



WELCOMING NEWCOMERS

New North Presentation | May 24, 2022

What does it mean to be welcoming?

“Being welcoming is much more than being friendly, tolerant, or peaceful. We believe that truly welcoming places have intentional, inclusive policies, practices, and norms that enable all residents to live, thrive, and contribute fully.”

Source: Welcoming America

Research Aims

- How can Imagine Fox Cities help promote a sense of belonging and well-being among newcomers to the area, especially among newcomers with historically marginalized identities?
 - What can we learn from other communities who have successfully built inclusive welcoming programs?
 - What resources for best practices exist?
 - Who could be potential partners in this work?



IDEAS FROM OTHER COMMUNITIES

Annual Programming Idea: “Welcoming Week” (2022 Dates: 9/9-9/18)

Welcoming Week 2021

Thank you for joining us in celebrating #WelcomingWeek2021!
Around 385 events took place from September 10-19 in communities all across the United States and Canada, proclaiming our theme for 2021, "Belonging Begins With Us".

Catch up on the highlights in this blog post:

[SEE THE HIGHLIGHTS ▶](#)



Concierge Programs

- Examples: Eau Claire, Green Bay, La Crosse, Fond du Lac
 - Funded by employers
- Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce used to have a similar program
 - 2012-2017
 - Mostly used to recruit C suite employees, no clear focus on DEI
 - The Chamber is now planning to launch “Engage Fox Cities” – a community immersion program focused on reaching more people

Web resources

The screenshot shows the homepage of the NWA Diversity Resource Guide. At the top left is the logo 'ERSITY^{NW} AR'. To the right is a navigation menu with links for 'Cities', 'Faith', 'Community', 'Food', 'Services', 'About Diversity NWA', and 'Blog'. The main heading is 'NWA Diversity Resource Guide' in a large, teal, sans-serif font. Below this is a subtitle: 'A guide to diverse businesses and organizations in Northwest Arkansas'. A short paragraph follows: 'There's more to our area than meets the eye. Find great places to eat, shop, and visit.' At the bottom, there is a search bar with the placeholder text 'Search...' and an orange 'SEARCH' button. The page is decorated with a yellow semi-circle at the top right, an orange circle on the left, and a teal circle on the left, all connected by dotted lines.

ERSITY^{NW} AR

Cities Faith Community Food Services About Diversity NWA Blog

NWA Diversity Resource Guide

A guide to diverse businesses and organizations in Northwest Arkansas

There's more to our area than meets the eye. Find great places to eat, shop, and visit.

