Inclusive Cities
US Knowledge Exchange

Report

Montgomery County, MD / Pittsburgh, PA
21st - 25th May 2018

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Global Exchange on Migration & Diversity

COMPAS · CENTRE ON MIGRATION · POLICY & SOCIETY

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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Introduction

Inclusive Cities is a knowledge exchange initiative supporting six UK cities and their local partners to achieve a step-change in their approach towards integration of newcomers in the city. Drawing on ideas and experience from within Europe and innovative approaches from cities in the United States, it aims

to support development of an approach which is strategic across the city administration, consistently uses positive messaging to develop an inclusive narrative for the city which informs and drives practice and is local authority led, working in close partnership with business, public and voluntary sector organisations to achieve shared goals.

1 Carnegie Library and Museum, Pittsburgh

Each of the cities (Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Liverpool and Peterborough, with London joining some aspects of the project as an associate member) has identified a number of priority areas which form an action plan made up of practical initiatives which broaden opportunities for inclusion of all residents across the economic, social and civic life of the city. They have also appointed a Taskforce of stakeholders from the private, public and voluntary sectors who will both advise on the project and take forward the actions in their respective sectors.

The project is a knowledge exchange initiative which allows the cities to reflect upon and develop their thinking in a number of ways:

- Peer learning and support between the participating cities
- Dedicated support from a project manager at the Global Exchange on Migration and Diversity who will inform the projects with specialist input – data, evidence, and examples of worldwide good practice and provide ongoing support to each of the cities
- Learning exchange with two US Cities, hosted by Welcoming America, a highly acclaimed initiative which supports the development of a shared narrative and inclusive practices among city administrations and their partners.

This note provides an overview of the US Learning Exchange which took place 21st-25th May 2018 in which 12 delegates from the 6 Inclusive Cities visited Montgomery County, Maryland and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, meeting with senior policy makers, community groups and activists and other partners involved in developing inclusive practices within the city. The visit was facilitated by the Global Exchange on Migration and Diversity (GEM) at the University of Oxford and Welcoming America.

A note about this report

This note provides an overview of the projects visited and some of the key themes which emerged from the exchange and which will inform the future of the Inclusive Cities programme – including the action plans which each of the cities are in the process of developing. It is necessarily an overview and does not aim to provide comprehensive minutes of the exchange, it also does not predominantly cover discussions between the cities. Information is correct as of the dates of the exchange.

Inclusive Cities is a knowledge exchange which allows for a sharing of different approaches in order that cities can learn from each other – but this process is not evaluative and therefore inclusion in the exchange (and by extension in this note) does not necessarily constitute an endorsement of that approach or project. The cities were chosen based on the interests of the UK Inclusive Cities and in partnership with Welcoming America.

Putting inclusion and migration policy in the US in context

Susan Downs-Karkos of Welcoming America began the exchange by putting the current migration situation in the US in context.

US Migration policy at the federal level is currently characterised by anti-immigration rhetoric advocating change contrasted with stasis at the policy levels as initiatives are stymied either by a divided Congress who are unable to pass legislation or by the courts, where many policy initiatives of the Trump administration currently sit. At the time of this May 2018 visit[1], these include restrictions on refugee resettlement, the so-called 'Muslim Ban,' Sanctuary Cities and the extent to which cities are required to collaborate with immigration enforcement and the fate of DACA or the 'Dreamers.'

These initiatives have simultaneously contributed to a challenging environment for cites and NGOs to operate in with a backlash against some work, contrasted by an outpouring of support both in terms of donations, volunteers and increased advocacy.

Delegates reflected on some of the resonances between the national government context in the US and that in the UK, in particular in relation to the Windrush generation and the wider hostile environment suite of policies. The differences between the powers of local government in the US and UK were noted but placed in the context of the potential opportunities provided by devolution in the UK and possibility for UK cities to take a more proactive approach on these issues, working in partnership with communities and other organisations within the city.

Susan outlined Welcoming America's response to this agenda and context which has focussed both on defence, supporting communities to defend their migrant communities, whilst continuing a longer term proactive strategy of working with communities, local government and other partners including business, bringing partners together in order to build capacity to do more at the local level in order to create change.

