

**"Today, we stand together to raise our voice for immigrants who need English language as a key to open a new life in America,"** said **Huong Ha** in the opening of her speech at a music festival in Jamaica Plain earlier this month. Slight in stature but commanding in message, Huong explained that having this key was critical to her own success, and urged the crowd to ensure other immigrants like her have the same chance.

A medical doctor in Vietnam, Huong came to the U.S. with her two children in 2012 in order to reunite with other members of her family. She lived "depressed and unhappy" until starting English classes at Asian American Civic Association. Through hard work and the support of staff, she soon transitioned into a career in the medical field, and now visits both Vietnamese and English speaking patients.

But, as she noted, **"I didn't want to stop my future there."** Soon thereafter she dove into community advocacy efforts in support of affordable ESOL classes with ENB's ESOL Student Leadership Initiative.

Her reason is simple: **"I hope that immigrants like me can be more confident to get a good job and begin a new life in America."**