



## TACKLING TRANSPORTATION

By Daniel Sturm, RefugeeWorks

When we asked employment specialists about the greatest obstacles that refugees seeking employment face, language ability (94 percent) and transportation (57 percent) were their most popular answers.



I can certainly relate to the challenge of transportation, which is the theme of this issue. As an immigrant from Germany myself, I have memories of adapting to U.S. commuting patterns.

During a job interview, I remember asking my future boss about directions to the bus stop to his office. "The sooner you buy a car, the better," he responded. "I doubt there are any buses. Welcome to America."

Is car ownership the best answer? Research shows that car ownership can be a costly solution, particularly for low-income households. The average low-income U.S. family owning a car spends 23 percent of its annual income on gasoline, maintenance and related expenditures (Brookings Institute, 2005). Employment counselors also relate that most refugees aren't used to driving. Moreover, when newcomers drive by themselves, it may decrease their opportunities for social integration. According to research by Robert Putnam, a Harvard University professor of public policy, community involvement falls 10 percent for every 10 minutes we spend driving to work.

In this newsletter RefugeeWorks highlights some of the best practices of refugee service providers on issues related to transportation. Transportation will also be one focus of our 2008 Employment Training Institutes. Please take a look at the RefugeeWorks website for resource materials, and a related discussion ([www.refugeeworks.org](http://www.refugeeworks.org)).

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### CONSULTANT'S CORNER: Jonathan Lucas



Hello everyone. I hope you are enjoying the cooler weather of autumn. I spent the first two weeks of October on my annual trip to Moscow, Russia. And no, I did not see any bears! I did however, spend time going to some of my favorite places. Gorky Park to see the many artisans' work for sale on the streets, Red Square where the famous St. Basils Cathedral stands magnificently, Old Arbat Street with its brick-paved road and kiosks where street vendors desperately try to sell you hand

painted stack dolls, fur hats and old Soviet area paraphernalia and, lastly, Moscow State University where I studied years ago and where one can see the Olympic stadium and the rest of the grand city from atop of the hill where it sits. Outside of spending time with friends and family the most important part of my trip was being asked by the principal Inna Sergeievna and several teachers to be a guest speaker at school 1266. I spoke to several classes and answered many questions that ranged from whether I knew any movie stars to what school was like in America. In between class

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## The Point is to Join Up

An Interview with Carolyn Jeskey,  
Community Transportation Association of America

By Daniel Sturm, RefugeeWorks

**With more than 60 federal programs for transportation in place, it's good to know that there's a think tank in Washington, D.C. to keep track of them all. To explore best practices in the field of transportation, RefugeeWorks sat down with Carolyn Jeskey, the director of the Community Transportation Association of America's Joblinks Employment Transportation Initiative. Utilizing funding support from the Federal Transit Administration and the U.S. Department of Labor, Jeskey and her staff work to improve employment transportation opportunities through policy directed projects, publications, conferences and technical assistance.**

**RefugeeWorks:** Many of our clients frequently change jobs, which makes offering transportation assistance an even greater challenge. What's your advice on designing an affordable and flexible transportation system?

**Carolyn Jeskey:** Contracting with public transportation operators is a good starting point. They have the vehicles, and they also cater to the employers' needs. Rather than operate their own transportation, refugee service organizations should reach out to area transportation providers and other service organizations. There are so many people with common mobility concerns wishing to get to common destinations. By working with organizations like the Centers for Independent Living, TANF agencies, and the U.S. Department of Labor-sponsored Career One Stop Centers, refugee service organizations may be able to group needs, pool resources and develop more viable transportation options. Sometimes the best way to serve people who are transportation disadvantaged is to reach out to and work with the larger community.

**RefugeeWorks:** One refugee service provider told us they'd purchased a van to transport refugees on their way to work in the suburbs. Initially, many newcomers took advantage of the option. But after one client purchased a car, everyone began car-pooling instead. The bus program was ultimately aborted. What went wrong?

