



## WORK: A CURE FOR TRAUMA

By Daniel Sturm, RefugeeWorks

When Ziad Turkey walked onto the stage of a Baltimore theater to discuss his new documentary, *Hometown Baghdad*, the Iraqi refugee didn't talk about the lighting or cast, as one might expect from a film director. Instead, he began by thanking the International Rescue Committee Employment Coordinator, Holly Leon-Lierman, for helping him find a job that pays the bills.

According to Richard Mollica, the author of *Healing Invisible Wounds* (Harcourt, 2006), finding work is the single most important goal of individuals who have fled from war and trauma. Mollica, who directs the Harvard Program in Refugee Trauma at Massachusetts General Hospital, says he learned from interviews with thousands of refugees that traumatized people of all ages and cultural backgrounds were "extremely resilient when they were involved in work."

This newsletter focuses on the critical role employment specialists play in helping refugees heal through work. It highlights the different approaches to job development that are utilized by employment specialists, job developers, career counselors and employment advocates (a sometimes confusing variety of titles to describe essentially the same role). In this issue, you will learn about the Utah Refugee Employment and Community Center's recipe for success. Also included are interviews with Idaho's refugee state coordinator about a new inter-agency employment program, and essays by job developers from around the county. Last, but not least, please make sure to take a look at RefugeeWorks 2010 Training Calendar. We hope to see you at a training workshop next year!



**E-Mail:** [dsturm@refugeeworks.org](mailto:dsturm@refugeeworks.org)

### CONSULTANT'S CORNER: Jonathan Lucus



Hello, everyone. The other day, I had the opportunity to visit the Potomac Job Corps program in Arlington, Va. This picturesque campus sits along the Potomac River, hosts over 500 students.

These students have the opportunity to receive their high school equivalency diploma and learn a valuable trade. Young adults enter the program with the hope of a second chance for a good future, and they leave the program well equipped to be successful in the world.

As job developers, we try to set up the same opportunities for our clients. The

best employment services programs try to combine pre-employment training with job development. It is not good enough anymore to place individuals in jobs without giving them the knowledge they need in order to succeed. This is especially true during these hard economic times. I encourage everyone to look into Job Corps or similar training programs for your clients, to supplement the training that your own agencies are able to offer. Also, I hope you take the time to read through this issue of the *Employment Quarterly*, as we uncover the initiatives, ingenuity and stellar work of job developers from around the country.

**Jonathan Lucus**  
RefugeeWorks

#### FRONT PAGE 1

*Work: A Cure for Trauma*

*Consultant's Corner*



#### JOB DEVELOPERS 2-11

*What Makes a Good Job Developer?*

*Just Like Dating*

*Social Networking*

*Positive Momentum*

*Being Resourceful*

*Patience is a Virtue*

*On the Cutting Edge*

*Your Best Bet: Meeting With Employers*

*No Leaf Unturned*

*RefugeeWorks Training Calendar 2010*

*Interagency Resource Sharing: An Interview with Jan Reeves*

*A Recipe for Success*



# WHAT MAKES A GOOD JOB DEVELOPER?

By Daniel Sturm, RefugeeWorks

This issue is dedicated to recognizing the job developers and employment advocates who assist refugees in gaining self-sufficiency. We've invited them to share some thoughts about the essential characteristics of a good job developer in their own words, and reflect on the following questions: What strategies do you use to build relationships with new employers? What advice would you give to colleagues who've just recently entered the field? How do you avoid burn-out syndrome? Which aspects of your job do you like/dislike the most? Since more than 20 colleagues in the field offered their insights we've decided to make these reflections an ongoing theme, throughout the next several issues.



## Just Like Dating

By Lisa Swid, Job Developer, Jewish Family Service of San Diego, California

The most important advice I'd like to share is that colleagues should focus on one client at the time, and try not to think of all of them at once. This can cause huge headaches. I prioritize clients and group them according to certain employability factors. In any given week, I think of specific clients who may have a good shot at getting specific jobs, and focus on helping these individuals first.

I often compare job development with developing friendships, or even dating. It's almost never love at first sight. In my office I have a banner stating that it takes five contacts to make a sale. The mistake many job developers make in the beginning is to

oversell their clients' skills and backgrounds. This can backfire. The truth is almost always more convincing.