Welcoming America's model aims to meet communities where they are today, with the aim of moving them on a spectrum from fear to tolerance and ultimately to active welcoming. In keeping with the research on integration which informs the Inclusive Cities model, Welcoming America's model is based on a recognition of the importance of doing as much with and for receiving or host communities as with

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[1] This note is correct as of May 2018, however there have been several updates to this in intervening months in relation to both policy and court judgements which are not reflected here.

the newcomers themselves acknowledging that it is in this way that more cohesive communities can be created. Its approach encompasses the three principles:

- **Building leadership capacity** throughout the city and in communities
- Increasing meaningful **contact** based on equality between newcomers and host communities
- Developing **communications** which can help to develop a more inclusive city wide narrative.

Welcoming America recently launched its Certified Welcoming program, recognizing cities and counties that meet the Welcoming Standard, which includes the policies and programs that local governments must have in place to meet the highest bar for being welcoming. The Welcoming Standard is composed of these framework areas:

- Government Leadership
- Civic Engagement
- Equitable Access
- Education
- Connected Communities
- Economic Development
- Safe Communities

These standards aim to be a road map for communities that want to strengthen their inclusion efforts. Ultimately, Welcoming America's aim is to reach a tipping point whereby all US cities want to be welcoming communities, and these approaches become normalised and are simply business as usual within the day to day life of the city.

Creating narrative change at the city level

How we talk about immigration, inclusion and welcoming has emerged as a key theme for the Inclusive Cities programme and is a key tenet of the Welcoming America approach.

Wendy Feliz from the American Immigration Council presented on how to best talk about immigration from the perspective of building greater consensus, in order to advance a collective vision of a unified America where everyone is included. This has proved challenging due to the uneven distribution in how

important immigration is to those who are pro and anti; immigration has often been a low priority for those who are supportive (or unsure or sympathetic but untapped) and a high priority for those who have entrenched negative views. Similarly debates on migration in the US feed into wider issues related to identity politics, the projection that the US will be 'majority minority' by 2050 and the competing realities of 'demographics as destiny' and anxiety amongst white communities in relation to the speed of this change. A number of principles were identified in how to develop and deliver a new narrative:

- Don't reinforce myths by fact checking negative assertions; rather replace with a new story
- Think as much about who you wish to reach as what you wish to say and find the right messengers to start where the community is today
- Focus on the resilience and contribution of newcomer communities as much as their needs
- Successful narratives for change focus on pragmatism, moral arguments based on common values and developing shared prosperity
- Us is a better message than them

Four key tips were offered to cities for how to achieve this

- Focus on culture change
- Listen with as much passion as you talk
- Change hearts and minds – even if that means starting one at a time
- Devise local strategies for implementation

Further information on narrative change and strategic communications with the Inclusive Cities project can be found [here](#).

Montgomery County, Maryland

Background to Montgomery County

Montgomery County has a population on 1.1million and covers a number of towns and communities in the commuter belt of Washington DC. It is a very diverse community with over 140 languages spoken in its schools and over a third of the population born overseas (43% including their US-born children.)

There is no dominant group within the migrant population – which is roughly divided into a third Latino, a third Asian and a third of black origin. There has been significant population growth in the last 10 years, though this has been primarily due to immigration and the population would be in decline without this.

The County overall is wealthy, but this masks significant high levels of poverty. In keeping with other areas of local government they have also seen significant budget reductions in recent years. The County Executive views itself as one of the most progressive in the US and has prided itself on adopting progressive measures such as civil rights before their adoption by Congress. 60% of the $5.6 billion annual budget of the Executive is spent on education, significantly higher than in equivalent counties and Montgomery County is thought to have one of the best education systems in the country.

Role of the County Executive (City Administration) – 'we need to build a bigger table'

Montgomery County's inclusion strategy focusses on community partnerships and liaison and promoting economic growth through a talent attraction strategy focussed on proximity to Washington DC, the diversity of the area and the strength of the public education system.

County Executive Ike Leggett emphasises the importance of balancing these factors, including distributional challenges in the face of austerity as key to building a positive and proactive approach which aims to build consensus and bring people along on what can sometimes be a difficult journey of inclusion.

2 The delegation meeting with County Executive Ike Leggett

The Office of Community Partnerships aims to represent the changing face of the County and act as a liaison for different communities. The Director, Bruce Adams explained that the mandate of the office is to bring fresh policy voices to the table and to

strengthen and diversify existing groups. These are non-statutory responsibilities and so were at risk during the period of austerity post 2008 – however they were protected by the Executive and have grown since (though they still operate with budgetary restrictions.) Based on Welcoming America's model, the Office has developed a [framework based on 5 areas of inclusion](#).

