



**State of Florida
Department of Children and Families**

Rick Scott
Governor

Esther Jacobo
Interim Secretary

**MIAMI-DADE REFUGEE TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES
August 9, 2013**

ATTENDANCE:

Bojan Bajic, Adria Dilme-Bejel, Hiram Ruiz, Erica Perdomo, Modesto Burgos, Berta Cassidy, Suzy Copp, Francisco Figueroa, Miriam Garcia, Felicia Gil, Emile Goeser, Marie Guillaume, Julio Iglesias, Lourdes Leconte, Silvia Lopez, Dorothy Martin, Charlande Michel, Eduardo Moras, Carlos Naranjo, Marie Philogene, Christine Reis, Veronica Rodriguez, Hiram Ruiz, Leydi Sosa, Evelyn Soto, Ileana Vallejo, Kris Gregory, Stephanie Scott, Nicola Roxburgh, Alexandra Medina, Carmen Jacqueline Gimenez

INTRODUCTION:

Adria Dilme from the Department of Children and Families, Refugee Services welcomed the task force members.

PRESENTATIONS:

Martha Ferrer from South Florida Workforce presented the new employment referral process for RAP clients. RAP clients are referred by DCF to one of the five intake centers according to their zip code assignment. Once the intake process is completed the clients will receive their stamped RCA letter needed to approve benefits and a referral to any employment provider of their choice for additional employment services.

Ileana Vallejo and Kris Gregory from the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade and Monroe presented information about the school readiness and VPK programs. The new referral process and form for the Refugee Child Care Program was also discussed.

Alexandra Medina, Public Information Officer for the Media Relations Group presented information about distracted driving awareness campaign on behalf of the Florida Department of Transportation. The objective of the campaign is to educate the public about the dangers of distracted driving and the reality of its consequences, as well as the new Florida State law (effective October 1, 2013). For additional information, materials or partnership opportunities Ms. Medina can be reached at 305-254-1613 or by e:mail at: amedina@mrgmiami.com

Krystina Fracois announce the upcoming National Immigrant Integration Conference, Nov. 17-19, in Miami.

The National Immigrant Integration Conference organizers continue to update the conference website, which is at: <http://www.integrationconference.org/>

401 NW 2nd Avenue, Suite N-812 Miami, Florida 33128

Further details, including information on the plenaries, speakers, and workshops will be posted soon.

On Sunday evening, November 17th, there will be events called "Miami Deep Dive" in which groups of 20 will fan out to various locations in the city to experience Miami and engage in discussion. Further information on Miami Deep Dive is at: <http://us2.campaign-archive2.com/?u=e3f4e7f39a6ceb4a8dc4739c4&id=e871956da1>

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Evelyn Soto has been appointed as the new Chair to the Volag Consortium.

Esther Jacobo has been appointed as the Interim Secretary for DCF and Gilda Ferradaz is the Regional Director for Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties.

Bojan Bajic announced the upcoming 40th anniversary of Youth Co-Op a celebration that will take place on Saturday, October 12 at the Amelia Earhart Park in Hialeah. Also to kick-off the event a fundraiser - 5K race is planned followed by recognitions, and fun "get together" activities. All proceeds from the fundraiser – 5K race will be used towards education projects at Youth Co-Op's Charter and Preparatory Schools, including our Refugee Youth Services Program. To make the 5K race registration process easier for those who are interested in participating, please register now online at event's website www.e35k.com. The entry fee is \$25.00 for adults and \$10.00 for children 12 & under. Online registrations will be subject to an additional \$3.25 registration fee.

REFUGEE SERVICES UPDATE (*Sent via E-Mail in August and September*)

- Phone scams targeting refugees make a resurgence
- Register for our webinar: Building Meaningful Contact with Refugees & Receiving Communities
- Health Insurance Marketplace 101
- 40 Days Until Open Enrollment, Are You Ready?
- Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) program to Sunset
- For Task Forces: Join Us For National Welcoming Week - Sept. 15-22
- HHS and Young Invincibles Video Contest
- The Partnership Center News: Health Care Resources and Upcoming Webinars
- Refugee Resettlement Volunteer Documentary on YouTube
- Invitation to Negotiate
- Employment Services For Refugees And Entrants In Miami-Dade County - Itn-Snr14k02
- Faces of Resettlement video now available on the Cultural Orientation Resource Center website
- White House Recognizes Welcoming America Champions of Change
- Register Now for Messages that Matter: Communications Webinar
- Top 10 nationalities of refugees arriving to Florida 2011 to date

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

NEXT MEETING:

October 11, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.

