



#### Special points of interest:

Green Card Applications

Benefits for Asylees & Iraqi  
SIV holders

Financial Literacy Workshop

Affordable Housing



Summer 2008 Newsletter

**Karen refugees fleeing Burma find new homes in Bridgeport, CT.**

# Refugee Bulletin

International Institute of Connecticut

## GREENCARD APPLICATIONS & CITIZENSHIP

All refugees and asylees are eligible to adjust their status and apply for the greencard after one year. For refugees, this means one year after arrival. For asylees, this means one year after asylum certification.

You can make an appointment with someone from the IIC immigration staff who can assist you with the greencard application. You will be required to prove all your vaccinations are up to date and may have to pay fees to the US Government. If you are having financial trouble, please come in and we can discuss possible grant opportunities.

After five years, refugees and asylees are eligible to become naturalized citizens of the USA. IIC can help with these applications as well. In addition, you will need to pass an oral interview in English. IIC offers daily ESL lessons and weekly Citizenship classes on Saturdays. Please feel free to contact Maria at (203) 336 0141 or stop by for more information.

## IIC TO HOST INFORMATIONAL SESSION ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Paying too much for rent?

There may be opportunities for affordable housing for those who qualify. The State of Connecticut and the City of Bridgeport are now accepting applications for affordable housing.

If accepted, the Bridgeport Housing Authority will examine your monthly income, your family size and your additional

bills to come up with a monthly rent that works for your budget. Waiting lists are long, so it is best to apply soon.

On **Tuesday June 3rd, at 10am**, representatives from the BHA will come to IIC's office to meet interested refugees and asylees. IIC staff will be available to help you fill out the applications. Please RSVP to Anthony at (203) 336 0141.



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### **Helping New Americans Since 1818.**

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**We're On the Web!**  
[www.iiconn.org](http://www.iiconn.org)

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The International Institute of Connecticut is a non-profit, non-sectarian social service agency dedicated to the needs of immigrants, refugees and their families. Support is provided through direct professional services, counseling, advocacy and the advancement of fair and humane public policy. Our experienced and multi-cultural staff allows us to offer unique services to those seeking to become new Americans. In fact, since 1918, we have assisted over 7000 people each year integrate into American life.

We have paved the way for them to find a place to live, to find employment, to learn English and to generally improve their lives and be happy and adjusted in their new country. We offer programs for employment & training, supportive services, and case management. IIC is recognized and accredited by the US Board of Immigration Appeals.

**Need help? Call Us at 203-336-0141**

## **BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO ASYLEES AND IRAQI SIV HOLDERS**

Unlike refugees, some persecuted individuals come to the US first and apply for asylum here through the US court system. Once granted, like refugees, they are eligible for many social benefits.

If you have recently been granted asylum, you may qualify for these benefits! Many asylees are eligible for case management services from IIC - which means having a caseworker to help you navigate through the system.

Most asylees are eligible for food stamps, medical assistance and possibly even cash assistance. In addition, caseworkers will help you find employment and get connected with training programs in the area.

In addition, Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders are also entitled to refugee benefits, including Reception & Placement, Social Services, and Matching Grant.

Don't waste time! Some programs expire just 31 days after you are granted asylum! If you or someone you know was recently granted asylum, or you would like more information—please feel free to contact our office at (203) 336 0141.



### **LEARN HOW TO MANAGE YOUR FINANCES IN THE USA**

On **Saturday June 27th at 10am**, the International Institute of Connecticut will host a workshop for refugees and asylees on financial literacy. Topics will include banking in the USA, managing your credit, and planning for major purchases such as houses, cars and business loans. For more information, contact Matt at (203) 336 0141.