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NEWS FOR YOU:

We want your content! Submit any events, stories or photos you would like to share with the community and we will include them in the next issue.

If you would like to subscribe to the newsletter, send us an email and we will be sure to add you to our mailing list!

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## Pathways to Wellness: An Innovative Approach to Refugee Behavioral Health

It is well established, both anecdotally and in academic literature, that behavioral health is a serious concern for refugees and that effectively addressing refugee behavioral health is a unique challenge. All of the financial, linguistic, cultural, and institutional barriers that keep refugees from accessing any other type of healthcare are applicable here as well, but are compounded by the severe stigma associated with mental health and substance abuse.

And while a significant number of refugees may have diagnosable

conditions and need appropriate care, many others simply suffer from the distress of resettlement: uncertainty, social isolation, hustling to support your family and the steep learning curve of acculturation. For people in this camp, there are few options for support, and high risks of long term depression and anxiety.

Lucky for us, Seattle-based community health collective, *Pathways to Wellness*, has developed a program to help both refugees who suffer from mental illness and those struggling with the adjustment process. Known for

producing the cross-cultural Refugee Health Screener (known as the RHS-15), which is a widely used mental health screener designed specifically for Refugees, *Pathways to Wellness* continues to meet the challenges of refugee behavioral health using a support group model.

Known as 'Adjustment Supports Groups,' the approach invites new arrivals to come together one night per week for eight weeks. The groups, often pot lucks, are guided by a mental health professional (*Continued on page 2*)

## Idea Soup: Creativity in Micro-Funding

With a micro-grant of \$250 and the support of Catholic Charities, AmeriCorps VISTA members Kara Batdorf, Anna Francolino, Phong Lê, and Sarai Richter brought Idea Soup to life. Idea Soup, a micro-funding event itself, aims to fund projects that benefit Arizona's refugee population. Which organizations or individuals they fund, however, is left up to the community.

The model is simple. The entry fee is \$5, which earns the attendee

soup, salad, bread, and a vote. Three pre-selected proposals from the pool of applicants are given 5 minutes to present their project. After having their questions answered by presenters, audience members cast their votes and the proposal that receives the most is walks away with 100% of the money collected from the entry fee.

The first Idea Soup, held on April 3 at Catholic Charities Phoenix,



**IDEA Soup attendees gather to listen to presenters and cast their votes.**

raised \$300 – notably more than the micro-grant that initially jump-started the project. Attendees of April's Idea Soup were faced with a (*Continued on page 3*)

# Pathways to Wellness (continued)

teamed with a member of the refugee community to provide information about life in America, emotional health, and overcoming the challenges of resettlement.

Beyond the explicitly educational element of the program, the Groups are also able to combat the stressors associated with resettlement by giving new refugees a place to gather, network, and socialize with others over shared experiences and cultural perspectives. Newcomers also receive

guidance and encouragement from those who have been through resettlement and overcome these challenges.

Many refugees have lost the social support they once had, and the Groups give them the opportunity to begin to rebuild these networks. In this way, the program not only improves emotional wellbeing, but also creates a trusting environment in which refugees can seek help to overcome not only the challenges of the present,

but also the traumas of the past.

And finally, the Groups create an opportunity for the co-facilitator, a licensed counselor or social worker, to identify individuals who might need additional behavioral health care. These folks will be consulted and discreetly navigated into care.

The Adjustment Support Groups have been successful in Washington, Oregon, Colorado, and North Carolina, and Arizona is looking into the adoption of this model.

## One Game, One World



For three weekends in April, the Iraqi American Society for Peace and Friendship, in collaboration with the American Red Cross Grand Canyon Chapter, hosted the One World Soccer Tournament. This event brought together refugee youth ages 15 to 21 from eight

different countries, including Afghanistan, Bhutan, Burundi, Burma, Congo, Iraq, Somalia, and the Karen state of Burma, uniting these diverse communities in excitement over a single shared sporting event.

Events like this are not only valuable social gatherings, but are also frequently mentioned in academic literature as strong supporters of mental health for refugee youth. Through a common love of soccer, youth are provided with an opportunity to feel solidarity both with their ethnic community and the

larger community of Phoenix. While the Iraqi team ultimately claimed victory in their final match against Burundi, all participants had a lot of gain from this important and exciting event. “No matter where we come from,” the promotional material said, “we all understand the language of soccer.”

