



Nashville International Center for Empowerment

Annual Report 2010

2010 in Retrospect: An Executive Director's View



2010 was an incredible year! Greater Nashville continued to see an increasing influx of refugees and immigrants from all over the world, and a proportional rise in demand for refugee services—a demand NICE continuously strives to meet.

Because of client demands and increasing diversity among the population we serve, our Board of Directors voted in April to change the name of the Sudanese Community & Women's Services Center to Nashville International Center for Empowerment (NICE). We have continued to provide a range of free services to Mid-Tennessee's refugee and immigrant community in spite of the "Global Economic Storm" which we all have had to weather.

In May, after a trip to Washington, D.C., I and the NICE team became determined to expand services to new arrival refugees, and formed a partnership with a national Voluntary Agency—The Ethiopian Community Development Council—in the reception and placement of new refugees. Core services will include intensive case management in the areas of housing, education, health, and employment assistance.

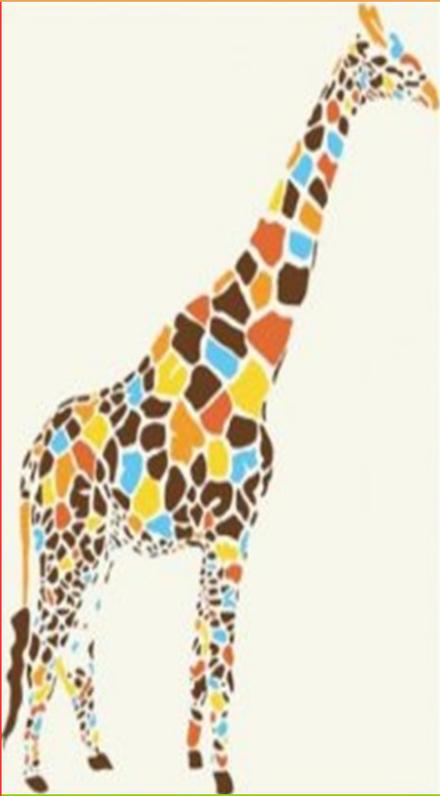
A July strategic planning session identified areas for improvement and long-range planning. NICE will expand and strengthen its core programs and initiate a fundraising campaign to increase paid staff and obtain an ideal space. Meanwhile, we continue to concentrate on bridging the social service gaps that exist among mainstream agencies by providing education, career & employment and other direct social services to refugees and immigrants.

NICE has continuously expanded and adapted its programs to meet the changing demands of its refugee and immigrant clients. 2010 was a strong year for the NICE employment team who, through resume development, application assistance, etc., surpassed

program objectives even during a challenging economic period. The same can be said of the NICE education team. On site and at a new satellite location, NICE students in 2010 exceeded expectations. The Youth Impact Program was instrumental in educating local teachers about cultural diversity of local refugee populations, and citizenship instructors factored in more than 50 new Americans obtaining their citizenship. In 2010, our immigration service team assisted more than 200 individuals with issues ranging from family reunification to status adjustment. Though 2011 will no doubt be a daunting year globally, we see enormous opportunity. NICE is blessed with an enthusiastic team of talented staff and superb volunteers including amazing board members who share the goal of maximum client service. Our partnerships with community organizations and faith groups have a major impact on our clients' lives as well. Thanks to our community partners, our talented teachers, and to our volunteers and local supporters!

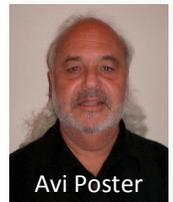
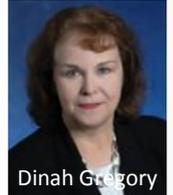
Gatluak Ter Thach
Executive Director

NICE Notable Events of 2010



1st Annual Community Empowerment Benefit Breakfast

On April 16, NICE held the first annual Community Empowerment Benefit breakfast, generously hosted by Lowe's Vanderbilt Hotel in Nashville. The event, which was attended by over 150 individuals from across the spectrum of our community, gave NICE the opportunity to present two significant awards for outstanding providers of direct refugee and immigrant service. The inaugural **New Arrival Award** was given to Avi Poster, co-chair of the Coalition for Education About Immigration, for his continued contributions on behalf of the refugee community since he settled in Nashville. Dinah Gregory, Director of Planning and Coordination for Metropolitan Social Services, was presented with the **Genesis Award** for her continued dedication on behalf of the refugee community. Speakers included Howard Gentry, former Nashville Vice Mayor and CEO of the Nashville Chamber of Commerce, and Abdelghani Barre, refugee advocate and Metro Social Services Planning Analyst.