The number one job development strategy is networking. Statistics show that each person knows an average of 100 people. So I utilize my friends' networks as much as I can. I go to farmer's markets on Sundays and



approach vendors who speak other languages to see if they are currently hiring. That's where the hidden jobs are. There are so many small businesses. Cold calling pays off, as well, because many employers get inundated with online applications.

What I like most about this field is that it constantly stimulates my mind. This job is a good fit for me because I tend to get bored easily. It's just incredible how many different faces and cultures you see in a short period of time.

For stress relief, I do kickboxing three times a week and punch the crap out of the bag. I also find it important to have friends outside of my field. My husband is a scientist, so I enjoy having conversations with him and other friends who have little to do with refugee employment.

My most unusual job placement was for a Karen man from Burma. I had first thought of helping him find a factory-type of job, until he told me in passing that he was fixing bicycles for fellow Burmese refugees. Using Googlemaps to search for bicycle repair shops, I located a shop a stone's throw from his home. When I talked to the shop's owner, I didn't expect it to lead anywhere. My jaw just dropped when he showed an interest hiring my client on the spot. This goes to show that job placements are often just luck. Had my client not volunteered this bit of information about his expertise, I would have never been able to help him.

**E-Mail:** [lisas@jfssd.org](mailto:lisas@jfssd.org)  
**Web:** <http://www.jfssd.org>

## Social Networking

*By Michael Somorin, Program Manager, Lutheran Social Ministries of New Jersey, Burlington, NJ*

I cannot overemphasize the significance of social networking on an agency's job placement rates. I was impressed by an article in RefugeeWorks' Social Networking Newsletter, which drew from findings of an Annie E. Casey Foundation report (*RefugeeWorks* Issue #27). Applying the Casey Foundation's networking theory to my own work, I decided to identify key players in positions of power for networking.



Let me give you an example. After studying Wal-Mart's management structure, I realized that it wasn't sufficient to have a good relationship with the store manager alone. I needed to also network with the personnel and department managers. For that matter, even the assistant store manager sometimes has clout. I have learned that everyone is important. It's happened more than once that the personnel manager agreed to set up interviews with my clients, but the assistant store manager wasn't on board, therefore appointments had little value.

And this is where yet another player becomes important: Wal-Mart's regional marketing manager, whose hiring decisions trump the store manager's views. If the store manager complains that my clients speak little or no English, I am able to move on to my friends in the regional marketing office, to investigate opportunities that work around the store manager's objections. I wouldn't be anywhere today, had I not decided to build relationships with every single player involved in the often complicated hiring process.

It's also important to be honest with employers about your clients' language skills. You may be able to place a client with limited English proficiency by pretending that his or her English is good. But if he or she performs badly, the damage caused by this single placement will be greater than the benefits. Remember that you may want to place many more clients with the same employer. I advise clients with no English proficiency to leave the related fields on the application form blank, rather than lie. It's important to accompany such an application with phone calls to the people in power, explaining the situation. In such conversations, I proudly cite the case of a Burmese stocker, whose English was very limited but did the work of two Wal-Mart stockers.

How do I maintain a positive attitude? First of all, it's important to find ways to get your mind off the job (I go jogging three times a week). Also, don't ever get discouraged by an employer's rejection. One door may close, but another will open.

**E-Mail:** [osomorin@lsmnj.org](mailto:osomorin@lsmnj.org)  
**Web:** <http://www.lsmnj.org>

## Positive Momentum

*By Dennis Morgan, Employment and Training Coordinator, Catholic Charities Migration and Refugee Services, Cleveland, Ohio*

What I like most about my job is seeing people change as they become vested in their employment and the job begins to put some normalcy in their lives. Sometimes we forget how important work is in that process.

Each business is unique. I once placed four Somali Bantu men in a forge in Cleveland, which none of us had ever seen until



we drove up to apply. There was a big hammer, bigger than I had ever seen. Three stories tall. These four Bantu men let me watch how they were actually forging. To this day I can't believe what they did for \$10 an hour. They were poorly trained, but they

still understood 90% of the job within the first week.

