

Immigration Issues and Our New Neighbors – the Afghan Refugees” The speaker for the January meeting will be Janice Beers who is widely recognized as a noted authority on immigration and refugee issues. Immigration is a very complex and controversial issue. For tonight’s talk, however, she is going to talk about how the immigration laws affect the most recent immigrants – the Afghan refugees.

Ms. Beers has over 30 years’ experience working in leadership positions in refugee resettlement, non-profit immigration legal service and immigration integration programs. As the only fully accredited Department of Justice Representative, she has over 16 years’ experience interpreting immigration laws and handling legal procedures and court rulings and has represented immigrants, refugees and asylees from over 80 countries. She developed and oversees the Immigration Legal Services Program (ILSP), which is affiliated with the Catholic Multicultural Center. In addition to supervising the legal and non-legal staff and volunteers, she also independently manages a diverse and active caseload of 350+ cases and promotes community outreach to garner support for the program.

She is also a consultant to the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC). In that capacity, she developed a toolkit “Summary of Immigrant Ineligibility for Public Benefits”, conducted research on state eligibility of public programs and financial ineligibility documents as they would apply to immigrants.

Prior to her work at the Catholic Multicultural Center, Ms. Beers was Director of Immigration Services for Jewish Social Services. Among many things she achieved in that position, she created and developed Dane County’s first and longest standing Immigration Legal Services Program and successfully resettled over 200 refugees and another 200 “secondary migrants” who have made Madison their home. Her work has been recognized by the local press including a “Know Your Madisonian” article.