Networks for Integrating New Americans

The Network Advantage for Advancing Immigrants’ Linguistic, Economic, and Civic Integration

National Webinar

19 February 2015
Cheryl Hiester  
Executive Director, Lancaster County Literacy Council  
Coordinator, Lancaster County Refugee Coalition

Silja Kallenbach  
Vice President, World Education  
Director, Networks for Integrating New Americans

Tara Wolfson  
Chair, Employment Committee, Neighbors United  
Employment and Training Program Manager  
Idaho Office for Refugees and Global Talent Idaho

Linda Faaren  
Director, Puget Sound Welcome Back Center  
and ESL Special Programs  
Highline College  
Member, White Center Promise Network
Division of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL)
Office of Career Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE)
U.S. Department of Education

Christopher Coro, Deputy Director, DAEL

Heidi Silver-Pacuilla, Team Leader, DAEL

Debra Suarez, ELL Specialist and COR, DAEL

Johan Uvin, Acting Assistant Secretary, OCTAE
Networks for Integrating New Americans

White Center Promise Network, King County, WA
Neighbors United, Boise, ID
Central Valley Immigrant Integration Network, CA
Lancaster County Refugee Coalition, PA
We RI Network, Providence, RI
Goal:
Immigrants’ linguistic, economic, and civic integration

Adult education programs in a central role in existing networks of organizations

Collective impact

Place-based

Multi-sector

Mutually reinforcing activities

Networks for Integrating New Americans
Work is driven by evolving Action Plans and benchmarks of progress

Technical Assistance

Coaching

Coordination by “backbone” agency

Shared accountability

Shared credit

Networks for Integrating New Americans Theoretical Framework: www.worlded.org/us
Goal: Economic integration of immigrants through clear articulation of career pathways in two high growth industries.
Lancaster County Refugee Coalition, PA

Core Network Member Organizations:

• Church World Service
• Franklin and Marshall College
• Lancaster County Refugee Coalition
• Lancaster-Lebanon IU13
• Literacy Council of Lancaster
• Lutheran Refugee Services
• Southeast Lancaster Health Services
Networks don’t just happen – they require attention and hard work, but it pays off.

- Goals
- Structure
- Members’ responsibilities
- Decision-making
- RELATIONSHIPS
Focus on Career Pathways and Employer Engagement

• Set an integration goal that will help us build on what we are already doing.

• Find out what is already out there.

• Expand our network and get employers involved.
Goal: Economic integration of high-skilled immigrants who have language as one key barrier to career advancement.
About Boise

- Small City of 200,000 (400,000 in metropolitan area)
- Refugee resettlement since 1975
- Progressive city in a conservative state
- Historically few foreign-born, not ethnically diverse population
- 2014 resettlement: 918 arrivals, 15% have a college education
Formed after economic downturn, 2009
City of Boise/Idaho Office for Refugees led effort to identify resources and needs
Mayor and 100+ community leaders
Subcommittees: Transportation, education, housing, employment, health, and social integration
Built Refugee Community Plan ... now Neighbors United
Cross-cutting goal: **Income generation and financial stability**
Employment/Adult Education committees applied for Networks for Integrating New Americans technical assistance

TECH. ASSISTANCE FOCUS:
Workforce development for high skilled refugees and immigrants →
Global Talent Idaho
Neighbors United

Core Network Member Organizations:

- Agency for New Americans
- Boise City/Ada County Housing
- Boise State University
- Boise Police Department
- Boise School District
- Catholic Charities of Idaho
- Central District Health Depart.
- City of Boise
- College of Western Idaho
- Easter Seals Goodwill
- El Ada Community Action
- English Language Center
- Family Medicine Residency of ID
- Idaho Dept. of Health & Welfare
- Idaho Department of Labor
- Idaho Office for Refugees
- International Rescue Committee
- Learning Lab
- META
- JANNUS
- St. Alphonsus Health System
- St. Luke’s Boise Medical Center
- Stoltz Marketing Group
- Terry Reilly Health Services
- Tidwell Social Services
- Treasure Valley Family YMCA
- United Way of Treasure Valley
- Valley Regional Transit
- Women’s and Children’s Alliance
- World Relief Boise
Neighbors United Employment Committee’s Action Plan