Visit the [IASPF website](#) for more information about the tournament.

Visit the [UNHCR website](#) for more information on the mental health benefits of sports for refugees.

## Looking Forward: Expected Arrivals

As the global political climate continues to shift, the demographics of Arizona’s new refugee arrivals is also expected to change. While Arizona expects to continue to resettle relatively

Asia		Middle East and Africa	
Bhutanese	-	Congolese	+
Chin	+	Iraqi	=
Karen	-	Somali	-
Karenni	-	Syrian	+

consistent numbers of refugees from some of its largest groups, the numbers of arrivals from other regions are expected to rise and fall in the coming months as outlined in the charts above. As we prepare to accept new refugees into our community, it is important to bear in mind the unique cultures, experiences, and health concerns that each new group of new arrivals will bring.

## Idea Soup (continued)

difficult decision. The Iraqi American Society for Peace and Friendship (IASPF) requested funding for their ongoing, youth-led initiative to bring refugee and non-refugee youth together to garden and plant trees throughout Phoenix. The Tucson organization Box of Hope aimed to purchase a portable storage unit to more easily bring furniture, clothes, hygiene products, food, and other commodities to refugee families in need. Global Transitions, a school specifically for refugee youth, hoped to fund their gardening program, which not only serves as a valuable student activity, but is also the source of student lunches.

To everyone's surprise, the votes totaled to a tie between IASPF and Box of Hope and each organization left with \$150.

The list of successes, however, goes beyond the \$300 raised. Box of Hope was able to develop a partnership with the Welcome to America project, a Phoenix-based organization with a similar mission whose Executive Director was in the audience. Some inspired attendees, many of whom had been unfamiliar with the refugee population, offered additional individual donations. The winners from the first event continue to support the project and attended the second Idea Soup on

May 31 as volunteers. Many organizations have expressed interest in hosting Idea Soup events, while others have reached out to the founders hoping for advice on starting their own Soup. With just one event behind them, the Idea Soup founders have already made an impact on the refugee community and it will be exciting to watch the event continue to expand its reach with each successive event.

For more information on how to propose, volunteer, join the board, make a donation, or attend an Idea Soup event, visit the [Idea Soup webpage](#).

## Governor Brewer Signs New FGC Bill

On April 24, 2014 Governor Jan Brewer signed Bill 1324 into a law dubbed the "Girls and Young Women's Sufferance Act" which places a state ban on female genital cutting (FGC). While there is already a federal ban on FGC, many critics complained that the law simply encouraged parents to send their children abroad for the procedure. Arizona's new piece of legislation, which had strong support in both houses, not only bans female genital mutilation within the state of

Arizona, but also criminalizes sending minors to have the procedure done elsewhere. A first offense is now punishable by a minimum fine of \$25,000 and a prison sentence of 5.25 to 14 years.

FGC is still practiced in several refugee countries of origin, including CAR, DRC, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Liberia, Somalia, and Sudan, among others, and some people may try to bring the practice with them to the United

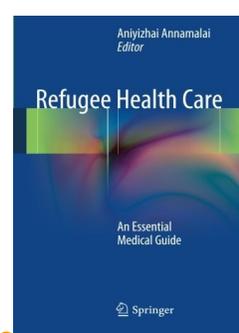
States. This new legislation may have serious implications for refugees from these countries, particularly because they are likely to be unaware of the law and the associated consequences. It is important that efforts are made to inform new arrivals of these restrictions to prevent parental incarceration from becoming an additional burden on these refugee families.

For more detail, view the [full text of the new law](#).

## New Refugee Health Care Resource

The highly anticipated book *Refugee Health Care: An Essential Medical Guide*, edited by Aniyizhai Annamalai, was released for purchase this March. As a reference guide specifically targeted toward clinical healthcare providers, the book is one of the first of its kind. The book spans a range of health issues, including infectious disease, chronic disease, mental health, and cultural

competency as well as unique considerations for special groups like women, children, torture survivors, and asylum seekers. This information, presented by a range of professionals, is concise, accessible, and pertinent to the practicing medical provider, making it a very useful resource for those serving refugee patients. Visit [the book's product page](#) for more details.





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## >> Call for Submissions <<

If you have any events, stories or photos you would like to share on the Arizona Refugee Health Newsletter, please submit them to [Zachary.Holden@azdhs.gov](mailto:Zachary.Holden@azdhs.gov) !

