

FACILITATING REFUGEE EMPLOYMENT
THROUGH THE PARTNERING OF
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES WITH EDUCATION

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ACRONYMS

- ❑ **WSS:** Way to Self-Sufficiency. Also known as Refugee Social Service (RSS).
- ❑ **RETP:** Refugee Employment and Training Program. Also known as Targeted Assistance Program (TAP). A partnership between LSS/NCA and BCCC.
- ❑ **ESL:** English as a Second Language
- ❑ **WS:** Workstyles
- ❑ **IRC:** The International Rescue Committee

OVERVIEW

History of Partnership

- LSS/NCA and BCCC have been successfully partnering employment placement and ESL services for refugees in the Baltimore metro area since 1999.
- The two organizations have worked closely under the RETP/TAP grant in conjunction with Baltimore City Mayor's Office since 2006. The RETP/TAP program combines employment services and workforce-focused educational programs to link refugees with meaningful and sustained employment.
- LSS/NCA and BCCC are housed in the Baltimore Resettlement Center where they coordinate refugee services with other service providers.



OVERVIEW

ASSETS: Cultural Awareness and Language Capability

- ❑ LSS/NCA Baltimore staff members are all either former refugees or political asylees.
- ❑ BCCC has nearly 30 years of experience serving refugees in Baltimore City.
- ❑ Staff members from both organizations combine to have lived on five continents.
- ❑ Staff speak over 20 languages.
- ❑ Familiar with the need and use of language interpretation.

OVERVIEW

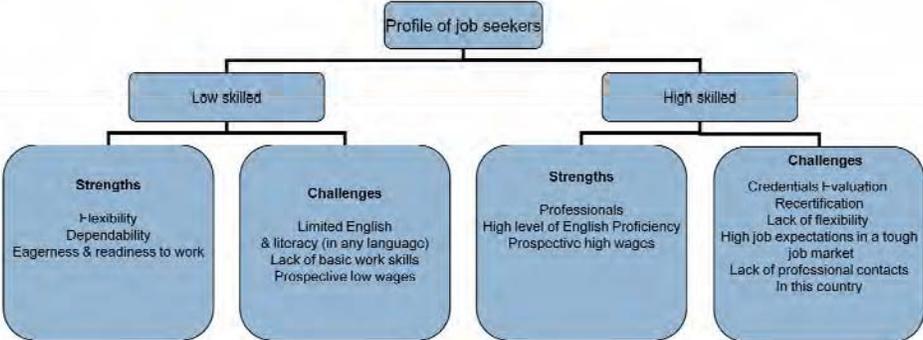
Refugee and Asylee Pool



- LSS/NCA and BCCC serve refugees and asylees from around the world.
- Current main countries of origin: Iraq, Bhutan, Burma, Congo DRC, and Eritrea.

OVERVIEW

Challenges and Opportunities



OVERVIEW

We outreach to:

- ❑ Employers that offer entry-level jobs for the low skilled. These include those in employment sectors such as hospitality, retail, and manufacturing.
- ❑ Employers that offer entry- and mid-level jobs for the highly skilled. These include those in employment sectors such as healthcare, education, technology, and banking.

EMPLOYMENT

Current Job Market Challenges for Refugees

- Larger pool of unemployed in the state.
- Fierce competition. The low-skilled and highly-skilled are often competing for the same jobs.
- Employers can afford to “cherry pick” a few refugees out of a group and set higher standards for lower-end jobs.

EMPLOYMENT

ESL and Employment Training

- Pre-employment training: All program participants are required to attend a four-hour workshop given by LSS/NCA on workplace culture and their responsibilities for finding a job.
- ESL: All participants are required to attend ESL classes at BCCC. The classes are designed to overcome barriers to sustained employment both outside of work (e.g. navigating the transportation system, maintaining a checking account and paying bills, describing symptoms to a doctor, etc.) and inside of work (e.g. recognizing and following workplace safety precautions). Levels range from Pre-Literacy to Job Readiness to Business Writing and Accent Reduction).

EDUCATION

ESL and Employment Training Cont.



- **Workstyles:** An innovative two-week, sixty-hour program that teaches US workplace culture, interview skills, and how to fill out a job application. A two-teacher model allows there to be multiple levels of English proficiency in the class.
- **Professional Pathways:** A series of workshops targeted to the highly-qualified on such topics as resume writing, networking and career exploration. LSS/NCA, BCCC, and the IRC partner to provide.
- **Vocational Training:** BCCC furnishes occupational skills training in such areas as Geriatric Nursing Assistant, Medical Terminology, and Construction Apprenticeship. These lead to relatively well paid entry-level positions in the respective fields.

EDUCATION

Educational Outcomes

- ❑ BCCC serves about 500 refugees a year in its ESL program. Classes have over an 80% retention rate. About half complete an English level (e.g. High Beginner) after a 72- to 120-hour session. When a level is completed students receive a certificate, which they can present to a potential employer.
- ❑ Since the inception of the program, more than 350 participants have successfully completed Workstyles.
- ❑ BCCC has trained more than four dozen Geriatric Nursing Assistants. Recently, Keswick Multicare Center was so impressed with the program and students, it paid for a cohort. One student, after taking the class, was able to pass the state's nursing exam and become an LPN.

OUTCOMES

**LSS/NCA INTAKE & JOB PLACEMENTS PERFORMANCES IN
BALTIMORE FY2009**

PROGRAM	INTAKES			JOB PLACEMENTS		
	Goal	Achieved	Percentage	Goal	Achieved	Percentage
WSS (RSS)	247	232	94%	198	184	93%
RETP (TAP)	135	149	110%	108	129	119%
Total goals & Outcomes	382	381	99%	306	313	102%

OUTCOMES

Vocational trainings lead to



Better employment

ON THE WAY TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY...