**Jeskey:** People found the mobility to work! It doesn't sound like anything went wrong in that example. If you have a good informal network, that's just what happens sometimes. But in many cases, when the cost of purchasing



Carolyn Jeskey

and maintaining a car is too expensive, it may be that formal transportation options, like vanpools and shuttles, work better. Regardless, having a back-up in community transportation for times when a personal car breaks down can be a real job saver. One community did just that: The Department of Social Services in Charlottesville, Va., established a pilot program that offered emergency transportation 24/7, so that if workers' cars broke down, they could still get rides to where they needed to go.

**RefugeeWorks:** Does owning a car improve a refugee's income and job opportunities?

**Jeskey:** Views differ here. It shouldn't matter how you get there, as long as you get there. There's nothing inherent in owning a car that makes one more successful. And people who take commuter buses are probably saving money over the long-term.

**RefugeeWorks:** Many service providers have their plates full, and it's difficult for them to take on a complex endeavor like setting up a vanpool. Can

you walk us through a feasible scenario?

**Jeskey:** Sure. The point is not to work alone, but to join up. I think the Transit Authority of River City, in Louisville, Ky., is a great example of how this can be done (see story on page 4). In urban areas you should get in touch with the Metropolitan Planning Organization. In non-urban areas you can look for the Council of Governments, or another rural planning body. Communities across the country are involved in collaborative projects like TARC's. That's the hopeful thing, that there's already a process going on.

**"Rather than operate their own transportation, refugee service organizations should reach out to area transportation providers and other service organizations."**

**Carolyn Jeskey**

## TIPS FROM THE FIELD: Challenges and Solutions

### Challenge:

Agencies have little time to organize transportation solutions.

### Suggested Courses of Action:

- > Assign transit tasks to one committed staff person
- > Partner with other social service providers.

### Challenge:

With more than 60 national transportation programs, deciding the best approach for funding may be difficult.

### Suggested Courses of Action:

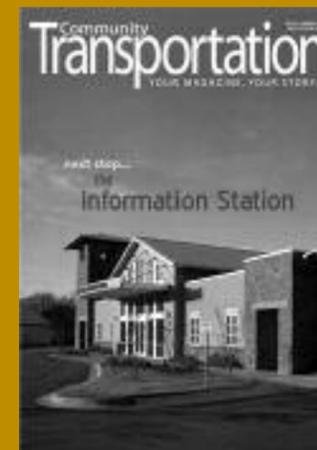
- > Talk to employers, transit authorities, other social service providers.
- > Create an advisory board.

### Challenge:

Lobbying community leaders for improved support services in an immigrant-unfriendly climate may lead to unwanted side effects, and backfire.

### Suggested Courses of Action:

- > Change your language. Prevent discriminatory labeling of vanpool programs, as "poor people's" ride. For example, the Florida Regional Planning Commission named its new van program the "Foreign Exchange Student" line.



Community Transportation Magazine  
Published by the Community Transportation Association of America



## Maryland Refugees Gain Special Access at the MVA

By Daniel Sturm, RefugeeWorks

Obtaining a driver's license is one of the largest barriers to employment, and for newcomers who live in Maryland, that obstacle used to be even larger.

Unlike everyone else, refugees could not just show up at one of the Motor Vehicle Administration's regional offices. Instead, they were required to call a 1-800 number, and schedule an appointment at the MVA regional office in Annapolis. This task was a challenge for newly arrived refugees with little or no English skills.

"Some of them have no telephone at home," said Mamadou Sy, a program coordinator at Lutheran Social Services in Baltimore. For others, navigating through the automated telephone system was difficult. Refugees in Maryland were more likely to go months without an appropriate state ID.

**"MVA staff were unfamiliar with the I-94 or the Employment Authorization Document. They were often asking clients to bring a passport."**

**Mamadou Sy**

Sy, a native of Senegal himself, recalls that the problem spilled over into the resettlement center. Caseworkers were becoming bogged down by an increasing number of clients who needed help with scheduling appointments.

In addition to the challenge of the automated telephone system, refugees had difficulty getting to Annapolis, which is a 45-minute drive from Baltimore. And even refugees with advanced English skills who'd managed to schedule an appointment and car-pool to the state capitol were not yet home free. "MVA staff were unfamiliar with the I-94, or the Employment Authorization Document," Sy said. "They were often asking clients to bring a passport."

