

# Welcoming Our Newest Neighbors – Idaho's Refugees

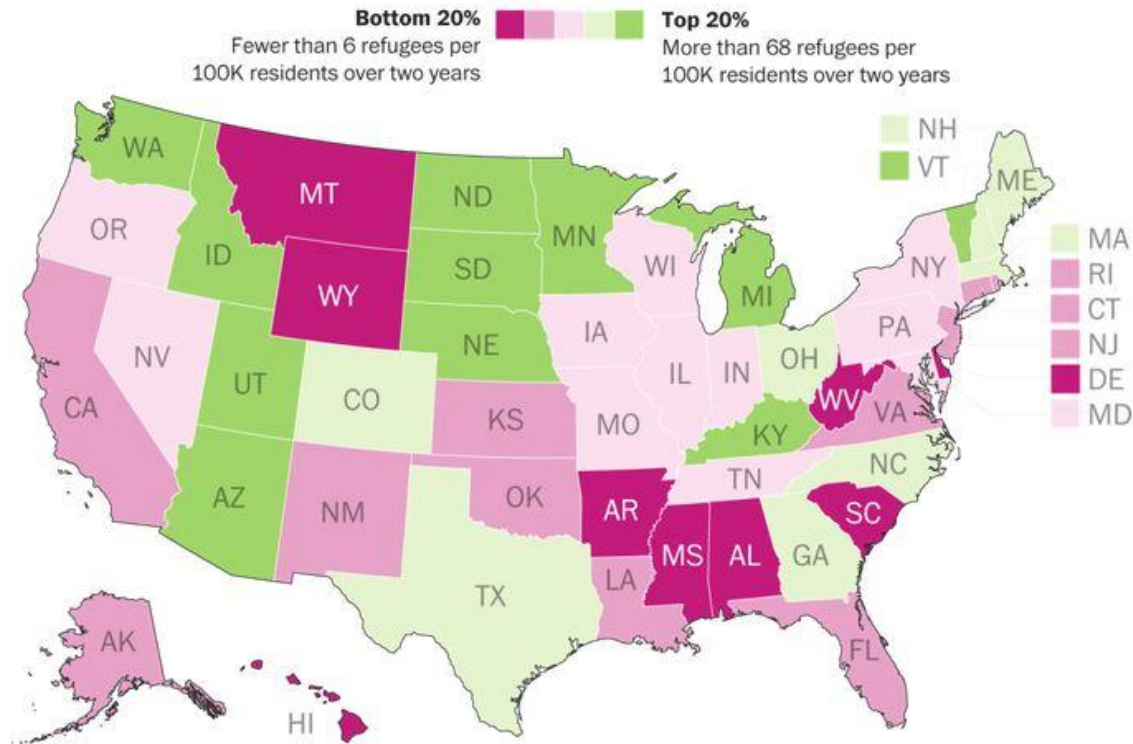
ELIZABETH RAMSEY with KAMAL RIZAL

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## The most and least welcoming states for refugees

Relative to their own populations, North and South Dakota have settled the most refugees in recent years, while Southern states have settled some of the fewest. (Data from fiscal years 2013 and 2014)



WAPO.ST/WONKBLOG  
SOURCE: U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement





"An immigrant leaves his homeland to find greener grass.  
A refugee leaves his homeland because the grass is burning under his feet..."

— Barbara Law, *More Than Just Surviving Handbook: ESL for Every Classroom Teacher*



# DEFINING DISPLACED POPULATIONS



- Asylees
- Refugees
- Special Immigrant Visa recipients

# THE CHANGING FACE of REFUGEES in IDAHO



- 1980's – Southeast Asian and Eastern European
- 1990's – More than half from Bosnia and Herzegovina
- 2000's – Pace of change accelerates as conflicts grow and spread throughout the world



# LARGEST REFUGEE POPULATIONS in IDAHO (2012)



- Burma
- Bhutan
- Democratic Republic of Congo

# THE LONG JOURNEY to IDAHO



- Flee to a neighboring country
- Apply to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for protection
- May then be permitted to continue living outside home country
- Referred to a Joint Voluntary Agency or US Embassy
- Assemble documents and wait for response
- Interview with US government official
- Medical exam
- A sponsor is found
- Travel to the US is arranged

# RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMS in IDAHO



- Office of Refugee Resettlement
- Idaho Office for Refugees
- Contracted agencies:
  - Agency for New Americans
  - World Relief
  - International Rescue Committee
  - CSI Refugee Programs, Twin Falls



