

STCC hosts panel discussion on 'Human Flow'

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield Technical Community College will host a panel discussion about the powerful documentary film "Human Flow," which follows the forced migration of some of the more than 65 million refugees who exist in the world today. The discussion follows an abbreviated screening of the documentary, which runs two hours and 20 minutes.

Students and the public are invited to attend the free screening and panel discussion at 10 a.m. on Nov. 15 in Scibelli Hall Theater. The discussion will be streamed live on STCC's Facebook page. Additional seating will be available on the seventh floor of Scibelli Hall, where attendees can watch a broadcast of the film and panel discussion.

Sondra Peron, coordinator of the Amy H. Carberry Fine Arts Gallery and cultural programming at STCC, will moderate the discussion with experts on the ongoing human migration.

"We want to unpack the complicated issues associated with the refugee

crisis," Peron said. "We have a diverse population on our campus and in our community. The issues raised in the film and during the discussion will hit close to home for many people living in Western Massachusetts—residents who either came here as refugees or know refugees. The panel discussion is a tremendous opportunity for our students and public to hear from speakers who are close to the crisis."

The panel will include the following speakers.

Kathryn Buckley-Brawner, executive director of Catholic Charities Agency for the Diocese of Springfield. She has worked with Catholic Charities and Catholic Relief Services for 15 years and has had the privilege of participating in the development projects in Haiti, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Burundi. In 2017, Catholic Charities became a Reception and Placement Agency site for the U.S. refugee resettlement program.

Maria Beatrice Castillo Canas, a refugee who was born in Ilobasco, El

Salvador. She said the crime and violence in El Salvador forced her family to leave the country.

Ibrahim Nuru, who was born in Moshi, Tanzania. Nuru said he helped refugees in Africa and in the United States.

"Globally we are witnessing an unprecedented number of displaced persons," Buckley-Brawner said. "At the same time we are also experiencing a rise in fear, distrust and a seeming inability to comprehend the circumstances driving this flow of humanity. As a people, as individuals, we need to educate ourselves to the global forces that impel people to flee, to seek asylum, to risk all in that journey toward safety and wholeness. By increasing our understanding, we can break through the rhetoric of fear and begin the dialogue of compassionate response."

STCC President John B. Cook will introduce the panelists. "The film and panel discussion presents a great opportunity for our students to learn about issues that are featured every day in

the news," Cook said. "They will get to hear stories from people with first-hand experience dealing with the refugee crisis. We think it will be an unforgettable experience for the students and community members who attend."

Humanflow.com describes the film as "an epic film journey led by the internationally renowned artist Ai Weiwei [that] gives a powerful visual expression to this massive human migration."

"The documentary elucidates both the staggering scale of the refugee crisis and its profoundly personal human impact, following a chain of urgent human stories that stretches across the globe in countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, France, Greece, Germany, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Kenya, Mexico and Turkey."

The project is supported in part with funding from the STCC Library. STCC digital media students, with guidance from Professor LuAnne Carbaugh, co-chair of Digital Media Production, will record the event.