Search... **SEARCH**

Web resources

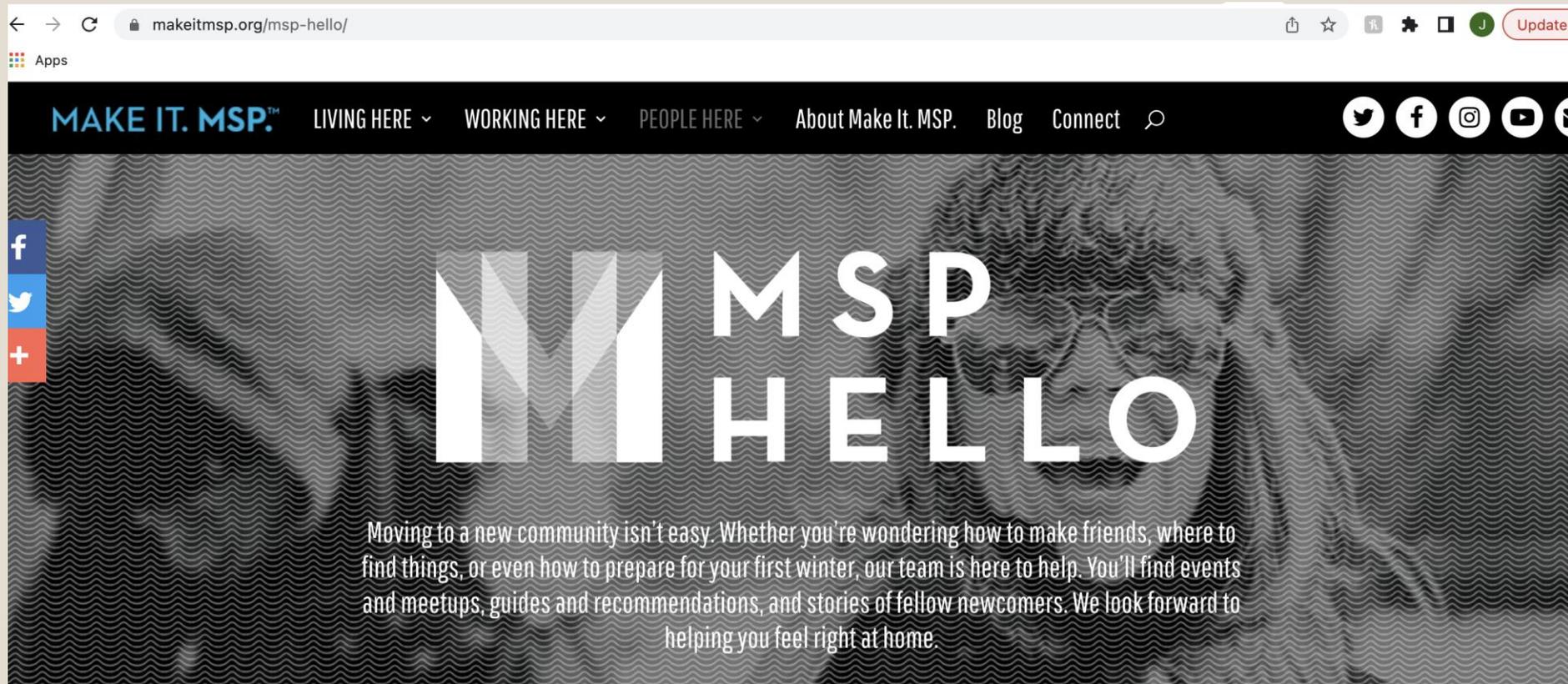
Category

Bentonville

- Community Community Organizations Food Restaurants Grocer Services Arts Grooming Counseling LGBTQ+ Resource
- Retail/Services Constuction/Contracting Education Food/Market Medical Nonprofit/Education/Religious Organization Real Estate / Rentals

Filter

Web resources



Welcoming Refugees

TIPS TO BUILD & SUSTAIN A LOCALLY WELCOMING INFRASTRUCTURE

01

Mobilize a Multi-Sector Response Group

The purpose of a multi-sector rapid response group is to leverage resources in a community to quickly respond to urgent, immediate needs.

02

Create a 'We Welcome' Fund

A *We Welcome Fund* can be a way to raise and distribute resources at the scale needed to support refugees and immigrant serving organizations, both in the current moment and for the long haul.

03

Share Messages of Welcome

Invite diverse community leaders and residents in your community to be welcomers equipped with messaging and a backbone of resources.

04

Change Policy

Elected leaders at all levels of government can begin thinking about ways to ensure that newly arrived families are not just welcomed, but integrated into their communities.

Read more: bit.ly/WelcomingAfghansGuide



The Welcoming Standard

(from Welcoming America)

There are seven framework categories of the Welcoming Standard that define truly welcoming places:

- **Government Leadership:** In welcoming places, local governments implement systems and programs, such as designating a unit and staff to coordinate immigrant inclusion, that strengthen community efforts and embed inclusion within government agencies.
- **Equitable Access:** Welcoming places work to ensure community services and opportunities are available to all residents, including newcomers. This includes improving access to healthcare, childcare, transportation, and more.
- **Civic Engagement:** Welcoming communities actively ensure that residents, including newcomers, fully participate in civic life by increasing access to leadership and democratic spaces.
- **Connected Communities:** Welcoming communities build connections between newcomers and long-term residents by strengthening relationships, communicating shared values, and promoting a welcoming culture through institutional communications.
- **Education:** Welcoming communities strive for an educational system that ensures all students have the support they need to succeed in school and the education they need to succeed in the workforce.
- **Economic Development:** Welcoming communities harness the full potential of all residents, including those from other countries who have the skills and assets to thrive, by developing economies that leverage all talents.
- **Safe Communities:** Welcoming communities foster trust and build relationships between residents and law enforcement and safety agencies. This includes training public safety staff on working with diverse communities and more.

Gateways for Growth Examples

- Gateways for Growth offered competitive challenge grants to communities between 2016-2020
- Funding for localities to receive research support and technical assistance from the [American Immigration Council](#) and [Welcoming America](#) to improve immigrant inclusion in their communities



GATEWAYS FOR GROWTH STRATEGIC PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Andrea Chaney, Assistant Director, Office of International Programs,
Western Kentucky University

Albert Mbanfu, Executive Director, International Center of Kentucky

Alice Tarnagda, Co-Director, Refugee Bowling Green

Brent Childers, Director, Neighborhood & Community Services Department, City of Bowling Green

Brian Becker, Director, Skills U, Southcentral Kentucky Community & Technical College

Elda Chavez, Realtor, EXP Realty

Heath Ray, Refugee Program Coordinator, Community Action of Southern Kentucky

Jon K. Sowards, LTC Vice President of Operations & Special Projects, South Central Workforce
Development Board

Dr. Kim Myers, Director of Workforce Solutions, Southcentral Kentucky Community &
Technical College