NICE Branches Out: The Donelson Campus

In October, NICE established a relationship with The Donelson Fellowship, which agreed to act as a satellite campus for NICE ELL classes. Equipped with three large multipurpose rooms featuring large screen television monitors, projection screens, and DVD hookups, as well as over 25 classrooms, Donelson's facility is impressive. The initial offering was two beginning-level classes, and there is much room for expansion.



Capacity Building with Vanderbilt CHS

Thanks to a grant from the Ethiopian Community Development Council, NICE contracted with Vanderbilt University's Center for Health Services to increase its institutional capacity. VCHS director Barbara Clinton and her team conducted a series of grant-making workshops, which were open to the community, as well as a strategic planning retreat on July 10th at Coleman Community Center. The retreat, attended by NICE staff, board members, and community partners, resulted in the development of valuable, specific action statements to address the needs of the center and to better aid our clients.



New Name, Logo & Website Launch

In a year of major changes, perhaps none was bigger than the re-branding of the center. On April 16, during the Empowerment Breakfast, NICE's Board Chair announced that SCWC had become NICE. This was followed by the unveiling of a new logo and the launch of a completely re-designed, more user-friendly and informative website.



Fifth Anniversary Celebration

On December 11, 200 friends gathered at Glencliff High School to celebrate NICE's fifth anniversary. The program included carolers, gifts for children, clothing distribution, and a presentation of certificates to advancing students. Most notable were the presentation of the **Sonrisa Trippe Volunteer of the Year Award** to Jim Bennett and the new **Community Empowerment Award** to longtime supporter Donna Pack.

Data Management & Technology Transformation

Perhaps the most significant impact on NICE's day-to-day business, as well as the services it strives to provide, was initiated by super-volunteer Dr. William Thompson and super-intern Karen McGee. These two teamed up to undertake a complete technological overhaul of the center's IT system, as well as institute a new, custom-built, comprehensive client- and service-tracking database. Equipped with powerful machines and a new improved data management system, NICE enters 2011 with bolstered institutional capability that will without a doubt translate into increased workflow and services.



World Refugee Day Celebration

On June 30, the Nashville International Center for Empowerment hosted a World Refugee Day Celebration to recognize the struggles and accomplishments of refugees and asylees of Middle Tennessee and throughout the world. Members of the NICE community, our partner Catholic Charities, and other local refugee and immigrant supporters joined together in a day of food, fun, and sharing.

2010 Year End Program Summaries



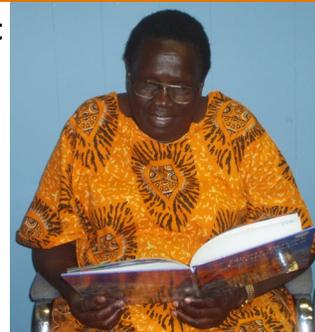
Workforce Preparation & Placement

The NICE Employment Program had a successful year in spite of the challenging economic climate: clients were placed in more than 100 jobs in 2010. Tragic as the May flood was for Nashville, it led to many flood clean-up positions downtown and at Gaylord Opryland Hotel and Convention Center. Opryland continued to be a figural employment partner once it re-opened. Our main hiring partners in 2010 were Construction Corps, Opryland Hotel, Nashville Bun Company, Babylon Gardens, and GCA (the company that provides janitorial services for Metro Nashville Public Schools). Most of the new clients enrolling in our program are refugees from Bhutan who have spent many years in Nepalese refugee camps. Late in 2010, a new workplace ELL-based English class was announced, to begin in early 2011.



