EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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DEED Creates Platform to Bring Immigrant and Refugee Advocates and State Leaders Together

December 2, 2020

St. Paul – The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) convened the first in a series of meetings that will bring immigrant and refugee advocates together with state leaders to network and collaborate, as well as identify concerns and key issues affecting immigrant and refugee communities. This forum, held monthly, will serve as a bridge between state leaders and immigrant and refugee advocates, and a platform where they can come together and have a dialogue.

“Immigrants and refugees have always made Minnesota great. Yet despite their extraordinary contributions to our communities and economy, including their overrepresentation in critical health care, retail, and agricultural jobs, all too often these Minnesotans haven’t gotten a fair shake,” said **DEED Commissioner Steve Grove**. “I thank everyone who joined today’s conversation to address systemic racism benefited from the dialogue. These are the conversations we need to be having to change our culture and our economy.”

“Today we started a conversation about removing systemic barriers. Our next steps will be to work together to understand and improve the ways our state agencies serve our immigrant and refugee communities,” said **DEED Deputy Commissioner Hamse Warfa**. “Our collaboration will be critical to supporting new Minnesotans. Immigrants and refugees will make up 70% of our labor force growth in the future.”

“Creating this platform for immigrant and refugee advocates means that they’ll have a space to share their thoughts, as well as their concerns, that will be organized and shared with state leaders,” said **DEED Assistant Commissioner Anisa Hajimumin**. “This is one of the major steps to bringing communities, advocates and leaders to work together and unify their efforts, so that together, we can realize the One Minnesota vision.”

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a disproportionate impact on Black, Indigenous and communities of color, DEED is providing services and resources to business owners and job seekers. Our Small Business Development Centers are ready and available. If your business is impacted by COVID-19, we can help optimize your online presence or rethink your business plan to include more delivery and takeout options.

And DEED is here to help if your job has been impacted by COVID-19. In addition to Unemployment Insurance, we can help with career exploration and job training assistance to grow your professional skills. Visit us at CareerForceMN.com (https://www.careerforcemn.com/).

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