



EAST BAY REFUGEE FORUM

General Meeting, December 6, 2016

Moderator: Jack Tyler (EBRF Steering Committee Chair, Diversity in Health Training Institute)

Attendees: Pooja Prakash (Narika), Kaitlan McClenahan (Partnerships for Trauma Recovery), Lila Katz (Jewish Family Children Services East Bay), Kate Goodin (Jewish Family Children Services East Bay), Lex Duey (Upwardly Global), Nicole Germanov (Refugee Transitions), Kara Tofte (International Rescue Committee), KJ Evans (California Department of Social Services, Refugee Programs Bureau), Sysvahn Kabkeo (California Department of Social Services, Refugee Programs Bureau), Sadaf Siddiq (Social Services Administration), Sambo Ly (Alameda Health Systems), Elisabeth Lang (Catholic Charities of the East Bay), Bowa Tucker (Administration for Children and Families, Office of Refugee Resettlement), Dusty Cooper (community advocate), Allyson Fritz (community advocate), Michael Carnevale (San Francisco State University, Master's Social Work), Guenet Sebsibe (Alameda County Public Health), Nate Dunstan (Oakland Unified School District)

Refugee Programs Bureau

Sysvahn:

CAM numbers are increasing and more applications are being received.

RPB is developing a newsletter that RAs and CBOs can use to highlight the successes that clients are seeing in the community. This newsletter will be used to promote newcomers, and new activities that organizations do within the state. These stories should be positive stories and activities that clients are doing to help themselves. RPB would like orgs to interview refugees who have made it in the Bay Area.

Suggested working on creating a phone line that newcomers could call to get information about where to go for services. Other people suggested that an organization that might be able to take this on is Building Home Together.

RPB would like to see the EBRF create specific task forces to tackle different issues such as housing, adult education, and other important issues. Jack noted that the EBRF SC created those groups several years ago but they were not successful in continuing for the long term. He noted that this would be an important topic to bring up again.

There is new funding for \$300,000 from the State for Syrians that will be available for RAs.

There are 13,800 arrivals planned for CA in 2017.

Jack was asked to email Ballav to see if they can attend the next Consultation meeting on December 12th.

Resettlement Agency Arrival Numbers

Lila (JFCS):

Community Consultation meetings will be changing. The hosting agency will be responsible for all stakeholders and want to know how many times stakeholders have been contacted. The new RAs need to invite as many stakeholders as possible and keep all notes from each Comm. Consultation meeting.



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Elections for Open Steering Committee Seats

Jack:

EBRF SC Elections for open seats took place. We received one application from Nicole at RT who was unanimously voted on the SC.

Meeting with Mayor Libby Schaaf's Office

Nate (OUSD):

He attended a meeting with Mayor Libby Schaaf's office to find a way to continue to work with unaccompanied minors and undocumented people in Alameda County. The mayor's office is working on setting up a fast response system to respond to ICE raids. They want to harness more energy from pro bono attorneys since there is a lot of work to coordinate attorneys for a fast response system.

RCUSA wants groups to contact Kamala Harris' office. This email will be sent out the EBRF when RCUSA wants to send the letters to the DC office since this approach might be more effective.

Allyson:

As a community member for Amnesty International, she said that Amnesty can get together large numbers of people to call DC offices and State offices.

EBRF Coordination Position Announcement

Jack:

Notified the EBRF that we are hiring a new Coordinator to take the place of Blythe. An announcement was sent out. There is no official deadline but would like to hire someone by January.