

Grassroots Community Development Organizations

Located on the Northside with focused efforts alongside our refugee neighbors

[Grassroots: The term implies that the creation of the movement and the group supporting it are natural and spontaneous. *Wikipedia*]



Northside Learning Center

A refugee-focused learning center on Syracuse's Northside for students of all ages

In 2009, a group of concerned local people became aware of the need for literacy services for refugees and immigrants. This awareness came to a core group of people through their involvement with the Islamic Society of CNY. They began to research the issue and learned that the “supply” of English Language literacy services did not meet the demand – both in terms of “available seats”; and in terms of schedule and location.

In committing to address the unmet need, they set out to visit successful local providers of similar services and we're told of three keys to success:

- Serve the whole family – both culturally and practically, newcomers don't have the resources to arrange childcare in order to attend classes
- Serve refugees where they are – the majority of new arrivals don't have cars – location, location
- Provide services in the evening – when people have time. The majority of existing services are offered during the day

In the first year of operation, nearly 160 students were served. Classes are held on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings from 5:30 – 8:00 PM throughout the school year.

This year, for the first time, NSLC is offering a Summer Academy for Middle and High School students with classes on Monday – Thursday from 9:00 – 1:00 for six weeks. Over 50 students are enrolled.



Northside Urban Partnerships

www.northsideup.org

Seeking to radically improve the quality of life within the Northside by assembling diverse groups of stakeholders to engage in common tasks for the benefit of the community.

All of Northside UP's collaboratively designed programs, projects, and activities are initiated by partners, both large and small, who contribute in a manner that is proportionate to their size and relevant to their assets. Our efforts are focused on people, place, and business, prompting a multi-faceted approach to community development that incorporates: working with developers to encourage quality mixed-income neighborhood housing, facilitating business development, coordinating community gardens and green space improvements, hosting arts and culture events, restoring the physical infrastructure of the neighborhood, and marketing the area to recruit new businesses and residents. Most notably, we implement Work Train, a workforce development system that includes Green Train – a weatherization and sustainable construction program – and Health Train – a program that links residents to entry level position in hospitals and the health care field. Currently, partners involved in Work Train are developing the system to include a greater variety of job sectors.

The Northside Urban Partnership is a collaborative endeavor sponsored by Catholic Charities of Onondaga County, a county-wide social service provider; CenterState CEO, Central New York's premier business leadership and economic development organization; St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center, the neighborhood's anchor institution and health care provider; Franciscan Collaborative Ministries, a neighborhood social service provider; and the Greater North Salina Business Association, the neighborhood merchant association.



Hopeprint

www.hopeprint.org

A home-based organization which seeks to create opportunities, facilitate personal development and inspire hope by cultivating relationships between the resettled refugee community and the community at large.

We believe that Syracuse, NY has been given a gift. Each year, the refugees arriving in our city bring with them an incredible amount of potential. When each of these lives has another who walks beside them and helps them overcome the barriers of language and culture in this foreign land, this potential is unlocked and released into our world.

Believing that relationships can transform lives, Hopeprint efforts to build bridges where these genuine and mutual friendships can be built, including the following venues:

- The Hopeprint Home – a residential home in the heart of Syracuse’s Northside which serves as a “community home,” hosting meals, conversation groups and being a part of the fabric of the community
- Academic Help Center – GED tutoring, academic writing class, tutoring in all college and high school level subjects and more available at the Assisi Center (N. Salina & Catawba St) T, W & H 6-8:30pm
- Life Coaching & Specialized Coaching Groups – American-born “Hopeprint family members” which match up with refugee Hopeprint family members to walk alongside one another in life and form genuine, mutual friendships, learning along the way
- HopePass – a curriculum used with the coaching groups that uses interactive classroom, field trips/workshops, reading with discussion and conversation groups to facilitate improved life, cultural and/or professional literacy



Yeshua Restoration Ministries

<http://northsideup.org/blog/goals-for-the-northside/>

Refugee boys soccer club and so much more

Yeshua Restoration Ministries (YRM), takes a very hands-on approach to revitalization. As members of the community, it’s leaders, Lou and Anne, have first-hand knowledge of its needs. When Lou brought out a soccer ball, language and cultural barriers evaporated. He says, “soccer is universal,” so the YRM soccer club began in the summer of 2010. Members of the club come from at least 7 different countries, and all of them have played soccer in their home countries. The thirty or so boys, ranging in age from about 10-15 years old, that regularly attend their club have really become a team.

Members of the club also give back to the community. They help neighbors with various projects and weekly cleanup of the streets in the neighborhood, learning responsibility and commitment to a cause and a team. As a reward, participants attend monthly cookouts and other activities.