Miami-Dade College Wolfson Campus

500 NE 2nd Avenue Building 3 Room 3208-09 Miami, FL 33132

VOLAGS REPORT AUGUST 7TH, 2013

SOUTH FLORIDA VOLAG CONSORTIUM

August 7th, 2013

MINUTES

ATTENDEES

Evelyn Soto	(CCS)
Veronica Rodriguez	(Youth Coop)
Daisy Sanchez De Rojas	(Youth Coop)
Maria Esparza	(LIRS)
Francisco Figueroa	(CWS)
Jose Sanchez	(CWS)
Charlande Michel	(EMM)

The VOLAG meeting was held at the offices of Catholic Charities located at 7707 NW 2nd Ave, on Wednesday, August 7th, 2013. Evelyn Soto, the new VOLAG chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. The VOLAG did not meet in June due to World Refugee Day event. The new agenda was approved and the following items were discussed.

Match Grant Enrollments:

2013 YDT Matching Grant Enrollments
October 1, 2012 to July 31, 2013

October 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013

Agency	Trafficked Person/SIV	Entrants	Asylees	Refugees	Total
USCCB / Catholic Charities	0	268	36	96	400
Church World Services	0	346	26	62	434
Episcopal Migration Ministries	0	165	0	96	261
International Rescue Committee	0	334	44	190	568
Lutheran Services Florida	0	86	0	140	226
World Relief	0	116	1	39	156
USCRI / Youth Coop	0	783	31	99	913
TOTAL	0	1830	102	626	2558

October 1, 2012 to July 31, 2013

Agency	Trafficked Person/SIV	Entrants	Asylees	Refugees	Total
USCCB / Catholic Charities	0	300	36	99	435
Church World Services	0	363	28	77	468
Episcopal Migration Ministries	0	178		106	284
International Rescue Committee	0	360	48	205	613
Lutheran Services Florida	0	154		98	252
World Relief	0	118	1	51	170
USCRI / Youth Coop	0	907	37	104	1048
TOTAL	0	2080	114	641	2835

Guest Speaker:

- Daisy Sanchez De Rojas, from Youth Coop, presented at the meeting. She informed the group that the case management program for Cuban ex-political prisoners has been renewed for another year. 80 people are currently enrolled in the program and are mostly from Spain. The program offers case management services to newly arrived Cuban ex-prisoners and to those who have been in the country for up to five years. This program has been extended to include family members of ex-political prisoners. Applicants need to show proof of prison records. The contact person for this program is Daisy Sanchez De Rojas and her email address is drogas@youthcoop.org.
- Evelyn Soto from Catholic Charities suggested that English classes for refugees be combined with technical courses to avoid refugees from being scammed by private institutions.
- ACCESS is now requiring applicants to respond to security questions in order to confirm their identity.

POP Arrivals:

- Frank Figueroa from CWS reported the following: 490 parolees arrived in July, 140 minors and 350 adults. Out of the 350 adults only 80 paid for their EAD. The rest applied with fee waivers. Year to date parolee arrivals are 5,978.

Match Grant:

Jose Sanchez reported that Church World Service has met its MG slots for FY 2013. The other VOLAGs are hopeful that they will meet their numbers by October 30th, 2013. No additional slots are anticipated to be assigned for 2013.

The next VOLAG meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 2nd 2013 at 2:30pm meeting place to be announced.

Meeting adjourned at 4:23pm.

IMMIGRATION AND LEGAL ISSUES SUB COMMITTEE AUGUST 2013**MIAMI AREA REFUGEE TASK FORCE****Immigration and Legal Issues Sub Committee****Minutes for meeting on August 8, 2013**

By Miriam Johana Garcia

Attendance: Oscar Alvarez, Haydee Cañas, Berta Cassidy, Yolanda Coto, Nancy Denis, Miriam Johana Garcia, Brad Ginter, Joseph Hackbarth, Marie Jean, Dorothy Martin, Amelia Ramirez, Alexandra O. Yaya.

The Immigration and Legal Issues Subcommittee meeting was held on August 8, 2013 at the offices of World Relief where Berta Cassidy provided the USCIS update and introduced to the members Joseph Hackbarth who is now the Acting Chief of Staff for the Miami Field Office.