Sy's colleagues at the Baltimore Resettlement Center (which houses four national voluntary agencies) forwarded their concerns to the Maryland Office of New Americans, which in turn was able to strike a deal with the MVA.

Today voluntary agencies send a weekly list of names to a designated staff person who is well trained and knows about the clients in advance. And clients now have a special window for newcomers only. In October the Baltimore Resettlement Center's staff started a monthly car-pool. "The new program works very well now," said Sy. "It allows us to process more clients than ever before."



## Collaborating With Employers

By Nadir Abdi, Jewish Family Services of Columbus, Ohio

New immigrants often lack the financial ability to pay for monthly bus fees, much less to purchase a car. This particular issue has been one of my main obstacles as a career consultant for Jewish Family Services.

It's one thing to have a job, it's another to actually get to and from that job. This is an area where innovation is required. With a few small (and yet profound) adaptations, one company has taken it upon itself to break down the transportation barrier. One of the employers Jewish Family Services partners with is ABX Air, in Wilmington, Ohio, a business that specializes in cargo transportation.

ABX contracts coach buses from Dayton, Cincinnati, Columbus, West Union and Springfield. In each of these cities it has organized pick-up locations or stops, where ABX employees may catch the bus to work for the low cost of \$40 a month. The

company is located 67 miles from Columbus, where most of our clients live.

Since 2005 Jewish Family Services has been able to place 200 refugees in jobs

**Had it not been for [ABX Air's] innovative shuttle bus system, Mohamed wouldn't have been able to make the commute.**

at ABX. For most of our clients, who constitute half of the ridership, the company's innovative transportation plan has made a significant difference. A case in point is the story of Mohamed Dayo, who came to the

United States from Somalia three years ago. In 2006, when Mohamed started to work the third shift at ABX, he was fortunate enough to live one block away from one of the pickup locations in Wedgewood on the west side of Columbus.

Had it not been for the company's innovative shuttle bus system, Mohamed wouldn't have been able to make the commute. In addition to saving money, the bus was comfortable, and its convenience enabled a newcomer like Mohamed to be on time. One thing I've found out, as a career refugee consultant, is that new immigrants really have trouble with time management. So this pickup system was a great way for them to avoid being late.

It's now up to other employers to take it upon themselves to adopt this model. Everything that ABX has accomplished could easily be duplicated by others.



## Establishing a Reverse Commuter Express Line in Kentucky

By Daniel Sturm, RefugeeWorks

Visitors know Louisville, Ky., as the hometown of the Louisville slugger, boxing champion Muhammad Ali, gonzo journalist Hunter Thompson, and fried chicken guru Colonel Sanders. But Louisville is known for a few more things. As highlighted in a Sept. 18, 2007 article of The Wall Street Journal, it's making headlines as one of the country's most welcoming places for refugees. And perhaps not coincidentally, it's also known for having one of the most commuter-friendly transportation systems.

In 1997 the Transit Authority of River City (TARC) established an express route between West Louisville and the Bluegrass Industrial Park, and also implemented a local circulator shuttle within the industrial park. Prior to this residents in job-scarce areas of the city had difficulty getting to work. Commuters often made three bus transfers, or were walking long distances. On average, TARC users were commuting two hours in each direction.

After the reorganization, the travel time was reduced to 45 minutes.

Zarifa Rasool, the employment services coordinator at Catholic Charities Migration and Refugee Services in Louisville, said that the reverse commuter express line has benefited her clients

**TARC's innovative programs have made it a lot easier for our clients to find transportation to and from our ESL school, our office, home and work.**

greatly. "TARC's innovative programs have made it a lot easier for our clients to find transportation to and from our ESL school, our office, home and work."

TARC also established a night owl shuttle bus to offer shared-ride services for late shift workers, a service Rasool thinks is really helpful in supporting refugees on their path to self-sufficiency. The shuttle operates from 11 p.m. until 5 a.m., 7 days a week. TARC vehicles pick commuters up at specific locations and times. The fare is \$2.00 each way.

Finally, TARC has created a special "job hunter" bus connection, which provides pre-planned transportation to groups of twenty or more potential employees to job fairs throughout the metro area. The bus picks up job seekers at designated locations and transports them to their potential employment sites.