The liaison model has a number of ethnicity based groups alongside an interfaith group (described below.) There have been challenges in this model with under-representation – for example the Latino group was strong but not necessarily representative as it did not include the central American representatives who characterise more recent migration. Similarly, the African American group was more focussed on longer standing communities and so a separate African advisory group was established.

The office also funds the [Gilchrist Immigrant Resource Centre](#) which acts as a hub for newcomer communities. The Centre aims to acts as a gateway for County immigrants: they can obtain information and referrals to programs and services offered by government agencies and community organizations, strengthen their life skills through English and basic computer classes, and increase their knowledge to prepare for civic life and/or U.S. citizenship. The County acts as a convenor to a legal immigration service providers network, bringing together a disparate network of service providers in order to build relationships, share best practice and look at joint referrals and advocacy on particular issues.

Alongside these practical initiatives, the office runs the city's [Sister City](#) programme (similar to twinning in the UK) and community outreach events such as the [World of Montgomery](#) festival. When this was initially put under threat due to budget constraints, the funding model was developed, over half of which is (c.$150,000) now contributed by the private sector. These broader outreach initiatives aim to build community contact and create relationships of trust through the planning process so that the impact of the festival is wider than solely the day of its delivery.

Diane Vu outlined the County's commitment to providing language access alongside ESOL provision. By Executive Order of the County Executive all front-line staff must be able to serve linguistically diverse communities. This order:

o   Requires translation of vital documents in the 6 top spoken languages in the county
o   All front facing employees must be able to serve any resident in any language at any time (this is done through a programme of certified employees and live telephone interpreting service)

The Office also aims to mainstream its work throughout the work of the administration, rather than keeping it centralised in the Community Partnerships service. One example of this is the integration of the health and human services departments with the aim of promoting a 'no wrong door approach' so that people get the services that they need regardless of which service they approach and which aims to ensure that people are only required to tell their stories once.

This mainstreamed approach has proved advantageous in working with minority and newcomer communities in a number of ways. The County has recently met its target to end homelessness amongst Veterans and now has a target to end homelessness for all single adults. Within this immigration status is not taken as a consideration (in part as the funding for the programme goes via a non-profit external organisation) allowing the policy to be fully inclusive. Similarly, within health provision minority health provision initiatives allow the County to develop culturally competent health programmes which are accessible and available to specific communities.

Building Community Leadership and Partnerships

Interfaith – 'the wonderful thing isn't only that we're all here, it's that we all know each other by our first names.'

Interfaith liaison work has been an important component of Montgomery County's community liaison work which aims to build trust between communities using community organising principles. Rev. Mansfield "Kasey" Kaseman from the Interfaith Network and Lubna Ejaz from the Faith Community Working Group explained how their work has grown a database of 40 faith leaders to 5000 today.

Central to their approach is to identify unifying principles which appeal to all Americans and faith communities. They are also clear that they are not at the table primarily to discuss faith based issues, but instead to start by bringing people together to take action around specific and tangible issues. For example, the Neighbours in Need working group brings together 18 non-profit organisations with faith leaders in a 5 year plan to make Montgomery County hunger free. The group also supports the religious land working group – liaising between faith groups and the County Executive to explain planning and licensing laws in relation to establishing or growing religious premises in order to mitigate any community tensions. In 2016, they worked with the County Executive to produce a guide to support

faith communities in welcoming their new neighbours which sets out practical ways in which faith communities can help.

Alongside this more proactive work, they have also established the Faith Leaders Response Team – which meets quarterly to ensure that there can be solidarity in response to any acts of hate or in case of the need for crisis response.

The group recognises that they represent a selective minority but that they can have an important role in reaching out to communities who may not otherwise engage – they have particularly focussed on building relationships with the Muslim community and have established a Muslim Advocacy Group.

Further information on the initiative is available here: http://montgomerycountyinterfaithmd.org

Police – 'It starts with the Chief' Sergeant Kathy Estrada

Sgt Kathy Estrada leads on community engagement for Montgomery County police department and outlined four key principles to their strategy: awareness, education, outreach and engagement. Central to their approach is aiming to build community engagement through trust, contact and communications. Languages are viewed as an asset base within the force with officers encouraged to use their language skills as part of their engagement.

