



Message from the Chairman of the Board of USCRI

Dear USCRI staff and partner agencies,

Lavinia Limon, CEO and President of USCRI has decided to retire from USCRI effective October 13, 2017. The Board appreciates Ms. Limon's over four decades of service to refugees and immigrants, and her contribution to USCRI, thanks her, and wishes her the best in her future endeavors.

The Board of Directors has appointed Mr. Eskinder Negash as acting Chief Executive Officer. The Board is currently in the process of conducting a national search, which includes the consideration of Mr. Negash.

Mr. Negash, a refugee himself, has devoted his entire distinguished career to addressing the needs of refugees and immigrants. Mr. Negash brings nearly 40 years of experience working on behalf of refugees and immigrants and managing non-profit social service agencies. Prior to joining USCRI, Mr. Negash served as Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), within the Administration of Children and Families, at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services from 2009-2015. With a budget of over 1.5 billion, the ORR is the largest government-funded refugee resettlement organization in the world. During Mr. Negash's tenure, the ORR provided essential services to more than 850,000 vulnerable people through its Resettlement Program, Rescue & Restore anti-trafficking campaign, and the Unaccompanied Children's Program.

Additionally, Mr. Negash served as Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer of the International Institute of Los Angeles for 15 years, and the Chief Operating Officer of USCRI from 2002-2009. Mr. Negash received an Outstanding American by Choice award from DHS U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, which recognizes naturalized U.S. citizens who have made significant contributions to both their community and their adopted country. In 2010, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) honored Mr. Negash as one of ten distinguished men and women whose stories of hope and transformation epitomize the refugee journey.

"We are blessed to have such a strong and effective servant leader such as Eskinder taking over the helm, with his passion for and experience in helping refugees and immigrants", said Mr. Gene DeFelice, Chairman of the Board of Directors of USCRI.

Mr. Negash stated: "We have a strong, dedicated team at USCRI, and it is a privilege and a great honor to work alongside such an incredible group of individuals that cares about refugees and immigrants and the mission of the agency. What makes USCRI unique and effective is its committed, purpose-driven staff with a history of excellent service, and strong advocacy to improve the lives of the uprooted globally. I look forward to working with all staff to continue to advance the mission of USCRI."

As we thank Lavinia for her service, say good-bye, and wish her well, please join me in congratulating and supporting Eskinder as he assumes the position of acting Chief Executive Officer of USCRI.

Sincerely,

Gene DeFelice
Chairman of the Board of Directors of USCRI