision on birthright citizenship, it is important to put the puzzle pieces together. In Maine we must understand the intersection of unvetted immigration and the cost in tax funded resources. We must understand how executive policy offices funnel taxpayer dollars to non-profits and NGOs that are loyal to Progressive ideology. These non-profits and NGOs profit from their loyalty through jobs, salaries and access to power.

We must stop the fraud and gift!

The government cannot give something to someone without first taking it from someone else. That someone else is you and your tax dollars.

Vote accordingly.

Maine Office of New Americans Announces New Director

The Office of New Americans (ONA) announced today that Jul will serve as its next permanent Director, effective July 30.

- Kerem Durdag, GWI
- Orlina Boteva, University of Maine
- Jonathan Baty, MaineHealth
- Ben Conniff, Luke's Lobster

Senate President's Appointments

- **Georges Budagu Makoko, Co-chair**, Amjambo Africa and Serenity Residential Care
- Mufalo Chitam, Maine Immigrant Rights Coalition
- Heremenegildo Paulo, South Portland School Department
- Barbara Stoddard, New Mainer Resource Center/Portland Adult Education
- Rick Bennett, Senate District 18

The ONA is part of Maine's Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future (GOPIF)—headed for years by Democratic gubernatorial nominee Hannah Pingree—and works to help resettle foreign nationals in the state and help them secure Maine jobs.

[RELATED: [What to Know About Maine's "Office of New Americans" ...](#)]

The GOPIF highlighted Luengo's extensive experience with immigrant services and her current role as co-chair of the ONA's advisory council.

Luengo was born and grew up in the Canary Islands before immigrating to Maine, and holds a master's degree in economic development from the Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and a bachelor's degree in international studies from the University of Southern Maine.



Image of Luengo from Maine's Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future

According to her [LinkedIn page](#), Luengo is an "opportunity optimizer" and currently works as the Director of Strategic Planning Management for UMaine.

She also had a hand in Maine's economic situation under Gov. Mills when she served from January 2020 to December 2023 as the State of Maine Economic Development Plan Implementation Director.

Prior to that, from 2017 to 2022, she held a similar position for the city of Portland, as the director of its Office of Economic Opportunity.

In the early 2010s, the furthest back her LinkedIn work history goes, she worked for Maine's DEI-style programs, first as the director of the Maine Migrant Education Program from 2010 to 2013, then as the director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs from 2013 to 2017.

In the latter role, she served "the needs of Maine's ethnic, racial, and linguistic minorities."

Her self-attested skills include cultural diversity, cross-cultural communication skills, civil rights law, and refugee resettlement, among other things.

She also served as a volunteer director for the Rockland-based Star of Hope nonprofit as of its most recent 2024 [Form 990 tax filing](#). According to ProPublica, the organization maintains \$46,286,638 in assets. The nonprofit manages the Star of Hope building in Vinalhaven.

Luengo also previously [served](#) on the board of directors for the Great Schools Partnership nonprofit that promotes "educational equity."

She has prior experience working with her disgraced predecessor, Ahmadov. In 2019, Luengo and Ahmadov both attended an immigrant workforce event hosted by immigrant-resettlement organization Catholic Charities of Maine.

**Catholic Charities Maine**

May 2, 2019 · 🌐

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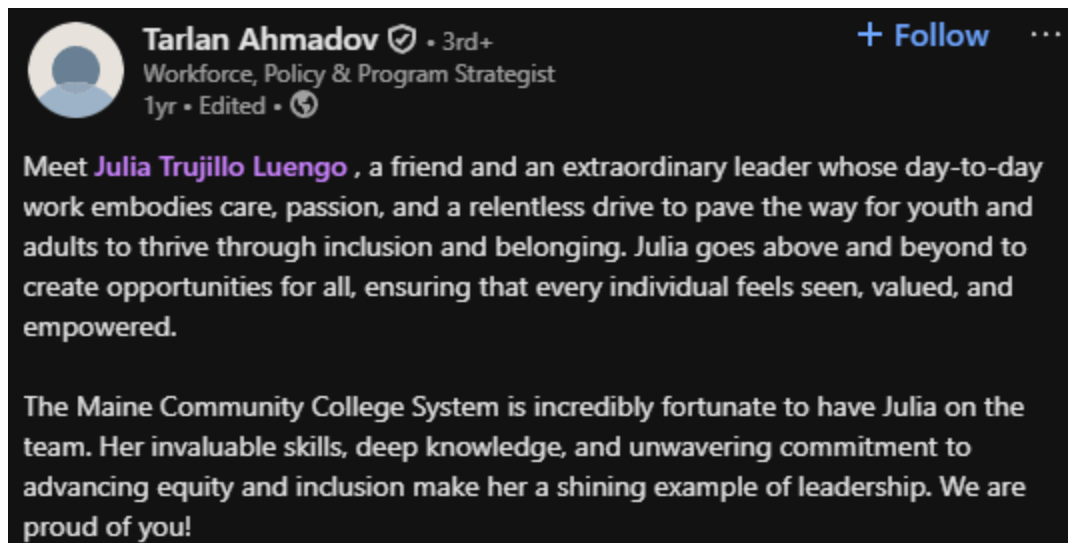
Excited to kick off our workshop: Maine's Untapped Talent: Our Immigrant Workforce in partnership with the City of Portland and the Chamber this morning at USM. Pictured (L to R) Julia Trujillo Luengo, Office of Economic Opportunity, Director City of Portland, Quincy Hentzel, President & CEO Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce with CCM's CCO Judy Katzel and Tarlan Ahmadov, State Refugee Coordinator for our Office of Maine Refugee Services.



She also [appeared](#) with him at the 2023 Inclusion Maine Conference in Portland.



"Meet Julia Trujillo Luengo, a friend and an extraordinary leader whose day-to-day work embodies care, passion, and a relentless drive to pave the way for youth and adults to thrive through inclusion and belonging. Julia goes above and beyond to create opportunities for all, ensuring that every individual feels seen, valued, and empowered," said Ahmadov.



Unlike Ahmadov, Luengo does not appear to have any controversial social media posts in her past.

She is taking over the ONA directorship from Acting Director Erica Carley Harris, who has served in the position since Ahmadov's resignation.

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Seamus Othot

Seamus Othot is a reporter for The Maine Wire. He grew up in New Hampshire, and graduated from The Thomas More College of Liberal Arts, where he was able to spend his time reading the great works of Western Civilization. He can be reached at seamus@themainewire.com or (401) 216-9160.

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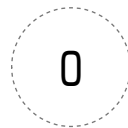
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