



Cultural
Connections
Committee

Gate City Immigrant Initiative

June 27, 2018

9:00AM – 10:30AM

Nashua City Hall Auditorium

Gate City Immigrant Initiative is a subcommittee of the Nashua Cultural Connections Committee.

Present: Jenn Hosking (Co-Chair), Lauren Osowski (Co-Chair), Dominique Boutoud, Carlos Camacho, Becky Field, Steve Genest, Yoly Rivero-Lara, Cecilia Ulibarri, Khaleel Shreet, Dinesh Chauwan, Pedro Altagracia, Samba Halkose, Paul Janampa, Donna Marceau,

Commenced at 9:05am

1. Call to Order/Introductions

2. Co-Chair updates

- Lauren summarized events that took place during the World Refugee Day celebration on June 20th at the Adult Learning Center.
- Nashua's Multicultural Festival scheduled for September 15th will take place in the Elm Street Middle School cafeteria.
- The focus of the July Cultural Connections Mayoral forum on July 17th at 3:30pm will be transportation. Staff members from Nashua Transit will be in attendance to answer questions. Unfortunately, the Mayor will not be present.
- Lauren read a statement from Representative Kuster written after visiting the southern border in response to President Trump's Executive Actions on family separation at the border. Anyone working with families that are effected by recent actions taken against families crossing the border can be directed to Representative Kuster's office. Full statement is at the end of the minutes.

3. Resettlement Agency update

- Ascentria – Dinesh Chauwan reported there have been no more cases settled in Nashua since our last meeting. They have assurances for 20 more cases this fiscal year, but don't expect any before September. To date they have resettled 9 people in Nashua. A case of 5 from Congo, and 3 cases from Burma that constituted 1, 1 and 2 case sizes.
- International Institute- No report.

4. Member updates

- Dominique shared information about her recent trip to France where she received an award.
- Khaleel shared information about DUET, a nonprofit partner with SNHU working with new refugees and immigrants to enroll in college and receive a higher education at a fraction of the full cost of tuition. Duet is currently serving 300 students at the Boston campus. Three students from Nashua are already part of the program.
- Cecilia summarized her experience at the Welcoming America conference in Louisville, KY. Topics covered included building strong economies, how to be a more welcoming city, language access and workforce development.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 25, 2018 – 9:00 AM-10:30 AM at Nashua City Hall Auditorium

Statement from Representative Kuster re: Visit to the Southern Border
Submitted by Erin Cotton on June 26, 2018

The Congresswoman is very disturbed by reports that families are being separated at the border. She recently cosponsored the Family Values at the Border Act to require the Department of Homeland Security to take safety and family concerns into account when making decisions related to asylum claims. The Congresswoman visited the Border this past weekend. I've included her statement on that visit below, which also addresses the Executive Order issued last week:

"The separation of families remains deeply troubling. I met with 40 mothers who had been separated from their children and it was impossible not to see the fear in their eyes that they would never see their children again. I heard from mothers who had their nursing babies taken from them and have no idea where they are. This is immoral, heartbreaking, and wrong. We still have not heard of plans for reuniting all of the 2,300 children who have already been separated from their parents. It's also clear that the Executive Order issued by President Trump is insufficient to address the issue of families being separated. We've heard from multiple officials that they need more guidance from the Administration. The Administration should immediately release a plan for reuniting divided families and provide guidance to border patrol officials to ensure that families seeking asylum are treated humanely and their asylum claim is reviewed quickly. Finally, Congress must act. We need comprehensive immigration reform that will ensure that families seeking asylum are not treated in this barbaric manner."