### TIPS FROM THE FIELD: Ways to Help Refugees Get to Work

**Zarifa Rasool, Employment Services  
Coordinator at Catholic Charities Migration  
and Refugee Services**

- > Contact former clients now working at a company to see if they can help provide transportation for new employees. They'll be happy to help, because they remember what it was like to worry about getting to work.
- > Make use of matching grant programs that give donated cars to clients.
- > Establish carpools with clients who own cars. Help refugees to organize car-pooling schedules and make car repairs.
- > Getting on the bus can be scary the first time. Offer some tips on how to make it a smooth ride. Explain the bus route and have brochures handy. Write the correct bus route number on the back of your business card and give it to your clients. If they need help, they can show it to someone.

Contact Zarifa [zrasool@archlou.org](mailto:zrasool@archlou.org)





## Bicycles Can Bridge the Gap

By Bree Pearsall, Kentucky Refugee Ministries

When Saah Fallah arrived in Lexington, one of the first things he received from the Kentucky Refugee Ministries (KRM) was a bicycle. For the past four months Fallah has worked the early shift as a housekeeper at the nearby university. "I like the job," he said. "It's not too hard and my supervisor is good." Without his bicycle the early morning shift would be inaccessible for Fallah, who begins work before the public transportation system starts.

The bicycle KRM gave him represents independence, which is the thing he's been working so hard to achieve since arriving in Lexington six months ago. Owning a bicycle expanded Fallah's employment options and gave him an alternative to the cost and limited hours of the city's public transportation.

Since its inception ten years ago, KRM in Lexington has been actively responding to the work-related transportation barriers common to medium-sized cities. Lexington, a city with a population of 250,000, has a public bus system, but its service can be sporadic, and it offers no night service. Many jobs that would otherwise be a good match for refugees become inaccessible because they are not on the main bus routes, or they have work hours when there is no bus service.

In 2003 Brad Flowers, an employee of the downtown Lexington bike shop Pedal Power, began fixing up bicycles in his spare time and donating them to KRM. In the beginning, bicycles were simply donated by community members. But over the years, a more formal partnership between Pedal Power and KRM has grown. And in January, the two groups launched a new program called Shifting Gears. Through this program, Pedal Power now donates one used bike to the refugee service organization each week. Most of the bicycle donations come from Pedal Power customers who choose to donate after deciding against the cost of repairing their old bicycles. So far more than 100 clients have received bikes through the program.

Lexington is an ideal city for bicycle commuting, as most employers are located within 10 miles of the refugees' homes. For jobs that are further away, refugees are able to take their bicycles onto the bus. Many clients use this combined method of busing and biking to travel to job sites located a few miles away from bus stops. Bicycles are not a solution for all, but those who do participate are happy with the flexibility of having their own two wheels.



Photo Courtesy of Pablo Alcala

*Without his bicycle, the early morning shift would be inaccessible for Fallah, who begins work before the public transportation system starts.*



## The Commercial Driver's License: A Career and Chance to See the Country

By Daniel Sturm, RefugeeWorks

When we asked employment specialists if they thought car ownership increased a refugee's chances of finding a job, views differed. Some noted that they'd seen clients go broke after purchasing a new car. Others saw car ownership as a great benefit.

Not only can a license help you get to work, but a commercial driver's license can be an excellent ticket to employment. This thought was on Heather Winter's mind when she started looking into truck-driving jobs. Winter is an employment coordinator at Boise, Idaho's Agency for New Americans. "Being a truck driver is a perfect fit for many newcomers," she said. "It puts you in the position of getting to know the country much better than anyone else."

Winter believes newcomers often get stranded in jobs that offer no upward mobility, and in "in small ethnic enclaves." Wouldn't it be great to give them the opportunity to really see what's out there?

The story of Usman Iskandarov, a Meskhetian Turk from Krasnodar, Russia, reads like a textbook story of a newcomer's American Dream. Iskandarov drove trucks in his native country, but they were smaller than American tractor-trailers. Realizing the importance of English

proficiency, soon after arriving he enrolled in Boise State University's Learning Center for Adult Basic Education. Studying six to eight hours per day, he quickly acquired intermediate English skills.