- **KENDALL FIELD OFFICE.** Paul Buono is now the Acting Field Office Director and Amanda Atkinson is the Acting Section Chief.
- **DEFENSE OF MARRIAGE ACT.** After the decision by the Supreme Court holding that Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is unconstitutional, USCIS will be treating same-sex marriage in the same manner as those of an opposite-sex marriage. Florida does not have same sex marriages but they will go by where the marriage took place. USCIS will review immigration petitions filed on behalf of same-sex spouse on or after February 23, 2011 and are still pending or were denied. Persons who were denied must notify USCIS before March 31, 2014, and can use the following e-mail address: uscis-626@uscis.dhs.gov.
- **I-485 PENDING.** USCIS have completed almost half of the backlog and they are continuing to process the pending cases for adjudication. Some are getting interviews and some are being approved by mail.
- **HAITIAN RE-PAROLE.** CBP is waiting to receive a list of Haitians whose parole cards were issued by them so they can start working on the re-parole processing. They will find the location and it will probably be by appointment. They want to assist with the renewals.
- **F2A VISA AVAILABILITY.** The Department of State visa bulletin has now the F2A category current.
- **CBO MEETINGS.** USCIS wants to hold more CBO meetings and are requesting that you suggest any topics that you would like them to cover. You may send the suggested topics to Berta.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 12, 2013 from 10:00 A.M. until 12:00 P.M. at the Offices of World Relief located at 2150 SW 8th Street, 2nd Floor, Miami, Florida 33135.

EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT FOR AUGUST, 2013

- REVEST is enrolling students for the upcoming term beginning Sept. 4 – Dec. 21, 2013. .
So far over 2700 ESOL students have been enrolled program wide and more are expected.
Vocational training enrollment is ongoing.
- The REVEST Program has been able to process registrations for over 250 Vocational students during the current term (Summer 2012-3) which began May 13th and still registering students until late August of 2013. Additionally, we have already registered over 100 students for the following term (Fall 2013-1), which will officially begin on August 26th.

- REVEST students still find difficult to establish the in-state resident status. They are unable to provide the documentation required in order to pay for any of the CCC and CTEC classes. In many cases their economic status does not permit them to have bills under their names, vehicle registrations or even pay stubs. If anyone has suggestions, we would appreciate it.
- Faculty meetings were conducted with all REVEST instructors May 16th and 17th. All CASAS testing procedures were reviewed with instructors to ensure a successful testing session. CASAS testing is taking place Aug. 7th, 8th and 9th.
- REVEST staff and clients attended and participated in the World Refugee Day celebration at the Government Center on June 14, 2013, sponsored by the Department of Children and Families (DCF). This was a huge success with lots of important information available to clients and wonderful performances and artwork celebrating the resilience and strength of our clients. It was a very meaningful and uplifting event.
- World Refugee Day was a success at all REVEST centers. These events took on June 20th. Students were invited to share their experiences and reflect on how they have adjusted to living in the United States. Much was learned and shared with great participation including all staff and clients. It was a great experience for all.
- REVEST instructors attended the Civics and Citizenship Symposia sponsored by USCIS at Lindsey Hopkins Technical Education Center on July 25, 2013. It was very informative and highly interactive. Our instructors received valuable hands on materials to help with current instruction and updates to prepare for future adjustments.
- REVEST continues negotiations on the new contract for the upcoming year.
- SAVES ended their 2012-3 trimester on July 31, 2013. In total, the program enrolled and rendered services to **3,750** students during the final trimester of the 2012-2013 academic year.
- The first trimester of the 2013-2014 academic year begins on August 19, 2013. All of the 16 SAVES school sites will open for registration on Thursday, August 15, 2013. The program expects to register and provide services to over 3,500 students next trimester.
- SAVES will continue offering evaluation and translation services to its students through Joseph & Silny. The next session will take place on Thursday, August 29. Students greatly benefit from these services since they facilitate the process of finding employment.
- New SAVES success stories, which highlight the achievements of some of our students, have been uploaded to the SAVES website (<http://saves.dadeschools.net>)
- Sponsored by the Department of Children and Families (DCF), a great celebration to observe World Refugee Day took place at the Government Center on June 14. From music, arts, and crafts to information tables and performances by refugee clients, it was a beautiful way to acknowledge all the refugees and asylees' contributions to our community.

