

# 2011 Annual Report

## NICE NUMBERS

**Clients served in the Education Program** 445

**Adult Education Classes** 14

**Jobs Secured for Employment Clients** 80+

**Participants in Youth Impact Program** 119

**Volunteers in Youth Impact Program** 150

**Speakers presented for Youth Impact Program** 24

**Refugees Resettled in 2011** 102



## Nashville International Center for Empowerment

### Letter from the President & CEO

The results of 2011 were extraordinarily significant, and I would like to share our highlighted details on the subsequent pages. The team at the Nashville International Center for Empowerment (NICE) demonstrated a unique ability to carry out strategic services intended to help refugees and immigrants achieve educational empowerment and economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible after their arrival in the United States, and especially in Nashville, Tennessee.

NICE's Reception and Placement program resettled 102 refugees in 2011. The success of this program can be attributed to the outstanding support of the local Nashville community, including individuals, church groups, housing providers, employers, the medical community and Nashville's public schools. Linguistically and culturally, it is imperative for refugees to receive appropriate services to overcome challenges after extraordinary suffering and years of barely surviving in refugee camps. The team at NICE was blessed with extended support from the local refugee community, which made it possible for the initial Reception and Placement to effectively deliver essential services to our newly arrived refugees.

Even with last year's weak economy, NICE's employment team was able to secure over 80 jobs for refugee clients, and this

was due to the commitment of the local employers that have seen and benefited from the hard work of refugees. In 2011, NICE also began the Refugee Integration Program, which is comprised of the Workforce Mentorship Program, the Service Learning Program, the Leadership Training Series, the Train to Work Program, and the English At-home Tutoring Program. This program will facilitate long-term integration and self-sufficiency.

NICE's Education Program served an enormous number of refugee and immigrant students: 445 clients combined in our Adult Education, Youth Education and Youth Impact programs. More than 75% of our adult education students advanced at least one level, in addition to those who received certificates of citizenship. The Youth Education program served elementary and middle school students with a full-fledged after-school program, which partnered with Nashville Public Schools for tutoring and cultural exchange sessions.

The Refugee Farmers Feeding Nashville Initiative, which put our newly arrived refugees from agrarian societies to work on small family farms in and around Nashville, was fantastic during 2011. The NICE team will continue to develop partnerships with farmers and other landowners for opportunities to have our refugee members apply their talents in the farms. We are



hoping to expand this program, and along with the Train to Work Initiative and the Mentorship/Volunteer Program, it will assist gifted refugees and immigrants in learning new careers from the partners. These initiatives are remarkably important for the effective integration of our refugee families.

NICE is anticipating a notable year in 2012. We are continuing to introduce innovative ideas, which we believe will help refugee and immigrant families gain access to broader services and advance their quick adjustment and integration. We are very thankful to our donors who support and partner with us to serve people in need. We are also grateful to our stakeholders, consisting of volunteers, board members, partner organizations, members of the Nashville community, the refugee and immigrant community, and finally, my wonderful staff.

Thank you!

Gatluak Ter Thach

## Naturalization Ceremony



*"One of my dreams has always been to attend college, but I couldn't because I don't have a high school diploma or a GED. Thanks to the NICE center, they are helping me make this dream possible by providing help to get my GED. Once I get my GED I plan on going to college to open up my own business."*

Ajyan Moustafa

## Employment Program News

Having and keeping a job is an extremely important step to self-sufficiency, and the Employment Program at NICE placed refugees in **over 80 jobs**, exceeding its goal for 2011.

October 2011 brought a few

changes to NICE, one of which included a new Employment Specialist, Mahmoud Jabasini (MJ). MJ has abundant experience assisting refugees in securing employment and extensive knowledge of Nashville, which makes him a valuable asset to our Employment Team. Thanks to his new community connections, NICE was able to develop a

partnership with Double Tree Hotel. We now have several clients employed there. Other community partners, who hired many of our clients and ensured a successful program, include Opryland Hotel, Sodexo, GCA, Tyson Foods, KBM, Inc., Abacus Staffing, Hidden Valley Farms, Fresh Point Tomato, and others.