***"Being a truck driver is a perfect fit for many newcomers. It puts you in the position of getting to know the country much better than anyone else."***

Heather Winter

Iskandarov then enrolled in a small technical school in Washington to receive his commercial driver's license. With license in hand, he hit the pavement in search of work. For awhile, only rejection letters came in. Most truck-driving companies required extensive behind-the-wheel experience, which Iskandarov's school hadn't provided.

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**The Community Transportation Association of America**  
With funding from the Federal Transit Administration and the U.S. Department of Labor, the CTAA works to improve employment transportation opportunities through many types of activities ranging from demonstration projects to direct, short-term technical assistance and employment transportation-related conferences.  
[www.ctaa.org](http://www.ctaa.org)



**Commuter Choice**  
Commuter Choice's mission is to help employers connect with service providers, who can help implement Commuter Choice programs at their worksites.  
[www.commuterchoice.com](http://www.commuterchoice.com)

**Reconnecting America**

A national organization that focuses on the link between transportation and community development, providing resources on transit-oriented development.  
[www.reconnectingamerica.org](http://www.reconnectingamerica.org)



**Center for Transportation Excellence**  
The Center for Transportation Excellence is committed to defending the merits of transit and equipping local leaders with the information they need to be successful with their public transportation initiatives and ballot measures.  
[www.cfte.org](http://www.cfte.org)

**The Federal Transit Administration**  
FTA administers federal funding to support a variety of locally planned, constructed, and operated public transportation systems throughout the United States, including buses, subways, light rails, commuter rails, streetcars, monorails, passenger ferry boats, inclined railways and people movers.  
[www.fta.dot.gov](http://www.fta.dot.gov)



**The National Center for Bicycling and Walking**  
This center's mission is to help create bicycle-friendly and walkable communities across North America by supporting the efforts of individuals, organizations and agencies involved in related initiatives.  
[www.bikewalk.org](http://www.bikewalk.org)

**Commercial Driver's License << 7**

Winter remembers how impressed she was with her client's positive attitude, despite the rejection letters. "He wasn't derailed at all," the caseworker said. "That's the kind of attitude you have to have in order to get your foot in the door." Iskandarov found a job at Alliance Trucking, making \$17.15 an hour.

Inspired by his success, the Agency for New Americans' job upgrades counselor asked Iskandarov to serve as a Russian interpreter and mentor for refugees interested in trucking careers. He could explain the economic opportunities of this career path, and the requirements for a commercial driver's license.

The agency also contacted Seland College at Boise State University to see if newcomers could enroll in their truck-driving classes. The program director, Ralph Dean, was so supportive that he hired Iskandarov as a part-time instructor.

In a recent telephone interview, Dean explained how glad he was about his new hire. Not only was Iskandarov able to teach classes in English. He also knew the trucking business inside out. And he spoke Russian, too, when needed. "The language barrier really is the only problem for them," Dean said. "Other than that, our refugee students learn just as fast as anyone else." To date, 14

**Not only can a license help you get to work, but a commercial driver's license can be an excellent ticket to employment.**

refugees have enrolled in the program and three have recently graduated.

When asked what she has learned from the experience of setting up this program Winter said she realizes how important it was to find a client who can serve as an "anchor," someone who had the ability to keep the door open for others. "This job upgrade paved the way for other refugees to become self-sufficient," she said. "I made my job easier, and people found better jobs."

**Tackling Transportation << 1**

At the core of America's transportation problems lies what experts call the "spatial mismatch," a situation in which 75 percent of low-income residents live in city centers, despite the fact that 75 percent of employment is located in the surrounding suburbs. And for city residents, jobs in the county are usually worth the commute. According to the 2005 "Bridges to Work" study, suburban employers are more likely to offer health insurance, for example.

To overcome this disparity, some refugee resettlement organizations help their clients to find housing that's closer to where they work. Bringing the workplace to the client is another potential option. One Baltimore Community College instructor I spoke with moved her entire American Workstyles class to the home of a Burmese student, after realizing that this would shorten students' commuting time. In certain contexts, employers might also be encouraged to implement such a relocation program.