- The next SAVES Program District Meeting will take place on Wednesday, October 9, 2013 from 3 P.M. to 5 P.M. at Lindsey Hopkins Technical Education Center. Please contact our office if you are interested in attending and/or presenting.
- If you have any questions about our program, you can call us or visit the SAVES website at <http://saves.dadeschools.net>

Maria Miranda

Instructional Supervisor, SAVES Program

SAVES PROGRAM

Lindsey Hopkins Building G, Room 162

750 NW 20 street

Miami, Florida 33127

305-548-3046

FLORIDA HIGHWAY SAFETY & MOTOR VEHICLE – AUGUST 2013

Modesto Burgos provided the following community update bulletin.

Information of Interest to Florida Drivers

The New School Year Starts: A new school year is near! As summer vacations end soon, students across Florida get ready to start a new school year. Along with all the preparations everyone must make, safety is an important part of the start of the new school year. Parents must work with their children to develop a safety plan to reduce the risk of accidents and injuries. Here are a few safety tips for school bus riders:

- Have a safe place to wait for your bus, away from traffic and the street.
- Stay away from the bus until it comes to a complete stop and the driver signals you to enter.
- Use the handrail when getting on or off the bus.
- Keep seated, with feet out of the aisles.
- Never put head, arms or hands out of the window.
- Do NOT stand up until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Be aware of the street traffic around you.
- Cross in front of the bus, NEVER behind, and be sure the driver of the bus can see you.
- NEVER stop, turn back, or reach under the bus.
- Be aware of the street traffic around you.

Safety tips for pedestrians or bike riders:

- Never walk alone – always travel with a friend.
- Pay attention to all traffic signals and crossing guards.
- Never cross the street against a stop light.
- Avoid loose clothing that can get caught in spokes or pedals and wear reflective colors and material to be better seen in street traffic.
- Walk your bike across all intersections.

The right car seat for your child: It is critically important to keep our children safe in vehicles as they travel our state's roadways. That means putting them in the proper restraint for their age, size and weight. Every operator of a motor vehicle driven on Florida roads must provide for the protection of any child, 5 years of age or younger, by using a crash-tested, federally approved car seat.

For children up to 3 years old, the restraint must be a separate carrier or a vehicle manufacturer's integrated child seat. For children aged 4 through 5 years, a separate carrier, an integrated child seat, or a seat belt may be used. For a passenger age 6 through 17 years, a seat belt must be used while riding in a motor vehicle.

Since parents are often confused about the difference between child restraint laws (which differ in many states) and the recommendations of national experts regarding child safety seats, safety advocates want to ensure that parents and caregivers are aware of the National *Car Seats for Children: Birth to 12 Years* Guidelines: For a downloadable flyer, [click here](#).

Information for Teen Drivers: The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles has a parents section on its teen driving website at www.flhsmv.gov/teens. The website provides parents with useful information to help them teach their teens to become safe drivers. Florida's graduated driver licensing program allows teens to obtain a learner's permit at age 15, which restricts them to driving only with a licensed adult under certain conditions. Other restrictions apply to teens with an operator's license until they turn 18.

To ensure that both parents and teens have a complete understanding of the law, an explanation of each phase of the graduated licensing program, and the related restrictions, can be found on the website. Certain behaviors are associated a high fatality rate of teen drivers including: inexperience and immaturity combined with speed, alcohol consumption, not wearing seatbelts, distractions, drowsiness, and driving when visibility is limited. The website includes a driving guide and a driving log to track the 50 hours of practice that teens must record to obtain their intermediate operator's license. To visit the website, please go to: www.flhsmv.gov/teens.

Emergency Contact Information: More than seven million Floridians have registered their Emergency Contact Information with the Department. DHSMV is proud of the success of the ECI Program and encourages Floridians to give their loved ones the peace of mind that comes with registering their information, especially during the hurricane season. The Emergency Contact Information program allows licensed drivers and identification card holders to submit two contacts to notify in the event of an emergency, such as a vehicle crash. The information can then be accessed, only in the case of an emergency, by law enforcement officers. To record your information, please visit flhsmv.gov/eci.

