

Who needs multicultural training?

Everyone! With a growing immigrant population in our community we can all benefit from learning more about the refugee experience and what we should know about the “New Mainers.”

How can my company/organization benefit from multicultural training?

The refugee population represents a growing workforce here in Maine. Many refugees have advanced degrees and they come eager to work and contribute to their new homeland. While language barriers may limit some, overall refugees are skilled, experienced, long-term workers who are motivated by a drive for stability and a strong work ethic. The more you know about them, the more welcoming a work environment you can provide, thus contributing to a more diverse and stronger business community.

“What an effective experience that is helping me better understand the refugees’ situation now.”

— Fern Tavalin, Ed.D.,
Chair, Art Education Department
Maine College of Art

“Informative, relevant and something I will not forget.”

— Androscoggin Chamber of Commerce
training participant

Refugee & Immigration Services

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In Their Shoes: An Interactive Experience



Multicultural Training for Corporations, Government Agencies and Not-for-Profits



“The initial experiential part was powerful...I wish everybody who is so judgmental about immigrants would be required to do this.”

— VTS Employee on In Their Shoes Training



Training Overview

Our training programs consist of dynamic sessions with options to customize to meet your audiences' needs:

In Their Shoes is an engaging, highly-interactive workshop designed to help participants understand the path of a refugee, and invites them to walk a moment “in their shoes.” Participants will learn:

- Why are refugees in Maine?
- What sort of help do they get?
- What would you do if you were faced with their same decisions?
- How can you welcome refugees to “The Way Life Should Be” in their new Maine communities?

We can also provide trainings on:

- cultural competency
- differences in the workplace
- language access rights and requirements
- how to work with interpreters
- refugee resettlement history in the United States.

Our trainings are comprehensive in that we touch on a variety of cultures now present in Maine communities and educate participants on cross cultural communication and managing cultural conflicts.

Customized Trainings

It is our goal to provide informed, relative content that is tailored to meet your organizations needs. Our recommended and most-popular training consists of a 3-hour long program, however we are able to provide condensed 2-hour training at Client's request to cover the most basic of information if necessary.

Fees are based on the amount of customization requested and number of participants. Please call us for more information and for special allowances for non-profit organizations.

Our Clients

We appreciate the support of the following businesses and organizations who have participated in our trainings: Bureau of Motor Vehicles, Androscoggin Chamber of Commerce, the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, the Diversity Hiring Coalition, Colby College, Maine College of Art, Breakwater School, public schools in Portland, Gorham and Sanford and Goodwill Industries among others.

For more information or to schedule training, please contact:

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“This is the best presentation I’ve been to all day. It was the most relevant because it was about what we’re seeing today. Seeing the racism and fear towards these refugees when that fear isn’t factual. And the training - going step by step and losing one thing after another until I just had my family left made a big impact.”

— Gorham High School Senior on the presentation at their Diversity and Inclusion Day

Our Experienced Facilitators



Tarlan Ahmadov, Director of the Refugee & Immigration Services (RIS) Program since 2012, provides supervision to refugee resettlement and Language Partners interpreter and translation services. He joined RIS in 2003 as a volunteer and was hired

as a Refugee Resettlement Case Manager in 2004. Prior to his immigration to the U.S., Ahmadov worked in education in Baku, Azerbaijan and was a business consultant to the Consulate of Azerbaijan in Tehran, Iran. He also had the privilege of working in different capacities with local and international NGOs, such as IFES (providing training to the newly established municipalities in Azerbaijan), working with the Social Research Center (by screening refugees from Chechnya, Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq).

Ahmadov is a graduate of Baku State University, and was granted a Master Degree in History and Social Sciences. Fluent in several languages, travel is one of his passions and during the last two decades he has visited more than 40 countries for business, training and teaching purposes.

Hannah DeAngelis is the Assistant Director of Refugee & Immigration Services. She is from Readfield, Maine. Her background is in conflict resolution, cultural competency and anti-bias education and non-profit management.



Qamar Bashir – Qamar Bashir is a Lead Case Manager and On-site Supervisor at RIS' Auburn office. She began her work with Catholic Charities as a Case Manager in 2004. Bashir received her bachelor of science degree from the University of Maine. She is fluent in English, Somali and Kiswahili.