

Life as a Refugee

June 19th-20th, 2009
Central Library



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1. How to Register

Attendees are asked to register in advance to help with planning (although walk-ins are welcome). Please note that registering does NOT guarantee you a seat.

Simply e-mail lifasarefugee@hotmail.com and indicate if you will be attending Friday evening, Saturday or both days; or call Jennifer @ (519) 432-1133 ext. 278.

While donations are welcome, all sessions are **FREE** to attend!

2. Detailed Schedule

All activities will take place at Central Library.

Friday June 19th

6:30-9:00pm

6:30-7:30pm

Stevenson & Hunt Room
(Seating limited to 120)

Speaker – Dr. Don Payne

Dr. Don Payne will speak of his extensive experience working with refugee trauma survivors as a psychiatrist and of the role health care professionals play in social justice and human rights.

7:30-9:00pm

Stevenson & Hunt Room

“Killing Time” documentary

Winner of Grand Prix at 2008 Montreal Human Rights Film Festival. This Canadian documentary follows the lives of Bhutanese refugees who have been living in camps in Nepal for 20 years as well as after resettlement in the United States. This film is timely given that the Canadian government has pledged to resettle 5,000 Bhutanese across Canada over the next five years. (See synopsis and the Jury’s statement in Section 5)

Saturday June 20th

9:30am-1:30pm

Note that several panels will be happening at the same time.

9:00am-1:30pm

Displays by community organizations

9:30-9:45am

Wolf Performance Hall

Welcome from organizers

9:45-11:00am

Wolf Performance Hall

Panel – “Human Rights of Refugees”

Liz McWeeny (Canadian Council for Refugees) and Gloria Nafziger (Amnesty Int. Canada) will discuss current human rights issues affecting refugees, including the refugee appeal division, safe third country, family reunification and transportation loans.

9:45-11:00am

Stevenson & Hunt Room

Panel – “London: A Good Destination for Newcomers?”

Representatives from local groups serving newcomers, including the Access Centre for Regulated Employment, the Cross Cultural Learner Centre and the Library Settlement Program, will speak about their services as well as the greatest challenges and successes of their clients.

11:15am-12:30pm

Wolf Performance Hall

Panel - "Helping Survivors of Torture and War Trauma"

Teresa Dremetsikas (Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture), Gaston Mabaya (ACFO) and Derek Oss (Partners in Caring at the CCLC) will speak about the approaches their respective programs use to help survivors of torture and war trauma. Regine King will provide examples from Rwandan programs for trauma survivors.

11:15am-12:30pm

Tonda Room

Panel - « Soutien aux survivants de la torture et de la guerre »

Perpétue Nitunga (Service et Encadrement des victimes de guerre et de crimes haineux à l'ACFO) et Jackie Gakumba (Centre Canadien pour les victimes de Torture) vont parler de leur expérience de travail avec les survivants de torture et de guerre.

11:15am-12:30pm

Stevenson & Hunt Room

Panel - "Why We Had to Flee: Stories of Resettlement"

Elsi Angulo from Colombia, Joe Swe Hantha from Burma and Abdi Hassan Ali from Somalia will explain why people from those areas have recently had to leave their homelands.

12:30-1:30pm

Stevenson & Hunt Room

Light, multicultural lunch and entertainment

3. Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 14th, 2009

Life as a Refugee

How well do we know our neighbours?

Can you spot a refugee in a crowd? Probably not, but newcomers are our neighbours, co-workers, classmates and friends. London has the highest population of one-time refugees per capita in Canada. The public is invited to learn about this diverse group of Londoners at the Central Library (251 Dundas St.) on **Friday June 19th** from 6:30-9:00pm and **Saturday June 20th** from 9:30am-1:30pm for **World Refugee Day**.

Newcomers to London bring with them memories of war and trauma, deep loss and often just the clothes on their backs. They also come with various skills, rich culture and amazing stories of survival. The "Life as a Refugee" event, hosted by the **Cross Cultural Learner Centre** and the **London Public Library**, will feature a documentary on Bhutanese refugees, displays and thought-provoking panels. It will explore topics related to human rights, root causes of displacement, settlement services, helping survivors of trauma and celebrating diversity.

Guest speakers include Dr. Don Payne, *a psychiatrist and the Coordinator of Amnesty International Canada's Medical Network*, representatives from the *Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture*, Gloria Nafziger, *Refugee Coordinator for Amnesty International Canada*, and Liz McWeeny, *President of the Canadian Council for Refugees*. Local panellists will present on settlement agencies, employment services and their own stories of fleeing to Canada.

Elsi Angulo, a panelist and lawyer from Colombia, thinks that “statistics do not tell the story of immigration. People do... Most Canadians are not aware of the circumstances of our places of origin without immigrants passing along their personal experience.”

The full schedule is available at www.lcclc.org or call (519) 432-1133 ext. 278. Registration is preferred and is done by e-mailing lifasarefugee@hotmail.com or calling the above number.

