REFUGEE YOUTH SHOW RESILIENCE THROUGH SELF-EXPRESSION

ECDC African Community Center Hosts Refugee Youth Talent Night

Denver, CO – At least ten refugee youth in the Denver area will share their talents at Aurora Central High School at the Third Annual International CITY Talent Night on Friday, March 9, 2018. The event, hosted by ECDC African Community Center (ECDC ACC), a local refugee resettlement agency, is focused on celebrating the skills, courage, and resilience of refugee and immigrant youth.

“This evening represents the success and passion of refugee students here in Colorado,” says Melissa Theesen, Managing Director of ECDC ACC. “It’s a tribute to our state’s heritage of not only accepting refugees but celebrating their individual talents and strengths.”

The event comes at a time when refugee resettlement continues to face challenges created by the actions of the government. The current administration has slashed the number of allowed refugee arrivals from a ceiling of 110,000 in fiscal year 2017 to 45,000 for fiscal year 2018 and is on track to settle less than half of this historically low number. These actions have had negative implications for the well-being of ECDC ACC’s refugee community members, including youth. Events like Talent Night help youth gain confidence and find their voices while showing them that their community supports them.

The public is invited to the Talent Night on March 9 from 4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. at Aurora Central High School (11700 E 11th Ave., Denver, CO, 80010). A $2 donation or donated school supply is asked in lieu of an entrance fee.

ECDC ACC’s Youth Programs support and prepare refugee and immigrant young adults as they navigate new sociocultural, economic, academic, and personal landscapes. College access classes, scholarships, and after-school programs including tutoring and sports all provide leadership and character development activities. These activities help to ensure the future upward mobility of refugee youth as they discover and activate their passions in their new home.

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ECDC ACC is a branch office of the Ethiopian Community Development Council that has helped refugees and immigrants rebuild safe, sustainable lives in the Denver area for nearly 17 years. Reception and placement activities that ECDC ACC conducts are paid for, in part, through financial assistance provided by the U.S. Department of State. ECDC ACC is a 501(c)(3) entity. For more information about ECDC ACC, visit www.acc-den.org and follow us on Facebook.