Leyda Becker, International Communities Liaison, City of Bowling Green

Lynn Williams, Vice President of Human Resources, Med Center Health

Maureen Carpenter, Vice President, Partnership Services, Bowling Green Area Chamber
of Commerce

Miller Slaughter, Director, WKU Small Business Development Center

Nick Cook, Grants Coordinator, City of Bowling Green

Dr. Robert Boone, President/CEO, South Central Workforce Development Board

Roddy Grimes, Vice President, Stewart & Richey Construction

T.J. Shockley Hunt, Regional Manager of Career Services, Goodwill Industries of Kentucky, Inc

Toni Dye, Director, International Student & Scholar Services Western Kentucky University

Victor Paz, Owner, DTS, LLC

Dr. Whitney O. Peake, Director, Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Western Kentucky
University

Gateways for Growth Example: Bowling Green, KY

- Steering Committee Members:
 - Higher ed sector
 - Refugee services
 - Realtors
 - Workforce Development
 - Local government
 - Healthcare sector
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Grants coordinators
 - Employers
 - Goodwill Industries

Connected & Safe Communities

Create welcoming and safe communities where New Americans are connected to community resources: religious institutions, recreational activities, safety services and housing options

1. Connect New Americans to Community Resources

- a. Promote and grow office of International Communities Liaison as a centralized resource for new Americans
- b. Update and share New American Resource Guide
- c. Utilize International Communities Advisory Council (ICAC) to disseminate information

Resources: United Way of Southern Kentucky, Community Action of Southern Kentucky, City of Bowling Green, SKYCTC Skills U., International Center, Churches, Youth Service Centers, Family Resource Centers, Migrant Education programs

2. Create Coalition of Faith Based Organizations

- a. Identify faith institutions working with New Americans
- b. Connect New Americans to faith institutions and mentors

Resources: Hope House, HOTEL Inc., Refuge BG, Salvation Army, Community Partnership for Immigrant and Refugee Families, religious institutions and local churches

3. Explore the potential for creating a BG ID

- a. Establish a cross-sector task force to research best practices of municipal ID and explore the need for adopting a municipal ID program in Bowling Green

Resources: City of Bowling Green, local Churches, International Center of Kentucky, Bowling Green Police Department, Warren County Sheriff, Bowling Green Fire Department, Warren County Attorney, Legal Aid, Housing Authority of Bowling Green, Refuge BG

GATEWAYS
FOR
GROWTH
EXAMPLE,
CONT.

REPORT

ENGAGED COMMUNITIES

Goal 3:

Support New Americans to be in elected office, on commissions and boards, and at key decision-making tables.

Recommendation 1:

Provide board governance and leadership development for New Americans.

Recommendation 2:

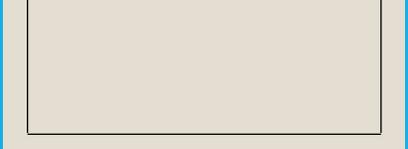
Orient New Americans on the process to run for and hold elected office.

Recommendation 3:

Assess organizational readiness, culture, and practices to identify and remove barriers to recruit, retain, and lift New American voices on the board.

Metric:

10 New Americans in elected positions and boards throughout the county, inclusive of cities per year.



GATEWAYS FOR GROWTH EXAMPLE: KENT COUNTY, MICHIGAN

[REPORT](#)

Roadmap to promoting belonging among newcomers.

Civic Engagement

- Well represented in the city including Boards, Commissions and Neighborhood Enhancement Teams
- Education for city staff, boards, commissions and elected officials on the complexity of the immigrant experience and ensure they are competent and literate in issues of diversity, race, religion and equity.

Roadmap to promoting belonging among newcomers.

Economic Development

- Entrepreneurs have equitable access to resources and opportunities that support starting, building and growing their business
- Equitable access to safe and reliable public transportation

Roadmap to promoting belonging among newcomers.

Education

- Equitable access to local quality and affordable early childhood education, parenting programs and development resources
- Equitable access to adult literacy, English language and GED program both in native and English languages

Roadmap to promoting belonging among newcomers.

Health

- Data is readily available to evaluate and track how diverse populations are served in health and social services
- Equitable access to affordable and local health-related resource via multilingual health and wellness directory and outreach services

Roadmap to promoting belonging among newcomers.