# SPONSORSHIP



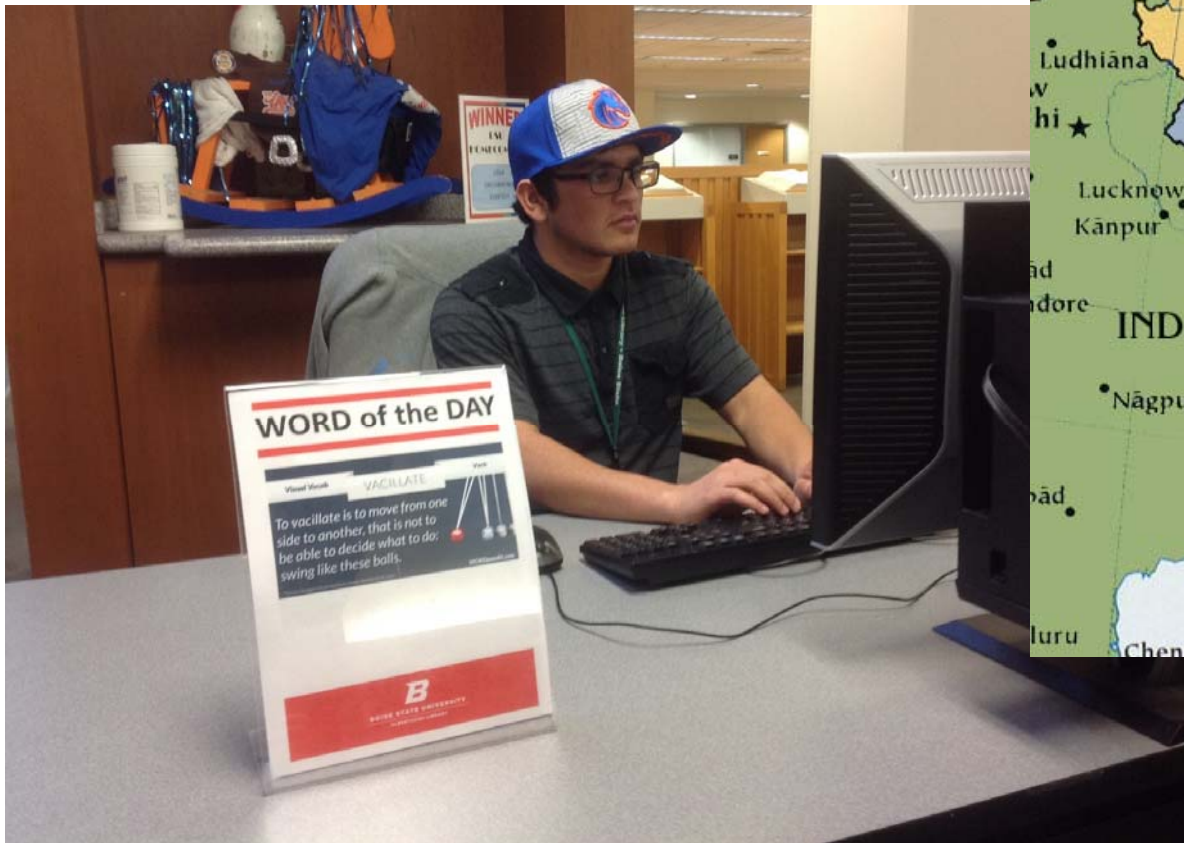
- Meets refugees at airport
- Provides housing for at least a month
- Provides any necessary clothing
- Applies for Social Security cards
- Enrolls children in public school
- Helps adults learn English
- Helps adults become job ready and seek employment

# NUMEROUS CHALLENGES



- Language barriers
- Education
- Economic stability
- Safe, affordable housing
- Health care
- Transportation
- Isolation
- Discrimination

# COMPLICATED SITUATIONS



BHUTAN: FORGOTTEN REFUGEES  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H01Uuvm1KHA>



## COMPLICATED SITUATIONS



“A lotus is a perfect depiction of my life.”

- Kamal Rizal



# LIBRARIES HELP EASE THE TRANSITION



- Homework Help
- Immigration & citizenship support
- Hosting English language classes
- Programming by and for New Americans
- Collection development
- Technology assistance
- Library guides
- Conferences



BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY  
ALBERTSONS LIBRARY

# BOISE PUBLIC LIBRARY REFUGEE SERVICES KEEP GROWING

- English Corner & Learning Lab at the Hillcrest Branch
- Tax Assistance & Free Legal Clinic
- Programming by the refugee community, ex. “Worlds Connect: Hill Tribes of Burma”

*- Shannon Davis-Jones,  
Volunteer Coordinator of the Idaho Refugee Committee &  
Member of Boise Public Library’s Foundation Board of Directors*





## REFUGEE INFORMATION FOR SERVICE LEARNING STUDENTS: REFUGEE INFO

Enter Search Words

Search

Information for service-learning students regarding the major countries of origin for refugees relocating to Idaho.

Refugee Info

Tips for Volunteering

Resources to Learn More

Current News

### Who is a Refugee?

Any person who is outside any country of such person's nationality or, in the case of a person having no nationality, is outside any country in which such person last habitually resided, and who is unable or unwilling to return to, and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of, that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

(From the Idaho Office for Refugees website)

### Welcome to Refugee Resources for Service-Learning Students

Welcome to the Refugee Resources guide.

This guide is meant to provide you with relevant and timely information centered around refugee issues, including research resources & databases, cultural guides, volunteer resources, and more.