Adult Education & Youth Impact

2010 was a prolific and successful year for the Education Program as well. 14 different ELL classes were offered, 12 at the “home site” on Nolensville and two at the new “satellite” campus at The Donelson Fellowship, which provided the necessary space to operate additional classes and reduce the number of students on the waiting list. Of the more than 200 regularly-attending students in 2010, 105 advanced at least one level. The education program created a new, streamlined attendance policy to address student retention rates and incorporated the new NICE database for program operations. Over 50 volunteers supported educational programs as teachers, tutors, and administrative workers. Though



2010 was a transition year for the newly-minted Youth Impact/Cultural Exchange Series, the initiative showed impressive results. More than 50 Metro Nashville teachers whose classes contain significant numbers of refugee and immigrant students learned about diverse cultures and the range of refugee experiences. Teachers were given the opportunity to engage in open dialogue addressing the specific needs of the students they serve.



New Program: Refugee Health Awareness In 2010, NICE began developing a program centered on health education which aims to educate clients on the American healthcare system and specific health issues they may face in their new homes, helping to aid in the journey to self-sufficiency. NICE has collaborated with the Vanderbilt Center for Health Services, Siloam Family Health Center, Franklin Road Women’s Clinic, Mental Health Association of TN, and Vine Hill Clinic, in order to provide its clients with a network of support and care as they start their new lives in America.

New Staff in 2010



Sue Lo

Education
Prog. Coordinator

Sue Lo earned a B.S. and M.S. from California State University. She has worked in various social service agencies providing services to children, adults, and families. Sue has done work with survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, children, adult, and families facing various life challenges.



Sarah Russ

Asst. Education
Prog. Coordinator

Sarah Russ worked closely with refugee populations of her home state of Minnesota before relocating to Nashville. She has experience with instruction, program coordination and volunteer management. She holds a TEFL certificate from Hamline University and a B.A. from Macalester College.



A'isha Garba White

Asst. Employment
Prog. Coordinator

Originally from Nigeria, A'isha Garba-White graduated from Mid-Continent University in Mayfield, Kentucky with a degree in Business Administration. In 2010, A'isha transitioned from volunteer immigration and administrative service to a paid position in the booming NICE Employment Program.

Refugee Reception & Placement

In October of 2010, Nashville International Center for Empowerment reached one of the most meaningful milestones it will ever attain as a refugee service organization: NICE was approved by the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, a branch of the United States Department of State, to become a new arrival refugee resettlement agent. The approval paved the way for NICE to partner with the Ethiopian Community Development Council, a Washington, DC-based Voluntary Agency contracted by the US Office of Refugee Resettlement, in resettling 75 individual refugees in the 2010-2011 fiscal year.



Ethiopian Community
Development Council

ECDC

Changing Lives.
Changing Futures.

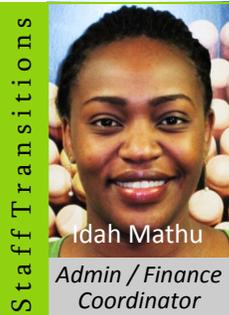
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Social Adjustment & Immigration

2010 was a year of change for NICE's Social Adjustment & Immigration Program. Previous coordinator A'isha Garba White transitioned into the Employment Program, leaving SA&I temporarily understaffed. This was remedied by recruiting interns from area colleges and universities such as Belmont, Tennessee State, and Vanderbilt to take over SAI responsibilities. Under the guidance of Gatluak Thach, A'isha Garba, and Idah Mathu, new interns Amber Franklin, Kenesia Cook, and Ashley Strawn were quickly initiated into working as Social Adjustment & Immigration Assistants. Even during a year of transition, the team showed significant outcomes, assisting more than 200 clients.



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Originally from Kenya, Idah came to Nashville in 2005. Idah holds a degree in computer science from Crux Institute. In 2010, Idah transitioned from volunteer to a paid position as Admin / Finance Coordinator.

2010 NICE Client Profile: Vicky Amouzou

Originally from Togo, Vicky Amouzou came to the United States as an asylee in 2008. In early 2010, she sought out assistance from NICE in her effort to find sustainable employment. Friendly, compassionate, upbeat and full of humor, Vicky never fails to bring a smile to the face of every person she comes into contact with. Of course, such a person needs little assistance! Vicky is employed at Opryland Hotel, which she says is a blessing.