Public Safety

- Victims and witnesses of crimes have access to multilingual resources to report crime and receive support services that promote their safety
- Committees, boards, and government represent their constituents' diverse backgrounds to lead in developing policies on community policing, crime prevention, and code enforcement



SEEKING INPUT/
COALITION-BUILDING

Extension Programs

Marketing Hometown America

Program Description

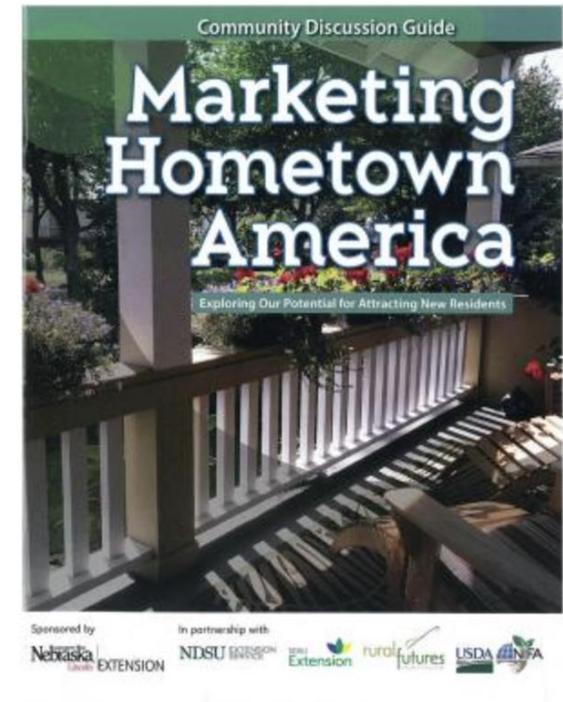
Marketing Hometown America is a program that has been successfully used by Cooperative Extension programs in Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota and now Iowa State University Extension and Outreach to help rural communities retain their quality of life and market the value of rural places by teaching them to home in on what people are looking for when they choose a place to live and do business.

Delivery Method

The Marketing Hometown America program trains local facilitators to run a four-week Study Circles program. Each week many small groups within a community meet with their own facilitator and work through a different topic. At the end of the four-week Study Circles sessions, all the participants from all of the groups come together for an Action Planning Forum where each group's ideas are presented and everyone chooses the ideas they like best to be incorporated into a marketing plan for their community.

Target Audience

Rural communities in need of a focused marketing plan to attract new residents and businesses.



Focus Groups

Focus groups were held in May and June in Appleton, Canby, Dawson, Granite Falls, Madison, Montevideo, and Ortonville. Newcomer lists were generated and up to twelve were personally invited to participate. A reminder postcard was also mailed to their address. The focus groups were facilitated by Toby Spanier with the University of Minnesota Extension. Audio recordings were made of these conversations and transcribed.

The following topics were discussed in-depth in the sessions:

1. What was important to newcomers in making the decision to migrate to the region?
2. Why was it important?
3. What were the “pull” and/or “push” factors that influenced them?
 - a. Push - what drove them away from their previous community?
 - b. Pull - what brought them to their current community?
4. How did they find a particular community?
5. How many regions did they consider before choosing?
6. How many communities did they consider before choosing the one they currently live in?
7. Was the community what they expected?
8. Are they currently active in community activities?
9. Do they wish to be active?
10. What is keeping them here?
11. What might push them away from this location in the future?
12. Do you have any final advice to give to local community leaders about recruitment and retention of new residents?

Focus Groups

- [University of Minnesota Extension](#)

Welcome Plan (Kent County, MI)

- Assembled a multi-sector task force called the Welcome Plan Committee and hired a Welcome Plan Coordinator.
- Welcome Plan Committee consisted of 36 multi-sector members with key representatives of health care, education, government, business, law enforcement, housing, and immigrants and refugees.

Welcome Plan (Kent County, MI)

- Agreed that Welcome Plan needed to come from New Americans, allowing their voices to guide the process and recommendations.
- As a result, two different research initiatives (survey distribution and focus groups) helped identify New Americans' top priorities and barriers to achieving those priorities.
- The Welcome Plan is a sum of barriers and solutions identified and expressed by New Americans in Kent County. **This reinforces that the Welcome Plan is built by New Americans, not simply for them.**



LOOKING AHEAD

Potential Community Stakeholders

- New North EDI Workstream
- Imagine Fox Cities
- Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce
- City of Appleton (and/or other local governments)
- Community Foundation
- Casa Hispana Interagency Group (<https://www.casahispanawi.org/interagency-group/>)
 - Group members include: AASD, Fox Valley Literacy, Appleton Public Library, and more
- World Relief Fox Valley
- Fox Valley Tech and other higher ed institutions
- Diverse & Resilient
- Be Well Fox Valley
- African Heritage
- People of Progression
- NEW Hmong Professionals

Questions for New North

- What role do you see New North playing in the work of attracting and retaining more diverse populations in the region?
- What ideas from today resonated with you and why?
- Who do you see as your partners in your work?

Additional Resources

- [City of Appleton DEI resources](#)
- [Welcoming America](#)
- [Gateways for Growth](#)