Here's my advice for colleagues who've recently entered this field. You must read and study all the best practice material you can find. Each person has his or her own style and techniques, and yours will also be unique. You should first understand what others in your profession are doing, and then always be prepared to try something new. New strategies will help to open doors. Keeping lines of communication open with employers and responding to their needs are also vital. Many employers appreciate having someone to call who knows their employee base and can offer practical advice and support. They are a business, in the end, and this should never be forgotten.

The key to refugee employment is positive momentum. Things will go wrong, but keep going in a positive direction. I try not to overreact to difficulties or victories. The best we can hope is to find our clients jobs in an environment where the employees are happy to come to work.

**E-Mail:** [dlmorgan@clevelandcatholiccharities.org](mailto:dlmorgan@clevelandcatholiccharities.org)  
**Web:** <http://www.clevelandcatholiccharities.org>

## Being Resourceful

*By Fatuma Elmi, Refugee Services and Employment Program, Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, St. Paul*

Refugees are not always an easy sell. They often lack work experience, communication and language skills, and some don't know about dress codes. However, if you live in a state where there are food production companies, you won't have any problems placing your clients in their factories. Refugees are hard workers and will accept almost any conditions. Bearing this in mind, you also have to monitor the situation to prevent companies from abusing them.

As an employment counselor, you have to be creative and resourceful. Otherwise you won't be able to meet your job placement goals. I also rely on a select number of good

employers who are my friends. Sometimes they respond to my calls and let me know if they have an opening.

Recently, I have come up with a new job development strategy: I call my Somali contacts to see whether anyone needs help to care for either an elder parent, or for children, in their home. I train my clients as personal care assistance providers through a free PCA provider program. Next, I place a client with a person I know in a 16-to-20-hour temporary job for a few weeks. The client gains a U.S. work history. I then take him or her to a temporary job agency. It's a long shot. But most clients find decent employment after a couple of months. So far, this strategy has been working well.

I also advise clients to work as volunteers in order to gain experience. This is not an easy sell for traditional Somali women. However, after a few months without work they realize that the road to self-sufficiency isn't easy, and the \$250 they receive isn't enough to pay for housing, or to support their families at home.



What to do about burnout? Don't take your frustrations home, and be clear and honest with your clients. Their expectations are understandably high, given what they went through in the refugee camps. You will become addicted to this type of work after a while. This job is rewarding and you won't feel inclined to move to another position. When someone comes to hug you and thank you for what you did, you are hooked.

**E-Mail:** [Fatuma.Elmi@lssmn.org](mailto:Fatuma.Elmi@lssmn.org)  
**Web:** <http://www.lssmn.org/>

## Patience is a Virtue

*By Yulia Le Good, Employment Manager, Refugee Resettlement and Immigration Services of Atlanta, Georgia*

The advice I can give new job developers is to be patient with clients and encourage them to work in partnership with you. We should educate them more about American culture and dress codes. Sometimes you have to come up with creative solutions to place a single mother with five children or an illiterate person with few skills and no English. It is a very fast-paced job, and you have to be very organized and take notes on all of your activities. When I contact a new employer I make sure they know that RRISA is a nonprofit organization, we don't charge a fee for our services, we provide interpreters,



and our clients are all legally in the country and have clean backgrounds.

There are some strategies and techniques that you might want to use when you feel overwhelmed and burnt out. First, learn to set boundaries.

Do not work during your personal time and do not give out your cell phone number to clients. Walking is helpful. Even taking your lunch break outside of the office is useful. I like to listen to music on the way home—it recharges me. It is also useful to have a hobby and not to think about work at home. I really like helping refugees and I think they are a wonderful workforce for the United States. They are reliable, hardworking and responsible. But this job can become hectic if you don't organize yourself and set boundaries.

The most unusual and successful placement we had was of an Iraqi Army general. We found a job for him in an apartment complex. He was hired as a property manager. He has a stable income now, and the apartment complex provides him with free housing.

**E-Mail:** [yulia@rrisa.org](mailto:yulia@rrisa.org)  
**Web:** <http://www.rrisa.org>

## On the Cutting Edge

*By Gene Davidovich, Job Placement Specialist, Jewish Vocational Service, Chicago*

The most exciting placement in my career was in the mid-1990s. One of my new clients was a recognized champion in Olympic, World and European sharpshooting. I called Colorado Springs, where American marksmen have their practice before the next Olympic games. It happened that the coach of this team was going to retire and the American Olympic Committee had begun searching for a new one. So, he was the right man at the right time. My client was hired and he relocated from Chicago to Colorado Springs. This goes to show that a counselor should also be a good salesman, capable of selling his client's skills.