“Life as a Refugee” is FREE to attend and a light lunch will be provided on June 20th.

Interested event sponsors or donors are encouraged to contact Jennifer Mills (see below).

For more information contact:

Jennifer Mills
Community Educator
Cross Cultural Learner Centre
(519) 432-1133 ext. 278 (8:30-4:30 Mon-Fri)
jmills@lcclc.org

4. Sponsors



Polish Combatants Association Branch #2, London Muslim Mosque, St. Aidan's Anglican Church, ACFO, Amnesty Int. London, Preceptor Delta Omega

5. Selected Bios of Speakers and Film Synopsis

Elsi Angulo

Elsi Angulo is a lawyer specialized in criminal law in Colombia. She is currently a student of Social Justice and Peace studies at King's University College at the University of Western Ontario. Ms. Angulo is the author of several essays on the subject of human rights of Afro-Colombians, and is the author of "Revelations of a Threatened Attorney." Published in Colombia in 2007 under the pseudonym "Gaby Marquez" "*Revelations*" chronicles her life as a District Attorney in Colombia and her attempt to empower the black community of Colombia.

Elizabeth McWeeny, CCR President

Elizabeth McWeeny has been active in refugee protection and resettlement since 1980. Since joining the Canadian Council for Refugees in 1991, Liz has held several leadership positions, most recently as Chair of the CCR International Affairs Committee. In November 2005, she was elected President of the Canadian Council for Refugees. She was re-elected to a second term as President in November 2007.

Liz has attended and participated at international meetings on resettlement as well as taking an active role in dialogue between the government of Canada and Canadian NGOs. She has worked as a resettlement specialist for the Refugee Sponsorship Training Program and in 2001 she was deployed to UNHCR Headquarters to review the UNHCR-ICMC deployment scheme. In 2004 she coordinated the CCR - UNHCR Annual Tripartite Consultations Project on Next Steps in Supporting Integration Initiatives.

As a founding member of the DOORS to New Life Refugee Centre and the Coordinator for the Refugee Sponsorship Program in the Diocese of Thunder Bay, Liz has a solid grounding in Canada's refugee program from a front line perspective as well as in the operational, policy and broader global perspectives of refugee protection.

Gloria Nafziger

Gloria is a Master of Social Work graduate of Wilfrid Laurier University, with a specialization in community development studies. She has worked with refugees in Toronto for the past 20 years. This work has included: founding co-director of the Metro Toronto Host Program (CultureLink), Refugee Coordinator for Mennonite Central Committee Canada, Chairperson of the former Inter Church Committee for Refugees, and for the last 11 years, Refugee Coordinator at Amnesty International. Gloria lived and worked in Mozambique for two years from 1990-92, observing the causes and effects of displacement.

"I have been inspired by the many refugees and uprooted people I have met over the years who have found the courage to stand up to oppressive regimes and fight against tremendous odds for justice. I often ask myself if I would have the same courage if confronted with similar circumstances."

Donald E. Payne, M.D., F.R.C.P.(C)

Dr. Payne graduated from the University of Toronto Medical School in 1963. After two years of general practice in rural Newfoundland, he did postgraduate study of psychiatry at the University of Toronto. He was certified as a specialist in psychiatry by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada in 1971. He is presently in private practice of psychiatry in Toronto.

Since 1979, he has performed psychiatric assessments and treatment on more than 1,500 victims of torture and/or war. He has testified at refugee determination hearings, has provided in-service training to members of the Immigration and Refugee Board, and has made presentations and written articles regarding torture and treatment of torture victims. He provided expert testimony on the psychological effects of torture at the Royal Commission regarding Mahar Arar.

Since 1982, he has been the coordinator of the Medical Network of Amnesty International, Canadian Section (English Speaking). He has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Center for Victims of Torture. He was one of two North American members on the Council of the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) based in Denmark.

“Killing Time” Documentary by Annika Gustafson

“Killing Time” tells the largely unknown story of the Bhutanese refugees. In the beginning of the 1990s, a sixth of the Bhutanese population fled their country due to cultural repression. Eighteen years later, Bhutan is known as a peaceful Buddhist Himalayan Kingdom and the promoter of Gross National Happiness. Meanwhile, the exiled Bhutanese are struggling for survival in overcrowded refugee camps in Eastern Nepal. Growing increasingly restless, the young see only one solution for peace – war. Annika Gustafson lived with the Bhutanese in the camps for long periods of time. She also lived with and filmed some of the Bhutanese who made it to New York to lobby their cause.

“Because it is a complete and intelligent film that deals with an unknown problem. Because the director has managed to put words on a reality that all refugees and all those who work with them recognize: this passing of time that brings them even further from their native land. Because it is an excellent film with universal values about the refugees from Bhutan, we are giving the Grand Prix to “Killing Time” by Annika Gustafson”.

- Statement by the Jury at the Montreal Human Rights Film Festival