

EAGA Business Builder

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Today's speaker was Ms. Kiri Mathsen—Refugee Services

Ms. Mathsen is a representative of Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains. She is working primarily with the employment program which seeks to secure gainful employment for refugees that are hoping to resettle in our area. "Who is a refugee? According to the 1951 United Nations Convention on Refugees, a refugee is a person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country." In order to further modify or clarify details of immigration, the Refugee Act of 1980 amended the earlier Immigration and Nationality Act and the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act. It raised the annual ceiling for refugees from 17,400 to 50,000, created a process for reviewing and adjusting the refugee ceiling to meet emergencies, and required annual consultation between Congress and the President. The Act also changed the definition of "refugee" to a person with a "well-founded fear of persecution," a standard established by United Nations conventions and protocols. It also funded a new Office of U.S. Coordinator for Refugee Affairs and an Office of Refugee Resettlement and built on already existing public-private partnerships that helped refugees settle and adjust to life in their new country. Kiri's programs involve more than just seeking employment for refugees. There are also programs for education, asset building, case management, family stabilization, health management and legal services. The folks that are being helped by these programs have been cleared by various US agencies. Homeland Security; FBI; Department of Defense; US Intelligence and others take 18 to 36 months to clear the individuals into the programs. The overall goal is to get refugees to be self sufficient, permanent residents within 1 year of their entrance into the program. In 2016 Ms. Mathsen and her team found jobs for 134 program participants. Average wages were \$9.25/hr. Of those 90% were still employed after 90 days and 87% after 120 days. Since the initial jobs often require only basic skills, the goal is to assist and encourage participants to continue to learn and progress upward in the employment chain. Many of the refugees already have advanced skills and training (they have medical; legal; and technology backgrounds from their previous country). Those folks just need a place to start and prove them selves. So far in 2017 there have been 61 placements. Average wages have also increased a little to about \$9.57/ hour. With a new US President, there has been a shift in allowances for immigration. There will be a substantial decrease in people allowed to enter into the country. Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains will continue their programs, but with less available funds. If you are interested in finding more about the organization and the services they offer, you can go to their website <http://www.lfsc.org>

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBER:

Covenant Schools of America

Representative: Paul Losey, CEO

- ◆ Mark Tobiassen is still having difficulties with his illness. He is being transported to a Cleveland hospital which has experience with the rare illness. Phil and Kevin communicate with Nicole as often as possible, and will provide updates as the information becomes available. Prayers will be appreciated.
- ◆ Mario has a new hip and is recovering well. We all wish him continued progress and an even speedier than planned return to everyday activities.

Contact information for Executive Director: Mario Hernandez

Phone: 505-239-0259

email: hernmar129@yahoo.com

Postal mail: 8100 Wyoming Blvd NE; Suite M-4 #345; Albuquerque, NM 87113

Business Leads:

None noted today

Reciprocity:

Thank you to Wayne Pollack for donating \$5 gift certificates.

Luis Alvidrez—Upward Motion Personal Training

Los Ranchos Gun Shop is looking for an experienced gunsmith. If you know of someone interested in applying, have them contact Mark Abramson 505-345-4276

♦ Fishing / Camping trip information and sign up sheets will be available at our Tuesday meetings for the next few weeks. Event coordinator is Klint Hall 505-821-4300

♦ First announcement of a prospective new member:

Petroglyph Animal Hospital, P.C.

Representative: Michael S. Melloy, DMV

Category: Veterinary Hospital

Sponsors: Klint Hall

Second announcement of a prospective new member:

Sharp Law Firm

Representative: Lynn Sharp

Category: Medical Malpractice & Catastrophic Injury

Sponsors: Mark Tobiassen & Tom Keleher

If you have an objection to either of these companies becoming a member, or if you have any information that you feel should be considered during the application review process, please contact Committee Chairman, Jack Zipper, (jdzipper@comcast.net - 505-259-5959), as soon as possible.

Badge Board Greeters

Feb 28th	Steve Grant—Downtown Bed & Breakfast
Mar 7th	Rick Reese—Blue Ristra
Mar 14th	Jerry Becker—Steamatic / John Campbell—Tonsorial Parlour
Mar 21st	Mark Abramson—Los Ranchos Gun Shop
Mar 28th	Guy Berger—Palms Trading / Scott Lardner—Rocky Mountain Stone
Apr 4th	Adam Tafoya—New York Life
Apr 11th	Terry White—Sunwest Trust, Inc
Apr 18th	Lou Rodges—Retriever Merchant Services / Brandon Saylor

Upcoming Speakers

Feb 28th	Rion Marcus—New Mexico Chiropractic Center
Mar 7th	Ted Trujillo—Small Business Development Center at CNM
Mar 14th	
Mar 21st	Mark Tobiassen—Action Coach Business Coaching
Mar 28th	