



MEDIA RELEASE

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Honoring World Refugee Day 2011

(Seattle, WA) – On June 20, 2011, the world will honor the courage, resilience, and determination of refugees. In observance of World Refugee Day, thousands of organizations in hundreds of countries will focus global attention not only on the plight of refugees and the causes of their exile, but also on their will to survive and the contributions refugees have made in our increasingly global community.

Currently, 47 million people in the world have been displaced by war, persecution, or natural disasters in their native lands. In an instant, refugees lose everything – their family, friends, home, community, and country. Forced to flee, they witness and endure the unthinkable. Despite the trauma and uncertainty in their lives, their hope of one day being safe and self-sufficient again is irrepressible.

In honor of World Refugee Day 2011, Exiled Voices for Justice and Seattle Central Library will co-host a free documentary screening, panel discussion, and advocacy fair on **Sunday, June 19, 2:00-5:00 p.m.** This one-time event will take place in the Microsoft Auditorium at Seattle Central Library (1000 Fourth Ave) and be introduced by Congressman Jim McDermott. Seating is limited; first come, first served.

At 2:30 pm, "Moving to Mars" will be screened. This critically acclaimed documentary follows two refugee families from Burma as they journey from a refugee camp on the Thai-Burma border to their new homes in the U.K. The film depicts their struggles to adapt to an entirely different way of life, offering insight into what it means to be forcibly uprooted, lose everything, and begin anew.

After the screening, panelists from Burma, Bhutan, Iraq, Somalia, and the Congo will speak to and answer questions about refugee issues raised by the film: Why Flee?, The Journey, Living in Exile, Trauma, Being Resettled, and Belonging, Again. Former refugees, all of the panelists fled war and persecution in their native lands. After overcoming countless challenges and resettling in our community, they helped ease the transition of other newly resettled refugees.

Before and after the screening and panel discussion, an advocacy fair will offer attendees opportunities to brighten the future of refugees, locally and abroad. Exhibitors will include the Refugee & Immigrant Children's Program, International Counseling & Community Services, and the Refugee Resettlement Program of Lutheran Community Services Northwest; UNHCR; The American Red Cross and ICRC; International Rescue Committee; Jewish Family Services; and World Relief.

This event is sponsored by Lutheran Community Services Northwest, Seattle Central Library, the American Red Cross, Seeds of Compassion, UNHCR, and Global Washington. To learn more about this event, please visit www.exiledvoicesforjustice.org To be alerted to other World Refugee Day events, simply "Like" the "Refugee & Immigrant Children's Program" on Facebook.

Lutheran Community Services Northwest is a non-profit human services agency. Our mission is to partner with individuals, families and communities for health, justice, and hope.

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