

-- NEWS ADVISORY --

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## **Refugees & Immigrants Prepare for Work with Specialized Training from the Northwest College of Construction**

PORTLAND, OR –Twelve newly arrived immigrants and refugees are discovering new skills as a pathway for gainful employment. The Northwest College of Construction (NWCC), in partnership with the Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization (IRCO), has established a five-week specialized training program to acclimate refugees to establishing careers in America, with an emphasis on warehouse work.

The training curriculum includes forklift and safety certifications (OSHA-10), job search training and familiarization with hand and power tools. Additionally, the students toured local CD distributor, CD Baby's, warehouse. There they have the opportunity to interview the warehouse manager about inventory and shipment procedures.

NWCC instructor, Terry Finch, is leading the class. An immigrant himself, Terry appreciates the obstacles his students face. Perhaps equally important as the hands-on skills, the students are gaining an appreciation of how to seek employment in the United States. *"This is a great experience for the college, the students and me as well. We are training and empowering people to look at their employment pursuits as a career, not just a job. Learning the importance of networking has been a vital lesson for them."*

The students have diverse backgrounds. They come from five different nationalities, range in ages from early-twenties to mid-fifties, have the equivalent of a GED to an MBA in Civil Engineering and have been in the states from two to six months. IRCO's program is designed to create self-sufficient, long-term contributors to the economic vitality of the community. NWCC's vision is to cultivate a highly trained workforce in the construction industry. Together, these organizations are building our communities in which we live and work.

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