

2017 EASTERN IOWA REFUGEE SUMMIT EVENT PRESENTERS

JOE BOLKCOM

Joe is serving in his fifth term in the Iowa Senate. He works on improving health care and mental health services and ending tax giveaways to large corporations. He also has been an advocate for more state funding to help Iowa's newcomers and their families be successful.



CHAD DAHM

Chad Dahm is the Bureau Chief for the Bureau of Refugee Services in Des Moines. The Bureau is part of the Iowa Department of Human Services. Part of Chad's job is to serve as the State Refugee Coordinator for Iowa. Prior to his current position Chad has served in a variety of roles for the Department and was most recently the State Child Care Administrator for the state.



ANESA KAJTAZOVIC



Anesa Kajtaovic immigrated to the United States from the war-torn country of Bosnia at the age of ten. Coming to the U.S. after spending years in refugee camps, Anesa and her family felt fortunate to get a second chance at life. Watching her parents work hard labor jobs, sometimes working two jobs, Anesa experienced the struggles and saw the opportunities. She went on to earn two bachelor degrees in Business and Public Administration from the University of Northern Iowa in just three years. At the age of 23 she made her first bid for public office, she defeated a long time Waterloo Mayor in a competitive race to serve in the Iowa House of Representatives and become the youngest elected woman in Iowa history and the first Bosnian-American elected to any office in the country. She served two terms in the Legislature. At 26-27, despite the urges from the party establishment to wait her turn, she launched a Congressional campaign in the first district. After the unsuccessful bid, she continues to serve her community in other capacities. She was the Executive Director for a county wide non-profit and recently joined Allen Foundation-UnityPoint Health.

ZELIKA KRVAVICA

Zeljka Krvavica came to the United States in 1993 as a refugee from Bosnia and Herzegovina after fleeing her home in war-ravaged Sarajevo. Since then she has devoted her life to helping other refugees make Iowa home because all refugees, regardless of their cultural, educational or economic background, have one thing in common: a great sense of loss—loss of the life they once knew, loss of the loved ones, loss of dignity. Through her professional work as a Refugee Case Manager with the Bureau of Refugee Services in Des Moines, Iowa and as Iowa State Delegate with UNHCR Refugee Congress, as well as through numerous volunteering engagements such as teaching English as a Second Language or establishing and conducting Green Card Clinics for the refugees seeking adjustment of status, serving as the founding member of Iowa Interpreters and Translators Association, acting as a Cultural Ambassador for CultureAll, a non-profit organization which provides cultural diversity workshops and trainings for school children in Iowa, or being an avid advocate for refugee women's rights. She is the recipient of the Iowa Council for International Understanding 2010 Passport to Prosperity Award. Ms. Krvavica learned to be grateful for the refugee clients in her life who had been teaching her to always look on the bright side and to cherish all the miracles in this world.

Ms. Krvavica is a 2015 recipient of the White House Champions of Change Award for World Refugees which recognizes every day Americans who are making positive changes in their communities.

CARLY ROSS

Carly Ross has overseas experience in Europe, East and West Africa, Southeast Asia, and Central America. She holds a B.A. from Carleton College and a graduate degree in International Development from the Asian Institute of Technology. Carly worked as a resettlement case manager for Lutheran Services in Iowa, overseeing family literacy and refugee medical programs. Carly then served as a staff member for Refugee Support Center Africa based in Nairobi, Kenya and for the International Organization for Migration, traveling to refugee camps in East and Central Africa to conduct screenings under the United States Refugee Admissions Program. Carly joined USCRI as Des Moines Field Office Director in 2014. She is committed to building an inclusive community of opportunity for new Iowans.

