



## Frequently Asked Questions about Global Talent

### **Q: What is the Problem?**

A: There are nearly 1.5 million immigrants & refugees in the United States who have a college degree from their home countries and they are vastly under-employed here. They are working in jobs that have nothing to do with what they studied and they have become the working poor.

### **Q: What kind of Jobs are they doing?**

A: In their home countries they were doctors, lawyers, marketing directors, teachers, journalists and social workers. In the US and Boise they are nannies, janitors, shelves stockers, cab drivers and housecleaners.

### **Q: Are they legal?**

A: Yes, these immigrant & refugees are all here legally and they are authorized to work for any employer in the US. Essentially they have green cards or are on their way to green cards. We do not work with undocumented/"illegal" immigrants.

### **Q: What is the difference between a refugee, an asylee and an immigrant?**

A: Refugees and asylees are individuals who have fled their homelands due to persecution based on their gender or ethnic, religious, political and/or racial background. Unable to return to their countries, they resettle permanently in the US and begin to rebuild their lives and careers. Immigrants come to the US for a variety of reasons: to join family, to marry an American, because of difficult situations in their home countries, to experience new freedoms and opportunities. We prioritize services for refugees and asylees, but we also serve unemployed and underemployed low-income legal immigrants.

### **Q: Where are refugees from?**

A: In recent years they come from Afghanistan, Burma, Colombia, Congo, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Iraq, Iran, Kenya, Kosovo, Somalia, Sudan, Tajikistan, Venezuela among other places.

### **Q: Can doctors and other professionals really practice again in the U.S.?**

A: Yes, the re-licensing/ re-credentialing process is long, bureaucratic and difficult, but not impossible. Global Talent helps navigate around the red tape by connecting immigrant & refugee professionals to people who know the process and can provide informed advice.

### **Q: What kinds of employment discrimination do refugees and immigrants encounter? Why can't they find jobs?**

A: These are the big barriers: 1) Lack of professional network, 2) Unfamiliarity with U.S. job search customs/practices and 3) Employer lack the resources and knowledge necessary to evaluate and hire immigrant professionals.

### **Our clients have experienced these kinds of difficulties:**

#### **On Employer Side**

- Employers who overemphasize the importance of English (ex: requiring 'perfect English' for an accounting position that deals more with numbers than people);
- Recruiters who pass over their resumes because of a foreign-sounding name;
- Interviewers who insist on conducting a phone screening (which almost always handicaps non-native English speakers), even when candidates request a face-to-face meeting;
- Employers who consider foreign universities and degrees to be invalid or inferior.

- Employers who refuse to hire someone who does not have U.S. work experience.
- Companies that advertise that only permanent residents or U.S. citizens need apply (there are many immigrants or refugees who are work-authorized, but not permanent residents).
- Interviewers who spend the whole interview discussing politics, not discussing the candidate's skills.
- Employers who advertise a full-time, salaried position, and during the interview switch the position to temporary, hourly (at lower rate) so they can "try out" the foreign-born professional.

Many of these practices are legal, yet prevent immigrants and refugees from becoming self-sufficient in the U.S.

### On Job Seeker Side

- Not familiar with American job search
- Need help with resume – they are sending in 6 page resumes
- Not used to "self-promotion" necessary for interviews
- Cultural differences in job searching
- Don't have a professional network (companies hire 40% of their employees on referral)
- Need to re-license, or re-certified with American license
- English is their second language

### Q: What do you do for them?

A:

- 1) **We teach them how to job search the American way.** This involves a training, workshops, interview practice, resume revision and education about the American workplace. It is a program to acculturate them to the American workplace.
- 2) **Mentoring:** Where possible job seekers are matched one-on-one with a volunteer who is a professional in the same career field. They help to give industry advice, guidance, and open doors.
- 3) **Direct Referral to our employer partners:** We present them for open jobs and midtermships (mid-level internships) with employer partners.
- 4) **Educate employers about issues of immigrant inclusion:** We educate employers how to become better employers of skilled immigrants by improving their hiring practices and integrating immigrants into their workforces.

### Q: Global Talent's immigrants are educated and experienced. Are things really so bad for them?

A: Refugees experience a great deal of loss. They have often lost family members and friends, in addition to their homes, homeland and most possessions. Unfortunately, when they get to the U.S. that loss continues. They lose their ability to work in their career fields, and they become the working poor, barely able to make ends meet for their families. Their human capital (education, skills and experience) is the one asset they have left. Global Talent helps them use their human capital to support themselves and their families.

### Q: Are there other organizations like Global Talent?

A: Yes. Upwardly Global is a nonprofit organization in San Francisco, New York & Chicago that is specifically focused on assisting skilled immigrant professional reclaim their careers in the U.S. and an invaluable partner with Global Talent.

### Q: What can I do to help?

A: We always need qualified volunteers who can mentor, train, and advise our jobseekers. Register to volunteer on the Global Talent website: [glotalent.org](http://glotalent.org) or contact Global Talent Project Manager directly: Ashley Davis – Phone: (208) 947-4253 | Email: [adavis@jannus.org](mailto:adavis@jannus.org)