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World Refugee Day celebration returns to the Bullock Museum on June 8

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

JUNE 5, 2024 (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 on Saturday, June 8 from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The free event will be held at the Museum and will feature a naturalization ceremony, live music and dance performances, samples of world cuisine and family activities.

Currently there are more than 114 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.



“For more than 15 years the Bullock has welcomed new citizens, acknowledging their journeys, their contributions to our communities and their commitment to establishing a home in Texas,” said Margaret Koch, Director of the Bullock Museum. “On World Refugee Day, we honor their resilience and dedication to the United States.”

Starting at 11 a.m., visitors take part in hands-on 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. Visitors will also make a family-friendly craft with Austin Public Library and learn more about some of the cultures represented.

At noon, the public is invited to witness the federal court ceremony that completes the process of becoming a United States citizen in the Museum's second-floor Texas Spirit Theater. Seating is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Following the ceremony, visitors can celebrate in the Museum's Grand Lobby with samples of world cuisine and live music by Diversity Band, a community band promoting diversity, education

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and multiculturalism, and dance performances by Nway Oo May: Ladies of Spring, a group showcasing the dances of Myanmar.

“We are welcoming refugees to Texas with a day of celebration and festivities to turn the page on their painful past and to offer the prospect of a bright future,” said Lubna Zeidan, Refugee Program Co-Director at Interfaith Action of Central Texas. “Meanwhile, we offer the opportunity for the Austin public to learn more about the journey these new Texans went through and the different ways our community supports them.”

The World Refugee Day celebration will take place at the Bullock Museum on Saturday, June 8 from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. For more information, visit TheStoryofTexas.com.

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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 one of the largest screens 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.