Volunteer Spotlights

Community Empowerment Award

THANK YOU

No words can express our appreciation for "Mama" Donna Pack, first honored recipient of the newly-coined NICE Community Empowerment Award.



Thank you, Ms. Donna!

Volunteer of the Year

THANK YOU

Congratulations to our Volunteer of the Year, Dr. James Bennett, who led NICE in its unprecedented 2010 grant making effort.



Outstanding Intern

THANK YOU

Hats off to Karen McGee, who tackled the NICE Technology Transformation before departing to Namibia for a year of service with World Teach.

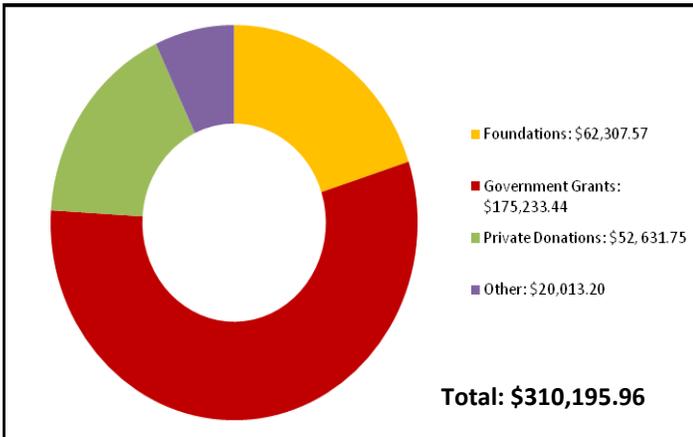




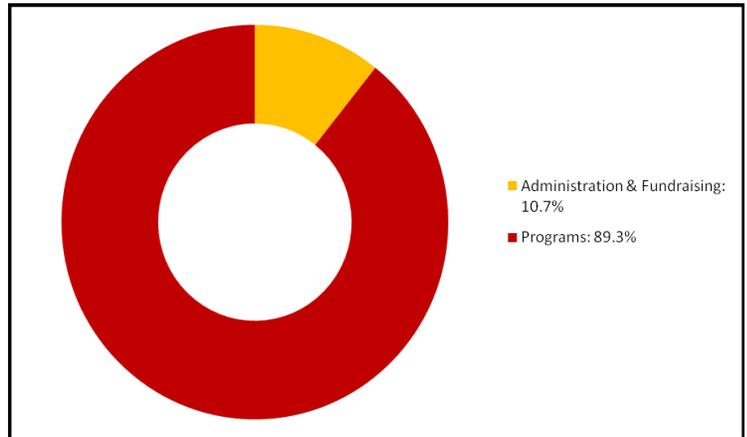
Nashville International

Center for Empowerment

2010 Income



2010 Expenditures



Thanks to our Top Ten 2010 Partners for Community Empowerment

- Bethel World Outreach Center
- Blend Studio
- Catholic Charities of Tennessee
- Checker Cab
- Donelson Christian Academy
- The Donelson Fellowship
- Lowe's Vanderbilt Hotel
- Tennessee Foreign Language Institute
- Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition
- Vanderbilt Center for Health Services

NICE Board of Directors

- President** Kathy Edson, Nashville Public Television
- Vice President** Koang Chol, Quality Living
- Treasurer** Choul Both, Community Volunteer
- Secretary** Donna Kumar, Nashville Council on Aging

- Will Alexander, DI Sports Holdings
- Asrar Babikir, Catholic Charities of Tennessee
- Both Jock Deng, The Gap Distribution Center
- Betsy Dooley, Health Assist Tennessee
- Emmanuel Ehiemua, Martha O'Bryan Center
- Angie Harris, Tennessee Foreign Language Institute
- Ryan Harvey, Federal Public Defender's Office
- Yam Kharel, Catholic Charities of Tennessee
- Dr. Julia Lydon, Metro Nashville Public Schools
- Lori Murphy, Vanderbilt University
- Jeff Pack, Gideon International
- David Khan Reath, Community Volunteer

