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REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT WOMEN LEADERS TAKE CHARGE OF BUILDING A STONG COMMUNITY

9th Annual Refugee & Immigrant Women's Leadership Conference

*"Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."
– Margaret Mead*

Atlanta, GA....The Refugee Women's Network hosts its Ninth Annual Refugee & Immigrant Women's Leadership Conference on November 14-16, 2008 at the Westin Peachtree Plaza hotel in downtown Atlanta. This event brings together more than 100 women leaders from a large number of immigrant and refugee communities across the United States, representing ethnicities from Africa, Southeast Asia, Middle East, Europe, and Eastern Europe.

The theme of the conference, **"In Our Hands: Building Solidarity and Community,"** highlights achievements made by individuals, organizations and communities who have worked tirelessly to build solidarity within the immigrant/refugee communities and with mainstream American community. The keynote speakers highlight how individuals, committed to change, have worked across social, ethnic, cultural and economic divides to build a stronger and safer communities for immigrant and refugees in the United States. Addressing the audience on November 14, on the topic of "In Our Hands", Ms. Kabzuag Vaj, a Hmong refugee woman discusses her personal journey of raising awareness about social justice issues since the age of 15. Addressing the audience on November 15, on the topic of "Reaching Across Ethnic Divides to Building Solidarity & Community", a panel of speakers from the International Community School, Tapestri, Inc. and International Women's House. Each of these institutions, based in Georgia, will discuss how a group of concerned community members recognized that the learning and empowerment needs of immigrants and refugees were unique and that they were not being met adequately within the existing educational and service institutions. Panelists discuss how they built on commonalities, and worked through differences in order to build a responsive, respectful and supportive community.

The conference features 28 workshop speakers from diverse disciplines ranging from human rights, social justice, civil rights, reproductive health, mental health, community building and leadership development, microenterprise development, community activism and political activism. The conference also features a "Gallery of Change Makers," where audience members who are community change makers can displays their work and network with other similarly motivated leaders.

The keynote addresses on November 14 and November 15 from 9:30am-11:00am are being directly broadcasted on WRFG radio, 89.3 FM.

Refugee Women's Network is a national non-profit organization created by women, for women, that focuses on enhancing refugee and immigrant women's strength, skills, and courage, through leadership training, education and advocacy to promote independence, self-sufficiency, and networking among its participants. Its programs include leadership development, microenterprise, health promoters and advocacy. Refugee Women's Network is governed and staffed by refugee and immigrant women from Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas. For more information on RWN, log onto www.riwn.org

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For more information on the conference and for media participation, please contact BryAnn Chen, Executive Director at 404-299-0180 x 224 or 404-271-0758 or director@riwn.org