A good counselor should have excellent interpersonal skills. I display respect, empathy and an understanding of clients' needs and aspirations. I remember that helping them find jobs is a way of winning their trust. These clients may then provide information about job leads at the companies where they will eventually work. In many cases, they tell me to send resumes and

they forward these to human resources. A number of them have become owners of companies and are happy to repay the kindness that was offered to them by employing other newcomers.

A good counselor should be on the cutting edge of information technology. He or she should be proficient not only in MS Word, the Internet and Outlook, but also in social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. She should know about specialized websites where clients can look for jobs, taking into account their professions and skills. Counselors should also be familiar with community resources that can help clients who are struggling with non-employment related issues. A good counselor is constantly gathering information and learning new techniques.

It is extremely important to nurture the business networks you establish. I remain in frequent contact with employers who have provided job leads and hired our clients in the past. I am also always on the look-out for new companies. I call, check out job leads, and inform the employers of the skills and talents my clients possess.



I find the work extremely rewarding and hearing about a client getting hired always makes my day.

**E-Mail:** [GeneDavidovich@jvschicago.org](mailto:GeneDavidovich@jvschicago.org)  
**Web:** <http://www.jvschicago.org>

## Your Best Bet: Meeting With Employers

*By Bethany Davis, Self-Sufficiency Specialist, Catholic Charities, Atlanta, Georgia*

As job developers during a recession we are all familiar with strategies that no longer work. There is, however, one tried and true tactic that I have found very useful, even in difficult times: forming a solid relationship with an employer. For me, the best way to do this is by asking for personal meetings with employers before showing up with a client.

Over the summer, I contacted a company that had recently hired a group of Burmese refugees who had not come from an agency. The human resources director seemed adamant that he didn't want any additional refugees, since the ones

who currently worked there carpoled together in one van, traveling an hour in each direction. He was concerned that if the van broke down, or a major traffic jam occurred, he would have no employees on the line. He also worried



about how they would get to the company doctor, who was even further away from their home.

Meeting with the director allowed me to listen to his needs, doubts and fears, and to address each one. I printed maps to show him the multiple routes

that could be taken in case of traffic jams, promised that we would help with transportation to the doctor's, and then followed through by driving a client to a "fit-for-work" assessment.

The time I put into the relationship has definitely paid off. This company has since hired from us on five occasions, with a total of 12 job placements. We've continued to have success with this personal meeting approach and feel that the employers have more confidence in the refugees when they experience for themselves the strong support our agency provides. As job developers, we should avoid approaching employers with an attitude that we're only interested in the end result or in an immediate placement. Focusing on the relationship and taking the time to know *their* needs is *never* time wasted.

**E-Mail: [bdavis@archatl.com](mailto:bdavis@archatl.com)**

**Web: <http://www.catholiccharitiesatlanta.org>**

## No Leaf Unturned

*By Holly Leon-Lierman, Employment Coordinator, The International Rescue Committee, Baltimore, Maryland*

If we believe in the talents of the refugees we work with and allow that belief to move us to action, we will be successful. As job developers, we face countless challenges, especially during an economic downturn. The fundamental rule of our employment program is that we must leave no leaf unturned. Any successes we've had can be owed to this open and explorative attitude. Here is our short list of the many forms it may take: 1) Utilize volunteers and interns; 2) Do cold calling; 3) Host employer appreciation and outreach events; and 4) Don't be afraid to try new things. I've been honored to work with extremely talented and passionate interns and volunteers during my tenure with

the International Rescue Committee. They are part of the fabric of the employment program. Over the summer, we had an Iraqi barber arrive on the Baltimore scene. He wanted to be a barber in the U.S. I asked the interns working with me if anyone wanted to take on the challenge of making that happen. One woman eagerly agreed and I am happy to say that the client continues to excel at a nearby barber shop. She went to 11 shops before finding the right one, but in the end she was successful. Cold calling employers is difficult and nerve-wracking. But it is imperative.