Montgomery County has a well-defined policy that they do not enforce immigration policy, as this is the responsibility of the Immigration Enforcement (ICE) at the national (federal) level and do not generally check immigration status. Their approach is based on asking three questions, 'are you hurt, do you need our help and has a crime been committed?' The aim of these questions is to maintain focus on their role as the police and avoid mission drift into other areas such as immigration enforcement.

Sgt Estrada acknowledged that this was a process and there is still work to do, particularly in building out from dedicated community engagement teams to ensure that this is mainstreamed as an approach throughout the force and that working with students to ensure that the force of the future is representative of the community was vital to this. However, she was also clear on the central role of leadership in building culture change – stating that the approach had to start from the Chief downwards.

Community activism in Takoma Park 'If we can't make it happen in Takoma Park, there's no hope for the nation' Mayor Sam Abbott (1908-1990)

Takoma Park is a municipality of almost 18,000 within Montgomery County which is notable for its very high levels of civic participation. Mayor Kate Stewart described how the City has implemented a policy where all residents can vote in local elections regardless of immigration status. 16 and 17year olds have also been enfranchised at the local level.

Takoma Park is a Sanctuary City which takes a rights-based approach – the city has its own police force and has taken the decision to not ask for information on immigration status in order to better build community trust.

Following the 2016 election, local community activists came to together to form Takoma Park Mobilisation which aims to provide an organising structure around community advocacy. This has now organised into a number of working groups and programmes – some of which are advocacy based and provide frontline support – for example providing legal support to those at risk of deportation and others are more proactive, such as the 'Breaking Bread' initiative – organising community dinners in order to build community cohesion. The group acknowledge that their volunteer base is often not as diverse as the community and so have looked for ways to break down barriers to participation. For example, they have done outreach work to encourage more diverse recruitment for school governor vacancies and provided support to people who wish to participate. The group also recognise the benefits of the mobilisation in building a wider sense of community amongst the wider community.

Further information about the Takoma Park Mobilisation: http://tpmobilization.org/about

Skills, employment and economic growth and development

Montgomery County has a clear focus on the importance of adult skills provision, pathways into the labour market and workforce development.

Montgomery County College's MI-BEST programme provides contextualised English as a Second Language (ESOL) provision based on a number of employment pathways which map onto high demand areas within the local economy (in particular healthcare, tech, construction and education.) The programme follows a team teaching model whereby a teacher focussing on content is paired with one focusing on language skills. The training is either free or highly subsidised and is funded through a combination of philanthropic, state and employer funding. 75% of those completing the courses move into work and the average wage increase for those previously in employment is $4/hour. Dr Donna Kinerney who leads the programme emphasised the importance of building employer relationships and the importance of tailoring the message to specific sectors – for healthcare the most important thing is to emphasise that those on this route are trained to the same standard as any route, whereas for other sectors it may be about emphasising this route as a proactive way of diversifying the workforce.

Welcome Back Center for foreign trained health professionals

The Suburban Maryland Welcome Back Center aims to build on the personal and professional assets of immigrants living in the United States to address health professional shortages, diversify the health workforce, provide economic opportunities for underutilized individuals and improve health outcomes. It is one of several initiatives across the US which make up the Welcome Back initiative network.

The programme began working with nurses and takes a case management approach and has worked intensively, in partnership with local hospitals, with the circa 100 nurses who have graduated from the programme to date. The Welcome Center is currently looking to expand its programme in behavioural health and for physicians and has a particular focus on identifying alternative health sector based employment pathways for foreign trained doctors.

Notwithstanding the successes of the model, there are continued challenges in building partnerships with employers and continuing outreach in order to bring in learners. There is a gap in services for highly skilled migrants and work is ongoing to meet this gap looking at models such as the Welcome Back centre (see box) and organisations such as Upwardly Global. Similarly, there is interest in developing more provision set within workplaces to support those in work to develop their English language skills.

Economic Development, Reinvented

Daniel Parra, Director of Small and Minority Business Development at Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation outlined the work of this public-private partnership to promoting the link between economic growth and the proactive welcoming of newcomers. The Corporation describes the 'MoCo Advantage' as being founded in its diversity (it states that 4 of the 10 most diverse cities in the US are in the county) and posits this diversity as an asset to attract investment. The partnership brings together 12 board members from the business community to develop a strategy of attraction (of new businesses and investment), retention and expansion. The project also aims to maintain a balance between smaller and larger organisation and places volunteering at the centre of its programme – with the aim of building networks between businesses – with a particular focus on supporting minority owned businesses. MOCO365 highlights one local business a day, with a particular focus on supporting local community businesses.

