

Iowa WINS (Iowa Welcomes Immigrant Neighbors)

Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Commission

**Wednesday, March 7th at 7:00 PM**

OUR VISION:

That the greater Mount Pleasant community would be an inclusive and hospitable community that welcomes people from across the world looking for a new home.

In order to achieve that vision, the MISSION OF IowaWINs is to:

* Identify the issues that newcomers face here, to provide solutions and help integrate them with the community at large.
* Build relationships among the diverse members of our community.
* Build and maintain the infrastructures and sustainable programs that improve opportunity and services now and for future generations of immigrants.
* Provide educational and cultural outlets to the community to learn more about the people (and their needs) who come to Mount Pleasant.

Minutes

In attendance: Claudia Streeter, Ed Kropa, Jeff Fager, Mike Riepe, Trey Hager, Tammy Shull

* **Relationship Building with Immigrant Community** – Trey is interested in pursuing opportunities for relationship building with the immigrant community in Mt. Pleasant. He suggested a bi-lingual Bible study and Conversational Spanish as potential opportunities to engage with the immigrant community. We will reach out to LULAC and some of the local Spanish churches to start a dialogue about these and other relationship building opportunities.

* **Bystander Intervention Training -** Jeff and Tammy will be facilitating this training at Iowa Wesleyan on how to intervene in public instances of hate speech while considering the safety of all parties. It can be one tool on the way towards building strong communities that resist institutionalized racism and violence.
  + Wednesday, April 4th at 10
  + Friday, April 6th at 11
  + Monday April 9th at 10 and 11

Trey is interested in participating and Tammy will get him the information on content and dates.

* **Refugee Simulation** – IW students in Joy Lapp’s service learning course presented to the Press On Youth Group and also at the IowaWINs meeting. Their excellent presentation covered the definition of refugees and the current refugee crisis. They also provided information on **Justice for our Neighbors** (JFON) that provides legal assistance to refugees and immigrants. They are asking the people participating in the Refugee Simulation to be sponsored for a minimum of $10 and distributed the sponsor sheets. They are holding the event on Sunday, April 15th from 2-4 PM at the IW Social Hall. They are using the simulation materials that Emily Situmeang from our commission developed last year. IowaWINs is a sponsor of this event and we will discuss donating to this event at our next meeting. Registration is due by 4/6 and can be done by calling Joy Lapp at 720-201-3697 or by email at [teamrefugeesimiluation@gmail.com](mailto:teamrefugeesimiluation@gmail.com)
* **International Potluck at IW** - Sunday, April 8, 5:00 p.m., Social Hall in the Student Center
  + Quilts that Unite Us – Our friend, Stacey Hurlin, who lives in Fairfield and works with refugees in Greece has a project that she started while on her latest trip to Greece. She has started an international art project involving painting squares of fabric that include the creator’s name, age and place of birth. The squares are later made into a series of quilts. So far she has 721 squares representing 69 countries. Stacey can come to the International Potluck to introduce the project including a 3 minute video that describes the project, a display of one finished quilt and many of the individual squares. We will also have a table where people can create their own squares while at the event. Claudia will reach out to several of the quilters in the Presbyterian congregation to help with this portion of the event.
  + Publicity.:
    - Press releases – Emery volunteered to write and Tammy will get the background material to him and ask for the press releases to be out by March 26th.
    - KILJ publicity – Sam Riepe and Trey will work with KILJ on publicizing this event.
    - Tammy has flyers available now for posting. Let her know if you can help post them throughout the community.
    - Tom Ellsworth will provide signage to promote the event. He offered his yard as a location. We also discussed posting one in front of the Social Hall and perhaps at the IW President’s home.
    - We will have a Facebook Invite – Tammy will work with Sam on creating.
    - Also should get the event listed on the Chamber Community Calendar.
  + Food – need to reach out to past participants and community members to encourage participation. Please promote this to your family, friends, groups and neighbors!
  + Logistics – Trey will arrange for the purchase of paper plates, napkins, and plastic silverware and tablecloths. We talked about setting up around 18 round tables plus straight tables for the food and quilt square painting.
* **Genesis of Exodus** – This film is now available for public viewing.
  + The Genesis of Exodus: The Roots of Central American Migration
  + Link to trailer: <http://storymap.genesisofexodusfilm.com/index.html>
  + Link to resources: <https://genesisofexodusfilm.com/resources/>
  + Sam has verified that we can show the film using Vimeo and we just need to select a date for using the IW International Room. We will discuss best dates at our next meeting.
* **Immigration 202 – AFS program –** Erica Johnson from AFS in the Des Moines area has confirmed that she could come to Mt. Pleasant on a weekend to present this program. She suggested Saturday, May 5th as a possible date. We will discuss in the April meeting.

**Next meeting: Wednesday, April 4th at 7:00 PM at the First Presbyterian Church.**

Thanks,

Tammy Shull

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