

# *Welcoming Communities Conference*

*Monday, October 26, 2015*

*8:00am - 5:00pm*

**Radisson Hotel & Convention Center**

*1150 Camp Hill Bypass, Camp Hill, PA 17011*

Our country has long been a beacon of hope and opportunity for people from around the world. Today, 41.3 million foreign-born residents live in the United States and are contributing to the vitality of our country and their communities. This includes the over 3 million refugees who have resettled here since 1975 from countries that span the globe. These immigrants and refugees are adding much to our country's social and cultural fabric, and are also critical to our country's continued economic prosperity. While 13 percent of the overall population is foreign-born, foreign-born workers represent close to 17 percent of the current U.S. labor force. Over the next 20 years, immigrants and their children will account for 85 percent of the net growth in the U.S. labor force. Immigrants are entrepreneurial, starting 28 percent of all new businesses.

Our success as a nation of immigrants is rooted in our historic success in integrating newcomers into the social, cultural, and economic fabric of our country. Integration is a dynamic two-way process that brings together newcomers and the long-time residents of communities into which they settle ("receiving communities") to foster greater understanding, promote inclusiveness, speed economic success, and build secure, vibrant, and cohesive communities.

The current Administration has studied immigrant and refugee integration efforts, maintained dialogue with stakeholders, and applied best practices and key principles, particularly those inspired by the "welcoming communities" movement. Welcoming communities are cities, counties, or towns that strive to bring immigrants and refugees and native-born residents together to create a positive environment for all. The Administration has identified three integration pillars — civic, economic, and linguistic integration — that have been its focus over the past six years. Numerous agencies have worked to enhance opportunities for new Americans across each of these pillars through programs that engage local immigrant populations and provide them with access to training around language needs, career development, and support services. Toward the end of 2014, President Obama created a formal interagency body, the White House Task Force on New Americans, which aims to further strengthen the federal government's integration efforts by making them more strategic and deliberate. The Task Force identified goals to strengthen our civic, economic, and linguistic integration and to build strong and welcoming communities. Achieving these goals will require action by all Task Force members, state and local governments, the private and philanthropic sectors, and immigrants and refugees themselves.

It is in this spirit that the International Service Center will be organizing a Welcoming Communities Conference in Pennsylvania's Capital area on October 26, 2015 as a modest contribution to further expand immigrant and refugee integration efforts and build welcoming communities.

**Conference Purposes:**

- 1) To promote mutual understanding and mutual support among the immigrants, refugees, and mainstream community.
- 2) To share the new immigrants' rich and diverse cultures with the mainstream communities.
- 3) To create an opportunity for networking among those interested in other cultures and people of the world.
- 4) To inform immigrants and refugees about new government policies and available services.

**Conference Speakers:**

Service providers, government employees, business managers, mainstream and refugee community leaders, educators and students will all benefit from a diverse selection of workshops, panel presentations, and keynote address by nationally acclaimed speakers from the Federal and State government agencies and other public and private institutions. Invited conference speakers include Governor Tom Wolf, State Secretary Pedro Cortes, USCIS Director Leon Rodriguez, Director Carl Rubenstein of the Refugee Assistance Division at ORR/DHHS, and many other prominent workshops presenters from the civic, economic, educational and medical fields. The mission of the conference is to raise awareness of the White House Task Force on New Americans initiative, and to present possible solutions for strengthening communities by welcoming all residents.

**Conference Organizers:**

The conference is proudly presented by the International Service Center (ISC), a community-based non-profit organization, in Harrisburg, PA, with the kind support of the PA Refugee Resettlement Program (PA Department of Human Services). The conference agenda is crafted in consultation with a multi-sector Planning Committee which includes recognized representatives from the federal, state, and local government agencies, health, educational, and public welfare institutions, religious and faith-based organizations, businesses and corporations, refugee and mainstream service providers, as well as immigrant and refugee communities.

**Hotel Accommodations:**

A block of room has been reserved at the Radisson Hotel & Convention Center, 1150 Camp Hill Bypass, Camp Hill PA 17011, at the rate of \$91 for single room and \$101 for double room. Guest Room rates will be offered 3 days prior and 3 days after October 26, 2015, subject to availability of guest rooms at the time of reservation. Individual guests will call-in and reserve their own room.

**The "cut-off date" for accepting reservations into this guest room block is 09/26/15.** At that time, guest rooms not reserved in the block, are released for general availability.

**The hotel direct number is 717-763-7117** and Radisson worldwide reservation number is (800) 333-3333. \* All reservations must be guaranteed with a credit card or advance deposit.

No guestroom cancellation charge for reservations cancelled 48 hours in advance. If reservations are not cancelled 48 hours in advance, a "no-show" fee equal to 1 night's room will be assessed.

Guest Check-in is after **3:00pm**-----Guest Checkout is by **11:00am**

**For Questions about Conference or Registration: Contact the International Service Center**  
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