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Pittsburgh's currently population of just over 300,000 is roughly half what it was at its peak in the post WWII era when the city produced more steel than Germany and Japan combined. Following steep industrial decline post 1979 the city was left with high levels of debt and a legacy of economic decline. Pittsburgh today has seen a renewal with a growing millennial population which means that the average age in the city is 32.8. The Pittsburgh Metro Area is home to 2.4m residents and has a small but growing migrant population of 80,000 and a growing refugee population, but this lags behind other cities of comparable size – leaving a gap of around 80,000 additional workers needed to support the growing economy. The city has high levels of poverty with around 1 in 4 residents living in poverty. A legacy of its industrial past, it has a number of large foundations – in particular Hillman Family Foundations, The Heinz Endowments, RK Mellon Foundation and The Pittsburgh Foundation who support much of the civic infrastructure of the city.

Creating a Welcoming Pittsburgh – 'if it's not for all, it's not for us'

The visit to Pittsburgh was led by Betty Cruz, who previously served as Deputy Chief of Special Initiatives to Mayor William Peduto and spearheaded development and implementation of the City's Welcoming Pittsburgh plan and now runs All for All, which aims to advance economic opportunity, break down barriers, and increase institutional best practices to further immigrant inclusion across the Pittsburgh region. All for All is guided by a comprehensive Immigrant Community Blueprint released in 2016.

The Pittsburgh visit kicked off with Dan Gilman, Chief of Staff to Mayor Peduto, who set out the key features of the City of Pittsburgh's strategy and the role of welcoming within this. Pittsburgh has a strong focus on inclusive innovation, economic diversification and an attraction strategy for investment. The Welcoming Pittsburgh plan aims to set out the economic argument of the need for immigration in order to meet the workforce demands of growth alongside the need to make the city more inclusive and welcoming for those already there. The plan is focussed on three main areas;

- *Welcome neighbour* – the role of receiving communities
- *Bridge to the city* – making the city more accessible to newcomer communities
- *Prospering together* – attracting and retaining talent

The action plan came about though a year long process of community engagement and feedback including five public forums, a communitywide survey complemented with 50 one-on-one interviews and a handful of focus groups who supported the city to refine their plans down to three priority areas and 37 recommendations and remains a living document. The plan was designed as a City-led effort and, as such, is specific to the City of Pittsburgh.

3 The delegation meets with Chief of Staff Dan Gilman and Mayor Garrett at City Hall

The strategy has a particular focus on economic development, which ties to other mayoral priorities to foster inclusive innovation as a way of tackling high levels of poverty – for newcomer communities but also existing minority and white working class populations. There is a clear focus on the need to bring the receiving communities along in order that they feel that they are sharing the benefits of that growth. As part of these complementary efforts, the City has partnered with Google in order to provide free programmes for small business owners and have a 'from rec to tech' plan to convert recreation (youth) centres to upskill young people. The strategy is also keen to ensure that partnerships with employers

focus not only on high skills jobs – but also working more broadly with the supply chains in order to open up more entry levels roles for local communities. Due to its history of high debt, the city also has a strong focus on developing public private partnership – especially with philanthropy, in order to ensure that development is sustainable, with Gilman emphasising the constant need for the city to be aware of, 'who's going to pay the band?' Most recently, Mayor Peduto has tied all of the distinct initiatives launched since he took office in 2014 under OnePGH, as a way to thread the City's innovation, resilience, and inclusion goals.

Civic and community engagement in Wilkinsburg and Baldwin County

Marita Garrett, Mayor of Wilkinsburg explained the need to translate these strategies into tangible initiatives and communications strategies at the neighbourhood level. Wilkinsburg, a borough of 16,000 which runs contiguous with the City of Pittsburgh is seeing some signs of transformation but there remains much to do. At present 18% of properties in the area are abandoned and this forms part of making the argument of the need for inward investment and of the need for more people to help alleviate the tax burden. Mayor Garrett has established Wilkinsburg Community Conversations to support people to better understand the issues in the borough. The initiative aims to support people to get to know their local government in order that they are encouraged to have a voice and to emphasise the need to 'show up' in terms of building the community.