Documentation Requirements Available Online: DHSMV recommends our customers visit www.GatherGoGet.com, a website dedicated to assist Floridians with the new driver license and identification card requirements. Floridians renewing or obtaining a new license or ID are required to show proof of: 1) identification, 2) Social Security number and 3) residential address (two items). The website and its tools are also available in Spanish at www.ReunaVengaObtenga.com and in Creole at www.RasanbleAlePran.com.

Get an Appointment: All customers who must visit one of our offices to renew, replace, or file a change of address to their driver license or identification card, are urged to secure an appointment prior to their visit. Connect via Internet at <https://services.flhsmv.gov/Oasis/> for an appointment to reduce the length of the visit. Driver license offices are open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please check our website at www.flhsmv.gov/offices/ for the most up-to-date information on office locations and schedules.

Florida Achieves Over 50% REAL ID Compliance: Over 55% of all Florida driver licenses and identification cards are now REAL ID compliant. This benchmark was achieved in 3½ years after REAL ID issuance began January 2010.

Credit Cards Accepted: Driver license offices throughout the state are accepting credit cards! Cards accepted include American Express, Discover, MasterCard and Visa. We also accept personal checks and cash. We again strongly encourage all our customers to skip the trip to an office by visiting the DHSMV website at www.GoRenew.com, and utilize our on-line services to renew their driver licenses, identifications cards, vehicle tags and change their addresses, eligible.

Electronic Proof of Insurance: Florida now allows drivers to show electronic proof of insurance on smartphones and tablets instead of paper copies.

The national movement has seen 25 states change laws to allow electronic proof of insurance at traffic stops. Other states in the Southeast included among this group are Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee and Kentucky.

Driver Licenses and Identification Card Fees

Class E (original and renewal)	<u>\$48</u>
Commercial Driver License (original and renewal)	<u>\$75</u>
ID Card (original and renewal)	<u>\$25</u>
Replacement License or ID	<u>\$25</u>
Endorsements	<u>\$ 7</u>
Driver License Services at Tax Collector Office Service Fees	<u>\$ 6.25</u>

For a complete listing of all motorist services fees, please click [here](#).

The Department uses a combination of vehicle information to determine registration fees. This includes registration use, license plate type and class code. The class code is determined by the vehicle weight, body type, vehicle type and registration use. To see a sample, click [here](#).

For a list of frequently asked questions and answers regarding Florida's fees, click [here](#).

Buckle Up Every Time, Everyone!

USCIS UPDATE FOR JULY 2013

The following update was provided by Berta Cassidy.

USCIS Idea Community - U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has announced a new initiative to use an online feedback tool, called the USCIS Idea Community, to ask for your ideas and opinions on our Customer Service tools.

We will be seeking feedback on:

- Change of Address Online;
- e-Request;
- My Case Status Online;
- Web Self-Help;
- Digital Customer Service; and
- "How do I?" Customer Guides.

We encourage you to become a part of our [USCIS Idea Community](#) and help us think of ways to do things better.

Same Sex Marriage FAQs – USCIS has published additional Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) based on the Supreme Court's *United States v. Windsor* ruling, which invalidated part of the Defense of Marriage Act. This information is available on the USCIS website on the [Same-Sex Marriages](#) Web page

within the Family section. We will continue to update information regarding same-sex marriage and immigration benefits.

To go to the FAQ's -

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=2543215c310af310VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnextchannel=2543215c310af310VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD>

Grants Workshop - The U.S. Department of Labor and United Way of Miami-Dade are hosting a Grant Writing Workshop aimed at informing community agencies about available funding opportunities with federal agencies. Please see further information about this event below. For any questions regarding this event, please contact Ms. Millie Herrera at Herrera.m@dol.gov or Vanessa Benavides at benavidesv@unitedwaymiami.org.

What: Grants Workshop aimed at informing community agencies about available funding opportunities in your federal agencies, and providing tips on writing a more effective and competitive grant application.

When: Monday, September 23, 2013: 8:30 am – 1:30 pm

Where: United Way of Miami-Dade, 3250 SW 3rd Avenue, Miami, FL 33129

Upcoming Naturalization Ceremonies - Below are scheduled dates for Administrative N-400 Oath Ceremonies and the corresponding field offices where the ceremonies will take place. Please note that although these dates are current on the date of issuance of this update, the dates are subject to change without notice.

Miami Field Office	August 20 and 23
Hialeah Field Office	August 16, and 23
Oakland Park Field Office	July 31 August 16, 23 and 30
Kendall Field Office	August 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30