Two things help me. First, I always have a pep talk with myself beforehand. I remind myself that we are not selling anything. We are working with highly qualified candidates who have an unmatched work ethic. We are offering to connect employers with individuals who will help their companies improve. Over the phone, I only ask employers for a meeting. I don't ask them to hire people, or even if they would be interested in hiring folks. I ask for the opportunity to meet them. I've found that after this meeting, the relationship becomes more profound. I highly recommend anything that deepens the relationship with area employers. Employer appreciation and outreach events are an excellent way to publicly recognize employers you currently work with, as well as educate and cultivate new relationships.

Going back to the incorporation of interns, our first annual employer appreciation and outreach event was planned by a spring intern last year. Volunteers are sent out to visit Baltimore employers we wish to target.

There are several objectives in doing this. Primarily, we are educating employers about who refugees are and what types of skills they bring. The best case scenario is that employers will want to have a follow-up meeting and begin a fruitful relationship. At the very least, we learn what the company is looking for in new hire candidates and the company will learn about refugees, should any refugees apply at that company.

Volunteers gain exposure to the employment program. Often, once engaged they are very helpful in brainstorming potential employer collaborations, or are willing to connect us to their own networks!

**E-Mail: [Holly.Leon-Lierman@theirc.org](mailto:Holly.Leon-Lierman@theirc.org)**

**Web: <http://www.theirc.org/Baltimore>**



# REFUGEEWORKS

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR REFUGEE EMPLOYMENT AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

## 2010 EMPLOYMENT TRAINING INSTITUTES

RefugeeWorks is conducting two intensive Employment Training Institutes (ETI). Each will highlight a special topic ("Good Jobs in Hard Times" and "Investing in Education") and cover a range of additional themes, such as computer-assisted employment search strategies, engaging employers, recertification, green jobs and marketing. In addition to these three-day national conferences, RefugeeWorks is able to tailor workshops to match your agency's specific training needs. To invite RefugeeWorks to your location, e-mail us at [information@refugeeworks.org](mailto:information@refugeeworks.org)

**Employment Training Institute registration opens Jan. 15, 2010. Please check our website to register.**  
<http://www.refugeeworks.org/about/training.html>

**St. Louis, Mo.**

**Focus: Good Jobs in Hard Times**

**April 6-8, 2010**

**Host: International Institute of St. Louis**

**\$90**

As the U.S. economy continues to falter, employment specialists must work hard to help refugees adjust to a very competitive job market. What are the best strategies for tackling job development during a recession? RefugeeWorks trainers will share job placement tips on the following topics: How does one go about uncovering hidden jobs (i.e. 80% of all jobs)? What strategies can be taken to diversify an agency's employer base? Which industries are more resilient in hard times? And what about green jobs? Finally, RefugeeWorks will share best practice examples on strategies for generating new employer partnerships and pursuing funding for programs that help refugees find meaningful employment.



**Seattle, Wash.**

**Focus: Investing in Education**

**Aug. 10-12, 2010**

**Host: The Puget Sound Welcome Back Center at Highline Community College**

**\$90**

How can we help refugees gain the education and training they need to enter and advance in the U.S. workforce? Join us for an interactive three-day training workshop to explore educational opportunities and address the challenge of meshing long-term educational goals into short-term employment plans for new arrivals. Front-line service providers and program managers will glean creative strategies for combining English language and skills training with new tools for assessment, best practices in recertification and community partnerships. Such strategies are used to promote education as an important step toward long-term self-sufficiency and integration. There will be opportunities to visit local education and training programs for newcomers, as well as some sight-seeing.



# TALKING POINT

## INTERAGENCY RESOURCE SHARING: AN INTERVIEW WITH JAN REEVES

By Daniel Sturm, *RefugeeWorks*

*During RefugeeWorks' training workshops, I emphasize the importance of information sharing as a method for laying the groundwork for an agency's success in job development, especially during hard times. An October 2009 study of Georgetown University's Law Center underscores exactly this point, lamenting that the U.S. resettlement system lacked "information-sharing across various agencies." Many organizations are keenly aware of this shortcoming and have formed new partnerships to fix the problem. In Phoenix, Arizona, a group of voluntary agencies have put together an Employment Working Group that incorporates partnerships with a children's hospital, the city government and local community colleges. And, most recently, Idaho's refugee program hired a regional interagency employment coordinator to improve information sharing and empower job developers. I interviewed the director of the Idaho Office for Refugees, Jan Reeves, about the details of this new position.*

**RefugeeWorks:** What was your strategy behind hiring an interagency employment coordinator?

**Reeves:** The main idea is to support the job development efforts of the four resettlement agencies

serving refugees here in Idaho. We wanted to branch out geographically and into new, untapped industries to try to make things happen.