Anthony Asciolla, Baldwin Borough code enforcement and zoning officer demonstrated how these principles of welcoming and engagement are being built into the mainstream services of his community – located in the South Hills part of the region, which is a cluster of City of Pittsburgh neighbourhoods and other municipalities like Baldwin that are now home to a growing immigrant community – which may not traditionally be thought to have a pro-active role in inclusion. For example, as part of his role, Asciolla is required to inspect each property prior to sale and this is now used as an opportunity to forge understanding between host and receiving communities by mitigating any potential tensions between communities through education.

CONNECTing the dots

Kristen Maser Michaels presented on the Congress of Neighbouring Communities –
CONNECT – which promotes cooperation and collaboration between the City of Pittsburgh and 42
neighbouring municipalities which comprise the region's urban core. For context, the City of Pittsburgh
is situated in Allegheny County which is home to 130 municipalities – each with their own services,
emergency response divisions, and multiple school districts. CONNECT was formed in response to the
sense that there was no formal way for the disparate urban core communities to connect and act with a
stronger advocacy voice. The group initially focussed on infrastructure projects but has recently seen an
increased interest in tackling community cohesion issues and provides an interesting model in the UK
context of devolution.

Workforce Development and Economic Impact

Pittsburgh's interest in the attraction and retention of talent (including of international students) has
meant a heightened awareness among local partners on what needs to be done to address the brain
drain that follows when talented international students study in the region but are unable to stay
following graduation. Belkys Torres, PhD, head of Global Engagement at the University Center for
International Studies at University of Pittsburgh, spoke of the importance of setting out a distinct local
policy and strategy, in particular in a challenging national policy environment.

Angelica Ocampo, president and CEO of the World Affairs Council and co-chair for the All for All Steering
Committee, spoke of the opportunities that exist to engage employers in order to open up employment
pathways and opportunities. The Council aims to shape Pittsburgh's global identity by promoting
international engagement across generations and sectors to instil independent, critical thinking about
the world and America's role in it.

The key question is to look into how to engage employers better whilst simultaneously building the
employer voice to make the business case for inclusion – which is based on the value of an increased tax
base and purchasing power. New American Economy's Map the Impact was referenced as a way of
demonstrating, at the local level, the economic benefits of migration. This shows, for instance that
migrants contribute $918 million dollars to the Pittsburgh region and have a spending power of $2.3bn.

Angelica also highlighted the need to tackle employer biases as much as working with communities, in particular identifying the gap between warm words at the strategic level and practice at recruitment and middle manager level and the Council recently ran a training and mentoring event aiming to bridge this gap.

4 The Delegation at University of Pittsburgh Cathedral of Learning

Building Inclusive Schools in order to create welcoming communities

Education is a key focus for Pittsburgh and this has included a growing ESOL focus as the relatively small migrant and refugee population has grown in recent years. This is matched by a recognition of the need for earlier intervention and greater parental engagement. The Office of Child Development at the University of Pittsburgh, a university-community partnership dedicated to improving the lives of children, youth, and families has identified the need to provide additional and earlier support to refugee children and now provides a home visiting programme for pregnant mothers. However, they also identified the need to work with school settings in the early years, in particular the need to develop teacher's cultural competences for welcoming.

The Office is also evaluating the Bhutanese Community Association of Pittsburgh (BCAP) approach to integration and its model to strengthen their capacity to address community driven needs and issues. These include:

- o Learning English (for all ages).
- o Health and behavioral health problems, especially suicide prevention.
- o Isolated and depressed older members.
- o Younger adults unable to find meaningful employment.
- o Alienated teens and young adults who are at risk for engaging in criminal activity and/or substance abuse.

The Bhutanese refugee community is one of the largest refugee groups in Pittsburgh – community estimates project there are more than 5000 former refugees from Bhutan, most came to the region through secondary migration – and so it is hoped that learning from the project will have wider applicability for the model throughout the city. The project has a specific focus on tackling cultural differences in order to mitigate tensions, for example the concept of trespassing does not exist in the same way in Bhutan and this can cause tensions if not explained to newcomers. Similarly, BCAP focusses on civic participation and become the first organisation to be permitted to have a replica voting machine to take into community centres to break down barriers to voting.