## Research Spotlight

**The mental health of unaccompanied refugee minors on arrival in the host country.** 2014 Jan 13. Marianne Vervliet, Melinda A. Meyer Demott, Marianne Jakobsen, Eric Broekaert, Trond Heir, Ilse Derluyn. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/sjop.12094/full>

**Breaking down the barriers: a qualitative study to understand child oral health in refugee and migrant communities in Australia.** 2014 April 17. Elisha Riggs, Lisa Gibbs, Nicky Kilpatrick, Mark Gussy, Caroline van Gemerte, Saher Alif, Elizabeth Waters. *Ethnicity and Health*. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13557858.2014.907391#.U2z7IYFdXpU>

**Access to Health Care by Refugees: A Dimensional Analysis.** 2014 Jan 3. Amy Szajna, MSN, Julia Ward, PhD, RN. *Nursing Forum*. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/nuf.12051/abstract?deniedAccessCustomisedMessage=&userIsAuthenticated=false>

## Upcoming Events

### 9 June—Congolese Women’s Health and Hygiene Class, Refugee Focus

9am at Serrano Village, 2828 W Camelback Rd, Phoenix, AZ 85017

This free class for women from the Congolese community will cover a range of health topics. Participants will receive free health resources and refreshments will be served. Email [jmounce@refugeefocus.org](mailto:jmounce@refugeefocus.org) to RSVP as space is limited.

### 14 June—Free Health Clinic, Muslim Community Center of Tucson

10am-1pm at 4727 E 5th Street Tucson, AZ 85711

The free health clinic is open to all on the 2nd Saturday of every month and offers disease management, preventive health screenings, health education, and more. Visit the [Muslim Community Center website](#) for more information.

### 19-21 June—2014 North American Refugee Health Conference

9am-5pm in Rochester, New York

The three day conference will focus on best practices in refugee health with lectures on topics like mental health, OB/GYN, pediatrics, and primary care.

### 19 June—World Refugee Day Tucson

10am-12:30pm at Catalina Magnet High School Auditorium, 3645 E Pima, Tucson, AZ

### 21 June—World Refugee Day Phoenix

10am– 2pm at Phoenix Civic Center Space Park, 444 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ

The World Refugee Day Tucson and Phoenix events are celebrations of Arizona’s diverse refugee population featuring speakers, food, and entertainers from local refugee communities.

### 22-25 July—North American Refugee Round Table

Grand Canyon University 3300 West Camelback Road Phoenix, AZ 85017

The North American Refugee Round Table is a faith-based event to discuss best practices, share ideas and explore ways to work together in supporting, encouraging and resourcing ministry with refugees. Visit their [website](#) to register or for more information.

For additional events and contact information, please refer to the calendar at <https://www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=azrefugeehealth%40gmail.com>

## Funding Opportunities

### 2014 Regional Grants Program - Aetna Foundation

Amount: \$25,000 - \$50,000

Deadline: June 5, 2014 or July 30, 2014

Eligibility: Projects focusing on healthy eating and active living among low-income, underserved, and minority populations.

### Improving Trajectories for Youth and Young Adults with, or at Risk for, Serious Mental Health Conditions - SAMHSA

Amount: Up to \$100,000

Deadline: June 13, 2014

Eligibility: Organizations working to create, implement, and expand culturally competent programs that improve outcomes for children and young adults with serious mental health conditions.

### Sundt Foundation Grant

Amount: \$1,000 - \$10,000

Deadline: June 15, 2014

Eligibility: 501(c)(3) non-profits that aim to improve the lives of disadvantaged children and adults.

### Information Resource Grants to Reduce Health Disparities

Amount: \$100,000

Deadline: June 29, 2014

Eligibility: Project that bring useable information to health disparity populations and their healthcare providers.

### Ethnic Community Self Help Program - ORR

Amount: \$100,000 - \$250,000

Deadline: July 27, 2014

Eligibility: ECBOs with projects that: 1) strengthen the applicant's organizational capacity or 2) provide SMART services (Specific Measurable, Appropriate, Realistic, and Time-Bound) to refugees.

### Information Resource Grants to Reduce Health Disparities - NIH

Amount: \$100,000

Deadline: June 29, 2014

Eligibility: Projects aiming to bring useful, usable health information to health disparity populations and their health care providers.