Hello neighbors,

I hope the warm, sunny weather this weekend lifted your spirits!  There is much to update you about, so I will jump right in...

**Airport Welcome - MONDAY 5/23 7:48 PM**

Please help us welcome a new neighbor to the PNW!  We have a young man arriving Monday night on United Airlines flight 462.  The flight should arrive at an E gate. We will meet upstairs where passengers leave the secure area.  Volunteers typically gather 15 minutes before the flight's arrival time.  Please make sure to check the flight status before you leave home as arrival times do change often.  We often hear how meaningful it is to have friendly faces greeting new neighbors at the airport.  I hope you'll join us.

**Furniture Donations**

First, THANK YOU to so many of you who have helped us manage the logistics of furnishing **32 new homes** in the past six months!  This was an enormous effort, collecting, storing, and moving a huge amount of furniture.  And now.... Instead of managing our own furniture donation program, thanks to the help of some of our dedicated neighbors, we will be able to refer clients to the NW Furniture Bank.  This is a great organization that allows folks starting over in new homes to choose their own gently used items.  Check out their website to learn more about their mission <https://www.nwfurniturebank.org>.

**Immigration News**

* Unfortunately, the Afghan Adjustment Act was removed from the Ukrainian Aid Bill that passed Congress this week.  Please continue your advocacy efforts with our federal representatives.  This act will streamline the process for our new neighbors to achieve permanent legal status here in the US beyond their 2 year parolee status.  Sponsors of the legislation say that they will continue to push for it to be brought to a vote.
* USCIS announced on Friday that Afghan parolees are eligible for Temporary Protected Status.  For more information about this, follow this link:

<https://www.uscis.gov/newsroom/news-releases/dhs-announces-registration-process-for-temporary-protected-status-for-afghanistan>. TPS may be beneficial for some of our new neighbors and will be part of their consultation with an immigration service provider.

* We were disappointed to learn this week that our Portland office will not be able to provide immigration services to clients living in Washington due to funding restrictions set by the state of Oregon.  Thankfully, in the coming weeks Washington will award $4.7 Million for immigration services for Afghan and Ukrainian parolees.  These grants should greatly increase access to services for folks needing work authorizations, status adjustments, SIV application assistance, and more.  We will keep you and our new neighbors apprised of who receives this funding and how to access the services.  Hopefully this will provide a measure of relief to folks.
* In lieu of being able to provide direct service to WA residents, LCSNW's ICAP director, Alma Jean, will be hosting a couple of information sessions for our Vancouver clients to help them understand their options for achieving permanent legal status.  The date will be set for sometime in the next couple of weeks.  We are working to set times that will provide the greatest access for the most clients.

**Employment**

* Congresswoman Jamie Hererra Butler will host the 1*1th Annual Southwest Washington Jobs Fair* on Wednesday, June 1 at the Clark County Event Center in Ridgefield.  For more information see: <https://jhb.house.gov/>
* Ahmed is in touch with a local glass company that is interested in partnering with us to hire folks into entry level positions with potential for long term growth.  If you know of anyone who would be interested, please contact him at amajeed@lcsnw.org

**Education**

* *Registration for Clark College's Summer term is open.*  We encourage all new arrivals to register for ESL classes and to speak with a Clark College advisor to make a plan to meet their educational goals.  If folks are having a hard time accessing classes with the Limited English Proficiency Program, the Transitional Studies program has different schedule offerings that might work.  <https://www.clark.edu/academics/transitional-ed/index.php>
* *Scholarship opportunity.* Linfield University is offering a few scholarships to recent arrivals wanting to pursue their undergraduate or graduate degrees.  Students will need to cover the cost of housing.  If anyone is interested in learning more, please contact me for more details.

**Needed Items**

* **Bikes.** *Bike Clark County*  <https://bikeclarkcounty.org/> has generously donated many bikes to new neighbors, so many, they have depleted their stocks.  If you have a bike collecting dust in your garage, would you consider donating it to BCC?  They will repair/tune-up the bike and see that it is given to someone who could really use some wheels!
* **Microwave**.  We normally do not accept donations of small household appliances, but we have a family that could use a countertop microwave if anyone has one they are willing to donate.  Please send me an email if you have one to give!

Thank you for all you are doing to provide a warm welcome,

**Nikki Chung**

Vancouver Resettlement Program Supervisor

Refugee Reception & Placement / Afghan Placement & Assistance

Lutheran Community Services Northwest

Direct line: 360-787-4707

3600 Main St, Suite 200
Vancouver, WA 98663

<https://lcsnw.org/office/vancouver/>