> **Global Minds Initiative – 'what is the point of diversity if there is no inclusivity?'**
>
> *Global Minds was established by Peyton Klein, a high school student who noticed that in the dining room at her school everyone was sitting in their own group, with very little mixing. The initiative aims to bridge the gap between newcomer and receiving communities' students though creating intercultural friendships.*
>
> *The student led initiative pairs high school students with English as a Second Language students who meet for two hours after school each week. Rotating teachers support the project, but it is very clearly a 'for youth, by youth' initiative. Klein is also clear that this is not volunteering but a two way exchange in which both sides build a friendship. The programme also attempts to build leadership skills amongst the participating young people.*
>
> *After beginning in one school in Pittsburgh in 2016, Global Minds now has 13 chapters across America and Canada.*

The group also highlights a key tension in the model – whether it is more inclusive to provide specific community group activities or to provide shared resources for all and the best way to facilitate this smoothly. It is a challenge to triangulate focussing on systemic, cross cutting issues which may be crucial for wholesale change (such as inequality, housing and employment) with the need to recognise specific needs of communities and how to meet these. The

city is building cross cultural community centres – primarily due to not being able afford culturally specific centres, however it may be that these are preferable as spaces to bring people together, depending how this is facilitated. Community asset transfer may be one model to reduce power imbalances (perceived or otherwise) in the ways that these assets are used.

Bibhuti Aryal, Chair of the Pennsylvania Governor's Advisory Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs, spoke of the need to systematise the good work happening at a policy level and also to link this to culture change at the front line – ideally taking the cultural competency training out to school and hospital receptionists as equally important as for teachers and doctors. Similarly, it is important to start from an asset base and not a deficit model, for example the heritage languages of students should be respected and taught, especially given the known value of being bilingual to childhood development. Similarly, Commander Eric Holmes, chief of staff at Pittsburgh Bureau of Police emphasised the need for proactive engagement with community groups in order to break down some of the fear that exists within communities. There is a strong separation between the police and ICE in Pittsburgh; however, surrounding municipalities and the jail system – operated by Allegheny County – are not coordinated or of one mind in how they handle community policing let alone their interactions with ICE.

Recruitment is also a serious challenge in attempting to ensure that the force more closely matches the communities that it serves. The force has revamped its selection process as a way of countering bias, but this remains an ongoing process.

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Annex A – Agenda for the Exchange

Monday, May 21, 2018

9:00   Welcome, Introductions, Program Review - Jacqui Broadhead, COMPAS; Susan Downs-Karkos, Welcoming America

9:30   An Overview of the U.S. National Policy Landscape - Susan Downs-Karkos, Welcoming America

10:15   **Driving welcoming work at the local level** - Susan Downs-Karkos, Welcoming America

11:00   **Talking Immigration in Today's Environment** - Wendy Feliz, American Immigration Council

12:45   **Communications Workshop**: Welcoming America - A hands on training to work on framing and messaging and to apply those principles

2:45   **Welcome to Montgomery County**: an overview of Montgomery County - Bruce Adams, Director of Office of Community Partnerships

3:30   **Public Safety and Interfaith Initiatives**: *Meeting and discussion with Police Department Community Engagement Division on their approach to engage with immigrants and increase trust in the immigrant communities, and their collaboration with interfaith community on prevention and intervention of extreme violence*

   Speakers:

   - Sgt. Kathy Estrada, Community Engagement officer
   - Rev. Mansfield "Kasey" Kaseman, Interfaith Liaison
   - Lubja Ejaz Co-chair of the Montgomery County Faith Community Working Group

Tuesday, May 22, 2018 - Montgomery County

9:30   **Overview of Montgomery County and its Welcoming Initiatives**: *Presentation and discussion – Overview of Montgomery County's welcoming initiatives: provide the delegation with a high-level overview of the welcoming initiatives and why this effort is important.*

   Topics include:

   - *Montgomery County: history and demographics*

- *Immigrant leadership development through advisory board*

- *Collaboration across the lines of difference*

- *Language Access policies, and other initiatives*

Speakers:

- Ike Leggett, County Executive

- Bruce Adams, Director, Office of Community Partnerships

- Diane Vu, Asian American Community Liaison/Language Access

11:15 **Immigrant Integration through Public-Private Partnerships**: *Presentation and discussion – Health and Human Services programs related to welcoming (Neighborhood Opportunity Network, Linkages to Learning, Minority Health Initiatives, CBDG, etc.): Various public-private partnerships that DHHS manages for successful inclusion.*

