Conference Announcement

BUILDING TOGETHER:
CREATING A WELCOMING COMMUNITY
FOR REFUGEES & IMMIGRANTS

Presented by

SMITH COLLEGE SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL WORK
With the Support of Welcome Home Northampton Steering Committee & Working Group on Psychosocial Supports for Refugees, and Smith College Center for Religious and Spiritual Life

May 17, 2017
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Smith College Campus Center Room 208

Please Register Online by April 28*
*Registration invitation to follow in separate email
This event is free of charge & a light lunch will be served – Social Work CEU’s available

You are invited to join a multi-disciplinary group of local service providers and community members as we explore the vital part we play in making refugees and immigrants in the Northampton area feel welcomed and successful.

How can we engage collaboratively with our new neighbors to promote an atmosphere of mutual understanding and reciprocity?

How can we support people to draw upon their own sources of cultural strength and resilience as they navigate the resettlement transition?

How can we, as service providers and community members who understand the nuances of our “system”, link individuals and families to helpful resources and support?

For more information please contact Julie Hooks
Conference Overview

DURING THE COURSE OF THE DAY WE WILL:

1. Learn how to use capacity-building, strengths-based frameworks and models in our work with refugees and immigrants
2. Develop skills for engaging respectfully and effectively in inter-cultural contexts
3. Explore how to orient our colleagues and adapt this approach to the unique professional and community sectors we work in
4. Network, brainstorm and collaborate with other conference participants about next steps for implementation within our specific sectors/organizations & at the community level

Tentative Schedule

OPENING REMARKS:
Marsha Kline Pruett, MS, PhD, MSL, Maconda Brown O’Connor Professor, Smith College School of Social Work

KEYNOTE ADDRESS
Supporting the Health and Well-being of Refugee and immigrant Youth and Families: Building Community Resilience Through Collaboration, Compassion and Inclusion
Saida Abdi, MA, LCSW, Associate Director for Community Programs, Refugee Trauma and Resilience Center, Boston Children’s Hospital

PANEL
Reflections on community-level work with refugees and immigrants

LUNCH: Catered by Smith College

KEYNOTE ADDRESS
Exploring Culture, Building on Strengths: Working Together to Create a Caring and Welcoming Community
Joshua Miller, MSW, PhD, Professor and Chair of Human Behavior in the Social Environments Sequence, Smith College School of Social Work

BREAK-OUT SESSION WORKSHOPS
Facilitated small-group sessions for reflection and exploration about how to disseminate and implement this work in our specific contexts

CLOSING COMMENTS

Invited Participants:
Catholic Charities, Clinical Support Options, Franklin/Hampshire Career Point, Franklin/Hampshire Regional Employment Board, Hampshire County juvenile and adult, probation officers, Local health care providers, Local mental health clinicians, Local Muslim community, Northampton Circles of Care, Northampton Fire Department, Northampton Police Department, Northampton Public Schools and Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School, Northampton Survival Center, Massachusetts Department of Children and Families, Massachusetts Department of Mental Health, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Massachusetts Office of Refugees and Immigrants, Servicenet
Marsha Kline Pruett, MS, PhD, MSL

Marsha Kline Pruett’s current research looks at family dynamics and development, both normative and non-normative, with a specialization in the promotion of healthy child and family development during life transitions, particularly those transitions related to adverse events or circumstances. Her clinical research incorporates preventive interventions, consultation, program design and evaluation. Another current area of research and intervention Kline Pruett is involved in concentrates on increasing father involvement with their children. The Supporting Father Involvement project aims to reduce child abuse and neglect and enhance family well-being through an intervention that encourages father involvement and couple co-parenting (among married and unmarried parents) in family resource centers. Kline Pruett involves undergraduate and social work graduate students in every aspect of research and writing on various projects. Students learn research skills and publish book chapters and articles. Doctoral students also attend and present at conferences and seminars that Kline Pruett attends in the local or national community. Kline Pruett is the recipient of numerous federal, state and private foundation grants and is known nationally for the development, implementation and evaluation of preventive interventions in schools and courts. At Smith, Kline Pruett is the faculty chair of the Research Sequence. She also serves on the Doctoral Program faculty and as a research adviser.

Saida Abdi, LCSW

Ms Abdi is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and a PhD Candidate at Boston University. She holds another Masters degree in Communications. She has extensive experience working with refugee and immigrant populations. She specializes in providing trauma informed care to refugee and immigrant youth and families. She has specific expertise in patient/community engagement, cultural humility and the use of interpreters and cultural brokers to reduce health disparities and enhance refugee access to mental health services. Ms. Abdi is fluent in multiple languages. As a member of the leadership team at the Boston Children’s Hospital Refugee Trauma and Resilience Center (BCHRTRC), Ms. Abdi has co-developed a manual for school-based groups focusing on acculturative stress experienced by young refugees, worked with team members to develop the Refugee Services Toolkit, implemented Trauma Systems Therapy for Refugees in Boston Public Schools, and provided training in and consultation to providers in multiple sites in the US and abroad. She has supported sites nationwide that have adapted and implemented Trauma Systems Therapy for Refugees and participated in numerous refugee research and evaluation projects. Ms. Abdi is currently an investigator in the largest longitudinal research project undertaken to understand the experiences of Somali refugee youth in North America. In addition, in her current role as the Associate Director for Community Relations, Ms. Abdi takes a leadership role in the Refugee Trauma and Resilience Center’s work with partners around community engagement and integration of cultural and clinical methods to enhance community resilience and system responsiveness to the needs of vulnerable populations.
Joshua Miller, MSW, PHD
The second edition of Joshua Miller’s co-authored book, *Racism in the United States: Implications for Social Work Practice* was published in February 2017. He and Annemarie Gockel are working on a book entitled *Integrating Positive Psychology with Social Work Practice: Cultivating Client Resilience*. He is currently working with First Nations tribes in Alberta, Canada where the focus is recovering from a major flood. He is the co-principle investigator (with Marsha Kline Pruett) of a U.S. State Department grant focusing on conflict transformation in Rwanda and Northern Uganda and manages an ongoing psychosocial capacity building project in Northern Uganda. He is working on articles about child sexual abuse in Mainland China as well as psychoeducational groups for socially targeted populations. In addition to his academic work, Miller has responded to, consulted on and written about many disasters including 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, the Aurora shootings, the Asian Tsunami, the Haitian earthquake, armed conflict in Northern Uganda, the Sichuan Province earthquake in China, the Boston Marathon bombing, and the elementary school tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut. He volunteers for a team that offers crisis intervention responses to firefighters, police officers and emergency medical technicians after tragedies, is a clinician with the Crisis Care Network and often partners with local NGOs when responding to major disasters.