

# Association Newsletter

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## *Carol Roxburgh begins her term as the newly elected President of the Association for Refugee Service Professionals.*

At its annual board meeting in December, the Board of Directors elected Carol Roxburgh as the new Board President. Carol has been with the Association since its inception. The idea of an Association came out of the vision of Carol, the current CEO of Refugee Services of Texas Inc. After years of working both at the local and national level, Carol noticed increased stress among colleagues and burnout of key people with years of experience, resulting in turnover and loss. Carol stated, "This affects the overall effectiveness of



agencies, as well as the clients we serve".

Carol hopes the Association will provide professional growth, and emotional support for the well being of its members, as stated, "we hope to provide additional resources for members to be more effective in their work environment, and lessen the stress we all

feel". We hope to provide benefits that will enhance our profession and maintain the well being of our members.

Carol succeeds Bob Palm as Board President, who assumes the duties of Treasurer.

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### **Donna Magnuson ARSP Board Member**

Donna Magnuson's passion for refugee resettlement began over 18 years ago and has grown exponentially since that time. She began her career in North Dakota working with refugee children in

schools and unaccompanied refugee minors in foster care. For the past 12 years, Donna has been the Director of the Refugee and Immigration Center for Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota. Her

years of experience have allowed her to develop various programs that assist families with reaching self-sufficiency and community integration. She has managed many aspects of refugee resettlement from initial

*Donna Magnuson is currently the Executive Director of the International Rescue Committee in Phoenix, Arizona*



### **Donna Magnuson (continued)**

and ongoing case management, pre-employment and employment placement, multiple English language training and vocational English language services, refugee cash assistance through the Wilson-Fish program, immigration services and interpreter services.

She has advocated for

refugees at local, state, and national levels and has held offices on the Executive Committee of SCORR (State Coordinators of the Office of Refugee Resettlement) most recently as Vice President. She has also served on the LIRS Regional Consultant Advisory Committee both as a member and most recently as Chair of that

committee. She believes in the mission and service model that the client is at the center of all services. "Working in this field is not my job but my passion and who I am as an individual".

### **ARSP Educational Trip, Amman Jordan by Raleigh Bailey**

Freedom," "Security," "Education," the first three volunteers wrote on the board. Our interpreter explained that they were listing the advantages of living in America. The list grew. They listed disadvantages. "Separated from family members," loss of culture," "learning the language," "loss of job skills certifications." Then

these Iraqi refugees who fled to Jordan discussed their answers. The lesson was taught by a teacher working for the International Organization for Migration (IOM). IOM contracts with the US State Department to provide cultural orientation for Iraqi refugees accepted for resettlement. The objective was to

develop realistic expectations about America and develop analytical and networking skills in decision making. The class was conducted in Arabic because the US no longer pays for English language training.

I was leading a dozen US refugee professionals and researchers from half a dozen states.

*IOM contracts with the US State Department to provide cultural orientation for Iraqi refugees accepted for resettlement.*

### **Educational Trip (continued)**

We were studying refugee issues. My daughter who works with the United Nations High Commission on Refugees had arranged meetings for us. The refugees appeared to be stuck in Jordan. Though approved for resettlement, they can't get security clearances because new software

designed for the Department of Homeland Security has problems. All the Iraqis had met US and UNHCR criteria as refugees: having a well founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, place of birth or political beliefs. Most had received death threats or lost family

members because they befriended Americans in Iraq.

Since the program began in 2007, North Carolina has resettled 779 Iraqis, a small number compared to several other states: California 8663; Arizona 3161; Texas 4424; Massachusetts 1719.

**Educational Trip (continued)**

Jordan is a hot spot. Besides being in the desert at the intersection of three continents, it is squeezed between Israeli controlled Palestine, Iraq, Syria, and Saudi Arabia. Syria was erupting next door. Jordan’s constitutional monarchy tries to maintain cordial relations with its neighbors and is an ally of the US. My taxi driver that morning had politely asked me “Why do Americans want to bomb my daughters?” This is a common belief.

been there since 1948. Another 5 million are displaced and scattered.

*Raleigh Bailey, Ph.D.*

*Is the Director of the Center for New North Carolinians at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro and an ARSP Board Member.*

*Mark Brown  
Program Manager, IOM  
Amman*

The UN oversees 1,400,000 Palestinian refugees in 58 holding camps in 5 Middle Eastern countries. Some have



*The UN oversees 1,400,000 Palestinian refugees in 58 holding camps in 5 Middle Eastern countries.*

**Refugee Resettlement: A Proposed Study**

**Developing common standards and benchmarks to achieve appropriate outcomes for refugees and receiving communities.** By Dr. Noel Busch-Armendariz, and Laurie Cook Heffron, The University of Texas at Austin, and Dr. Maura Nsonwu, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University.

This project seeks to document the success of refugee resettlement efforts in the US and provide models of current best practices that may be replicated from one location to another. The ultimate goal would be to establish a common set of goals or overarching framework. The objectives

will include defining “successful resettlement,” and refugee integration to include how individuals, communities and organizations are doing. An expert panel including administrative and direct service staff, representation from national organizations, and refugees themselves

will be convened to develop this process, and the outputs and outcomes will be tested across a continuum of service providers and communities. Also, we have learned that questions about the success of US resettlement have increasingly become a

**Association for  
Refugee Service  
Professionals**  
P.O. Box 180584  
Dallas, Texas 75228

**Phone** (512) 538-4981  
**E-mail**  
palmrobertrst@yahoo.com



part of two distinct but connected areas of public policy debate:

- 1) Within refugee resettlement -- What conditions and services are necessary for resettlement to be successful?
- 2) What can we learn from refugee resettlement about advancing immigrant integration?

*While many hold the belief that the United States resettlement program is highly successful, there is little empirical evidence available to support this*

Independent studies on the impact of resettlement have been limited, often focusing on one particular aspect of integration or so broad as to include other humanitarian

### Benchmark Study (continued)

migrants who may not have had access to the same type of legal status or social service delivery system that is available to resettled refugees. What difference does this formal system make?

Our hypotheses are that there are a number of key decisions made along the resettlement spectrum that would benefit from a stronger set of goals and outcome evaluation, such as: how should admission decisions be structured, in which communities should refugees be resettled initially, and what services should be offered and for how long. Other factors to consider are the level of trauma and length of time

needed to recover from previous trauma, the educational and cultural background, and the realization, "that one size does not fit all".

Within the larger discussion of immigrant integration, refugee resettlement offers a practical case study on the integration experience. There are lessons to be learned and this project seeks to summarize those lessons and strengthen models that are built on empirical inquiry.

*ARSP Members in Amman, Jordan*



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