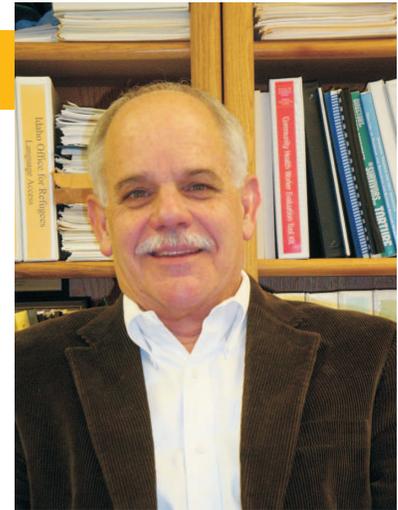
### **RefugeeWorks:**

The new coordinator is supposed to increase interagency collaboration. How?

**Reeves:** Even before we hired our new coordinator, Tara Wolfson, the local job developers in Boise were meeting to talk about strategies for getting new employers on board. We also partnered with the Idaho Department of Labor to organize an employer seminar that provided information about the benefits of hiring refugees. This effort involved all of the agencies. So the idea of collaboration isn't new. Still, we lacked concerted focus and direction, and that's what Tara has brought to the team. One of her key responsibilities is to chair a joint Job Development Committee and to develop and oversee a committee work plan. Also, I think it's pretty typical when you have multiple agencies doing job development in the same geographic area that you're likely to see a certain degree of protection of each agency's employer base. The big question we're dealing with now is, "How can job developers trade employer information and job leads without feeling like they're giving away the store?" We all share the core value that the interests of refugees come first, so I think we'll be able to make significant headway on this issue.

**RefugeeWorks:** How is the coordinator going to support job developers in their roles?

**Reeves:** Here's an example: Tara is putting together a package of job skills and English language training that should give refugees a leg up when employers are making hiring decisions. We're looking for a commitment up front from targeted employers in industries that need workers, and we're seeking to involve them in the development of this training package. Local agency staff can then



refer their candidates to the training program and facilitate the hiring process, at the end, but the hard work of gaining a commitment from the employer and developing the training package will be done for them, and they'll have more time to concentrate on their job readiness activities. Also, Tara is taking the lead on a comprehensive marketing approach that involves outreach and education to employers and employer associations and organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce. She's publishing a quarterly newsletter that goes out to hundreds of area employers.

**RefugeeWorks:** High turnover among refugee job developers is a problem everywhere. Will the new employment "Csar" help tackle this issue as well?

**Reeves:** I would hesitate to use the term "Csar." One of the concerns of a number of the local job developers has been Tara's role in relation to their work. There have been questions like, "Do I answer to her? Is she my supervisor?" We want to be clear that it's quite the opposite. Tara is working for them, to make their jobs easier. With regard to the turnover issue, I would hope that greater collegiality across agencies and tangible support from a macro-level job developer can make a big difference in growing job satisfaction. We'll see.

#### Further Reading:

***Refugee Crisis in America. Iraqis and Their Resettlement Experience***  
(Georgetown University Law Center - October 2009)

**Web:** <http://tinyurl.com/yk6tuoq>

**RefugeeWorks:** How has the recession affected your state's success in finding jobs for your clients?

**Reeves:** Our unemployment rate shot up from 2.5% to almost 10%. Our entered-employment rate has decreased from 90% three years ago, to 55% in FY 2009. We have quite a few families who've been here for over a year and are still looking for their first jobs. The new economic climate has pushed us to rethink the way we approach the task of finding jobs. Even before Tara came on board, the International Rescue Committee in Boise discovered a couple of eastern Oregon employers in need of workers. We

have now placed over 80 refugees in well-paying jobs there. It's not ideal, of course, because of the distance and the lack of refugee specific services in the community, but it has been entirely voluntary and these jobs provide income and, for many, health



insurance. To a large extent, this out-of-area job development set the stage for the work Tara is doing.