Read this article from the database CQ Researcher for background information on refugees worldwide: [Global Refugee Crisis by Mary H. Cooper.](#)

Guide to Working With Refugees



### Refugee Arrival Info



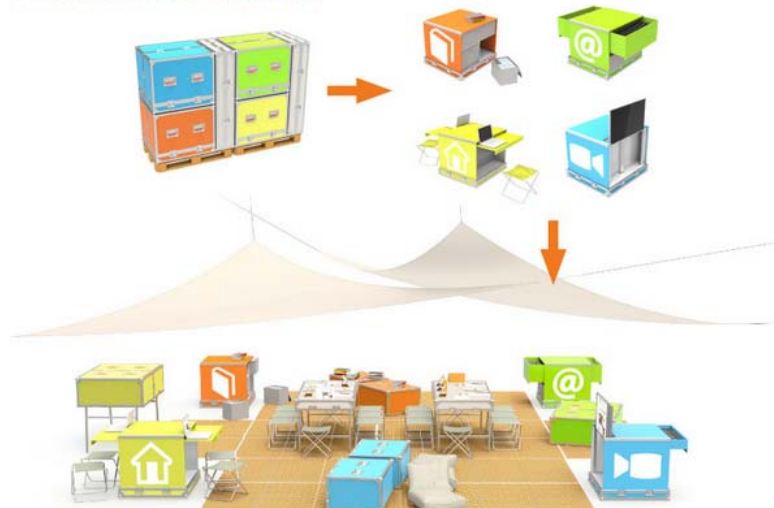


## IDEASBOX

Discover the first device providing access to culture and information in emergency situations



### THE IDEAS BOX, A PORTABLE MULTI-MEDIA KIT FOR REFUGEE AND VULNERABLE POPULATIONS



"When one has lost everything and there is nothing else left, the only thing that cannot be taken away is the ability to dream" -- Philippe Starck

### NEWS AND EVENTS



**LWB DEPLOYS AN IDEAS BOX IN LEBANON**

One year after the deployment of the first Ideas Box in Burundi, where there has already been a notable impact...



**PRESENTATION OF THE IDEAS BOX AT THE 12TH DIHAD CONFERENCE!**

From the 24th to the 26th of March, Libraries Without Borders will participate in the 12th DIHAD conference, which is a major humanitarian...



**PATRICK WEIL, LWB CHAIRMAN SPEAKING AT THE INSTITUT FRANÇAIS IN LONDON**

Libraries Without Borders and the Institut Français in London are organising a conference focused on the Ideas Box and cultural...



**THE IDEAS BOX SHOWCASED AT SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST!**



# WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE



“So when I came to America, it was just a feast, the fact that I could go into a library. It was such an incredible feeling of liberation. I mean it was like church! 'Oh my god, I can take any book out that I want?' I think that's really what was my salvation and has been throughout my life.”

- Nayomi Munaweera,  
Refugee from Sri Lanka via Nigeria on *First Days*

# International Market family fund



BOISE, ID

EMERGENCIES

\$52,800 of \$50k

Raised by 841 people in 9 days

Donate Now

SHARE ON FACEBOOK



3.0K TOTAL SHARES

f SHARE

2.9K

t TWEET

136



Created September 6, 2015

✉ Kari Williams Randel

# RESOURCES

Starting Over Again: The Refugee Experience in Boise. A documentary by students at Boise State University

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gEv2bd4Xtc0>

Backgrounders on refugee cultures from Idaho Office of Refugees

[http://www.idahorefugees.org/home/information\\_resources/#who\\_are\\_refugees](http://www.idahorefugees.org/home/information_resources/#who_are_refugees)

List of books and films about refugees from the International Rescue Committee

[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/orr/refugee\\_films\\_and\\_books.pdf](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/orr/refugee_films_and_books.pdf)

Teachers' resources from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

<http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4ab346796.html>

First Days – stories of immigrants' first days in the US <http://www.pri.org/series/first-days>

Syrian Journey: Choose your own escape route. An interactive text adventure that puts you in the shoes of a Syrian migrant <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32057601>

# RECOMMENDED READING

*Library Services for Multicultural Patrons: Strategies to Encourage Library Use* (2012) Carol Smallwood, Kim Becnel, (eds.) Rowman & Littlefield.

Moorehead, C. (2005). *Human cargo: A journey among refugees*. New York: H. Holt

Pipher, M. B. (2002). *The middle of everywhere: The world's refugees come to our town*. New York: Harcourt.

Sassoon, J. (2009). *The Iraqi refugees: The new crisis in the Middle East*. London: I.B. Tauris.

White House Task Force on New Americans (2015). *Strengthening communities by welcoming all residents: A federal strategic action plan on immigrant & refugee integration*. Retrieved from <http://1.usa.gov/1HpGvHi>

Zamindar, V. F.-Y. (2007). *The long partition and the making of modern South Asia: Refugees, boundaries, histories*. New York: Columbia University Press.