

POWR Post

December 2010 (Vol. 1, Issue 3)

The POWR Post is a monthly e-newsletter that shares information and success stories related to the USCCB/MRS Parishes Organized to Welcome Refugees program. Do you have any news items, stories or pictures relating to your parish program that you would like to share? If so, please contact Daniel Sturm at dsturm@usccb.org. Merry Christmas!
~Daniel Sturm, MRS Special Projects Manager

Media

Refugee Storytellers (Nashville, Tenn.)

With the funding for Nashville Public Television's "Refugee and Immigrant Storyteller" project, our clients and work will continue to receive a good bit of positive media attention. The project will provide training for 15 staff and clients to become videographers, telling stories of life in America from a refugee perspective. At the end, we get to keep the two video cameras, as well as the laptop computer and video editing software. This will give us an on-going means of creating videos that highlight our clients' successes in presentations, on our website, and on the Internet.

Kellye Branson, kbranson@cctenn.org

Media Buzz Increases Call Volume (San Antonio, Texas)

In a segment called "Joy in Our Town," Channel KHCE TV 23 highlighted San Antonio's POWR initiative. The show discussed our need to connect every refugee family with a local parish, and with the church and community volunteers, who help make the resettlement process run smoother. The segment ran for five days over the Thanksgiving holiday. After that, calls increased significantly from people wishing to get involved.

Paula Walker, pwalker@ccaosa.org



POWR Public Service Announcement (Jacksonville, Florida)

Queen of Peace Catholic Radio, a local Jacksonville station, invited POWR representatives to do the "Live at 5:00" program that runs Friday evenings and has a listenership 5,000 people. An encore presentation of the program ran the following Saturday to an audience of 1,500 people. A podcast of the program is available for those interested. A public service announcement for POWR ran daily in November, as well. All feedback on POWR has been positive to date.

Shannon Cutler, scutler@ccbjax.org

Parish Outreach

The Three Wise Men Appeal (Portland, Maine)

We designed and distributed 5,300 refugee information inserts to be included in area parish bulletins. Using the Christmas theme of the Three Wise Men, this insert invites parishioners to contribute to the refugee program in three ways. The first way would be a Gift of Time—by volunteering to help a newly arrived person or family. The second would be a Gift of Talent—by becoming an English tutor for a new refugee. And the third would be a Gift of Treasure—by donating gently-used items, gift cards or money to assist the new refugees and their families.

Bonnie Bagley, bbagley@ccmaine.org

Parish Outreach Gathers Support (Jacksonville, Florida)

San Juan Del Rio hosted a POWR information session for roughly 25 parishioners. Our team presented and answered questions from the audience. Two refugees from the parish spoke of their experiences of coming to America and how important the help of the local population is to refugee success and happiness. Attendants discussed ways to include refugees in projects such as Habitat for Humanity and Parish Clean-ups. The session generated thirteen volunteers for job training, mentoring, transportation, and professional clothes shopping.

Shannon Cutler, scutler@ccbjax.org

Volunteer Management

Ambassador Program Attracts Donors (Indianapolis, Indiana)

The agency collected \$5,000 in December. This represents one ambassador for next year! 11 of the 12 ambassadors have met clients at the airport, watched their children during ESL classes, or otherwise helped our clients. The feedback is amazing. In March the students will be on a local TV station with 80,000 viewers to talk about their efforts. Stay tuned.

Gabrielle Campo, gcampo@archindy.org

New Tapestry with New Database (San Antonio, Texas)

The volunteer data base, eTapestry, which will streamline all aspects of tracking volunteers and donations, has been finalized and will soon be implemented in the refugee resettlement program.

Paula Walker, pwalker@ccaosa.org

Potluck Mentoring Party (Des Moines, Iowa)

Our potluck-style quarterly "Welcome" party drew 100 refugees, volunteers and staff. It gave the volunteers an opportunity to meet the families they had assisted through donations and apartment set-ups. Children were entertained with craft and face painting activities. A few volunteers spoke at the event, as did one recent Iraqi refugee.

Megan Thibodeau, mthibodeau@dmdiocese.org

Volunteer Handbook (Amarillo, Texas)

We have created a new volunteer handbook which I would like to share with the POWR network.

<http://www.cfsama.com/images/stories/RRS/cyoa.pdf>

Dena Dyer, ddyer@cfsama.com

Work

Workforce Development Newsletter (Brooklyn, New York)

Catholic Charities Brooklyn has drafted a flyer promoting the idea of hiring refugees. "Our refugee workforce comes from all around the world, and has unique experiences and talents, ranging from artisans from Tibet to Russian engineers."

A pdf copy of this flyer is attached
Cristina Grisham, cgrisham@ccbq.org



Graduate Student Caveat (Indianapolis, Indiana)

An ambassador should be a current high school or college student, and not a person who recently graduated from college. They must make a regularly scheduled time commitment.

Gabrielle Campo, gcampo@archindy.org

Old Media Works, Too! (Richmond, Virginia)

Utilizing traditional methods of recruitment such as fliers/signs can revitalize a program that is heavily dependent on online recruitment tools. Plus, it is a way for the agency's name to get out to folks who may not be interested in volunteering, but who appreciate the work your organization does—you may find a potential donor!

Marilyn Breslow, marilyn.breslow@cccova.org

Marketing Resources

BRYCS Refugee 101 Page

Check out BRYCS' Refugee 101 page for background information on resettlement, which can be shared with the media.

<http://www.brycs.org/aboutRefugees/refugee101.cfm>

International Rescue Committee Media Handbook

Developed by the IRC, this media handbook will help you with writing press releases and letters to the editor, and with pitching a good story. It also provides tips and advice on using social networking to help promote your cause.

<http://tinyurl.com/2ekqoju>

International Rescue Committee Media Relations Presentation

Melissa Winkler of the IRC discussed guidelines on dealing with the media, which included understanding how the media works, how to conduct an interview, how to generate news coverage and how to respond to negative news.

<http://tinyurl.com/2fnpn2b>

Project SOAR: Email and Electronic Communication

What is the best way to write an email that will get your point across to your donors, staff, board members, clients, and media contacts? This briefing will shed light on all of these issues.

<http://tinyurl.com/2ccsnqx>

USCCB/MRS Members Only Website

Interacting with the media can be an intimidating process. However, the media can be a key player in generating community involvement and support. Check out USCCB/MRS' media relations materials!

<http://www.usccb.org/mrs/diows/media.shtml>

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