**RefugeeWorks:** What would you like to say about employment partnerships in your state?

**Reeves:** We're working actively with the Idaho Department of Labor and this has been productive in a number of ways. IDOL has actually assigned a senior staff member to take on special responsibilities for refugee employment and training. We're also working with university extension programs to design and implement agriculture-related training for refugees. The IRC led the way on this approach earlier in the year, when they negotiated dairy training for refugees interested in the Oregon jobs. Tara is working toward establishing an employer advisory committee, as well.

**RefugeeWorks:** How is the new position funded?

**Reeves:** Through the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement's Supplemental Services to Recently Arrived Refugees grant. It's a 17-month project, so we have limited time to turn things around and there's no guarantee we'll be able to continue to support the position when the project period ends. But if the approach turns out to be as valuable as we hope, we'll do everything we can to continue funding it.

**E-Mail:** [jreeves@IdahoRefugees.org](mailto:jreeves@IdahoRefugees.org)  
**Web:** <http://www.idahorefugees.org>

# A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

By Melisa Valentin, Employment Specialist, Utah Refugee Employment and Community Center, Salt Lake City

The van is full to capacity. Jamal is in a hurry to get going. In the meantime, Iman and Osman are interviewing new clients that have just been transferred to the agency. Maggie informs a client about an upcoming job fair at the Hyatt Place Hotel. Robert explains why class attendance is vital. There is no space in the lobby. And “I want to work” is the first phrase most clients say to our employment team at the Refugee & Immigrant Center (RIC), a program of the Asian Association of Utah in Salt Lake City.



Despite the great challenges refugees face, the consistent hard work pays off. Through focused outreach activities, Jamal Alanati, Iman Yare, Maggie Boehly, Osman Hassan and Robert Elnour are placing refugees into appropriate employment. Last year, despite all economic hardships, this employment team placed 437 refugees into a variety of jobs with an average wage of \$9.44 per hour. Seventy-eight percent of all clients received health benefits and 90% were still employed 90 days after placement. Job seekers found employment as production workers, CDL drivers, warehouse workers, machinery operators, package handlers and certified nurse’s assistants, and they found positions in restaurants and hospitality.

Forming new partnerships with businesses is our most successful strategy. Recently, Maggie Boehly, an AmeriCorps volunteer at our agency, responded to a new hotel’s job fair announcement. Her quick initiative led to the successful placement of 16 refugees, one of whom has been promoted to supervisor. This partnership also produced contacts that resulted in an on-the-job training contract and an in-house job fair.

Robert Elnour, the TANF program supervisor, believes that it’s critical to nurture existing business relationships. When overcoming barriers to employment, it is easier to place and retain a refugee employee if the employer feels comfortable with the job developer. This will allow the job developer to step in before an employer decides to let a newly hired client go. Employers who are familiar with the refugee employee’s support network are more likely to work out arrangements to facilitate the adjustment and learning process.

When considering the greatest challenges, Jamal Alanati, a job developer supervisor, identifies language. Other barriers include little or no work history, lack of skills, physical illness and over-qualification. However, refugees’ resilience and willingness to strive for a better life are assets that help them overcome these barriers.

Jacqueline Mukasafari, a former law student from Rwanda, used to work with adolescents in her home country. After surviving the

devastating Rwanda genocide of 1994, she came to the U.S. as a refugee. She has since been working at RIC as a case manager. She was once a client and now uses her abilities and skills to help others in need.

Saad Dukhan, a journalist from Iraq, used to have his own TV show. Having worked as an investigative reporter for 13 years, he was accustomed to mingling with prime ministers, ambassadors and heads of state. His former prominence didn't help him in the job search. Nevertheless, he has been using his skills to help other Iraqis who, like him, are trying to build the best lives they can in their new homes. Dukhan has been gathering the information and documentation necessary to have his experience and education evaluated so that he can eventually get back into the field of journalism. In the meantime, he's working on independent media projects that document his talents.