Speakers:

- Uma Ahluwalia, Director, Department of Health and Human Services

- Betty Lam, Chief, Office of Community Affairs

2:15 **Workforce Development and Economic Development**: *Meeting and Discussion: a meeting to discuss their innovative workforce development programs and services for immigrant residents, such as MI-BEST programs, and small business development programs.*

Speakers:

- Dr. Donna Kinerney, Dean of Instruction, Adult ESOL & Basic Skills for College and Careers, Workforce Development and Continuing Education, Montgomery College

- Philip Bonner, Director, Workforce ESOL Programs

- Daniel Parra, Director of Small and Minority Business Development, Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation.

3:15 Tour of the Gilchrist Immigrant Resource Center

4:00 **Neighborhood Efforts** – City of Takoma Park: *Meeting and Discussion: Overview of the City of Takoma Park and its welcoming initiatives (including Takoma Park Mobilization)*

Speakers:

- Kate Stewart, Mayor and key members of Takoma Park Mobilization

Wednesday May 23rd

Travel from Washington DC to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Thursday, May 24, 2018, Pittsburgh

9:00   **Leading a Welcoming Pittsburgh***: Meeting and Discussion: An overview of Pittsburgh's welcoming plan and why leaders have prioritized this approach. Tour of Mayor's Office and Council Chambers.*

Speakers:

- Chief Gilman Mayor's Chief of Staff and former City of Pittsburgh Councilman
- Marita Garrett Mayor of Wilkinsburg
- Kristen Maser Michaels Director of CONNECT
- Anthony Asciolla Baldwin Borough Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer

10:55   Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Tour and Overview of its [Welcome Center](#)

11:15   **Addressing Economic Impact & Workforce Gaps**: *Panel Discussion: A discussion of immigrant economic development in the region, with a focus on the data, gaps, and promising practices.*

Moderator: Betty Cruz Project Director All for All

Speakers:

- Angelica Ocampo President & CEO, World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh
- Belkys Torres Executive Director of Global Engagement, University Center for International Studies at University of Pittsburgh
- Ketaki Desai Immigrant entrepreneur

1:45 - 2:45   Tour of [Nationality Rooms at University of Pittsburgh](#): *The nationality rooms are located in the University of Pittsburgh's Cathedral of Learning. The rooms were designed to represent the culture of different groups of immigrants that settled in Allegheny County.*

3:00   **Building Inclusive Schools**: *Panel Discussion: A discussion underscoring the importance of creating inclusive and accessible programming, and highlighting successes as well as challenges in Pittsburgh.*

Place: Schenley Plaza

Moderator: Ivonne Smith-Tapia Project Manager, Office of Child Development at the University of Pittsburgh

Speakers:

- Peyton Klein Founder of Global Minds Initiative
- Bibhuti Aryal Chair, Governor's Advisory Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs

6:30   Break out dinner groups

Dinner hosts:

- Michael Goodhart and Nathan Darity (University of Pittsburgh and The Global Switchboard)
- Dr. Karen Hacker (Allegheny County Health Dept)
- Nadya Kessler and Zineb Outnoun (Global Pittsburgh and Atlas Languages)
- Betty Cruz and Ivonne Smith-Tapia (All for All and University of Pittsburgh)

Friday, May 25, 2018

8:30   Walking tour of East Liberty to Kelly Strayhorn Theater

9:00   **Creating Welcoming Communities**: *Round Table Discussion - a conversation highlighting initiatives to create more inclusive environments and services, speaking to challenges as well as successes here in Pittsburgh.*

Place: Kelly Strayhorn Theater

Speakers:

- Betty Cruz Founder & All for All Project Director, Change Agency
- Wasi Mohamed Executive Director, Islamic Center of Pittsburgh
- Khara Timsina Co-Founder, Bhutanese Community Association of Pittsburgh

- Eric Holmes Commander & Chief of Staff Pittsburgh Bureau Police

- Kheir Mugwaneza Former Director of Refugee Resettlement at NAMS

- Monica Ruiz Civic Engagement & Community Organizer, Casa San José

10:45   Wrap Up and Reflection Session - COMPAS and Welcoming America

12:00   Programme ends

Global Exchange
on Migration & Diversity

The Global Exchange on Migration and Diversity is an ambitious initiative at the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) opening up opportunities for knowledge exchange and longer term collaboration between those working in the migration field.