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World Refugee Day celebration returns to the Bullock Museum on June 18

Free event recognizes refugees and celebrates new citizens with food, music and activities

JUNE 14, 2022 (AUSTIN, TX) — The Bullock Texas State History Museum and Austin Refugee Roundtable will host Austin's annual celebration of the United Nations' World Refugee Day this Saturday, June 18 from 11 am to 2:30 pm. The free event will be held at the Museum and will feature a naturalization ceremony, live music, samples of world cuisine, and family activities.

"After a two-year hiatus from an in-person event, we are thrilled to be back in the Museum to celebrate World Refugee Day! This is one of the Museum's most cherished events because we get to celebrate some of our nation's newest citizens who have worked hard to overcome extreme adversity," said Bullock Museum Family Programs Manager Angela Kennedy.

Currently, there are more than 79.5 million people who have been forcibly displaced from their homes throughout the world. Established by the United Nations in 2000 and first celebrated on June 20, 2001, World Refugee Day raises awareness of the plight of these refugees and recognizes the courage and resilience of people forced to flee their home country. This year's World Refugee Day celebration at the Bullock Museum is made possible through support from Gregg Philipson and Michelle Warech-Philipson.

Starting at 11 am, visitors can take part in interactive activities, including a step-by-step learning game that allows participants to experience the journey of a refugee. Visitors will learn what causes people to flee, what it is like in a refugee camp, the process for applying for resettlement, and the experience of refugees coming to the United States. As one of the top destinations for resettlement every year, Texas welcomes more refugees than many other states.

At noon, the public is invited to witness the final step in their journey — taking the oath that will complete their process of becoming a United States citizen at an official naturalization ceremony in the Museum's second-floor Texas Spirit Theater. Seating is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis.

"Refugees are some of the most resilient and optimistic people. How else would they have been able to persist through years of violence, oppression and terror? They successfully held on to the hope of a safe life for their families until it happened. It is an honor to celebrate them as our new neighbors in Austin, Texas," said Lubna Zeidan, Refugee Program Co-Director at Interfaith Action of Central Texas.



Following the ceremony, visitors can celebrate in the Museum's third-floor Austin Room with samples of world cuisine provided by Catering By Rosemary, an activity with the Austin Public Library, and live music from international jazz fusion ensemble Indimaj.

"World Refugee Day is such a joyous time of celebration and friendship with some of Austin's newest residents. The food, activities, music and learning opportunities are fun for the whole family! It is our honor and privilege to support this great celebration and gathering each year," said Meg Erskine, co-founder and CEO of Multicultural Refugee Coalition.

The World Refugee Day celebration will take place at the Bullock Museum on Saturday, June 18 from 11 am to 2:30 pm. For more information, visit TheStoryofTexas.com.

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This program made possible through the generosity of Gregg Philipson and Michelle Warech-Philipson.

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The Bullock Museum, a division of the Texas State Preservation Board, is funded by Museum members, donors, and patrons, the Texas State History Museum Foundation, and the State of Texas.

ABOUT THE BULLOCK MUSEUM

The Bullock Texas State History Museum, a division of the State Preservation Board and an accredited institution of the American Alliance of Museums, illuminates and celebrates Texas history, people, and culture. With dynamic, award-winning exhibitions, educational programming for all ages, and an IMAX® theater with the largest screen in Texas, the Museum collaborates with more than 700 museums, libraries, archives and individuals across the world to bring the Story of Texas to life.