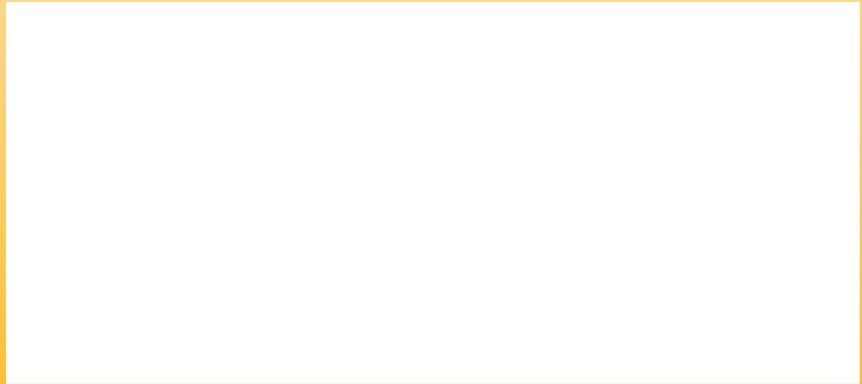
Despite the great challenges that refugees face to obtain and retain employment, there are a lot of success stories out there. In the state of Utah, RIC has seen many employers become fluent in the cultures of refugees and their needs in the workplace. The Marriott Summit Watch, located in Park City, Utah, has found that refugees can be loyal and efficient employees. To tackle transportation issues, Marriott's managers have provided a shuttle for all its employees. They've created training tools based on images and pictures to help new foreign-born employees overcome literacy issues. Marriott also provided an ESL instructor and language learning software to help employees improve their English skills. The key to this success was the realization of how mutually beneficial this working relationship could be. This hotel complex is now the second-ranked Marriott resort of its type in the Western U.S. With our clients on board, the hotel's turnover rate went from 100% to 5%.



E-Mail: [MelisaV@aau-slc.org](mailto:MelisaV@aau-slc.org)  
Web: <http://www.aau-slc.org/>



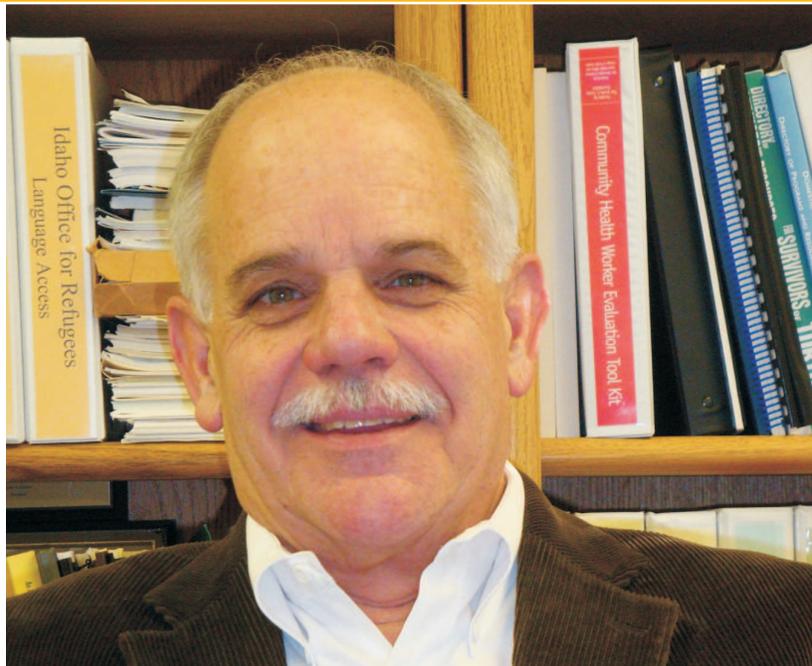
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## NEWSLETTER 31 JOB DEVELOPERS

**“The main idea is to support the job development efforts of the four resettlement agencies serving refugees in Idaho. We wanted to branch out geographically and into new, untapped industries to try to make things happen.”**

*Jan Reeves, Idaho Refugee Coordinator  
See “Interagency Resource Sharing,” p. 6*



**Daniel Sturm**  
Newsletter Managing Editor  
and Consultant  
dsturm@refugeeworks.org

**Jonathan Lucus**  
Senior Consultant  
and National Coordinator  
jlucus@refugeeworks.org

**Rebecca Armstrong**  
Consultant  
ramstrong@refugeeworks.org

**Linda Rabben**  
Consultant  
lrabben@refugeeworks.org

**Anne P. Wilson**  
LIRS Acting President

## REFUGEEWORKS

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