In Louisville, the Transit Authority of River City tackled the problem of spatial mismatch by establishing a "night owl" bus for late shift workers. This Kentucky success story illustrates how smart transportation strategies can lead to self-sufficiency. Partnering with employers is another solution. An Ohio job developer writing for this issue reports on one employer that established its own ride service, bringing affordable transportation to its 200 refugee employees.

Thinking outside of the box can't hurt when you're trying to solve transportation problems. In New Haven, Conn., for example, one creative nonprofit group offers free bicycles to refugees. As a result,

refugees can now accept jobs in parts of the city that are underserved by public transportation. Although they have been very successful, such bicycle programs only exist in a few pockets around the country. Statistics from the Bicycle Institute of America show that only 1.67 percent of Americans commute by bicycle to work (in contrast to 15 percent of Japanese workers).

Regional adaptation is important. Not all solutions work everywhere. For example, fare-free mass transit programs don't exist in most parts of country. But where they do exist – such as in Cache County, Utah – they've made a significant difference in our clients' lives.

Aden Batar, a refugee from Somalia, was placed in the city of Logan, Utah two years after Cache County's public

**75% of low-income residents live in city centers, despite the fact that 75% of employment is located in the surrounding suburbs.**

transit system became fare-free. Batar, who now serves as the director of immigration and refugee resettlement at Catholic Community Services in Salt Lake City, recalled: "The free bus system was great. Sixteen Somalis arrived with me in Logan. We were using buses for shopping, school and work. Within a month, we all started our first jobs."

Cache County's bus system is funded through a local quarter-percent sales tax and Federal Transit Administration Urbanized Area Formula Program grants. Making mass transit fare-free is becoming a more popular policy elsewhere. This summer San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom asked transit officials to study the impact of eliminating fares on city buses, streetcars and cable cars. While infrastructure is important, solutions don't always come from the top-down. Sometimes they also come from refugees themselves. Small

individual efforts can make a difference.

When he saw an opportunity to help, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service caseworker, Pai "Paul" Uk, a refugee from Burma, donated his Honda to a refugee couple who had recently arrived from a Malaysian camp. The couple had found jobs at a suburban window-making company, but couldn't make the commute without a car. So Uk stepped in. "My wife and I both felt we should help," he recalled. "I knew they couldn't afford to even buy a used car, for \$3,000, let alone thinking of purchasing a new one. So we donated our car. I also paid for the title change."

As Uk's story demonstrates, solutions to transportation problems are found in the social context of communities. The couple is now taking good care of the car, he reports, and they're making it available for short-term use to other refugees who need it. Over the years, the Uks have donated three cars to refugee families.

**Consultant's Corner << 1**

.....  
bells, as I awaited the next group of students to come in the room and sit down, the teacher whispered in my ear... "You know out of 37 students in this class there are over thirty nationalities."

This was a very profound moment for me. In America we pride ourselves on our diversity and helping those from foreign lands. But we are not alone in the world when it comes to this. In this room were kids from Uzbekistan, the Republic of Georgia, South Korea, Vietnam, Armenia, Chechnya, Ukraine, Moldova and many other places. All in one city and in one school room, learning together. All being taught by teachers who embrace their differences and try to bring to light their commonalities. All having parents who came to Moscow to look for a better life for their families and who understand that a strong economy and a sense of freedom mean there is a chance for hope to survive.

A familiar story – only this time it was told in a different language.

**Jonathan Lucus**  
Senior Consultant and National Coordinator



## Banking for the Unbanked

An interview with Kica Matos on New Haven's Elm City Resident Card

*In late August, the New Haven, Conn., Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services was having its weekly food bank. The room was filled with fresh fruits and vegetables, and the walls were covered with signs announcing the center's support for the "Elm City Resident Card." Employment staff wore buttons with the same message.*

"What's the Elm City Resident Card?" I asked, wondering if the ID might have anything to do with the fresh vegetables. Elm City was New Haven's nickname, IRIS's director, Chris George, explained. And the municipal ID card was a much-appreciated program aimed at increasing the social integration of new residents.