## Refugee Integration Program

Refugee Integration is a new program at NICE. It includes six component programs: The Workforce Mentorship Program, the Service Learning Program, the Leadership Training Series, the Train to Work Program, the English At-home Tutoring Program, and English classes. Refugee Integration targets refugees who have been in the US

for at least 8 months. The program fills a service gap encountered by refugees once their initial resettlement assistance has ended. Many refugees do not have enough time to acclimate within the allotted resettlement period and need further help adjusting to and learning about their new home. With the help of NICE, refugees who have

had issues after resettlement will have an opportunity to better themselves and the people around them and become thriving, contributing members of the Nashville community. If you want more information about the Refugee Integration Program, please contact Mark Eathery at [mark@empowernashville.org](mailto:mark@empowernashville.org).



Santa visits the NICE 6th Anniversary Holiday Celebrations



A few participants at NICE's Youth Camp

## Adult Education Program

A total of **445 clients** participated in one or more of the **14 classes** offered by **20 volunteer teachers** at both the NICE main office and at our secondary location at Donelson Fellowship Church. Classes offered included English Language Learning, GED, Citizenship, tutoring and com-

puter classes. At the end of the first half of the year, **86 ELL** students took the final exam and **76%** advanced to the next level. At the end of the year, **81** students took the final exam and **73%** advanced at least one level. This year, **10** students registered in the GED classes, which covers all sub-

jects including Language Arts, Science, Social Studies and Math. This was also a tremendous year in our citizenship classes, with **20** students passing the citizenship exam.



## Youth Impact Program

Not to be outdone by growth elsewhere at NICE, the Youth Impact Program took-off this year, launching a summer program for elementary and middle school learners at two locations and a full-fledged after-school program at Glenciff High School. This year the Youth Impact Program served **119 learners** through the efforts of **150 volunteers**, who often worked with learners one-on-one to assist with reading and language skills. The

number of children and teens on our waiting lists demonstrate that we have the possibility for growth in this program in the future. Volunteers and interns are the backbone of our program, made possible with the help of some stupendous partners: the Center for Student Missions and Teach One. These partners brought volunteers to our doors week after week, enabling us to serve greater numbers of

students than ever. Our tutoring program at Glenciff for English language learners is made possible through a partnership with the Family Resource Center there, and our status as a Pencil Partner, as well as with Alignment Nashville, means increased collaboration and support from the schools. Teachers at Glenciff tell us our program is really making a difference!

## School Impact Program: Cultural Exchanges

The goal of the School Impact Program is to provide school personnel with the information they need to relate to their refugee students and families. We bring speakers from Iraq, Burma, Bhutan, Somalia, Cuba Eritrea, Burundi or Iran, countries with vibrant or growing communities in

Davidson and Rutherford counties, and facilitate a discussion geared toward equipping staff to better serve their diverse learner populations.

We presented ten times throughout the year to teachers and school personnel, utilizing **24 speakers** from

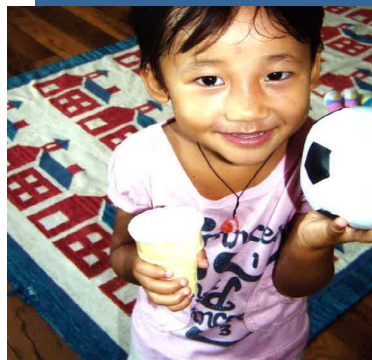
eight refugee communities to present at staff meetings, professional development sessions and conferences. **155 teachers** reported that the presentations increased their knowledge and access to resources, enabling them to better serve their refugee students.

*"Expectations are important for teachers because we know how to conduct parent conferences by phone and by internet and by person. Also, it helped me understand what the Kurdish students were allowed to draw and what the Kurdish parents expect of their children, my students. I am an art teacher, and I need to respect their point of view..."*

**Rosemary Wade**  
Art Teacher at Croft Middle School.



# SPOTLIGHT: REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM



Sudikshya Subba (5), arrived in May, Bhutanese

2011 was a year of much growth for NICE's Resettlement Program. When we received our first client on April 21 from Burma, the resettlement team was comprised of only two volunteers. By the end of the year, the team had grown to **six full-time members** and had resettled **102 clients**, including **32 families**.