- Career Pathways & Access to Employers
- Understanding of US Work Culture
- English Language for Professionals
- GTI Academy/Career Summit
- In Development; Building on Existing Resources
Neighbors United has received **Technical Assistance** from Upwardly Global on:

- Job Seeker Recruitment & Training
- Coaching & Mentoring Models
- Database Tools & Tracking Outcomes
- Employer Engagement
- Messaging around Skilled Immigrants
Accomplishments To Date

- Global Talent Idaho (GTI) launched in Fall 2014  www.globaltalentidaho.org
- Idaho Dept of Labor received $3.5 million grant in collaboration with GTI for targeted training & internships.
- Job seeker pool is now 60+.
- 15 immigrants and refugees placed in IDOL-funded internships & OJTs.
- Piloting 4 career workshops in Jan – Feb.
- Building employer relationships (10+) & advisory council.
- Technical assistance from Upwardly Global → ongoing partnership

Next:
- Technical assistance on filling ESL gaps for skilled immigrants
- Technical assistance on strengthening network
“Midternships” provide bridges for skilled immigrants working to reclaim careers.

“Midtern” placements a few include:

- An Iraqi accountant with a local CPA firm
- An Eritrean businessman as manager at a chocolate manufacturer
- An Iraqi mechanical engineer as a Mercedes auto tech
- An Iraqi pharmacist as a pharmacy tech at a large local drugstore

Malak Al Fatal, Computer Engineer from Iraq
Internship in Data Management
Idaho Office for Refugees
White Center Promise Network, WA

Goal: Civic engagement and leadership by refugees and immigrants that result in them becoming an integral part of a welcoming community.
White Center Promise Network, WA

Core Network Member Organizations

- Highline Community College
- Highline Public Schools
- King County Housing Authority
- King County Library System
- One America
- Port Jobs
- Southwest Youth and Family Services
- White Center Community Development Association
- YWCA of Seattle-King-Snohomish
Our Definition of Civic Engagement and Leadership

Civic engagement and leadership exist where various communities and individual members use their experience and strengths, passions, and ideas to shape the larger community. This may include voting and volunteering, voicing concerns, sharing language and cultural traditions, using community resources, and creating a vision for their desired future.
White Center Promise Network, WA

ESOL Lesson Development for Civic Engagement

- Embracing and celebrating a sense of place
- Bringing the community into the classroom
- Using the community as the classroom
- Creating learning communities among faculty and network members
- Nurturing community leadership in the classroom
White Center Promise Network, WA

Work in Progress

• Added 11 civic integration questions into comprehensive neighborhood survey.
• 50 residents took part in Refugee and Immigrant Day at the State Capitol in February 2015.
• King County is on board to become a Welcoming County.
• Won a Communities of Opportunity grant to support organizational capacity, especially for data collection, communications and development.
• Proposed Story Corps Project to capture immigrant stories.
• Proposed to become a BIG READ community using a book written by an Ethiopian telling his immigrant story.
• 4Culture grant for cultural performances by local artists/performers being considered for 2015.
3 Basic Network Functions

**CONNECTING**
*Information*

Connects people to allow easy flow of and access to information and transactions

**ALIGNING**
*Identity*

Aligns people in ways that help them form more collective transactions than a connectivity network will do. Individuals come to share a set of ideas, language, or standards

**PRODUCING**
*Initiative*

Fosters joint action by people or organizations—has a specific purpose

- *Policy action*
- *Advocacy*
- *Learning*
- *Knowledge production and dissemination*
Recap Network Development Strategies

• Agree on membership structure and decision-making process.
• Articulate and agree on common goals.
• Develop action plan with benchmarks of progress.
• Connect peripheral members to the core.
• Cultivate relationships and trust.

Networks develop at the speed of trust.
Questions, Comments?
Networks for Integrating New Americans

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Silja Kallenbach, Project Director  skallenbach@worlded.org
Andy Nash, Technical Assistance Coordinator  anash@worlded.org

World Education, Inc.
44 Farnsworth Street
Boston, MA 02130
617-482-9485