In addition to serving as an identification card, the ID had a multitude of other useful functions. It could be used as a library card, and as an entry pass for public beaches and parks, and even as a bank card at 50 downtown shops.

"We're going to encourage all of our clients to get this card," George said. "It's especially useful for children, who typically don't have IDs, because they can have immediate access to public libraries. We're going to cover the small cost of signing up."

In an interview with RefugeeWorks, the city's community services administrator, Kica Matos, who is the main organizer of the program, said that public safety was also a motivation behind the cards. "We discovered that a lot of immigrants were targeted because they carried cash with them," she said. RefugeeWorks spoke with Matos two weeks after the Elm City Resident Card was launched.



**"We see [the Elm City Resident Card] as a way of integrating people into New Haven's civic life."**

*Kica Matos*

**RefugeeWorks:** How many people have applied for the Elm City Resident Card?

**Kica Matos:** We issued 2,570 cards in two weeks. It's a lot more than we expected.

**RefugeeWorks:** How do refugees benefit from the program?

**Matos:** We believe this card will integrate people who feel marginalized because they are immigrants, refugees or new to the city. We see it as a way of integrating people into New Haven's civic life. We also see it as an opportunity to offer banking for the un-banked. And the next step the city wants to take is to find ways to link financial literacy with the ID card. For refugees, this is an opportunity to really take advantage of city services.

**RefugeeWorks:** How long did the launch of the card take?

**Matos:** We started working seriously on this initiative in January 2007. City Council said it would approve the program only if taxpayers would not have to foot the bill. So we raised money ourselves, put it through the legislative process, organized publicity, bought the equipment, and rolled the program out on July 24.

**RefugeeWorks:** How can residents apply for it?

**Matos:** All you need to show is an acceptable ID and a proof of residency. The card costs \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids.

> **Contact Kica** [kmatos@newhavenct.net](mailto:kmatos@newhavenct.net)

## Stay Tuned for RefugeeWorks' 2008 Conference Schedule!

RefugeeWorks will soon announce its 2008 Employment Training Institute schedule. Check out our Web site in early December, at [www.refugeeworks.org](http://www.refugeeworks.org).

### PRESENTERS NEEDED

If you have strong training and communication skills and expertise in refugee employment program management, workforce development or vocational training, consider presenting a paper at one of our upcoming conferences. Email your resume to [information@refugeeworks.org](mailto:information@refugeeworks.org).

### UPCOMING CONFERENCES

**Dec 4-6, 2007** — Don't miss the Institute for Social and Economic Development's New Americans Economic Development Summit. Location: Hilton Washington Embassy Row in Washington, D.C. More info: [www.ised.us](http://www.ised.us)

**Dec 6-8, 2007** — Register for the National Immigration Law Center's 6th National Low-Income Immigrant Rights Conference. Location: Doubletree Hotel Crystal City in Arlington, Va.

## RefugeeWorks Welcomes New Staff Member

Daniel Sturm has joined RefugeeWorks as a new staff consultant and managing editor of this newsletter. Prior to joining the team, Daniel worked as a full-time journalist covering under-reported social and political topics. Originally from Germany, since moving to the United States, he has worked as a reporter, journalism professor and social justice advocate. Understanding media's potential to serve as a voice for the voiceless, Daniel intends to highlight refugee success stories, and will always welcome your "scoop."



You may contact him at [dsturm@refugeeworks.org](mailto:dsturm@refugeeworks.org)

## REFUGEEWORKS ON THE ROAD

In the hometown of boxing champion and civil rights activist, Muhammad Ali, job developers participated in an advanced-level RefugeeWorks Employment Training Institute. Hosted by Catholic Charities Migration and Refugee Services in Louisville, from Sept. 11-12, case workers attended sessions ranging from transportation to career ladder, and toured the new Muhammad Ali Center.



**NEWSLETTER 23**

**TRANSPORTATION ISSUE**

***“Sometimes the best way to serve people who are transportation disadvantaged is to reach out to and work with the larger community.”***

Carolyn Jeskey, Community Transportation Association of America.  
See, “Bicycles Can Bridge the Gap,” p.6.



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Community Partnerships

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