## What does the resettlement team do?

Preparations for the arrival of refugees begin as soon as the resettlement

team is informed that a new client will be arriving. We search for housing and the furniture and appliances to put in it; we set up health care appointments and try to anticipate the refugees' needs. A R&P (Reception and Placement) team member meets the refugee or refugee family at the Nashville airport and takes her/him/the family to the place they'll now call home, either with

family or at our arranged housing. For 90 days, various members of the resettlement team, with assistance from other NICE program staff, help our clients enroll in benefit programs, cash assistance programs, schools for the children and English classes for the adults.

## Where do the refugees come from ?

We have resettled refugees from Bhutan, Burma, Eritrea, Iraq, Iran and Burundi. The majority of our refugees are considered High Priority refugees, which means they were fleeing persecution or threats of violence when they left their home country. Our second largest category of refugees are considered Family Reunification refugees and they move to Nashville because a member or members of their family are already here.



The Miburo Family of Burundi shopping for necessities after their arrival to Nashville

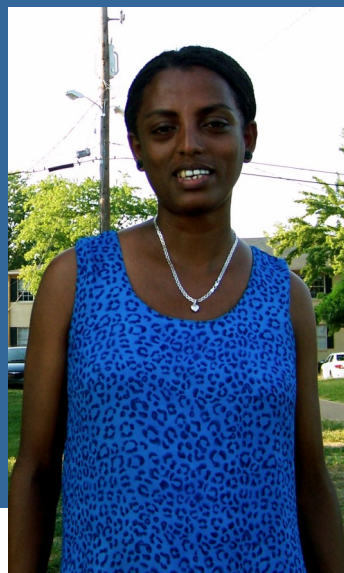
*"I am truly out of words for the kindness and effort that you and your staff has extended to my brother. I am blown away. I am just writing this message to express how much I appreciate your work."*

**Steve Tesfay**

*Reunited with his brother from Eritrea after a 15+ year separation*



The Sarki Family, arrived in June, Bhutanese



Bisrat Awalom, arrived in Nashville in July, Eritrean



Yuri Yur Ben (3) and Hae Gay Htoo (5) Ou-Htee, arrived in June, Burmese

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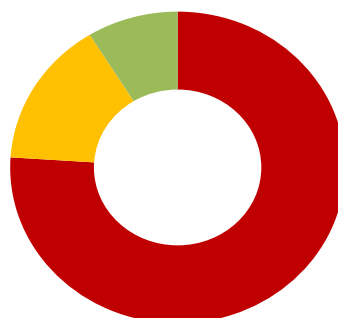
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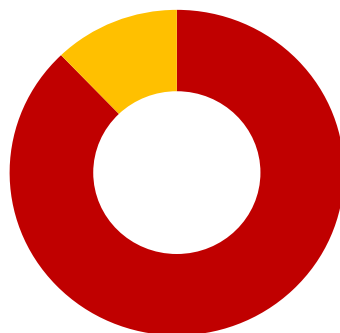
Vanderbilt Center for Health Services



### 2011 Income

- Government grants \$400,503.44
- Foundations \$79,930.29
- Private donations \$46,331.02

**Total \$526,764.75**



### 2011 Expenditures

- Programs 87.8%
- Administration & Fundraising 12.2%

**If you would like to assist NICE in its mission to serve the immigrant and refugee communities of Nashville, please consider:**

#### Volunteering

NICE is looking for childcare and administrative assistance, English and GED teachers and tutors, as well as interns. Information can be found on our website, or you can contact Patrice Watson at 615-678-7273 for more information.

#### Monetary Donations

Monetary donations can be made on GivingMatters.com or Crowdrise.com by searching for "Nashville International Center for Empowerment" and clicking on our site profile. All donations are tax-deductible.

#### Supply Donations

Our Resettlement Team is always looking for clothing, dressers, beds, bedside tables and any other home furnishings for our arriving refugees. Please contact Jordan Peoples at 615-678-7267 for more information.



Nashville International  
Center for Empowerment