



Press Release

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Twin Cities to celebrate World Refugee Day on June 5

Minneapolis—Joining people in more than 100 countries around the world, the Twin Cities will hold its 4th annual large-scale, public celebration of World Refugee Day on Saturday, June 5, 2010, in downtown Minneapolis. This year's event features a new partnership with Minneapolis MOSAIC, creating a joint day-long festival exploring the state's rich cultural heritage.

The joint event takes place in downtown Minneapolis just off Hennepin Ave. between 7th & 8th streets. From 1-10 p.m. festival-goers can enjoy free live entertainment, food and vendors from around the world, children's activities, a community resource fair, and interactive educational displays by the American Refugee Committee.

The Twin Cities is home to some of the largest refugee groups in the country and worldwide, including the largest Somali population in the United States and one of the largest Hmong communities on the planet. More than 90,000 refugees have been resettled in Minnesota since 1979, and countless others have come to reunite with family members, find jobs and join communities with roots in the state.

"The human story of refugees is less about the horrors of war and the escape to freedom than it is about refugees' struggles, perseverance and achievement of dreams. Refugees dream of finishing school, of social justice and human rights, of freely praying to the god they believe in, and of transforming those dreams into realities. America, Minnesota and the Twin Cities are built by all of us, and each day our dreams are connected, renewed and achieved through our engagement with refugees and immigrants," said Pham Thi Hoa, executive director of CAPI and one of the event's chairs. CAPI, a social justice organization serving refugees and immigrants, is also a platinum sponsor of Twin Cities World Refugee Day.

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World Refugee Day is also a time to draw attention to the more than 15 million refugees worldwide, most of whom still live in the developing world. Less than one percent of refugees are resettled in another country.

“Every day, our staff around the world see the resilience and courage of the refugees with whom we work,” said Daniel Wordsworth, President and CEO of the American Refugee Committee, a Minnesota-based humanitarian aid agency that works with millions of refugees worldwide. “On World Refugee Day, we honor refugees who—against incredible odds—survive and make vital contributions to our communities and to our world.”

The American Refugee Committee (ARC) will offer interactive displays and materials at the event to educate attendees about some of the issues faced by refugees around the world. Participants can also find numerous opportunities to support refugees locally and internationally with ARC, CAPI and 60 other organizations in the community resource fair.

Twin Cities World Refugee Day is a locally organized festival that celebrates the more than 100,000 refugees living in Minnesota and the diversity of cultures, experiences and assets they bring to our community. Since 2001, people all over the world have celebrated World Refugee Day with events that honor the world’s more than 15 million refugees and raise awareness about their continued plight. For more information about the event and refugees worldwide, visit www.tcworldrefugeeday.org.

The American Refugee Committee is an international humanitarian aid agency that works to help people take back control of their lives. The partnerships we form with our constituents and supporters provide essential services and economic opportunities to people who have lost everything due to conflict and disaster. Each year, the American Refugee Committee works with nearly 2.5 million people around the world. Visit www.ARCrelief.org for more information.

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