In addition to the obvious aesthetic changes the Vinciguerras are making on the Northside, the real fulfillment of their goals lies in the relationships they continue to build within the community.



Women Transcending Boundaries

www.wtb.org

Bringing women together across the boundaries of faith and ethnicity through education, socialization and service.

In our eleven years we have held programs on a wide variety of spiritual topics, educating ourselves and the community about similarities between faiths and the diversity within each faith. We developed a community garden on Isabella Street for NorthSide residents, organized an annual weekend of volunteerism to commemorate 9/11, and created programs at the Center for New Americans that are helping local refugee women learn to use American sewing machines, make jewelry and useful ceramic items, and develop job skills and marketing opportunities for their sewing, knitting, and ceramic products.

[Contact: Jennifer Crittenden, President – info@wtb.org]



Blessed Sikhosana Foundation, Inc

“Community voice” for refugees on the Northside of Syracuse

We are the “**COMMUNITY VOICE**” for orphans in Bulawayo-Zimbabwe, Africa as well as for the Refugees residing in the North side of Syracuse who come into the USA driven out by war in their own homeland countries.

Rev. Sikhosana accentuates that, “We are an independent Not-For-Profit-Organization and not affiliated with CYO Catholic Charities or the Refugee Center both of Syracuse, who in my opinion are a huge initial setting stage in resettling our new comers here in Syracuse.”

Nevertheless, helping to resettle refugees in any community, anywhere in the world requires collaboration of/with many other organizations with similar interests. At BSF, we believe and embrace Africa's truism that, "**It Takes A Village To Raise A Child,**" and hence the refugee program was incorporated in the BSF, Inc as our local priority project.

"As the Founder and Executive Director of BSF, I was born and raised in Bulawayo-Zimbabwe, Africa and I chose to live in the North side of Syracuse for many reasons, being able to help refugees at grassroots level, was my top priority. Over the last 6 years, I have had the blessed privilege of personally working on a first hand experience with the refugees, particularly those who come from African countries, such as Sudan, Congo, Burundi and Rwanda.

"Within this period of time, I've witnessed many of the refugees' hardships, for example, high school students struggling with computer access for homework; clothing as they first arrive into the neighborhood; need for more food; need for furniture for their new apartments; land for farming to feed their children and to start up cooperatives, and many other concerns, but these being some of the major issues. The Blessed Sikhosana Foundation, Inc. has been blessed to be able to meet most of these needs, "one refugee at a time". A lot of work is still ahead of us.

"As a matter of fact, BSF is heavily involved in extensive land acquisition conversations with the USDpt of Agriculture to train and empower our local refugees to be farmers, self sustained and move away from welfare. Conversely, I am confident that, 'Together as Northside Community Leaders, Having Similar Concerns, We Can Make a Difference in the Lives of Refugees.'"

Some Additional Community Resources

P.E.A.C.E., Inc.

<http://www.peace-cao.org/>

A Community Action Agency helping people realize their potential for becoming self-sufficient

P.E.A.C.E., Inc. believes in the strength of the human spirit and is dedicated to changing lives by teaching people how to help themselves and support those around them. To this end, we provide a continuum of services for the entire family from infants to the elderly. Head Start (HS) helps children, ages three to five years of age, achieve their full potential by providing early childhood development, health, family services and other support to participants and their families. Early Head Start (EHS) promotes the physical cognitive, social and emotional growth of infants and toddlers, as well as prenatal education and support services to pregnant women. Other P.E.A.C.E., Inc. programs, such as Big Brothers Big Sisters school-based mentoring and Family Resource Centers, are also open to families and individuals.

There are several ways New Americans might want to connect with us. (1) If they are pregnant or have a child from birth to age three, they may benefit from participating in home-based Early Head Start. (2) If they have a child who is three, they can participate in home-based Head Start. (3) When children are four, they transition into a center-based Head Start program. Some children spend part of the day at a Catholic Charities preschool and part of the day at Head Start. To get an application, families can call 470-3300. Head Start recognizes that parents are the primary educators of their children. Our goal is to provide them with as many services as we can to support a child's learning and development.

White Branch Library

www.onlib.org

Local public library serving Syracuse's Northside

Currently Offering:

- Beginner ESL Classes - Tues., Wed. and Thurs. from 12:30-3:30 for very beginning English learners (must register at Bob's School). Classes are taught by a certified SCSD teacher.
- ESL Conversation Group – Fridays at 10:30 (no registration necessary)
- Literacy Assessments for 1-on-1 tutoring (Literacy Volunteers of Greater Syracuse)
- ESL Literacy Lab w/ 4 computers, pre-loaded with ESL software, citizenship and more ESL materials